THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, March 18, 1985

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 9:45 a.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Speaker)
His Honour R. E. Brathwaite, (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. S. Craig, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House)
Hon. H. B. St. John, Q.C., LL.B., (Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning)
Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, (Minister of Education)
Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, (Minister of Housing and Lands; Minister of Trade, Industry and International Transport)
J. G. Odle, Esq., B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. L. R. Tull, Q.C., M.A., (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw, (Minister of Labour, Social Security, Sport and Community Services)
Mr. L. L. Sisnett, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Trade)
Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, M.A., M.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food & Consumer Affairs)
Dr. R. C. Haynes, Ch. B., F.R.C.P., (Edin.)
Mr. P. M. Greaves, B.A.
Mr. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B.
Mr. O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.), Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office)

Prayers were read by Father D. Stapleton.

Messrs. B. M. TAITT, W. O. FRANKLIN and Hon. H. deB. FORDE entered the Chamber and took their seats.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, March 12, 1985.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the meeting of March 12, 1985, be taken as read.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on the Minutes there was – I am sorry I did not have the chance to speak with the Leader of the House before – one error listed in the attendance which, I would take it, needs to be corrected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would the honourable Member point out to us where the error occurs?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am sorry, Sir, just one minute. Let me double check. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. It appears to be in the Minutes before this one, which were, in fact, confirmed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Those Minutes have already been confirmed. If there are no objections or observations, let the Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I have received correspondence from the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Sir Robin Vanderfelt, and it reads as follows:

"Shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the death of Prime Minister Adams. He was a staunch supporter of institution of Parliament and of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association had no better friend. Grateful if you will convey to the family of the late Prime Minister and to Members and Officials of Barbados Parlia-

ment the sympathy of the Chairman and Members of the CPA's Executive and of all of us at CPA Headquarters. My wife would like to be associated with this message. You are in our thoughts and prayers."

OBITUARY SPEECHES

SPEECHES RE: LATE PRIME MINISTER OF BARBADOS, RIGHT HONOURABLE J. M. G. M. "TOM" ADAMS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Speaker, on the 11th March, 1985, this nation lost a great statesman, parliamentarian and man. Full and ample tribute has been paid in a number of arenas in Barbados, but we, in Parliament, I know, would wish to place on record our own tribute to Tom Adams.

It is over twenty years that, along with the Leader of the House, the Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) and others, I started up a strong, vibrant and happy political association with the late honourable Member. I feel that this close association entitles me to say quite clearly and distinctly, from my own personal knowledge, that there was no one who loved parliamentary democracy more than Tom Adams. He took part in the rebuilding of the Barbados Labour Party, and throughout the years, since his election to Parliament in 1966 as the Senior Member for St. Thomas, he was especially interested in the preservation of the Westminster system of Government. All of us know of the tremendous contribution that he made in all of the major political battles that took place during that period of time from 1962 until his death last week. There are few that must be recalled, because of the significance of those battles and the contribution that he made.
9.55 a.m.

He helped to shape, in a large measure, the fundamental instrument which governs our people in Barbados, namely, the Constitution. He was a member of the team representing the Barbados Labour Party at the London Constitutional Conference. I well recall his contribution in the area of the Fundamental Human Rights chapter, in the area of citizenship in particular, for he was greatly interested in matters relating to immigration, emigration and citizenship. He shared with the honourable Member for Christ Church West, myself, and the honourable Member for St. George, who was the leader of the Barbados Labour Party delegation at that time, a desire to place within the Constitution instruments in Barbados simple machinery to preserve Barbados' Association with the Windward and Leeward Islands in a judicial system, in the event of Parliament wishing by special resolution so to do. In short, a special procedure was built in to ensure that we would not have to go through the Constitutional process of amendment in order to perpetuate this objective.

Tom Adams was, in addition to being a great lover of Parliament and the Westminster system, a Caribbean man. I believe that all of us who knew him well understood fully that he felt the same depth of disappointment that the other members of the Barbados Labour Party felt on the demise of the last Federation. He, like us, had never given up hope of the realisation, if not of a formal, legal, political union, at least of an association which will perform in many areas many of the functions which a legal union would perform. His love for the Caribbean and his clear vision of the need for mutual self-help in all areas in the Caribbean was manifested in the strong stance that he took at the time of the Grenada rescue mission.

In many other ways, too, Tom Adams and his Cabinet were united in the desire to continue to pursue this path. He has borne the brunt of criticism in relation to Barbados' position in the Multilateral Clearing Facility, but the stand that was taken by Barbados in the Multilateral Clearing Facility is totally consistent with the views and conception of the role of Barbados in the Caribbean. I know that there are many others who regard this stance taken by the Government and by its Leader and Minister of Finance as being unduly generous, but he, more than anyone else, understood and knew that Barbados was destined to play a pivotal role in this process of reconstruction of suitable instruments for effectuating Caribbean association. He knew that one cannot always receive benefits without having to bear burdens, and there can be no doubt that the progress that Barbados has made in many areas of its economic activity, particularly in the manufacturing area, during the course of his tenure of office as Prime Minister of this country from 1976 until his death, was made because of the fact that we were part of the Caribbean Economic Community, and that our people were able to rise to the challenge presented by the limited Common Market opportunities. Statistics will show and demonstrate that Barbados, above all, benefited greatly from the Common Market.

One other area, I think, I should cover is his love of Parliament. We know that he belonged to a group of parliamentarians, of which Your Honour is a prominent member, who regarded the CPA as a special thing. Unfortunately, despite my long association with Parliament and with the honourable Member, I think that Your Honour, myself, the late Speaker and a few others so completely absorbed the mechanism of this Association, that others felt that unless one shared the same profound commitment, it would be better just to pay the life membership and leave it in the good hands of Your Honour.

His love of Parliament was also manifested by his attention to the Debates Committee, and by his desire to ensure that the physical circumstances under which parliamentarians worked were improved. Tom Adams will go down in the history of Parliament in Barbados as being

the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance who pioneered the idea that parliamentarians should receive research and secretarial help in the performance of their duties to their constituents. He also pioneered the idea, and he was prepared to suffer ill-informed or any other kind of criticism for it, that Ministers and parliamentarians should be adequately rewarded. And he held firmly to the view that office was a sacred trust, and that those upon whom the good fortune was bestowed to hold office were under an obligation, in return for society paying them adequate remuneration, to conduct themselves in their offices in accordance with the highest standards of probity.

Luckily for us in the Barbados Labour Party, Cabinet Government for Tom Adams was a system of Government in which responsibility had to be shared. I speak from personal experience when I say that, throughout my period as Deputy Prime Minister – and I know throughout the period of all of those Ministers who served with him from 1976 – he was a great delegator, and he expected of us the maximum performance within our capabilities. I do not believe that it is true to say that in the administration of his Cabinet the only road led to Tom Adams. Great freedom was given the Cabinet Ministers to pursue their own style of work, and he was very much a consensus man in the sense that, over very wide areas of Government, he expected that his Ministers would come forward with ideas; and they were encouraged to make their contributions to all areas of Government. 10.05 a.m.

I do not wish to speak on all areas of his activities, for, if I did, I would be selfishly trespassing upon areas which I know many other Members would like to be left to them so that they can make their contribution today in supporting the Resolution which has been circulated.

I join, and I ask honourable Members on the other side to join with me, in the unanimous passage of this Resolution which is in the usual form.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Speaker, a lot has unfortunately fallen to me, in the absence of my leader, for which I first wish to apologise. The Right Honourable Member for St. John is, as I believe Your Honour has been informed, or will shortly be informed, indisposed and will not be here. I believe the honourable Member, the Prime Minister, has been so informed, and so I apologise for his absence, which is due to a minor illness.

In rising in the highest traditions of the parliamentary system to second this Resolution, which has been proposed by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, the Prime Minister of Barbados, I say that none of us in this House would have preferred to have this Resolution before us at all.

The right honourable gentleman who has passed from this scene has been eulogised, and has had tribute paid to him elsewhere. I believe that today he is being honoured in his capacity as a parliamentarian. I think that it is fair to say that no one would begrudge the words of the now Prime Minister when he says that if the departed Prime Minister was anything at all, he was a parliamentarian.

These traditions of what has been described as the Westminster system help us, especially in small developing countries, to maintain a level of civility and a level of civilisation which will augur for the continuation of the society, and it is in the keeping of those small detailed areas of Parliament, keeping them pure, that we who have been given these high tasks as representatives of people can make our greatest contribution to preservation of the democratic system.

We all have our recollections of Prime Minister Adams, and those who have been associated with him, either as comrades in the party or comrades in the Cabinet, will obviously have other and different recollections and more intimate glimpses of the man than we whose role it was to oppose him, and whose role it was to deal with him in adversary terms. But we on this side – certainly I, as I have said elsewhere – know him in his parliamentary capacity, and one of the things which impressed me soon after I came to this Honourable Chamber was the unfailing courtesy which the honourable gentleman exercised in the course of debate. Even at the height of the most adversary relationship, one only had to rise in one's seat and express those famous words, "On a point ..." He never waited to hear what the point was before he sat and allowed the Member to say what he had to say. As slight as that may seem, to me it is one of the most important aspects of the parliamentary system which we have inherited, and which it is our duty to preserve. I think that, in that measure, we can assess – I will assess – Tom Adams the parliamentarian.

As a debater, I have been at the brunt of his wit, and I have in my own time accosted him in similar terms. But, again, as those things occurred on both sides of the House, as is the custom when a witty phrase, when a, if you will pardon the expression, salubrious statement has been made, it is welcomed by all honourable Members of this House. When Tom Adams, the debater, was in full cry, even those who were at the mercies of his tongue could not help but notice the facility with which he phrased what he had to say.

I have had the distinction of having battled with Tom Adams the campaigner. A more indefatigable and committed campaigner for his cause cannot be identified. When you were campaigning against Tom Adams, you knew that you were working – and that you had to work hard. I locked horns with him in St. Michael South Central and I locked horns with him in particular in St. Peter, and in both of those campaigns his

unfailing commitment to his own party, to his own ideals and to what he perceived to be the only ultimate result was apparent to all who observed him and all who felt the brunt of his tremendous wit.

I think that to say we will miss him in Parliament would be an understatement. I think it were better said if I identified him as a worthy opponent. As you know, Sir, Homer in the Iliad and in the Odyssey identified the most worthy human endeavour as that of battling against the elements, or at least battling against worthy opponents. Apart from the other aspects of parliamentary representation, I think that all politicians become exhilarated, and indeed become stimulated, when they are engaged in what we all called 'the fight.' The fight is one in which each man, each woman, is committed to one ultimate result, to win. Again, in the classics it has been indicated that to the victor belongs the spoils; or, put another way, woe to the conquered. But even so, those who did not win themselves benefit from the battle, because in the mere exercise of participation they, too, have their moments of exhilaration and of conquest.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Barbados have spoken eloquently of their views of the Prime Minister's death and the Prime Minister himself, but I think that it can be said again that whenever one hears of and experiences a death in the way which we experienced the death of a man who was at the height of his powers, who appeared at the height of his vigour, and who was cut down in the morning, it must humble us politicians. It must reduce us and teach us humility, because we become closely familiar with a statement which is heard from the Good Book time and time again, that the days of man are but as grass – the grass withers and the flowers thereof fadeth away. We who have the responsibility of carrying on the people's business, as we like to say, cannot but be humbled by the experiences which we have had in recent times, and more particularly, by the sudden and untimely death of the right honourable gentleman from St. Thomas.

10.15 a.m.

Our hearts go out to his young children. None of us, unless we suffer that particular difficulty and that particular loss, can know the innermost thoughts of a young man or a young woman who sees his or her idol, friend, father go down in the heyday of life. To those two children, we would all wish to extend not only our sympathy, but our hope that they will be able to go in the paths, whatever those paths would have been, that they father would wish for them.

To his wife, it would be a very difficult time, for sometimes she would have to be mother and father to her children, and she would have to provide for them the psychological sustenance which, again, only those who have suffered that kind of loss would truly understand but which most of us can only speculate.

To his mother, Grace Lady Adams, she has had some experience in the grief which has been renewed for her. Though it must be entirely difficult to have suffered the loss of her only son at the time which she has, in extending sympathy to her and to the others of the Adams clan, we, on this side, could only express the hope that they will understand that this was the work of God, and that only God knows why these things occur.

The honourable Member, the Prime Minister, has spoken of the Right honourable gentleman in his capacity as a Caribbean man, and as a student and practitioner of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's ideals. I think it would be superfluous merely to repeat what has been said, and so, in joining most reluctantly, most regretfully, in this Resolution by way of seconding it, I express my sympathy to the honourable Members on the other side, and express the condolences of those of us on this side to all members of the Barbados Labour Party in particular, and the people of Barbados in general.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): Mr. Speaker, the death of the late Prime Minister Adams last Monday translated the cliche of deep loss into a harrowing reality to me. Tom Adams was a leader of this Government who led by example. I have already paid tribute to him in public, in the Supreme Court last Friday morning, but it is important that I put on the Record of Parliament some of my own feelings about the late Prime Minister.

I first knew him as a young boy when I went to Harrison College. His form, the Maths Six, was next door to mine, overlooking the clock tower at that school, and I would see him from time to time coming from his form room into mine, and, with that famous smirk, making comments to us who were in our first year at that school. From that time until last Sunday, when I spoke to him for the last time, there was something about him that always fascinated me. I have tried during the last few days to see if I could put my finger on what it is, and I believe I have, and during the next few minutes I would like to focus on what I have come up with.

Tom Adams showed a great versatility of intellect and interest from the time he was a small boy, and after he had got a Barbados Scholarship and gone into Magdalen College in Oxford, where he studied Politics, Philosophy and Economics, he then moved on to the BBC, where he worked as a radio producer. It was at that period that perhaps the early exposure he had had as the son of the late Sir Grantley Adams was nurtured into a full political maturity. The BBC was an opportunity for him to develop his skills in public relations and communications, and he also used the West Indian Student Centre at Earles Court in London as an arena for the development of the primitive political skills that were required for a Caribbean politician, particularly at that time.

When he returned to Barbados, I am told that he was a rather indifferent public speaker and tentative and dissident in his approach to politics generally. Perhaps the night air, the stimulus of the crowds and, after 1966, when he became a Member of this Chamber, the ambience of this Chamber, which was the scene of many famous, hard-fought and distinguished political debates, all went a long way in finally honing his debating skills, and he became, after that, the premier political speaker both within and without Parliament.

It is fair to say that in his last few years he has bestrode this Parliament like a colossus. He brought powers of intellect, incisiveness, wit, sharp repartee, a tremendous grasp of facts and a great capacity for analysis to bear on debates in this Chamber, and I think that as we reflect on his life, that aspect of it is the one that will stand out more than others.

When Tom Adams came back to Barbados, he merged himself totally into every aspect of life in this country. He saw it as an important part of his development as a person and as a politician in this community that he should get to know everything about life in this community.

He was a great historian, and I can attest to the fact that in his bookshelves is every written book on the history of Barbados. And they were not there for decoration, because he quoted often and liberally from the historical works relating to this island. He got among people and he moved among them at all levels in the society, and he got to develop a keen instinct for the way Barbadians felt and reacted in any given circumstance. In a real sense, he was a Barbadian.

He was a lawyer. Those of us who had the fortune to work with or against him at the Bar would attest to his remarkable skills of advocacy. He was a very clever lawyer, and one whom we had to watch carefully when we were working against him.

10.25 a.m.

It is more appropriate to see Tom Adams as a politician. He won a seat in Parliament in 1966 and he became the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party in 1971. Those of us who were at the bitter end of defeat in the 1971 elections know of the overpowering forlornness in the Barbados Labour Party at that time. There was a feeling of despair after the 1971 elections and many of our friends seemed to fall away from us like dry leaves falling from a lively plant, and it was Tom Adams who mobilised his forces for action, and he had the abiding faith and confidence that he could restore the party to a level of acceptance or acceptability in this country that many of us at that time doubted. But he led, and we followed.

As the Prime Minister has said, Tom Adams was not a man who imposed his will on people. As a matter of fact, it would have been difficult to do it to the people with whom he was working, but it was not his disposition. He was a genius at listening to people's ideas, pretending not to accept them and then repeating them on a later occasion with great refinement and embellishment, so he was someone who could learn from others. For this reason, he did a great deal of consultation. He talked to the people who worked with him, both the members of the party and members of his Cabinet in later days, and this, to a large measure, resulted in the success that he brought to bear in Government. He did not believe that he could do it alone. He thought that he could get better results by tapping on the varied resources and talents of the people around him and bringing it all into a composite whole.

Tom Adams was a man who was a political tactician *par excellence*. I remember his last triumph, the St. Peter By-election, when he expressed a great deal of annoyance and frustration at the spirit of the party as it moved into the first by-election in July last year. He was not satisfied that the party had developed the kind of fighting spirit that was necessary for victory. He did what he was accustomed to doing all through his period of leadership – he led from in front. Every little last detail of that by-election, he dealt with personally. All the bottle-washing, all the sweeping up, he looked after personally, and moved his forces to an outstanding victory.

Tom Adams was a formidable opponent in debate, in politics, in law, wherever there was a chance for him to use his skills, but one of the things that impressed me about him was the fact that he had a great loyalty and allegiance to his friends, even when they were hard on him. When they had a cause that was very weak, he could make it sound good, because he felt the need to protect his friends. In addition to that, he had an extremely generous attitude to his enemies.Those people who were unreasonably hostile to him, those people who were spiteful and malicious in their calumnies against him, could always expect generosity of spirit from him.

I am moved to say that he was perhaps, and I have said before, one of the most misunderstood people this country has ever produced. As someone who worked very closely with him and one who enjoyed a very close personal relationship with him, I found there was a great gulf between public perception, as I have heard it many times across this country, and the man that I knew. I found it difficult at times to understand how a man who attracted so much unreasonable hatred could be so generous to people who hated him. He had a lot of time for people, opponents, particularly if they were sharp and able, because he set a high score on excellence. He felt that people who were weak, vacillating and irresolute were

people to pass by, but he had a lot of time, whether they were friends or opponents, for people who were clever, sharp, skilful and able. He recognised worth wherever it was.

The Prime Minister has said that he was a man who gave a lot of delegating powers to his Ministers, and I can attest to that. This was no one man show. He felt that Ministers as Ministers should be in charge of their fiefdoms, their Ministries, and that they should be creative in their Ministries and bring their own personal experiences and intelligence to bear on what they were doing in the Ministries. He consulted the Ministers often, they were partners in a very real sense, they were not subordinates, and that is a measure of the greatness of the leader.

Tom Adams was a man who read, and read widely. He read books the way and with the enthusiasm with which young children read adventure stories. I have never seen a man who could read as rapidly as he did and memorise every last detail of what he had read, and this is for many years after he had read them. He particularly loved military history. I was moved to say only last week that perhaps the only regret in his life was that he was not a great military figure, a military tactician guiding large forces into warfare. He knew the history of every war and quite often brought me to shame when he would ask me about a war of which I should have some acquaintance – the Peloponnesian War or one of those wars of the Greek and Roman times – and I did not remember or perhaps never knew the details. But he knew the details, not having read it for very very many years. He knew what were the particular strengths of Hannibal, the General, and the particular weaknesses of Caesar. He knew what made Alexander the Great a great leader, and he had a knowledge of German military history which, I believe, was second to none anywhere.

He did not read for pleasure. Tom Adams felt that in the pages of books, in the annals of history and in the voices of philosophers was a great source of knowledge waiting to be tapped, and that when he tapped that knowledge, he could use it for the development of himself and this community.

Tom Adams was a man who loved art, and one of the last conversations I had with him before his death was in respect of his plans to go to France next week to see a major art exhibition. Again in the course of his conversation he shamed me into my own ignorance of the details of the history of art with his wide and extensive knowledge of the details of the art of the ages. He was a man who studied ancient and alien civilisations, a man who could talk with great ease and facility of the ancient Assyrian Kingdom or the old Babylonian Empire. Whatever it was, he was a man who could exchange words in a knowledgeable way on these topics.

10.35 a.m.

He and I shared an interest in philosophy and we talked with equal freedom of the great political philosophers of two and a half centuries ago – Plato, Aristotle, right through the middle part of this millenium into the modern philosophers. We quite often exchanged views and ideas on the modern existentialist philosophers, and I was amazed that he could find time to master the details of what is extremely complex political and philosophical thought. In short, Tom Adams was a man of great and wide intellectual interests.

Tom Adams was also a man who felt that not only in history and in the examples and events of history, he could learn a lot. He always kept before him portraits of great men, he kept them in his mind. So both in his personal life and in the handling of matters of State he always endeavoured to mould himself by imitating the lives of great people.

He also was a man who had a genius for method, for detail. He had a good memory. He had a taste for things of beauty. Those who were close to him can speak about that. Much of it was lost to people who did not know him well.

He was a great orator, a very eloquent man. He had the kind of eloquence that goes with imagination and sensibility. His self-expression was not only linguistically sound, but it was coupled with a fine sense of artistic propriety. That was the man, not a word was missed on him. Tom Adams was the finest orator this country has ever produced.

He had other stable endowments. He had the kind of endowment that made for real dignity of life and of success. He was a man with an indomitable will, firmness of purpose. He was a man who had the courage and the power to face what was uncomfortable. He was a man who did not over-indulge in emotion. He was very pragmatic, and pragmatism particularly was the hallmark of his political philosophy.

Although as a young man he mingled with leaders of socialism and labour in the United Kingdom, and studied the principles of Fabyanism at the feet of the great leaders in the United Kingdom, he never brought to his political philosophy any hidebound, unichannelled thought on action. That he could be the person who led the Barbados Labour Party into Socialist International, and at the same time articulate a political philosophy that accorded more with the milder form of socialism that one finds in Western Europe, shows that the man had struck the type of balance required in dealing with a country such as Barbados. Adherence to any rigid ideological position was anathema to Tom Adams, because he believed that Barbados was a very special case with very special problems, and that it took a whole confluence of thoughts, ideas and attitudes, to deal with problems of a small island state,

close in proximity to the biggest consumer market in the world, and overwhelmed and beset by a culture from North America that made development in this country something that needed special handling.

Tom Adams was a man who had a powerful vision of where this country should be going. We did not always agree with him, and it would be remarkable if we did, but he saw somewhere in the future, the not very distant future, a prosperous Barbados developed both materially and in the lives of individual Barbadians, that would bring the standard of living in this country to the level of North America in less than two decades. And he was no idle dreamer. Those of us who worked with him know that he was not a dreamer. He was a pragmatist to the core, and yet he had visions of Barbados moving beyond its limitations of time and resources to a standard of living and a quality of life to match that of countries far bigger and with much greater resources.

Tom Adams was an eloquent man, a fine speaker, but unlike most people who are eloquent and who have the gift of fine language, he did not allow his eloquence to paralyse his faculty of action. He was a man who could take good decisions, and quick decisions. I remember working with the late Prime Minister in the last 48 hours before the incursion into Grenada. It was a period of high tension, of frayed nerves. It was a period when we were walking a tight rope, when there was no time for sleep. I think that in the last 40 hours before we heard the voice of Colonel Barnes and Radio Free Grenada saying that the eagle had landed there was no sleep for the two of us – the desks and the floor of Government Headquarters provided comfort for the body. It was during that period that, if I ever were in doubt, I saw the strength of purpose and the strength of character, and the capacity for decisiveness of Tom Adams.

I have had a good personal relationship with the Prime Minister. We talked a lot late at night, we spoke to each other on the phone most days, both about matters of State and other matters. I am not one who have ever had a human idol in my life, and I do not believe I will ever have one. I do not go in for personal heroes, but as close as possible you could get from that elevated state, Tom Adams reached.

We had a number of classic battles. I fought with him both in the Government and in the party, and he fought me with the fierceness that he fights his political opponents, but at the end of it we could appreciate our respective positions. I say this because I do not want any impression to be felt that he had a close relationship only with flatterers, those who would fall on every word that falls from his lips. There are those who fought and resisted him who have tremendous respect for him.

10.45 a.m.

He was a man who believed that two types of politicians could survive, those with charisma and those who are organizers, and he was sufficiently modest to put himself in the second category. He believed he could succeed only by great attention to detail and organization, and that he did. That is the measure of his own personal success in politics.

Tom Adams had a vision of the Caribbean. He saw the Caribbean stretching from way in the north to the south as an archipelago of islands with a common destiny, and he felt that it was a duty of his to devote his public life to efforts of bringing the Caribbean together as one unit. He was very concerned about the dangers that were lurking around the shadows of the Caribbean that were likely to explode into an orgy of violence and insecurity of these islands. Therefore, he conceived a regional security system, and he wanted an umbrella of protection of security for all the island states of this region. That was his consuming passion right up to his death.

He was a generous man who could forgive the wickedness and the foibles of others, those who sought to put him down, and he refused to allow any personal antipathy to stand in his way of trying to work together for the unity of the Caribbean. That is why I was asked by the late Prime Minister to go to Trinidad a few weeks ago to talk to the people in Trinidad and to make it known that whatever differences existed, personal or otherwise, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago were two important units in the Caribbean, and they had to be working together if there were to be any unity in this system.

Prime Minister Adams was a great statistician, a recorder of events, a man who knew as much about cricket history as any man ever lived. He could tell you in 1929 when a new ball was taken at what time and how many runs were scored during the session, that kind of statistic, without looking it up. Such was the nature of his encyclopaedic memory.

He was a gardener, a man who would go around the world trying to collect all kinds of cacti and things that I considered weird. He was a great philatelist, a man who had perhaps the finest and most extensive collection of stamps in the whole Caribbean. He was a man who also collected antiques, particularly old maps of Barbados, and he was a man who found a certain fascination in cards. There was something about cards that excited him, and a lot of his spare time was devoted to that kind of activity.

The most important legacy that Tom Adams has left in this country was witnessed on Monday evening when there was a transition of Government, transition to the new Prime Minister, without as much as a ripple on the political and social scene of this country. Those who

tried to denounce him during his life and put out that he wanted to be a dictator, to draw all power to himself and deny people their democratic rights, are shamed by the fact that there could be such an easy transition in this country with never a word of discord.

Mr. Speaker, finally, whether we loved Tom Adams or not, we cannot gainsay the fact that he was a man pre-eminently suited for the high office of leader of Government in this country. Whatever issues he dealt with, he illuminated and enhanced. He was a man who brought respect to law, to legal training, for institutions, for Parliament and for the standards that we have always set ourselves in this country. He was a man who gave solidness to Government in a way none of his predecessors did. He made all the people in this country feel more secure, and he brought the matters of public financing, not only with the skill of a technician, but the craft of a man who grasped details, and grasped them well, and, he also brought a political flair to these matters.

To some, he was not a sympathetic figure. He was not a man beloved. Yet, his qualities were such as to compel admiration and respect even if not affection. Whatever we loved in Tom Adams, whatever we admired, will remain forever indelibly etched in the minds and the hearts of the people of this country and the people of the Caribbean, who, on sober reflection, can properly gauge the great and tremendous contribution he has made as leader of our country.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): Mr. Speaker the death of Prime Minister Adams represents a terrible loss to this country, the full dimensions of which cannot now be fully identified or precisely determined. His loss is all the more keenly felt because he was at the summit of his enormous powers, and notwithstanding his impressive achievements, he remained a man of rich promise and unfulfilled capacity.

As I saw him last Wednesday at the funeral home, I could not help thinking of a tree stricken in full leaf. This is one explanation for the incomparable outpouring of grief which this nation experienced over the last week, and continues to experience. A second explanation is to be found in the fact that after 19 years in Parliament, almost nine of which were spent as Prime Minister, he touched all of us and became part of our national being. He was beloved by many and respected by friend and foe alike. In death he achieved a new status, and he came to be perceived for what he was not perceived to be in life, a national hero.

We will remember him for his boyish and attractive personality, which bore a contradictory and interesting feature. In many respects, he was a very unserious man, taking a large and unbelievable interest in the daily routine, almost the trivia, of life. He would interrupt the most profound discussion to provide you with a mischievous anecdote or a comment on a seemingly unimportant and irrelevant matter. I often think that, perhaps in that regard, he was saying something about himself and his recognition of the imperfection of man. At the same time, and this is the other side, he set himself and his country goals of excellence, and he was equal to and strove after Olympian feats.

We will remember him for his gifts of mind. God blessed him with a robust and many-sided intellect, which he assiduously cultivated through constant reading, regular discussion and hard study. And in his reading he reflected a certain catholic taste; his interest ranged from biographies to autobiographies, social histories, military affairs, cricket, gardening, stamp collecting and art.

His vocabulary, as we all know, was huge. He possessed a meticulous memory and a pellucid style. He was adept at remembering names, events and people. As a speaker, both in and out of this Honourable Chamber, he was exceptionally powerful and overwhelming. He had range, he could be pungent, he could be witty, he could be stringent and combative, and when roused in debate, as all honourable Members on the other side know only too well, he could be ruthless and irascible. But his verbal dexterity did not mask any superficiality, for he was at once a man of scholarship and substance.

I wish to agree with the Honourable Attorney General in making the point that Tom Adams, though read in political philosophy, wore no alien labels of foreign political baggage. In that regard, I considered him a typical Barbadian. He was always interested in the practical, pragmatic, common sense solutions to problems, provided they were fair to all classes, protected the freedom of the individual without compromising the wider good of the society, and provided, too, that they were consistent with the Barbadian instincts of moderation and gradualism.

As Prime Minister, he showed a deep interest in all the work of his fellow Ministers, yet he never sought to inhibit their style or dampen their initiatives. He was always open to fresh ideas, and it never mattered from which side of the party, of the House or indeed of the nation they originated. As a leader of men, he was generous, compassionate, wise and supportive, and because he was so human, men of very dissimilar styles and intellect won his attention and admiration. In the Cabinet, able and talented, if I may say so, in the House of Assembly experienced and well endowed, Tom Adams stood out. As Minister of Finance, he showed originality and flair while at the same time mastering the complexities of his subject. He gave to the high office of state he held, the indelible stamp of his character, restless energy, mastery of concept and detail, dynamism, probity and vision.

He had great faith in the wisdom of the people of this country and in their capacity to respond intelligently once issues, however complicated, were clearly set forth. He was a champion of human rights and democracy, and the large role played by him and by Barbados in the restoration of democracy in Grenada represents one of his finest hours. In that particular episode I think he became, if not by anything else but the display of sheer courage, a statesman.

Prime Minister Adams was a great House of Assembly man. He simply loved Parliament. He saw it as a vital institution in the structure of our democracy. He mastered its Standing Orders and was very familiar with Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice and Procedure. It was here in Parliament, that he gave full expression to his vast powers of advocacy. He was a believer in all the rich traditions of Parliament. He would never tell the House an untruth – never! He respected the office of Speaker and the rulings of the Speaker, regardless of whether they were in his favour or out of his favour.

He was a strong supporter of all the work of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. He genuinely saw it as providing a useful forum in which parliamentarians could meet and exchange ideas on matters of mutual interest. He saw the value in our Parliament establishing links with other Parliaments, both within the Commonwealth and outside the Commonwealth, and before he died, he spoke to me about our Parliament establishing links with the Congress of the United States of America, and I know, Mr. Speaker, that before he died, he also wrote to you suggesting that we establish formal links between this Parliament and the U.S. Congress.

He gave practical and generous support to the repair and the rehabilitation work which is going on here in Parliament and looked forward to all Members of Parliament enjoying enhanced facilities. In particular, he gave great emphasis to a well-equipped library, meeting rooms for MPs and improved dining facilities.

1.05 a.m.

In the words of the Attorney General, he dominated Parliament like a colossus, and it is here that we saw the generosity of his spirit, for he was quick to acknowledge a sound point, whether originating from within his own ranks or made by the Opposition, and Hansard is replete with his tributes to Members on the other side for able and interesting points which they made in the course of debate. We who have seen him at work in Parliament will miss him, and will for ever remember him. Long after he has gone, his work as a parliamentarian will be spoken of. I am confident that his memory will never perish.

The whole area of social and economic life in Barbados has been permanently affected by Mr. Adams' humane policies and bold initiatives. He was working towards a new Barbados in which all classes would be prosperous, where sickness without resort to a doctor through financial poverty would be a thing of the past, where the fear of old age without the support of a decent pension would be unknown, and where unemployment would be stripped of its terror through an expanded Unemployment Insurance Scheme.

On the international scene he was an articulate and respected spokesman for special regimes of assistance for small nations and small island states like Barbados. And when the World Bank tried, as they tried for the last two years, to graduate Barbados and other small countries from its aid programmes, he fought with skill, with determination and with success.

As a regionalist, he walked in the footsteps of his illustrious father, and was uncompromisingly committed to the advance of the regional movement. Nothing brought him more distress than the decline in regional trade, the collapse of the Multilateral Clearing Facility and the general logan of the moment. At death he was working assiduously to achieve dialogue where there was silence, and to fashion new bilateral relationships within the context of the Chaguaramas Agreement.

He loved life, and lived it to the limit of his enormous energy. He died in his prime after giving freely and fully to his country. I am confident that at the bar of history he will be generously judged, and will emerge as a great Barbadian patriot and as an outstanding regionalist and internationalist.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the many genuine tributes paid to the late Tom Adams by all sectors of this community, and by the speakers in this Parliament so far today on both sides of the House. Before I do so, I would like to state that the Right Honourable Member for St. John, the Leader of the Opposition, has asked me to be most meticulous to indicate to this Honourable House that it is only because of the fact that he is suffering from acute laryngitis that he is not here today, and despite that he made every effort to be present at the State Funeral.

Like all other human beings, one must feel a deep sense of pain and grief at the loss of a young man in the full flower of youth and in full possession of his intellectual powers. The death of each man reduces us all and reminds us all of the frailty that is the human condition, of the need to try as hard as we can when we are alive to do as much good as possible, and indeed, it makes one reflect with humility that what happened to the late Prime Minister could easily have happened to any of the 26 of us left behind. Indeed, if anyone can show me a man who cannot grieve and who can find pleasure or seek benefit from the passing of another man, then you have

shown me someone who has never fully taken his place among the family of human beings.

This was not the passing of an ordinary individual, but the passing of a Member of Parliament, the passing of the Prime Minister of this country, the passing of the political leader of the Barbados Labour Party, which forms the Government of this great country of ours. His death is a tragic loss for this democratically-elected Parliament of this country, for his political party and for this nation as a whole. Above all, it is a tragic loss to his wife, his two children, his mother, Lady Adams, and to his relatives, to whom I take this opportunity in this Parliament once again to extend my deepest and heartfelt sympathy. No words of consolation can be adequate, and I speak for myself, my entire family and for the people of St. Michael South Central in making the statements I have made so far.

Much has been said about Prime Minister Tom Adams, but I know how he felt about the passing of someone close to him. It was my sad task on the passing of the late Sir Grantley Adams to communicate the news to him, and I recall in detail his reaction.

As he would be the first to admit, it was my duty in Opposition to focus on the weaknesses of his Administration, this being the essence of the multi-party democratic state, which makes for better Government for the people. Once he has passed away it is equally our duty to focus on the positive aspects of the man to ensure that the good is not interred with his bones. Sharp indeed have been our differences on national economic policy, but this has never blurred an appreciation of the qualities and gifts which made him such a formidable political opponent, his political success being more than adequate testimony to that.
11.15 a.m.

Firstly, he understood the factors that moulded and shaped political opinion in Barbados, and was able to attack – or in retreat, to avoid injury – in this area, which he assessed with the greatest precision. He knew and always felt the pulse of his political constituency in the widest sense, and armed with that knowledge and insight, he brought to bear his incredible gifts of communication and debate. Parliament and the media were the arena in which he displayed these gifts, with consummate elegance at times; and if he faltered, he somehow always found a path of retreat and recovery with dignity.

From the perspective of one who has had the task of challenging his activities in his main portfolio, his financial planning, that was to test his debating skills, since I had to understand and be knowledgeable of the basic material at his disposal and his wider objectives when he spoke. One of his major achievements, not often recognized, was that he was able to alter the vocabulary of political debate in economic matters in this country. This was a formidable political weapon, which he displayed with telling effect as he reached his constituency with fatal rhetoric, Budget after Budget and in between. One can identify this as a communication of the skills in the practice of the art of communication in the politics of economic analysis in Barbados.

Much has been said about his attention to detail as an administrator. What I can vouch for is his attention to detail in debate in this Chamber. It was not long before I realize that when in retreat on the substance of a matter of debate, and his opponent made the slightest error, a wrong date, a wrong calculation, however minor, he would sit and lean forward quietly and make a note. When he rose he would seize on that minor error, and he had the capacity to use it with remarkable skills, even to destroy a more substantive argument. I believe that I am qualified to speak to this aspect of his political career.

However stinging were his assaults in Parliament, I can say that he seldom went beyond the boundary which he well understood, and if it did occur, he always found a way of communicating regret. There are some matters which he found to be an unacceptable obscenity in respect of parliamentary debate, and he never hesitated to say so. He had a very intimate knowledge of the Rules of this Parliament and, more importantly, the history of those Rules, and this formed the basis of his debating tactics within this Chamber. My colleague has referred to his courtesy in debate. I can say that he always deferred to intervention and, indeed, by his courtesy invited interventions, although often it was a fatal step to accept the invitation.

I have chosen to speak of Mr. Adams, the parliamentarian, whose gifts as the Member for St. Thomas found full expression, and who did much by style and content to shape the pattern of debate in this House. To me, his passing is a tragic loss. I have enjoyed many battles with him, some won, some lost, but at all times we understood the difference between relentless debate in pursuit of a cause which he espoused, and personal hate and animosity, which are destructive of human respect. And so it was that before or after the most bitter of exchanges, we could still exchange a view on that or any other matter relating to Barbados.

From time to time, when matters of weighty import were likely to arise, by some apparently casual remark, he would send a clear signal as though he wanted you to prepare for a debating battle. One could speak, for example, of the intimations of the likelihood of joining the International Monetary Fund. I can well recall that about six months before that event took place, I saw him

in the dining room and he was going through, I think it was the 1982 World Bank Report, and then, quite out of the blue, he indicated, "I do not care what you or anybody should say, if I have to go to the IMF for cheaper money, I am going there." Perhaps the most recent example of this was when, out of the blue at 7.30 one evening, he indicated that he would have to do something drastically about the Barbados National Bank, the last of that kind of signal which he would send to the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I join with all Members in expressing my deepest sympathy to his wife and children, his mother and all other members of his family, and the broader family of the Barbados Labour Party and our nation as a whole.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Speaker:

> "I celebrate myself
> And what I assume you all shall assume
> For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."

Members would recognize the immortal lines of Walt Whitman in his famous poem "Leaves of Grass."

I rise this morning not to celebrate myself, but to celebrate the late J.M.G.M. Adams, the former Prime Minister of Barbados, and I assert, not assume, what I am sure every well-thinking Barbadian asserts, that every atom belonging to him belonged as good to all of us, because he was a public person.

It is not too often in our lifetime that we encounter men of the capacity of the late Prime Minister. He was one of those rare gifts which nations sometimes receive from the hand of God, and which it is the good fortune of the countrymen to share. One of the striking paradoxes of his life is that he was such a remarkable, simple, man. When I say "simple", I mean not really complex, but yet that he was misunderstood by so many persons.
11.25 a.m.

What I think stands out about him, which those of us who knew him well and even those who were his prime detractors will readily admit, was that he was a man of enormous courage when it came to dealing with matters of public duty. He had a capacity to sail into the storm unmoved, because he recognised that what he was about to do was in the public good; and cry as loud as his detractors would cry, and shout as they could, and as they did, once he was settled in his mind about the rightness and probity of his action, he sailed unperturbed into the eye of the storm. Those of us who were honoured with the opportunity to serve by his side recognised one of the great gifts which is not the lot of many politicians, because most of us, I submit, are cowards, but this was a man who was able to sail without blinking, and in the end those of us who took critical notice of the actions were delighted to be able to say how glad we were to participate in that exercise, because it strengthened us as we went along the course. If anyone wants one example of his courage, I draw your attention to the part that he played when, right on our shores, our neighbours in Grenada were threatened. When most people felt the honourable thing to do would be to slink away and hide and pretend not to be concerned and not to be involved, we recognised what John Donne mentioned so many years ago, that we are all a part of mankind and that every man's death diminishes us, and he recognised it as his duty – and he spoke firmly to his party and to his Cabinet about his commitment – to make sure that whatever he was able to do to avert catastrophe in that country, he was prepared to do it. Public criticism notwithstanding, he did it, and I believe now that not only Grenada but all of us and all those who were faint-hearted at that time recognised that this was the course of action that needed to have been taken, and we celebrate him for his courage in taking that decision.

That is but one of the many strengths of the man Tom Adams. He was a man of undying loyalty to his friends, and when I speak of friends, I do not speak of the high and mighty; I mean whoever called him friend. "Slims" was a friend of the Prime Minister, and he felt it his duty and responsibility as friend to be as loyal to "Slims", as to be loyal to any other, no matter how high or how privileged that person might have been in society. A brand of loyalty, dedication and devotion to friendship was demonstrated across the spectrum and knew no social barriers. We used to tell him that it was at once his greatest strength and his greatest weakness that he found it difficult to be harsh to his friends.

In the week preceding Tom Adam's death, I had the opportunity to speak with him almost every day during the course of my time in Washington, and I spoke to him on Sunday morning, with a promise that I would have been speaking to him on Monday evening. But that was when the tragic news came, news that I still find hard to accept because of its suddenness. Reflecting on his passing, I am minded that such was his nature that perhaps tragic though it was, it serves in many respects to be a blessing, because he will be remembered at the summit of his career. He will be remembered not on the decline, but on the rise, on the pinnacle, at the top of an apex which few men will live to achieve, and short though his life was, his greatness is not to be measured by the length of his years, but by the quality of his living and the contribution that he was able to make in those few short hours that he laboured to the cause of mankind, not only here in Barbados but far afield as well.

Martin Luther King was another great leader who died at the apex of his own career, and it is remarkable, when we reflect on these short lives, how men of great distinction are able to crowd so much into such a short period of time. Christ laboured on earth for three short

years and, the world can go on till eternity, his contribution in those three short years will never be forgotten. I do not mean to celebrate the Prime Minister in terms that would be largely christocentric, I do not want to enlarge him beyond life, but I do want to magnify his deeds here among us so that we, too, can have a pattern on which we can draw when it comes to the matter of public service, dedication, commitment, unfailing trueness and duty.

I mentioned earlier that cowardice is the lot of many of us who present ourselves for public service, and sometimes the quality of our work is diminished by the fact that we seek to evaluate every move we make in terms of what the populace is likely to say, what the detractors are likely to say about the actions that we take and how we are likely to be misread. But even though in order to achieve and to put forward momentum it is necessary sometimes to go backwards or even to stand still, I think that what we have to bear in mind is that those of us who seek to make a contribution to the lives of our fellows have a special responsibility to make sure that what we are about to do is right, and, settling that in our minds, to go forward and face whatever detractions are to be faced, and not to be blinded by the criticism, because all great moves of life are usually in the short term unpopular.

The late Prime Minister of Barbados was severely criticised for a number of social initiatives that he took. Indeed, only very recently I heard people castigating him for what they regarded as a weakness that he had, what they described as being too preoccupied with white people and Indians. But he was often careful to point out that as a public person, and particularly as Prime Minister of Barbados, his duty was to Barbadians, and he did not allow any great divide of race, class or ethnic consideration to separate Barbados, a nation of men of different colours and complexions, social and religious backgrounds. He did not allow those narrow considerations, which sometimes are attractive to lesser men, to blur his vision, and therefore impair the quality of his service.
11.35 a.m.

He recognised his job as building a bond between all of us who are called Barbadian, and I believe it is to his eternal credit that when it may have been in the short term feasible, he stood up on the floor of this House on more than one occasion and on public platforms throughout this island and condemned the expedience of using race, ethnic origins, to divide and, in my submission, misrule Barbados. Those who reflect upon his life now will be able to regard this as one of the man's outstanding qualities.

It has already been said that he was a man who sought out people who had a contribution to make. Once he was settled in the conviction that that person could make that contribution, he loosed all the fetters and put the person to an objective of achieving whatever he could achieve. This is one of the things I will fondly remember him for, his capacity, which was born out of his own sense of assurance, to be able to delegate freely, to give enormous responsibilities to men who served with him in the Cabinet to make decisions and then live or die by those positions.

The last words that he spoke to me on Sunday morning before the tragic Monday were words along that very line, words of assurance, that whatever I deemed to be the right course of action on a matter to which I was then assigned, he was going to back it one hundred per cent. I thanked him generously for those words, because when people are on hard missions, they need to be comforted with words like those. That was a mark of the Prime Minister, a man who knew his own strengths and trusted what he regarded as the strengths of others.

When we go to measure the contribution of the late Prime Minister, having regard to his enormous intellect, I submit that that by itself will not be credit. The fact that he was an outstanding scholar will not be a matter that will charm our memories for time immemorial, but I believe that what will live on is what he was able to achieve with that intellect, because he used it always and only to enhance the quality of life in this country, particularly in the sphere in which he chose to serve, and I refer to public service and politics.

He was a man who identified his options, chose his course and then used all his resources to achieve that particular objective. He was a fighter. Sometimes people forget that fighting is not a pleasant sport. Fighting involves confrontation and the drawing of blood, in some respects, if you are talking about physical confrontation, and in the area of verbal fights obviously there will be some stinging assaults. He was adept at that. He did not spare opponents, and he always fought for noble causes.

I can recall that when he determined that it was in the best interest of the poor people of Barbados that legislation should be in place making it possible for the tenants of plantation lands to have the freehold of the lands they occupied, he came in here and he gave that dream meaning. Today adorning the abundant social legislation of this island is what I regard as the most significant piece of social legislation in this century involving the change of the Constitution of Barbados. The Prime Minister, the Right Honourable J. M. G. M. Adams, now departed, was the architect of that programme, and he drew enormous opposition when he sought to get it passed. But such was his commitment to social justice to the poor and underprivileged that he saw the need, at whatever cost, to put that legislation through.

One of the things that I believe the Prime Minister will be remembered for, as I mentioned just a minute ago, was his deep concern for the underprivileged. Sometimes it is difficult to convey a sense of genuine commitment in this direction, because that dedication needs, if it is to be genuine and lasting, to be couched in terms of strict pragmatism, and many lesser men professing a greater affinity for social awareness have wrecked not only the lives of the persons they sought to help, but they have destroyed their countries by enacting social legislation that was not pragmatic, that did not have as its first point of departure the base that was grounded firmly in economic reality. The Prime Minister of Barbados has had many detractors because he has always sought to make certain that the base upon which a social programme is to rest is first in place before one goes ahead and puts that programme on the books. When he sought to improve the lot of the old people in this country, he first determined that the Treasury of Barbados could afford it, and sometimes people in analysing the man have failed to take fully into account the pragmatic approach he took to these matters, and they have, in many instances, given him less credit for the enormous social conscience which he carried than he rightly deserved. He was a man who lived not so much for himself as for others. He lived upon a world stage, conscious of the fact that whatever he did touched the lives of others, and therefore he sought to make sure that whatever he did would make a lasting and good contribution to the advancement of the cause of those less fortunate than many others of us.

When I first came to politics is when I first met the Prime Minister; in 1971, I believe it was.
11.45 a.m.

I am not able to speak about him from a background of long long years of association, but within the 14 years that it has been my good fortune to know him well, I have formed an impression, indelibly etched, that here was a great man, a man who combined the gifts which God so generously bestowed upon him, the gifts of intelligence, human compassion, understanding, firmness, commitment, and all of these attributes that we now celebrate, and I am grateful that I had the honour and privilege of serving with him on the political battlefield and, subsequently, to serve closely with him in the Cabinet of Barbados.

I do not know how to express the grief that we have all felt. I am not a man easily given to tears, and sometimes people look at me and feel that I am concealing my feelings. I envy people who can shed tears, those who do not occlude, because that is the means of dissipating the grief that is pent up inside. But those of us who do not weep easily, therefore, are not be regarded as having less feeling. Indeed, sometimes I believe that our grief is all the more severe.

I will miss the Prime Minister of Barbados, and I am sure that every sensitive Barbadian must miss him. I do not count as sensitive or even Barbadian any man who is able to stand up in a moment like this and cast words of disparagement. Those are puny people, small, miniscule people on the landscape of life who have never learned what it is to share and drink deeply at the well of life, and who do not know what it is to be gracious or to be generous.

I am sure that God will give to his relatives, Lady Grace Adams, Genevieve and the boys, the strength that they will need to be able to cope with this most tragic lost, and I tender to them my deepest sympathy.

In closing, I would like to thank the scores of people who have stopped me on the road, met me in church, in the store to express their own condolences on the passing of one of the distinguished sons of this Caribbean and to, perhaps, Barbados' greatest son, J.M.G.M. Adams.

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): Mr. Speaker, a lot of what had to be said has already been said by the Members on this side, and the expression of sentiments and condolences by Barbadians and people from overseas over the last week have summed up the life of the Right Honourable John Michael Geoffrey Manningham Adams.

I had the pleasure of meeting Tom Adams in 1967, shortly after he took his seat in the House of Assembly as the Member for St. Thomas, at a time when the late Sir Grantley Adams and the honourable Member for St. James, as it was then, the Leader of the House, were removed from Parliament unceremoniously for three months, at a time when the Labour Party was trying to make a triumphant return back to Parliament. Tom had called me, because at the time I was in possession of a large convertible car which he wanted to use for Sir Grantley and the honourable Member for St. James to sit in and be viewed by the thousands of Barbadians that lined the streets on their way back to Parliament. That was my first encounter with Tom Adams. I was a member of the Labour Party two years prior to that, and a supporter of Tom even in the days when his brilliance, as now has been found, did not shine so bright then.

I became fully involved with Tom in 1972, and threw my weight behind him when he became Leader of the Party, and I want to personalize my tribute a little bit, because a lot has been said about the man. Tom was an inspiration to me, and I am sure to many other people with whom he has come in contact with over the years, and I can say that my life is far more richer today, having known the man and having suffered a great loss, rather than not to have known him at all. I am sure that, even though I bear the heavy burden of his loss, I met a man whom I considered to have been really a great and true Barbadian patriot.

I watched this man developed. Between 1972–1976, the whole country became more increasingly involved as a result of the brilliant Budget replies which were televised, and for those of us who followed Parliament in those days and came to Parliament, at a time when you yourself, Sir, sat in Opposition, when it was 18:6 – 18 on the Government benches of the Democratic Labour Party and 6 on the Barbados Labour Party benches, with Tom leading the ferocious 6 and fighting off the DLP's 18 – it was indeed in those days a privilege to see the true spirit of Parliamentarians. Like yourself, Mr. Speaker, Tom Adams was a true Parliamentarian in every sense of the word. He believed in democracy.

On September 2 of 1976, when we were swept into power under the leadership of Tom Adams, the favourite pastime of many Barbadians was to watch him grow in stature from day to day and from week to week. It was as though all his life he was in training for the job of Prime Minister, and he surprised many people in Barbados, in the Caribbean, and, later on, in the world.

Tom was indeed an incredible individual, and those people who knew him would know that he was a very sensitive man. He was a very loving man. He was loved by many people. He had a very strong bond with those people whom he considered his friends. Perhaps, at the level of Cabinet he may have been criticized for that loyalty, but he never let his friends down. If there was a fault in his character, it was that. He remained loyal to the Deputy Prime Minister and to those whom he knew before as his personal friends. Despite the fact that he was Prime Minister of this country, and despite the fact that because of that he was always extremely busy, there was never a time that you could call him that he did not find time to return your call, and there was never a time when even as Prime Minister he may have done something in Parliament that would have affected the Party that he did not explain to you the reasons for what he was doing and the reasons why he was doing it.

11.55 a.m.

He really believed in democracy, and he never ruled with a heavy hand. He was decisive, no doubt, but in the final analysis, though he may listen to your counsel and not necessarily take your advice, the point is that he did give you an opportunity to give your views, which he would consider and sometimes argue with you. But he was a strong leader.

He had a strange capacity of being able to do several things at the same time, and do them well. One of the things which had an impression on me was that in the early days of 1976, immediately after the by-elections in St. Philip North and the City of Bridgetown, we had a meeting to discuss the manifesto and what the programme of the Barbados Labour Party would be in the manifesto. Tom was chairing that meeting, and an individual, a Member of Parliament, was making a very important speech on what he considered was the best programme for the Labour Party to enunciate in its manifesto on education, but after about five minutes of his speech, which was brilliant on what he considered should be the policy of the Barbados Labour Party in relation to Education, he became very angry because there at the top of the table sat Tom Adams reading *Time Magazine,* I remember this well, because the person that was making the speech became very angry and he said, "Mr. Chairman, I think I deserve better than this. Here I am making what I consider to be a very important policy statement in relation to what our manifesto should state as our party's policy in the next general elections and there you are completely ignoring me, reading a magazine." Tom said to him, "There is no need to get upset, I heard exactly what you have said." The Member said, "I do not see how you could have heard what I have said, because I was watching you and you were reading." Tom said, "Well, let me explain to you what you have said," and Mr. Speaker, almost *verbatim,* Tom Adams repeated the contribution that the honourable Member was making, and at the end of it he turned to him and said, "Now would you like to hear what I was reading about in the *Time Magazine?"* This gave an indication of the man Tom Adams. Even though he appeared as though he was not paying attention to what you were saying, he was chairing the meeting, listening to all the side talk, at the same time listening most attentively to the contribution that was being made, and at the same time his very great brains still had room to be doing something else. It was as though his life was so compact, that he was so hungry for knowledge that he had to read every bit of information which was available to him.

Sometimes this became annoying, because he worked best in his office dealing with several files in front of him while at the same time talking to someone on the phone and engaging you in conversation. From time to time over the last four years, I found this to be a little irritating, because I was also under the mistaken impression that he was not hearing what I was telling him while he was speaking on the phone, reading the files, minuting the files. But this was the way in which he worked best, I think, because it was a way of being able to relax.

It is the same way in which he played cards. Cards was one of the games which he loved best. He was not a gambling man as such, but he enjoyed his poker. He taught me that in poker, sitting across the table from other people, you learn a great deal from people while playing cards, about their characters, and he found this as a way of getting some relaxation. Many times when I played with him I was cognisant of the fact that even though he was involved in small talk and playing cards, at the same time you could visibly see his brain turning over

and working out the problems and churning out solutions to those problems that faced Barbados.

He was a man that had a tremendous capacity for hard work, and I sometimes wondered where he got the energy, because Tom Adams worked seven days a week and he put in a good 20 to 21 hours a day, seven days a week, on a continuous basis. I would say he literally worked himself to death. It was as though he did not want to waste any of his time in this life sleeping, that he thought sleep was a waste of productive energy. Although he recognised the importance of sleep, he minimised it as much as possible in order to maximise the amount of work that he could put in in a day.

To have known Tom Adams meant that you had known a man who had greatly enriched your life in more ways than one, and I know, because I can speak from personal experience of the influence which he has had on my particular life. He was always very concerned about the people around him, his Cabinet, his Parliamentary colleagues, party supporters, members of the National Executive. He was always very concerned of their needs, the needs of the people of Barbados, the needs of the people of the Caribbean. It was as though he had so much that he wanted to accomplish, and that he knew that perhaps he had such a short time in which to do it. But the quality of the time which he had given to this country is more important, in my view, than the quantity.

It is unfortunate that we were robbed of Tom Adams as a leader of this country in the prime of his life, and after just a few years as Prime Minister. But I do believe that in the short time that he was here, he has left an indelible mark on history's pages of this Island, and he will go down not only as being a brilliant speaker and orator, not only will he go down in history as having one of the finest minds in the Caribbean, indeed in the world, not only will he go down in history as being perhaps, as the Leader of the Opposition would say, a political animal the likes of which the Caribbean has not seen for the last 75 years, but over and above all these things Tom Adams will be membered as a good friend, a sincere human being.

12.05 p.m.

Over and above these things, Tom Adams was a good friend, a sincere human being. He was a good father and a good husband, and he tried to do all that was necessary to keep Barbados on an even keel, to maintain the status of Barbados in the eyes of the Caribbean and the world, to maintain his relationship with his wife and his children, and with his friends. He was well loved and respected by all of us, and perhaps many people did not realise how very much this man was loved until the past week after the many tributes were paid to him.

I can say no more, Mr. Speaker, because everything else has been said, except to add that I loved Tom Adams as a man, and we shall miss him.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, it is not usual for people to look in the face of God. I am sure, however, that during the past few weeks many of us did. Many of us would have asked ourselves why not us or some other less capable person than Tom Adams. It is not surprising that we should ask ourselves this. There is no doubt that Tom Adams was perhaps the most dynamic leader that we have witnessed in Barbados for a long time. In some respects his leadership has probably surpassed that of his great father.

I would like to speak about him in a few areas only on this occasion, since I unhesitatingly endorse all of the remarks which have been made about him by previous speakers. I should first like to speak about Tom Adams as a friend and a most courteous gentleman. He was painstakingly punctual. Once he had committed himself to an undertaking, he honoured it. Once he had given you his word as a friend, he never resiled from that word; and if he had to he would always make a point of giving you adequate explanations for so doing.

I remember the warmth of his friendship during our joint student days in London. Tom Adams was a man whose house was open to all and sundry, and very often many of us misused that freedom. Whether it was another student colleague from his Oxford days, or whether it was "York" Marryshow, the son of a great West Indian who had come on lean financial days, Tom Adams was always willing to assist. Many of us therefore took his generosity, his time, his warmth and his friendship for granted.

During his days at Oxford, he had become a legend for organisation on the political level, whether it was the student politics of the Oxford Union or assisting in the Oxford Labour Party. When he came to London, that same meticulous care was evident when he participated in the politics of the West Indian Students' Union. But he always found time for friendship, and I remember him as perhaps the most consummate host that one could ever have. Whenever he entertained you, he saw to every detail. He made sure that you were happy and relaxed, he catered to your taste, and you felt at home with him.

I should like to speak of his commitment to his country, Barbados. Obviously Tom Adams, with such an illustrious father, found a good deal of resentment among some people who grudged him. Although this is a tribute to his memory, I think one must not mince words. It was not easy for him, having such an illustrious father, to come back without realising that some people wanted to settle their scores with his father against him personally. But despite this, I believe that he recognised the wider duty which he had to the public of Barbados, and he threw himself fully into the political life of our country.

The Labour Party went through lean days. The honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig) is probably in a better position than I am to speak

of how critical those lean days were. He joined our party in the crushing defeat which we suffered, and together with the Prime Minister, the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, and the late Prime Minister brought a determination to rebuild the party.

I cannot claim to have been close to those plans at the time, but frequently you would hear Tom Adams' voice over the phone on a Friday saying to you, "We have not got enough money to pay the persons working at the headquarters. Whatever little contribution you can make will be appreciated." He was meticulous in ensuring that those who could assist did so without any detriment to the principles for which he and our great party stood. He planned with care for the party's finances. Even in those days, I believe the honourable Member for St. James North recognised a certain parsimony, what I would like to call good husbandry, which characterised his management of financial affairs. Whether it was his own personal business, but more importantly when it was the business of the public, he showed the greatest care in managing financial affairs.

It is now past history that when we were defeated again in 1971, most of us, as the Honourable Attorney General has said, were totally deflated, dejected and depressed. In this House it was Tom Adams' voice that spoke to many of us and reminded us of the serious commitment which we had to our party to help rebuild it, with the long term national goal of carrying on the great work for which our party was founded.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, and you will recall, that some of us were saddened and virtually cried on that day. The honourable member for St. James North, I remember, took the defeat very, very seriously indeed, and it took us some time to get him out of the despondency to which he had sunk; but I believe that the late Prime Minister was able to draw to his attention, even at that time, the strong strength which he possessed and the manner in which he could contribute to the country as a whole.
12.15 p.m.

I do not believe that the years between 1961 – 1976 can be written without focussing on the tremendous contribution made by the then Opposition to the maintenance of parliamentary democracy. There were small bands of persons left in this Parliament, but I believe that rallying cry of the late Sir Grantley Adams, our present Prime Minister, our past Prime Minister, along with the formidable assistance of persons like yourself, Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for St. James North, the former Honourable Minister of Health, Mr. Freddie Miller and your predecessor in the Chair, stood out in fighting to protect parliamentary democracy in the national interest.

Tom Adams contributed more than his fair share in Opposition. Whether it was in replying as Shadow Minister of Finance, whether it was a debate about drainage, whether it was looking to the ecology of Barbados, whether it was in social development, he was always knowledgeable. He was always farsighted and he was always devastating in criticism, but always with the national image ahead.

When one is paying a tribute, it may not be the most appropriate time to recall some of the hardships, but I would never like our country to forget that when Tom Adams led us in 1976, the slogan against him was, "Can you trust Tom Adams". I believe that his life and his performance, has proved beyond measure that he was totally trustworthy and capable. I wish this to stick in the minds of Barbadians, because sometimes we are apt to praise our heroes only when they have passed to the Great Beyond. Sometimes we are apt to recognize the qualities of outstanding men too late, and he was an outstanding man. Many of us, particularly those who were close to him, recognized his outstanding qualities, but there were several who did not have the time nor the care to recognize the qualities which the man possessed.

There are some lessons that I think we have to draw from his period in history. One is that just as he fought to teach the public, those of us who remain must teach the public that public service needs its just, not its unjust rewards. Too often it is fashionable to hurl stones at people who shoulder the heavy responsibility of public life, and never to hurl encomiums. I am sure there are many today who regret that they did not take the time to say to Tom Adams, "You are doing a good job for this country, may the good Lord preserve you to do it".

I know there are many who found the excuse of attacking the salary which one was paying the Prime Minister. None of them sought to educate the public to appreciate the heavy service which he was giving to this country, and which finally caused his demise. Let us learn the lesson from his passing. Persons in public life, particularly those who have the primary responsibility for the day-to-day fashioning and running of this country's affairs, deserve their rewards; not only financial, but, occasionally, the type of encomiums and encouragement which the country should rightly give to them.

The second lesson we can learn from his life is that it is possible for us to disagree without necessarily being destructive. I frequently listened, particularly when I was Attorney General and had access to some of the secret project reports, to the remarks of a few misguided persons who said that they would wish the Prime Minister dead. That type of language should be banned from the vocabulary of people who are in public life and who are allowed to address our nation. Yet, it was the measure

of the man, Tom Adams, that when those matters were drawn to his attention, he would pass them off lightly and with a smile. But, no doubt, he was only human, and I am sure that those too took their toil on this great man.

Several speakers on both sides of the House have adumbrated his several qualities; a scholar of the greatest calibre, a gentleman, a man possessed of astuteness, a knowledge and a deep sense and appreciation of history, a statesman of the greatest core, a person possessed with commendable magnanimity even to those who were most hostile to him, a man of compassion, a man with the lucidity of mind and the ease of expression which enabled him to be perhaps one of our best orators and speech-makers, a man with a cool temperament and an analytical brain. I believe that there can be seen in him the best virtues that have been inculcated in Barbadians through education, religion and upbringing. He was witty, humorous and a warm friend. He had an excellent command of our language and many of us will certainly miss his gifts of communication and the unique, rich and melodious tones in which he addressed this Chamber.
12.25 p.m.

I have had the privilege of going to one of the most outstanding and prestigious universities in the world, and I have come in contact with some of the most brilliant people in the world. I believe that Tom Adams measured against them in the breadth of comprehensiveness of his knowledge and did Barbados proud in the way he conducted himself. Whether it be the leader of the greatest state in the west or whether it be the leader of the smallest small state in the world, Tom Adams was always able to cope, to answer and to deal with that person in a manner that stamped him out as their equal. He loved Barbados and he died in the service of the country. We will all miss him; his place will be difficult to fill. No one person so easily carries in his body the several qualities which this man possessed. I believed that it will be several years before we see in the Parliament again anyone with the encyclopaedic knowledge which he had – the capacity for repartee, wit, humour, probing and for offering creative ideas and suggestions.

I would like to stress one quality which he manifested, which I would like to see preserved. I think it is a contribution to our democracy. Very frequently, I recognised that whenever the Right Honourable Member for St. John got up and spoke, even where the late Prime Minister differed from him, and sometimes they differed very fundamentally, he always showed respect to the high office which the Right Honourable gentleman has held, and to the experience which he carried in this House. In fact, some of us attest that there was a club of Prime Ministers, and sitting from the back bench and even talking to some of my colleagues across the tabl , one would hear the remarks that you could never get into the business of two former Prime Ministers. I think that it is a significant pointer. I hope it will not be lost on those of us in public life, and those who will come after, to see that these two great men could, despite the political divide, manifest to our country that people who hold high office should be equally respected in this way.

The Adams family has given more than its fair share to this country's development. It is to the credit of that family that they have always put service before self. Sir Grantley and his son have together made a contribution which we cannot in our lifetime ever hope to repay to that family.

In this hour, I would like to express my deepest condolence to Lady Adams, a woman who has borne tragedy with the greatest dignity and restraint, and who, I believe, mirrors the best that one can find in womanhood, and in Barbadian womanhood in particular. I often like to think of her not necessarily as the legal constitutional queen of Barbados, but the real queen of our country. Her husband and her son have done us proud. Long may their memory live on; and to those of us left behind, those of us who are grieved and sorrowing, let us use the example of his life as an inspiration to carry on the great work for which he and his father have fought so strongly in our country. If only we are faithful to their ideals, if only we can continue their work, then we know that their passing, and his in particular, would not have been in vain.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 1.15 p.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken the House was making obituary speeches. It may now continue.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): Mr. Speaker, this is an occasion about which none of us can easily be happy, unless something is wrong with our kind. We have heard a lot said in here today, and a lot was said from the 11th of this month when it was reported that the late Prime Minister had passed to the Great Beyond. I do not believe that we can easily add or subtract from what has been said about him during the past days since his passing.

I have known the Prime Minister for a considerable length of time, and it has been my good fortune to work with him in the Barbados Labour Party for many years. What seems not to be known even within the party is the fact that I am one of the oldest members of the Barbados Labour Party in this House. I joined the party in 1957, which gives me some 28 years of faithful and loyal service to this party, and I joined it at a time when its fortunes were on a decline. The learned Attorney General, I think, came in about a year after myself, although he was born in the faith, if I remember correctly. He will attest to this.

It was during those long and very turbulent and bitter years of fighting that I was in the party, and when the late Prime Minister came back to Barbados it was my task to work very closely alongside him with the present Honourable Prime Minister, the honourable Member for St. James North and the honourable Member for Christ Church West, as well as a number of other people who assisted the party from time to time. Those were not days one would have felt very happy and contented about, although there was tremendous reward in the fact that those were trying and difficult days. The honourable Member for Christ Church West referred to the fact that in those days many of us had to more or less tighten our belts and pull our pockets in order to keep the party alive. They were not the most flourishing days for some of us, but whatever little amounts we had in our pockets, we had to cough out to assist in keeping the Barbados Labour Party alive.

It is to the eternal credit of the late Prime Minister that he, with his flair for details and figures, embarked upon a programme which allowed for funds to be collected from week to week in order to ensure that the policies and programmes of the party continued by way of the *Beacon* being put out, and by way of having a steady flow of meetings leading up to the windfall, when there was a serious battle between the Government of the day and the Workers' Union on one side, and the Barbados Labour Party and a group of sugar workers on the other side. It is to the tribute of the Barbados Labour Party and those who were in the fight at the time that we came through victorious and allowed the will of the people to permit the money to be paid out to the workers, whose money it was, and who felt that the money should be paid to them.

What impressed me tremendously about the late Prime Minister was his disarming charm. You never felt unhappy when you were with him, even if you thought that he was an enemy, and I do not think that he was really an enemy. Some referred to him as a political animal, and I believe that is what he was. He lived and died for a cause, and his cause was political. It was his mother who, in a recent interview, said that politicians are overworked people. They have no time for rest, no time for recreation. They must be always there on the ball. They have got to be marriage counsellors, even though they might not be good in that sphere. They have got to be lawyers, they have got to be doctors, they have got to be priests to the constituents they set about to serve.

The late Prime Minister has never for one moment tried to be angry, except in debate when he was in one of his moods, and I believe that this was more a question of an act rather than any attempt to cow any person into fear. The Prime Minister has always set about to make one feel at ease. This is something which was amazing about him.

The learned Attorney General and the honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke about his amazing memory. All of us are aware of this. The Opposition has spoken well about it, but what was significant about the memory of the man and his ability to recall things was his facility for calling a person by the first name. I think that held true not only with people whom he came in contact with from day to day, but people of his own constituency and people who were far afield. I recall that when you met the late Prime Minister and you would ask him about a person rather than saying yes or no, he would go on to make some remark about the person and would give you a full history of that person. The man had an unmatched memory, beautiful recall.

It was said and I want to repeat it, because his friendship was extended to me to a large extent – that he was very loyal to his friends, loyal, in my view, to a fault. Sometimes I thought that he defended his friends too well. Sometimes your friends need to be chastised – not that he did not – but I believe that he did not do it sufficiently. I think that he was a most genuine and loyal friend to all those whom he met.

He saw the country as his country, and he had a consuming desire to ensure that the country moved forward. I believe it is in the country's cause that he had virtually broken his health and so came to an untimely end. The country, mindful of this, did not fail to show its deep appreciation in the interviews conducted by the Press, by the letters in the Press, and by the demonstration of over two and a half miles of lines on the streets last Saturday. The weeping which we saw demonstrated love for the man and for the work which he did.

As a representative of the people, the late Prime Minister saw himself as the chief servant of the people. As the Opposition and other people have stated, he was a person who was unfailing in his courtesies to others, and he had a great reverence and respect for all the institutions that mean so much to us. Parliament, the churches in the country and the law of the land – he was unfailing as a champion of all these institutions. His life,

short though it has been, was rich in abundance in terms of output.

He had by his side a faithful family. It is not easy in politics to have your family remaining loyal to you, and I sometimes get the impression that Members of Parliament, or people who seek to be in public life should be celibates; they should be like priests in certain denominations. Unless you have partners in life when you are in public life, you suffer as a casualty of the day-to-day pressures which families are subject to when you are unable to be with them every inch of the way. Your family, I believe like all families, would always feel that you should be by their side, and that you should do all that is pleasing to them, and you find yourself sometimes on the limb having to choose between your family on one side and the public, whom you serve, on the other.

The late Prime Minister had the family understanding so that he was able to serve the public on the one hand and the understanding family on the other. I would like to pay tribute to his wife, Genevieve, his two sons and his mother, who is royal, and in all dignity carried several virtues over the years that she has had to live with politicians. Her late husband was a man who has had several problems. She has had to live through the period of the Riots where her husband was shot at and had to hide behind tables, and the walls for his own security, and that of his wife and his late son. She lived through that and eventually had to mourn the loss of her husband, who was faithful until death to her, and in recent times, a son who was cut off at the peak of his powers, a man, who I believe, if fate had permitted, would have gone on to greater and greater heights in serving his country, a country which he loved. If in his passing it would dawn upon all of us that we should learn, from his humility, his simplicity, the attitude which we should carry into public life, I believe his life would not have been in vain.

1.35 p.m.

The late Prime Minister was a dedicated servant, and it is to the credit of this country, that we have been able, since Independence, and long before Independence, from the time of the settlement of this country, to produce men of ability and integrity to serve us in our Honourable Chambers. We have also been able to produce leaders at the time of necessity. The first Prime Minister of an independent Barbados has served this country, and served it well. I was pleased beyond all measure when I saw him at Grantley Adams House last Saturday, along with us, to pay his respects to the late Prime Minister. It says something for us as a people and for our institutions.

He was succeeded by the late Prime Minister, and the transition to office and power – and I hate to use "power", because power, we should always bear in mind, resides only in the people – was smoothly handled as a result of the wish of the people of this country. On Mr. Adams' death, the acting Governor-General was able, very quickly and smoothly, to name the present Prime Minister as the person to carry on those duties, since, in his judgement, and as signalled by us, he was the person most able to carry on the affairs and to command a majority in this Parliament.

It says something for us that we are able, as an Opposition and a Government, to hammer out our problems, despite the cut and thrust of debate, and settle down calmly to do the people's business. I want to thank the Opposition for their magnanimous approach in this matter. I think they have done the country proud, and we are happy to think that we see the country as our own and not as the province of any political party, which is nonsense.

On behalf of the constituency of St. Andrew, whose servant I am, I am committed to offer their deep sympathy to the family and relatives of the late Prime Minister. We hope and pray that the good God of Heaven, the Father of us all, will stand by them at this time and always.

Mr. J. G. ODLE (St. George North): Mr. Speaker, Tom Adams seems to be having another day in Parliament, for even though his mortal remains rest silently and quietly in the graveyard of the Cathedral, covered with flowers which appear not to want to wither, we remember him for what he has done for his country, what he has done for us as our leader, and for his contribution to Parliament and this country. I certainly would wish to join in the sentiments expressed by other Members of this House, on both sides, who have spoken so far.

I knew Tom well over forty years ago when, as school-boys – we were both school-boys then, but I was ahead of him – we used to go to the Empire Theatre. My first real contact with him resulted from the fact that there was a lady of whom he was particularly fond who, to me, was like a young sister. She sat with me, and I remember Tom coming over and, in a weary, sentimental tone, saying, "May I sit with you?" During the time before the curtains were drawn and the picture came on, I was very impressed with the discussions, the high level of conversation which he engaged in at that age, even though I was about four or five years his senior.

Our association was obviously founded in a family relationship which extended over many years ago. My grandfather, on my mother's side, was a very close friend of his grandfather. They both were teachers and head-masters. When my father left Combermere, he told me the first job that was offered to him was offered by Sir Grantley's father.

There was a club which Tom formed with a couple of young people. They used to have concerts and parties at *Tyrol Cot* at home with some other people, and I remember very much an occasion on which, when I was about entering the state of manhood, but still considered a boy, the other boys drank all the beers Sir Grantley had in the fridge, and when that was gone, we proceeded to drink the wine, and like boys, we left the empty bottles in the garden. The next morning it was Tom's job, with his father, to gather the bottles from the rose trees. 1.45 p.m.

We had occasion to go into politics, which I entered in 1971 and lost. We used to journey around the country at times, around the shops and around the corners, because he loved people, he was very interested in the countryside and what was happening there around. We have much to be thankful for, for what he has done for us.

I am one of those people who believe that in this country there are many people in this House and outside, men and women of integrity, moral rectitude and courage, who could lead this country with distinction in the immediate future and further on. I am aware of the fact that there are among them people who can resist the powerful currents which would seek to take us off course, and on to shallows and murky waters for which we have no chart and for which we certainly have no mandate. We are indeed fortunate in this respect, and I believe we are a blessed people, because among all of these we know we have now a Prime Minister, one who above all others stands out as the most capable, the most competent, the most experienced, certainly the best trained and with great intestinal fortitude, who will take the mantle and carry us through in the years to come.

I wish to say – I would not say on behalf of the backbench, but I am sure they concur – and certainly on behalf of the constituents of St. George North, that I support our new Prime Minister. St. George North and South usually work together in most things, so I am sure I speak for all St. George, many of whom yesterday at church stopped me and called me aside only to express to me their sorrow and to ask that their condolences be expressed in Parliament, and who want to let it be known that we stand firmly behind our new Prime Minister.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Speaker, someone has said that I go back a long way with the late Prime Minister, Tom Adams, and I suppose there is truth in that. We had a few things in common; we were both children of members of the first Cabinet of Barbados, we were both members of the honourable society of Gray's Inn of Court, and *Tyrol Cot* was a house in which I moved with a certain ease during my early years. This was a man that I never knew as a boy because of the twelve or so years which separated us, but I certainly remember as a young girl going to *Tyrol Cot* from time to time. In addition, his mother Grace Lady Adams, taught me at school for many years, and I heard much about the boy Tom and the young man Tom from her, and from my own father, who knew him well as a boy in a way that I did not.

I first met him on the occasion of the christening of his first child Douglas, one summer vacation when I was home from college, but I first became acquainted with Tom Adams, the man, in London, in 1966, when I was reading for the Bar finals and he, together with my father, the now Prime Minister and the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) came up to London as the Barbados Labour Party delegation. In those days, as a hungry student I was always careful to arrive at lunch time when the delegation met, but it was an early introduction not only to modern-day politics in Barbados, but to Tom Adams the man.

I came to know Tom Adams as a comrade within the family of the Barbados Labour Party in 1969, and thereafter when I came home and took up practice at the Barbados Bar, and as a comrade in arms in the Barbados Labour Party during those long years of Opposition.

A great deal has been said, and I have no doubt there is a great deal more to be said. On this occasion, I would only want to say words about my own view of this man. I share a lot of the memories and a lot of the understanding of him as a person, as has been described by other honourable Members and other people who have paid tribute over the past week. He was a man whose tastes were catholic, as the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham) has said, rather than eclectic, but for me the characteristics which were most admired were his loyalty to friends and colleagues, and his generosity. He was generous with words; he never overlooked praise, and not only the spoken word but with the written word as well. He was a man who loved to write. He wrote letters of gratitude, he wrote letters of praise, he wrote letters of congratulation, he wrote letters of condolence. He was a great letter writer. That was part of the romance that he had with the language.

He was generous, too, with his gestures, reaching out to people physically, the pressure of his hand, a hand shake, a nod. He was generous even with a simple glance, that twinkle in the eye, sometimes mischievous. I believe that one of his most wonderful gifts, his most wonderful physical gift, because many of his gifts have been extolled over the past seven days, apart from his stature, his 6' 3" and his bearing as a man and as a Prime Minister was his voice. His voice had a timbre. I think it was not given to any of us, the modulation and his command of the language. It was something that no one else, I think, enjoyed.

His speech, his oratory, commanded the ear of those who listened, and, more importantly, I think that something which is given to very few people was given to Tom Adams, and that was the music of language. All great orators do not necessarily have this special quality, but Tom Adams had that, so that as speech fell from his lips, it compelled you to listen to what he was saying. I think he knew that he had this special gift and he used it to the best and full advantage.

I do not particularly want to make any extended comment or observation on the personal relationship which I enjoyed with this man, except to say that, mercifully, none of us can see ourselves, and it was not often that in this life we recognise that we were indeed walking and talking with a great man. I think some of us got a glimmer of this before last Monday, March 11, that we were indeed comrades in arms with a man who was already in his own time a great man. Now that he is no longer with us, this clearly has been confirmed, and I do think that history books will record that the late Tom Adams was also the great Tom Adams.

The responsibilities for the arrangements of the State Funeral and burial of our fallen hero fell upon me. It was not an easy task, but I must say for the Record, that it was made bearable and manageable largely, because of the very high level of co-operation which was extended to me. The Barbados Defence Force, about which Tom Adams had very special feelings, rose way beyond the call of duty, and in every respect responded to every suggestion, every idea, and helped to make the planning and the strategising for his last moments with us a reality, I wish publicly on this occasion to give my especial thanks to Brigadier Lewis and the Barbados Defence Force. Equally, I must offer my thanks and those of the people of Barbados to Commissioner of Police Durant and the Royal Barbados Police Force for their attention to detail, and whose co-operation was no less than that of the Barbados Defence Force.

1.55 p.m.

I must also say on this occasion that the Cabinet Office, and in particular the Cabinet Secretary, were among those who worked many hours beyond the call of duty without any thought of overtime to make Saturday, Friday and Thursday, and all the days that went before, days that Barbadians would remember, and remember with pride. I want to thank them as well.

I wish also, Mr. Speaker, to thank you, the Speaker of the House, and most particularly Mr. George Brancker, our Clerk, for the tremendous effort at very short notice which was made and sustained over four days which transformed this Honourable Chamber into a place where the lying in state for the late Prime Minister could be achieved with a certain dignity. There were times when there was not even a moment to consult as we should do, bearing in mind that the respect for this Chamber is something that we never lose sight of, but I believe that when our final plans were made and communicated to you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honour concurred without hesitation and allowed us the freedom of the Chamber. Mr. Brancker and the staff of Parliament were among those who worked way beyond the call of duty marshalling the several thousand people who came through the House of Assembly between Wednesday and Saturday morning, receiving Heads of State, organising private viewings for Lady Adams and members of the Adams family and for Members of Parliament. Our debt to them is very great indeed.

I also wish to state that the Dean and Chapter of the St. Michael's Cathedral were anxious and willing in their co-operation. Without them, the service which all Barbadians took part in on Saturday afternoon could never have achieved that high solemnity and the dignity which Tom Adams deserved. But I cannot speak in these terms without thanking, most of all, the public of Barbados, whose behaviour was exemplary. Barbadians queued to sign the Condolence Book in silence, in hot sun and rain for long hours. Equally so, they queued to view the body in this Honourable Chamber.

At the funeral itself, although people readily recognised that the seating capacity at St. Michael's Cathedral was limited, in the effort to make sure that everyone in Barbados, Barbadian or otherwise, could feel that they too were physically taking part in the service, I am pleased to report that the two minutes of national silence which we tried to achieve did indeed become a reality, and I think served to involve people who could not even have contemplated leaving their homes. In that way, they, too, took part in those last rites, and I am grateful for all of this co-operation.

I must thank the Adams family. Over the past week I have had cause on a daily basis to call on Mrs. Adams and her children, Lady Adams and other members of the Adams family. They recognised, even in their deepest moment of grief and sorrow, that Tom Adams belonged to Barbados, and much as they may possibly have preferred in these circumstances to have a far greater degree of privacy than was afforded them, they rose to the occasion and allowed us all in Barbados to love and hold Tom Adams until the very last moment when we laid him to his final rest.

There are other people who took part, nameless people, ordinary people. After the service ordinary people from every walk of life were invited to come up to the dais and lay wreaths.

I must also mention that prisoners from Her Majesty's Prison came down and helped us to clean the churchyard and paint the graves. I have already offered them my own personal thanks, but I think on behalf of

us all, the people of Barbados, we would want to record our thanks to them.

To the ladies and the few gentlemen of the Barbados Flower Arranging Society who offered, unasked, to do all of the floral decorations, and who did us so proud on Saturday 16, I thank you.

I must thank my Cabinet colleagues and the Prime Minister for the confidence they placed in me and for the support that they gave me in all of the planning and the detailed management.

It seems that nothing went unnoticed. There are many facets of details, minutiae of details which you might think no one noticed, but it seems that everything was noticed. Certainly, one member, for instance, of the British delegation, I think, recognised the music played by Dr. John Fletcher during the service, something which was a piece of music which was much loved by the late Prime Minister, Tom Adams, Dvorak's New World Symphony. His widow particularly asked, even though it might have been difficult to find the music, that some of that should be incorporated into the music for the funeral, and Dr. Fletcher did indeed manage to accomplish it. I was not aware of it until after the funeral, when one member of the British delegation pointed out that he was very moved to hear Dvorak's New World Symphony being played for the first time in the New World. So even the tiniest detail was not overlooked, and I believe that we have said our final goodbye to the former Right Honourable Member for St. Thomas in a style and in a manner that he would have appreciated.
2.05 p.m.

He was a man who loved a spectacle. He was a man who had a sense of occasion and enjoyed, if I may use such vulgar language, "a good show." I do believe that Barbadians said goodbye in a style and fashion that he himself would have enjoyed.

There is not much more that I wish to say on this occasion, there are going to be other occasions, but before I take my seat, I want to offer to Mrs. Adams and her sons, to Grace Lady Adams and to the Adams family, my own personal condolences, those of the constituents of the City of Bridgetown and those of my father, Frederick Miller.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Mr. Speaker, I am going to be very brief, in the light that I rejoice. I rejoice in knowing that I have had the privilege to walk and talk with a man that was given to us by the great architect, the Supreme. I rejoice in knowing that his work on this earth has been completed in 53 short years. I rejoice in knowing that he lived it for people. I rejoice in knowing that some 34 000 people signed the Condolence Book, demonstrating in no uncertain terms the love they had for him, though they may have even differed with some of his opinions and ideas. Nothing with God is accidental and, therefore, we dare not challenge the work of the Supreme.

Much has been said by so many of us over the past days that I would only be reciting many of the kind things said about the late Prime Minister, Tom Adams. Even his detractors in public life could only say, to sum it up in one word, that he was a "genius", and a genius with infinite painstaking.

I met Tom Adams in circumstances that I would have never envisaged, and that was one night at a boxing match at the YMCA in the very early Sixties. I did not know the man, but boxing was a hobby which we shared. I always revelled in speaking and talking to people about World War II, and I was telling some of my friends about Joe Walcott, the Barbados demon, who was fighting an American Jew by the name of Joe Choyski, and I was demonstrating to them how Joe Walcott, who was then the welterweight champion, had given Joe Choyski, a right cross to the ear and split the ear. Within arms' length, here was this slim young man with a wife – and in those days, I was a young insurance man around town, if I may use that term – and as I gave the illustration of Joe Choyski and Joe Walcott, there was a voice that contradicted me. He said, "You gave the story wrong. Walcott gave Choyski a cuff on the ear, the ear fell off, Choyski fell down, took up the ear and gave it to the referee, and started fighting again." Well, I did not know the man, and I started to argue with him that "you white boys always want to come and put something on us black boys." That is how I saw it in those days. Beside me there was a man called "Culpepper" who said to me, "that is Grantley Adams' son," and I immediately retreated in respect of this man.

As fate would have it, we had a political marriage down through the years. It is needless for me to recount those years, but if I had to relive my life and had to walk, work and go into any battle with a man, I would have the fullest confidence in the man Tom Adams. He was a loyal and sincere man. It is regrettable that, as some of my colleagues said, many people did not know the man.

I believe he was also a coward, in the light that he found it very difficult to hurt people intentionally; very, very difficult; and I can recall many incidents. At times when I would be pushing him to do something which I believe might have brought about some punishment to an individual or individuals whom I thought were unkind and unfair in whatever respect it was, in his deep baritone voice he would say, "Lio or Scoutie, give John X a chance. Do not mind him or her." He found it

difficult to punish people. He was a man who loved people.

He was a man of great wit and wit is the salt of conversation, not the vote. He was a man without an idle mind, for idleness is the holiday of a fool. He was polite, and there is no doubt that politeness is the sign of culture. Those were some of the characteristics of the man.

He was a knowledgeable man, and that was his base of power. As the Attorney General has said, he was capable of discussing any matter at all, any subject, and at times it was embarrassing to talk with him. I recall an occasion when I was smoking a pack of cigarettes. I took the matches up, lit a cigarette and put the match-box down. He took up the box and started to read what was on the box, and I said to him, "Even that you are reading?" He said to me, "Well, Lionel, have you an idea how many sticks are in a box?" I made a wild guess, and I said, "About 40, but I am subject to correction." He said, "Sixty-two in Masters and 57 in Three Plumes.

I have never experienced anything that frightened me more than when on one occasion I was seeking the post of Assistant Secretary of the party and I was not quite sure that he was in my corner on that occasion. I set out to get the support from members of the National Executive Committee, and after a meeting, we walked across to a shop opposite. He got me engaged in a conversation about why I should be Assistant Secretary, and I went out to demonstrate to him that I would not only beat the man I was running against, but I would humiliate him. I made the biggest error in my life by naming the people in my corner. I turned on my car lights, took out a paper out of my pocket and only just showed it to him, and I was only counting. I had eighteen and when I put the paper down, he recited every single name that I had on that paper within a split second. It is a feat that I would never forget. I had to look and see if the names he called were correct.

Working with him was a joy, and that is why today it is needless for us to be any longer upset. We can rejoice in knowing that Barbados produced a man of great skill, character, knowledge and stature. We in Barbados, no doubt, mourn the loss of a son. The Caribbean and the wider world would have lost a leader and a statesman, a man that could have been President or Prime Minister in any country on the face of the earth. That is a tribute to this country and to all Barbadians.

I have lost a friend, but I am happy to know that he died with a clear conscience, that he was working only for the people of Barbados and the wider Caribbean. I know that one of his fervent wishes would have been to see a united Caribbean and to remove the hate, maliciousness and gossip from the society in which we all live.

I have already paid my respects to his family. To all Barbadians, I say, this is a time for us to brace ourselves to continue, to march to the progress of the country for which he has given his life, for we all know that when that great writer comes to write against your name, he will ask not if you have won or lost, but how you have played the game. I know history will record that he played the game well, and now he has gone to serve his Master in a higher office, to do a bigger job, to his family I simply say, 'Be of good. cheer.' This counsel is of Heaven.

2.15 p.m.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, I wish in the words of the Resolution, that the sentiments of profound grief, regret and sympathy on behalf of the nation and of the Members of this Chamber be conveyed to Mrs. Genevieve Adams, to their children, to his mother Grace Lady Adams, and to his other relatives and friends. I wish to endorse the words of the Resolution which is being considered, and I do so particularly on behalf of my constituents of St. Michael South, the vast majority of whom were shocked and saddened at the passing of the Prime Minister of this country.

I am grateful to the media of this country, both the print and electronic media, for providing me with the opportunity of expressing my own sentiments, which I feel very deeply, and my only wish is that I could say that everything I have said in respect of this particular matter could be read into the Record of this Honourable Chamber. I have said that neither storied urn nor animated bust can bring back the life of Tom Adams to us, and I believe also that we should observe his life, the way he lived it, the things that he did, to see in what way it can further elevate this country, or to see in what way we should try to follow that example, or to avoid any errors which he may have made, because he made errors. He was not perfect, as none of us is perfect. He was a human being, and I believe that these occasions in life, these shocks that come, remind us that we are all mortal and that in the twinkling of an eye we can be here today and gone tomorrow.

It has been said that domestic politics is the pursuit of civil war by other means. I do not necessarily share that particular viewpoint. There are those who believe that, to move a country forward, we have to use all the weapons in the military arsenal in order to get things done or moving, including the worse aspects of human nature, appeal to hatred, to venom and to the other Machiavellian pursuits which politics is never free from. I do not share that particular viewpoint. I believe that, in discussing the grave issues in a country, we can have different outlooks, visions, goals and objectives, and that we can have different methods and techniques of arriving at our goals and objectives. I believe that in a mature democracy we can debate matters, then, in the spirit of true democracy, come to decisions and respect those

particular decisions until time and circumstances provide an opportunity for the review of those decisions. That, I believe, is the essence of parliamentary democracy.
2.25 p.m.

I have spoken, and I speak of Tom Adams in my own view as one who believed in parliamentary democracy. I believe also that his work in Parliament was a tribute to that democracy, and I hope that never will we reach that stage when we are attracted by other kinds of philosophies or other goals other than those of parliamentary democracy.

I do not speak as one who had a close personal relationship with the late Prime Minister as others on that side may be able to speak. I had a very deep respect for him and a deep regard for his views. He was the kind of Renaissance man, trained in those liberalising arts, which, in Mediaeval times, used to be known as the trivium and the quadrivium, the kinds of disciplines which were studied in the great Mediaeval universities and which shaped the kinds of omnicimpetent personalities who were so many in the times of the 15th and 16th centuries in Europe. I believe that he reached back to that kind of breadth of outlook and, as I have put it, dept of vision.

I also believe that Tom Adams was a dreamer and a visionary, and it is not for me on this occasion to speak on or to reflect on his visions and his dreams. He was grounded in *real politique,* the arts of practical politics, but he was also a visionary and a dreamer. Perhaps when the time comes for a balanced assessment of his contribution, it will be seen that perhaps it was his visionary nature and his dreams that were even more important than the practical contributions which he made to the Government and politics of this country.

All in all, this country has been blessed by the fact that, during his years as Prime Minister of this country, we have been able to maintain our democratic institutions, that we have been able to survive many buffettings from many quarters, that as we come to usher in a new era, the ship of state is shipworthy and that we have a worthy successor in our present Prime Minister to take over the reins of Government.

It is perhaps not well known that on one occasion after a general election one of the very first telephone calls which I received after that general election was from Mr. Tom Adams, then Prime Minister, congratulating me on having retained my seat, and he said on that occasion – I cannot be disclosing any confidences at this stage – "Sandy", as he called me, "I would be very happy, and it would give us great pleasure, if you would become, or if you would accept the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly of Barbados." I, of course, thanked him for his congratulations and thanked him for the very high regard that he obviously would have held me in that he could make that particular offer. I never asked him whether he anticipated that I would have refused the offer, but whatever the motivation of the offer, I took it as an indication that he was reaching out for some kind of healing process in the turbulent confrontational politics that might have been plaguing the country.

I met him very early in the 1960s, and thereafter, while I was in the Other Place and he was in This Place, we got to know each other. Then we worked together in this Chamber. On this side, the Member for St. Michael North, (Mr. P. M. Greaves), him and I worked together on the Standing Orders, which are still in force and which shape and control the debates in this particular Chamber. Even then we could have seen his incisive mind at work trying to help the Committee to arrive at the kind of rules which would bring about a measure of fair play between the Government and the Opposition, and which would assist an ancient and great debating Chamber in coming to decisions in a democratic manner.

I also recall his work on the Library Committee, infrequently though it met, as well as his work on the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and in all those ways I believe he demonstrated his belief in Parliament as one of the great institutions of this country.
2.35 p.m.

I therefore wish to associate myself with the Resolution that is before us and express appreciation for the contribution made by an outstanding parliamentarian and an outstanding Barbadian.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT (St. Michael North East): Mr. Speaker, a week ago today, Barbadians suffered the loss of their second Prime Minister. This an occasion when we cannot really express in words the mystery of the passing of Tom Adams. Each one in Barbados and abroad feels sadness and sorrow. I believe that to his close friends, his political comrades and those who served in Cabinet with him, that sadness perhaps is greatest.

I was so utterly shocked by the news a week ago today that I found myself in great difficulty restraining the tears. It was such a bitter feeling for me that I had to be controlled in an audience in the heart of town. Later that evening, when the full realization of the occurrence had dawned upon me, it was even sadder to see his inner Cabinet at the Cabinet Office like little children huddled together, in tears as I was, at the lost of our party leader.

It has been said in one of Shakespeare's works, Julius Caesar, by Calpurnia,

> "When beggars die, there are no comments seen. The Heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."

Monday, March 11, began as a very ordinary day in the lives of Barbadians here. By mid-afternoon, this tragic news sent shock waves through the hearts and the minds of all Barbadians everywhere. We were shocked, we were shaken indeed, by the passing of Mr. Tom Adams.

I saw Tom as a man with a mission, which he set about to implement with a vigour and allowed nothing to get in his way. I saw Tom with very high ideals for Barbados, and greater ideals for an integrated Caribbean. When he came to office in 1976, as the leader of the Barbados Labour Party, he set forth in the manifesto of 1976 the objectives which he had seen for Barbados. Those objectives are now known throughout the length and breadth of the island. He had seen Barbados at the crossroads, and he had seen where one sign was pointing down the road to total economic depression, to waste, and he had seen the vision of another Barbados, another sign pointing towards the road that can lead us to new highways, bold initiatives and fresh thinking about our national problems; to an honest and intelligent approach to what is needed in today's Barbados; to social justice; to new horizons in economic development; to a massive attack on unemployment and inflation; to the restoration of the principles of integrity and morality in the administration of Government in our country. These were the ways offered by the Barbados Labour Party, under Tom Adams, and those were his objectives.

He pursued those objectives in uplifting the standards of life, in the machinery of Government, in our economic policy, in all the services, public transport, agriculture and fisheries, physical development and communications. He lived to see the environment protected, and he longed for better housing for our people. He might not have realized all his visions, but I believe that his sojourn on earth was not in vain because he has set the sights which must be carried on by us, his followers. He voted massively large sums for education, arts and culture, sports and recreational facilities, law reform, a charter for women. Under his guidance, we have seen the fullfilment of some of these objectives. I believe that we are now to carry on the fuller life for which Tom Adams lived.

I remember Tom when I was a little boy, very much his junior, running about behind him in what is now known as the National Stadium. It was nothing but canefields and cart roads. I remember Tom around the Spooner's Hill area at *Tyrol Cot* doing the things that ordinary boys do, climbing, picking fruit and doing the mischievous things that would be associated with normal, active children. He was very, very active, and very wicked indeed.

A year or so ago, I was at *Tyrol Cot* with Lady Adams and she was showing me some of the photographs of the late Sir Grantley Adams. There was a set of pictures and she said, "Leroy, see if you can recognize anyone here." I looked at the family album and then I said, "Lady, I only recognize Sir Grantley and yourself." And then she said, "You really do not recognize anyone?" I said, "Honestly, I cannot." She said, "There is the little brute," referring to her son.

We have had very many pleasant occasions to sit and chat about the late Sir Grantley and about Tom. On Tuesday, following the death of her son, I went to give her my condolences, and we had a heartfelt talk about the situation. We expressed ourselves in tears, because we agreed that it has hurt. But I would say for her that she is a very strong individual. She has a very strong character, for her life has been full of experiences, from the Riots in the Thirties right up to seeing her husband in the highest political office and fighting the forces of the day, coming right through to her son, taking on from where her husband had left off and carrying on the Government of Barbados, and then, seeing him taken away almost instantly in the presence of her eyes.

2.45 p.m.

Tom Adams will live in the minds and hearts of Barbadians and in the minds and hearts of people everywhere, because I believe that his objectives for Barbados were ones which we as Barbadians can clearly see, and ones which we would want to be associated with. I, on behalf of the constituency of St. Michael North East and the many friends of the Adams family, especially those surrounding *Tyrol Cot*, wish to convey my heartfelt feelings to Lady Adams, to Genevieve Adams and her children.

I sincerely hope that as time goes by this House of Assembly may make it possible to release some of the debates in which Tom Adams took part to make them accessible to the public in a series of volumes of works. I also think that in respect of the manifestoes of 1976 and 1981, in which Tom Adams had a very significant part to play, in which many of the ideas, ideals, and objectives may become public in a very meaningful way, every institution would want to read and follow some of the principles and objectives he lived for. As I said earlier, he might not have seen coming to fruition all of the things he hoped for, but they are contained in the 1981 manifesto. What satisfies my heart is to see things like the new bus terminal in Bridgetown coming on stream. Tom lived for a new Magistrates Court. He also spoke about the Barbados Development Bank's Headquarters. We are now in the process of implementing plans for the airport to Wildey/Wildey to Warren/Warrens to Black Rock Road. We have heard about the Sites and Services projects. They are all here as part of the contributions Tom Adams envisaged for Barbados, and we are now to ensure that these programmes and policies are carried through.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW (St. Michael South East): Mr. Speaker, the late Prime Minister, Tom Adams was indeed a great man, and I say 'great' not because, as we all know, he was endowed with great intellectual capacity, not because he was a distinguished leader of his country, not because he was a fine orator or an excellent debater or even a fierce opponent. The late Prime Minister will go down in history as a great man because he never lacked the common touch. He was human. He possessed those characteristics which distinguish great men. He was sincere in whatever he pursued, he was sympathetic, he loved people, he was charitable, and above all these qualities, he was compassionate. Anyone who possessed those various characteristics must indeed be great.

Tom Adams never liked to see his fellowman suffer. He was always prepared to reach out and accommodate even the simple folk. He was unlike many public figures who have lived, and who yet live. He was able to walk with kings, presidents, queens, and walk with the common folk. As a great poet said, he never even lost the common touch. Whenever you were in his company, you felt an air of comfort, feeling that you were indeed wanted. There was an air of protection around you, because the man reached out to accommodate you in every way possible. He listened to the arguments of the intellectuals, those who were endowed with similar academic qualities, and, equally, he listened to those who were less educated. At the end of the day he was able to learn, and also to assist those who were not privileged to attain his level of academic brilliance.

I have referred to his being compassionate and considerate, and his love. When the history of Barbados is written by someone who is prepared to give, as they say, "Jack his jacket," the name Tom Adams will surely stand out as the finest Prime Minister this country had in this century. I say that because the man lived like a general, never wanting to see one of his soldiers fall by the wayside unnecessarily. He felt that in the battle, and I refer to the political battle, it was necessary to have a strong general, and with this in mind he set about to lead the Barbados Labour Party in all of its political battles. He listened to the views of the poor people and he acted on those views whenever he felt that they made sense, and when he felt that it was in the interest of the country. All views from the rich and the poor, the educated as well as the uneducated, were taken into consideration, and that is what makes a man truly great.

I wish to recall Tom Adams when I was assailed by all sorts of abuse. My family was tormented, and I was mentally as well as physically wrecked, and Tom Adams was one of the four men who can claim that I have managed to survive this life. I have on occasion thanked him when he was alive, and I wish to do so on this occasion publicly, because I have to live on, as surely Tom Adams will live on, because no one would have understood the pain and the suffering which humble folk like me had to undergo. It was not easy for a Prime Minister to understand, to fully appreciate and even take action to assist a person who was in real and serious difficulty. And I would say "thanks" also on this occasion to the present Prime Minister, because he is one of the two people to whom I owe that gratitude.

2.55 p.m.

The battle is not lost. Tom Adams death is not in vain. I know some of the things that he stood for. He stood for the development of the poor and the development of the young people. He was annoyed about the rate of unemployment, and he had expressed this concern on more than one occasion to me. It was his wish to have the unemployment rate reduced, because he knew that this would have caused a number of people to be in misery and, therefore, he set about a programme with a view to alleviate unemployment and to bring to the people of this country incomes so that their families could be better off.

I think the old people in Barbados have lost a friend. I well recall my contribution two years ago to a debate saying that the late Prime Minister was a friend of the old people, the poor people. I still maintain that that was so, because he manifested in his action, including in his Budgets, how he felt about the poor people, by increasing old age pensions, giving more money to Welfare in order to assist the poor and the under-privileged in Barbados, and he helped them with welfare housing. All of these are things distinguished by a great man.

3.05 p.m.

He cared about the poor people, those people who had made a contribution to this country. He had come into my house in time of need and said to me, "Braddie, I am with you, please feel comfortable, the Labour Party is different." Those are words that I welcomed and cherish, because sometimes we do not have the compassion, the feeling, the sympathy, the understanding when people are in distress, and I think that the late Prime Minister understood that.

I do not want to say how hurt I was when I learnt of his death, because all of us, whether we belong to the Barbados Labour Party or any other party, felt the loss of our dear Prime Minister. This country is not the stronger for his loss, but I pray that his family, especially his wife Genevieve, sons Douglas and Rawdon, as well as his mother Lady Adams will be given God's comfort and be guided by the Almighty through this most difficult time. I am sure that they are blessed for the mere fact that from the family Lady Adams saw the passing of two Prime Ministers. I hope that the prayers of all of us will go up to the surviving family.

I do hope, too, that politicians and other people, whether they liked Tom Adams or not, will realise that it can happen to them. We should not revel in the demise of a man. We should always remember that God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders have got to be performed. God knows why He has called our dear Prime Minister away from us. We who survive in this Honourable Chamber as leaders of this country must understand that Tom Adams has left an indelible mark in the annals of our history, especially our parliamentary history. We should all try to emulate him by caring for the people of this country, putting Barbados first, trying to heal the wounds and reaching out to the opposing side in an effort to build this country.

I hope that this Honourable Chamber will accept the fact that leadership demands a number of qualities. I have no doubt in my mind that the Great Supreme will endow our present Prime Minister with such qualities so that he, too, will continue to make a mark on this country's history. We must all realise that Barbados has suffered a great loss. It is now for us to take up the mantle, and I appeal to my colleagues in Government, to take up the mantle where our late Prime Minister has left off and go forward to fight the good fight and assist Barbados and put it forward.

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Speaker, the passing of a Prime Minister in office, particularly, in his prime and at so relatively young an age, is a sad occasion, and it is a cause for national grief.

His pathway and ideas for the development and progress of Barbados were not ours, and that is why we opposed him on the many political and social issues which emanated from his own political thought and activity, issues which affected the lives of so many Barbadians, ordinary people in this community, but because we differed on political grounds and issues, that is no reason why we on this side do not and could not feel the loss of this man, and we feel his loss particularly from the debate in this Honourable Chamber where we came face to face with the qualities he had which have been so eloquently spoken about, the sharpness of his intellect, the breadth and depth of that intellect, his courtesy during the course of debate in this Parliament. And it was here that we particularly began to appreciate what a formidable political opponent he was.

During the short time I have had the privilege to serve in this Honourable House on the opposite side of the late lamented Right Honourable Prime Minister, I certainly was able to appreciate all that has been said about him in relation to his intellect, character and dominance of his opposition as a political figure. What can clearly be said about Mr. Adams is that he was a very dominant figure, but there were certainly no negative feelings about him. People either felt very strongly for or against him, and to say that is to recognise the very dominance of the personality he had, because it does take a dominant personality for one to have very strong feelings either for or against, and it is a recognition of that supreme quality of dominance which he held in the country, in his own party and in Parliament.

I would like to express my own condolences and those of my family to his widow, Genevieve Adams and to his children, and to his honoured and distinguished mother, Grace Lady Adams.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES (St. Michael North West): Mr. Speaker, the circumstances demand that anyone who has ever been close to the late Prime Minister should be able to say something which could be of good benefit to this nation. Being a new Member in this House and not being a member of his party, I am unable to make the kind of extensive statements that I heard here today, but I have no doubt that they were made in all sincerity.

In any nation, when a national figure has fallen, there is always grief and shock and great emotion, but when these things have passed away and calmer times come upon us, we are better able to assess the impact that figure has made. I firmly believe that we are now at that stage of assessment, and if there are any other virtues which one can bestow on the late Prime Minister, I should ask all those who are capable of making them known to the nation to do so.

I will miss Mr. Adams' presence in this Chamber. In some way it was a lesson to me, and I have learnt quite a bit from his techniques and his approaches in debate. I will always remember his attacks and counter attacks, even though at times he may not have been the winner, and I am sure that we were all the better for them. I shall also remember his eloquence and at times the jovial mood in which he placed the Chamber. But most of all, I want to remember his courtesy. He was a man whom I met on many occasions, and probably being new to him he was always willing to extend that 'good evening' or 'good morning' when I spoke to him. The last time he spoke to me, I remember it was in an aside when I was in the lobby, and he made a political joke which I will not share. Certainly, his courtesy was beyond doubt, and I want to share with you an occasion on which it was certain that he was the kind of man who had a gentlemanly outlook.

I remember very well speaking as the spokesman for the Opposition on a health matter. The then Prime Minister had introduced the measure, and unfamiliar with the skills of Parliament as I was, the then Leader of the House realised in one of his tactics that there were only about five minutes to go before lunch, and as the then Prime Minister sat, I began to speak and was only able to get through two sentences before lunch was taken. As soon as I got to the door the then Prime Minister said to

me, "Do not be dismayed, I am sure that the lunch break will give you an opportunity to prepare your speech much better." Certainly, Sir, it gave me courage and encouraged me to do the best I could on that occasion.

I believe that there are many other instances which allow one to report on the courtesy of the late Prime Minister. I certainly respected his leadership, more so in the light of his party, for when I thought that party was dead, he breathed into it life so that it has become a formidable force for us in the Opposition.

I regret very much that I am not in a position to say many more of the things I have heard today, but I know that those things that he has done will do the country some good in the future.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE (St. Lucy): Mr. Speaker, the death of the late Prime Minister was a shock and a loss to the people of Barbados and the West Indies as a whole. He was perhaps one of the greatest sons that was born in Barbados. The Lord always led him in all of his endeavours in this country, and the Lord, as I say, knows best. I thought he would have had the privilege to sit back and relax and watch the good things, the accomplishments that he brought to this country. Up to this present time from last Monday all I have been hearing are good things about this gentleman, and I hope that this will be a lesson to every Barbadian and that they will try to praise people in their lifetime. We realise that there are many people who are throwing lots of praise on him at this present time, but if they had done that a year or two ago, he might be alive today. You have to realise that every problem we gave to that great man was another nail driven in his coffin.
3.15 p.m.

He was a peacemaker not only in Barbados, but in the West Indies as a whole. About three years ago, someone described the West Indian islands as a boiler ready to explode. No one would say that now, because while we had Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia all with big problems, and nobody was thinking that those countries were thinking about elections, through the work of that great leader, today we can relax for a time and I hope for a long time. We all know that Tom Adams was the chief architect of the peace that we are all enjoying now in the West Indies.

Tom Adams was a man who never enjoyed unfair punches. Even on the cricket field, when you made an unfair appeal, he would always call you down and say the man was not out. Even from this side and someone had made a foul, saying something they were not sure about, to make a high point against the Opposition, he would always question it. He always believed in fair play in all fields. I am happy to know that his mother is yet alive to listen to what is said about such a son that she could bring into this world.

One piece of legislation which Tom Adams has brought to this country that touched my heart very much was the Plantation Tenantries Act. He told me he would like to see Barbados become like Bermuda. I have never been to Bermuda, but he told me that they have very few wooden structures, that most of the structures in Bermuda were of wall, and he would like very much to see the day come when Barbados would be just like Bermuda with mostly wall houses. I am sure he was working on that concept very, very fast.

He was one of the greatest sons ever born in this country. He was always willing to listen and always willing to give advice. He always tried to encourage you to do the best in this country. I remember once I had a disagreement with him. He was at another place chairing a meeting and I was making a speech. Whilst I was speaking, he was talking to someone else, so I stopped. He said, "Roy, what has happened? Go on." I said, "How can I go on when you are talking to someone else?" He said, "Do you want me to tell you everything you were saying?" And he told me every word I said from the beginning of the speech up to the end, and I had to continue. All those things prove to you that he was one of the greatest men that ever lived in this island, and that the Lord really was directing him.

I am sure today that this loss will never be replaced, but I have no fear whatsoever. I remember that in 1970 or 1971, when I never had any intention of entering into politics – I intended to live a nice, spiritual life – our now new Prime Minister, along with Tom Adams, the Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite) and the Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham) encouraged me to enter politics, and I know for sure that although we will miss Tom, the work has been laid, and I am sure that this Parliament will continue to go from strength to strength. We will miss him in person, but I am sure his spirit will live on.

He had a thirst to see the north of this island develop, but whensoever he tried to plan something for the north, some people would always try to obstruct him. One of the things I hope is that our new Prime Minister will keep the ball rolling in the north.

On behalf of the constituents of St. Lucy we extend our heartfelt sympathy to his mother, his wife and his two sons. It is my wish and prayer, he has done so much for this country, that he had a chance where he could make everything right with God. We here now have a chance and a privilege to live true and honest to God, and I am sure that if we do that, we will meet him on the other shore.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Speaker, death is something that we mortal people never seem to get acquainted with, particularly when it comes at the height of the careers of people who are contributing to their society, who by all outward appearances have been enjoying good health, and who have been fighting for a cause that they believed in.

Mr. Adams was one who has contributed to the community, and as was said earlier, his presence was always felt. There are those who believed explicitly in him, and even those who did not always agree with him respected him for his intellect and the way he was always able to put his case.

I suffered at the hands of his intellect and the marshalling of his forces in the by-election of St. Philip in 1976. I, too, admired the man for his determination and his ability to get his fellowmen to work with him as a team, and I respected him for that. I respected him on all other occasions even though I differed with him on numerous occasions on the matters he was putting forward, and I always had a deep respect for his faith and his belief in the things that he was doing for Barbados.

Only yesterday I held a meeting in St. Philip of my branch, and to show the respect that was meted out to the Prime Minister of Barbados, my branch stood for a moment's silence without any plodding or pleading on my behalf. They figured that he has contributed to the community and it was our duty to respect him for what he has done.

I would like on behalf of the people of St. Philip North to extend my sympathy to his wife, his two sons and his mother, Lady Grace, who has borne with dignity two great losses, and hope that his memory will make us all better persons for it.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty whatsoever in supporting this Resolution before us here today. Of course, I have some difficulty in supporting some of the claims made, but we are not asked to support that. I suppose on an occasion like this all these things can be expected.
3.25 p.m.

I knew Tom probably longer than most people in this Chamber. He was a third former at the school that I attended when I went into the second form at the school, but we all were in Sixth Form at the same time; he in the Maths and I in the Classical. I well remember the many verbal battles that we had in the Classical Sixth form where he very often came with a Mr. Fabian Holder, a man whose genius, I believe, Tom had the very greatest admiration for.

We were both members of the Acting Club at the same time. He won a Barbados Scholarship and went to England, and I saw him again in England in the late Fifties and early Sixties, when I myself was then a student. He returned to Barbados and, for two years, he was my immediate neighbour. Very often, we would meet across his wall or across my wall, in his home or in my home, and we would sit and have a social time together. That would have been the middle 1960s.

I, like most Members, was completely shocked last Monday when I heard of his death. I was shocked because I had gotten to know him well. I found that he was a man who was in very good health. We have sat in this Chamber together. In fact, we were both members of the Barbados delegation to the Constitutional Conference in London in 1966. At that time he did not make many interventions at that Conference, but there are one or two matters which I think moved him deeply, of which the Honourable Prime Minister referred today. He spoke specifically on matters pertaining to citizenship, and on matters pertaining to the judiciary.

In this Chamber, I was a member of the Select Committee that revised the Standing Orders of this Chamber and he made a very good contribution. We all did, as a matter of fact; we all worked very well together in that Committee. I think that at that time I was in the Other Place and he was a Member of the House at that time, and we were having a look, for the first time, at the Citizenship Act. It was a Select Committee set up by both Houses, as far as I can recall – I believe the Honourable Prime Minister might recall this – and we all sat and went through the draft Act as was laid in Parliament, and I believe that because of that, we had a better instrument.

Like the honourable Member for St. Philip North and other honourable Members on this side, we have had our battles, particularly between 1971 and 1976. At that time, I was a Minister, and we had our verbal exchanges. There was never, ever anything personal in those exchanges and we were always able to meet outside of these Chambers, and sometimes for a very long period we would sit in the lunch room and exchange pleasantries.

I, too, was struck from the time I entered these Chambers by his unfailing courtesy to all honourable Members. I refer specifically to his never failing, during the time he was on his feet and addressing the Chamber, to take his seat the moment someone else rose to make an intervention. I think that that is one feature that honourable Members in this Chamber can really and truly emulate. I believe that, if we did this, a lot of the heat in this Chamber sometimes would be removed.

I am indeed sad that he is no longer with us. He has made sterling contributions to debates in this country. I did not always share his political views, and I believe that accounts for our being on different sides, but I believe he held firmly and passionately to those things that he espoused. For this reason, I believe that Barbados being the society that it is, cannot afford to lose men with the kind of skills that Tom had without our indeed feeling it. I am particularly sad about that, because he could be a lesson to many of us here in this Chamber and outside.

I should like to join honourable Members in extending to his wife, children and mother my sincere sympathies at his passing.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the sentiments of grief and sympathy which have been expressed in this Chamber at the passing of our late Prime Minister, and to pay my own personal tribute to his memory.

My first acquaintance with Mr. Adams was in January 1975, when I returned to Barbados from Jamaica to attend one of my sisters' funeral. He talked to me and invited me, together with a group of his friends, to his home, as if that was his way of reaching across the barrier of grief to comfort a person who he barely knew, and who would have been of no political significance to himself.

My subsequent acquaintance with him was all too short, but very intense and very personal. I worked with him in a professional capacity for two years, as a civil servant, in the Ministry of Finance and Planning. To work with him was a very stirring test of the intellect, for he was a man who had a painstaking regard for proper method, a man who had a great insistence on accuracy and, above all, a man who had a great passion for clean and clear decisions. To work with him was also to be caught up in the excitement of a great economic adventure, as he sought to steer this country in a new direction through the monumental work he put into our new Five Year Development Plan and into our recent Economic Stabilization Programme. But I recall that in all this, no matter how stern were the tasks and how difficult those decisions that he had to take, Tom Adams was a man of humanity and humility, for none of his subordinates in the Ministry of Finance and Planning can ever recall an angry word or a raised voice during the difficult economic years over which he has had to preside.

Many persons in this Chamber today speak of Mr. Adams as a political colleague. I perhaps can speak more personally of him, as something of a political father, because it was upon his personal inspiration and encouragement that I took the decision to enter public life. I will always gratefully and very fondly remember the efforts he made to transfer this encouragement to me into success on my account. In the political struggles that he fought on my behalf, there was no burden that was too large for him to bear. He was the mastermind of my political campaigns, but he also found the time to be a canvasser as well. In his very complete way, he found time both to be my general as well as one of my foot soldiers.

Many societies in this country are now paying tributes to parts of his person. I would want to believe that we in the economic profession have over the last few years come to believe and accept that a very special part of Tom Adams belonged to us. His vast knowledge on the structure and functioning of economics was perhaps the largest knowledge available to this country possessed by any one person. But beyond that, we in the profession will remember him as a development visionary, whose concept of this country's development was very neatly summed up in the words that "he wanted nothing for Barbados than to make it a better off society." The tremendous public works which he managed to create will be a very sterling memory to him, as well as constitute a very substantial investment on his part in the future of this society.
3.35 p.m.

We in the economic profession will always remember him, above all, for his skills in economic management. Indeed, his greatest accomplishments, when his history is written, may very well have been that of bringing stability to economies proned to instabilities during the most turbulent economic times. For us in the economic profession there is now a very large and very lonesome gap.

For my part, and on behalf of my wife and sorrowing constituents of St. Peter, I would want to express my sympathies to his wife, mother, his children and relatives. I want to believe that everything I shall do in public life will be to the glory and the credit of the investment that he has made.

Mr. SPEAKER: Earlier today, I read a notice received from Sir Robin Vanderfelt, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and in that message Sir Robin said that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association had no better friend. I think those words aptly sum up what the late Honourable Prime Minister J. M. G. M. Adams, MP for St. Thomas, meant to the Commonwealth. It is not for me to repeat the numerous statements made about him either in the media or in here today, but I believe I should place on the Record the ideals and aspirations that the late honourable Member for St. Thomas had for Barbados and the Caribbean.

Over the four weeks we discussed the hosting of a regional Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Barbados, because he felt that the countries in the region

were not coming together as quickly as he would have liked. That conference, he said, should be organized in Barbados sometime later this year, and invitation should have been sent to members of the United States Congress. He also invited me to seek to form an association between the Parliament and the Congress of the United States as a first step to a wider association between the Parliamentary Association in the Caribbean and the Legislature in the United States. He felt that we could not have developed our communication media, which exposed Barbados as to what is happening in the United States, the better life that is offered, without doing something to draw Barbados closer to the United States, to give us that sort of development. He felt that our association with the Legislature in the United States and Canada was the best thing that could be done for us at the time.

His passing has shocked us all, and not only in Barbados, because I believe we shall be the poorer in the wider Caribbean. It is for us who remain to carry on the fight and to achieve the vision which the late Prime Minister had for Barbados and the Caribbean.

To his sorrowing relatives, on behalf of myself and the members in the constituency of St. Joseph, I extend to them our greatest sympathies at their lost.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, at this stage, I beg to formerly move the Resolution that has been circulated.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Resolution which has been formerly circulated is before you, and I request that we stand for two minutes in silence as a method of passing that Resolution to his mother, wife, and his children.

The House stood in silence for two minutes.

SUSPENSION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting will now be suspended until 4.15 p.m.
3.45 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

APPROPRIATION ACT, 1985

Order No. 1 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of Barbados for the year ending 31st March, 1985.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Speaker, some time in the near future, I will have the opportunity to address this Chamber on economic matters when the 1985–86 Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals are presented. On that occasion, I will give a full account of the general performance of the economy in much more detail, and the performance of various sectors during the year 1984. However, to provide a framework for the discussion of the 1985–86 Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, I consider it necessary to draw the Honourable House's attention to some of the financial and economic trends that have been observed during the past year.

You will recall that the emphasis of our economic management policies since 1981 has been to stabilize the Barbadian economy in the face of adverse international economic circumstances. In specific terms, we have placed priority on safeguarding our foreign reserves position and in protecting our productive capacity, so as to put us in a position to take advantage of any opportunities for renewed economic growth. Provisional data indicates that, on the balance of our economic stabilisation programme, it has worked out to the nation's advantage. Our estimates of real activity show that the economy grew by 2.5 per cent in 1984. This performance is welcomed after three years of relative decline. We are particularly heartened by the evidence of renewed economic strength in our main productive sectors, particularly tourism and agriculture.

Nineteen hundred and eighty four will be remembered as the year in which tourism fully emerged from the doldrums. By the end of December 1984, the contribution of tourism to the GDP had risen from $186.5 million in 1983 to $206.8 million. The resurgence continued until 1985, and although there has been a marginal decrease in the number of visitors arriving from Europe, there has been a substantial increase in those coming from North America.

It is our intention during 1985–86 fiscal year to increase our promotion in the North American market and to endeavour to recapture some of the business which we have lost from Europe, mainly because of the turbulent foreign exchange market conditions in Europe *vis-a-vis* the U.S. dollar. As a consequence, the provisions under the new Ministry of Tourism and the Environment have been increased to cover the cost of additional promotion, the beautification of our island for nationals and tourists alike, and to address and attend to the serious problems of beach erosion and beach control. Honourable Members will recall that, during the course of the last financial year, we received the reports of the study on beach erosion, which was commissioned previously with the aid of the loan funding from the Inter-American Development Bank.

In respect to manufacturing, our manufacturing sector is making a recovery in spite of the loss of some of the markets which we previously served. The recent

attempts to break through the furniture market of the United States of America is very heartening, and we are hoping that, in due course, this market will more than compensate for the loss of some of the CARICOM markets. Furniture and garments are the two areas which have suffered most from the decline in demand in CARICOM. Efforts will be continued at the Government level and in co-operation with the private sector to provide adequate financial assistance to the industry. Increased expenditure has been provided for the Export Promotion Corporation to aid its efforts in promotion overseas and to supplement those of the private sector.

As indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, there has been steady progress in the agricultural sector, in spite of the present difficulties which the sugar industry is experiencing because of the fluctuations in exchange rates and also because of the reduction in the demand for sugar as a product, arising from the utilisation by a number of former consumers of high fructose corn syrup.

Our non-sugar agriculture and fishing continue to make inroads in foreign markets, and greater encouragement will be given as one will see from the provisions in the Capital Estimates.

In Barbados, like in most of the rest of the western world, except the United States, unemployment continues to be the main economic problem. Its incidence has reached a level of 18 per cent, a level which is both economically and socially undesirable and unacceptable to this Government. However, in Barbados, like the rest of the western world, it appears clear that economies may grow but, because of the structural changes taking place in the economy, unemployment reduction does not necessarily follow. The high incidence in Barbados could be attributed to the slow growth of the economy in recent times and, more particularly, to the need for us to pursue fiscal restraint in the face of difficult external market conditions.

We are as committed as ever to the reduction of unemployment, and the improvement in our economic circumstances now affords us the opportunity to do so. To this end, these Estimates of Expenditure will reflect an aggressive attempt to seek external market outlets for our manufacturing sector. We will continue to broaden the market diversification programme which our tourism sector has recently embarked upon, and the evidence is now abundantly clear that in the first two and a half months of this current winter season, from the hotel occupancy, the hotel tax, indeed the visible evidence, we are receiving a larger number of visitors than we have ever seen in Barbados at any given period of time. We trust and we feel confident that, so far as the remainder of the winter season is concerned, this will continue. However, I must sound a word of caution as the summer season is still the subject of some speculation, having regard to the position of the European currencies.

4.25 p.m.

We have already put in place the legislative framework to promote the growth of services for offshore business, and we will seek in the months to come to take the fullest advantage of this initiative.

On the public account, we will seek to expand employment opportunities by an expanded capital works programme, particularly in areas of housing and road construction. Such initiatives, however, and I will stress this, will not be executed at the expense of our maintaining a sound external position and an equally sound and prudent fiscal stance.

I now come to a review of the fiscal estimates for the year 1984–85. As indicated in the Memorandum to the Estimates which is now before us, the projected outturn for the current fiscal year is as follows: Current Revenue, $571.8 million; Current Expenditure, $569.7 million, giving us a surplus on Current Account of $2.1 million. The Capital Expenditure was estimated to be $111.4 million, an overall deficit of $109.3 million.

The revised revenue for 1984–85 is much lower than the original estimate, mainly because of the decrease in Corporation Tax and import duties. It is now common knowledge that some companies went through a difficult time because of a loss of certain regional markets and through their inability to switch and make a quick change in other markets. Some of the other failures may be attributed to the inability of management to look after the affairs of their company properly.

In the case of import duties, the shortfall can be in part attributed to the very success of our economic stabilisation policies. You are aware, Sir, that we have had to curb import expenditure by credit and income control to counteract the slow growth in our export earnings. In addition, we believe that the slow volume of increase in our imports was occasioned by the fall in the price of non-U.S. goods occasioned by the strength of the U.S. dollar. We, however, intend to arrest some of these developments during the course of the next fiscal year, and I will shortly indicate to this Chamber the strategies we will employ to pursue this objective.

The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1985–86 is as follows: Current Revenue, $625 442 674; Current Expenditure, $642 799 318; a Current Account deficit on budget of $17 356 644. Capital Expenditure has been projected at $179 915 528, an overall deficit of $197 272 172.

Our estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the fiscal year 1985–86 have been bounded by certain considerations. Although there is ample evidence of renewed

growth in the economy, particularly in relation to tourism and agriculture, we expect that such growth will not immediately be reflected in a major increase in Government revenues. Our private sector has recently experienced low levels of profitability, and it would be necessary in the near future to provide them a breathing space before they can be expected to contribute to the public purse. In addition to that, our external position remains sound, but we do not think it wise to propose to rapidly accelerate import expenditure in search of public revenue. Our estimate therefore of expected revenue is conservative.

In relation to our Current Expenditure, we have had to make provision for the recent wage increase in the public sector. The impact of this will be shown. Personal Emoluments for the Central Government and secondary schools have increased from $237.3 million to $290.9 million which represents an increase of $53.6 million or 22.6 per cent. If the salary element of grants to statutory boards is included, the Personal Emoluments component will increase by a further $23.3 million. As such, Personal Emoluments will therefore account for approximately $314.1 million or 48.8 per cent of our Current Expenditure.

The charge of debt has stabilised just over $105 million, in the face of the fall in international and domestic interest rates. At 16 per cent of the estimated revenue, it represents a modest price to pay for the tremendous improvements we have secured, through loans, in the standard of our infrastructure, the expansion of our educational facilities, the upgrading of our health facilities and the addition of two major elements to our productive capacity. I must however stress that, to cope with the increase in the public sector wages, the most stringent controls have been placed on the increase in the operating expenses of Government departments. Except in rare cases, such as the Police Force and the Fire Department, such increases have to be kept within the limit of the inflation rate.

We are forecasting a Current Account deficit of just over $17 million, but we will be making the sternest effort to eliminate this through careful management and the monitoring of our quarterly allocations to the Ministries.

It will be noticed that our estimated Capital Expenditure is set at just under $180 million, a decrease of $9 million as compared with the estimate approved for the fiscal year 1984–85, though not a decrease on the estimated actual expenditure.

4.35 p.m.

In order to allow the private sector to participate with the Government in employment generation, we have kept Government's Capital Works programme at the above limit. Nonetheless, our Capital provisions allow for some employment generation through substantially increased allocations to road works and housing. We do not fear the impact of foreign exchange loss in these areas, particularly now that the cement plant has been completed and is in a position to supply a substantial element of the raw materials used in those areas. We also propose to make a considerable investment in agricultural diversification to the extent of over $19 million. Provision is also made for the repairs and improvement of our runway facilities at Grantley Adams International Airport, and for the continuation of our recent efforts to improve our primary and secondary educational facilities. I must also point out that some $44 million has been earmarked for Government to protect its capital position in some commercial ventures. The most notable are the Arawak Cement Plant, the Barbados National Oil Company, Caribbean Airways, CARICARGO, and the Broiler Breeder Project. A great part of this expenditure is really the finalisation of the capitalisation of the Arawak Cement Plant and the Barbados National Oil Company.

In general, honourable Members will see that emphasis has been placed on projects for which institutional financing has already been secured, those which can expand or protect our productive capacity, and others which are geared to improve the quality of life of all Barbadians.

In relation to the financing of the above Capital Expenditure, we anticipate calling upon more than $16 million in concessional loans, as well as using the surpluses of the National Insurance Scheme and the Health Levy funds to support public investments. We envisage that just over $25 million in domestic banking system credit will be used in the process, and I wish to emphasise that we do not anticipate that this level of credit from the National Insurance, the Health Levy funds and the domestic banking system will put an inordinate strain on the availability of credit to the private sector, since this is the amount which is in conformity with the levels maintained in recent years. We also have the option of utilising Central Bank accommodation, which is at present way below statutory limits. This expenditure, however, will be used sparingly because of its known impact on our resources.

Mr. Speaker, our overall fiscal position has been prepared with great care and is a finely balanced one. On the one hand, we seek to expand employment, but not at the expense of a radical drain on our reserves. Equally, we have made provision to carry out our statutory current expenses without at the same time impairing the growth prospects of the private sector.

I am confident that we will, in the face of all the circumstances, continue to maintain our sound fiscal and external positions, ease unemployment and make way for renewed private sector growth. We look to the private sector, trade unions and the general public to join us in accomplishing these objectives, and it is in the certain

knowledge of your co-operation and understanding that we continue to manage the present with courage and confidence, and face the future with expectancy and realistic hope.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that, Mr. Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, this is a rather unusual atmosphere in which we have to deal with the Appropriation Bill for the year 1985–86. Indeed, the efforts by the Honourable Prime Minister, I think in his first presentation of the Appropriation Bill, have not gone unnoticed. He has certainly taken the opportunity to reassure us that the same fiscal indiscipline as identified by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) two years ago, which went through the Government's finances for the year 1980–81, the pre-election year, would not be repeated, and indeed quite wisely signalled that he would be very wary of any excessive Central Bank accommodation, otherwise known as the printing of money, which he has recognised has done such damage to our external position in the past. For those two things, we must be very grateful that there seems to be a determination on the part of the Government to avoid the pitfalls which were domestically generated in the presence of a relatively hostile economic climate over the past four years.

The Honourable Prime Minister quite rightly sought, as a matter of courtesy, to set the Appropriation Bill within the context of current financial and economic trends in the country, and I propose in reply to pursue the same direction.

He has pointed to the success of Government's stabilisation programme, in effect a programme imposed by the International Monetary Fund, which seeks to artificially match imports with export earnings and destabilises many social objectives of Government, the social expectations of the community, and to a large extent a wide range of economic variables, one of which he has identified as the relative failure of demand within the society for imports and a consequential fall in import revenues, indirect taxation, and indeed the profitability of businesses which depend on relatively high levels of consumption within the society.
4.45 p.m.

He has identified that there was specific growth of the economy in 1984, 2.5 per cent largely due to agriculture and manufacturing. It does not surprise me that that growth is not reflected in any easing of the unemployment situation, because if you look very carefully at how the growth is calculated, even in an industry like the sugar industry, which, during this fiscal year, has for the first time laid off large numbers of people, nevertheless, by increased output in terms of tonnage of sugar, it would record a growth. Similarly, in the manufacturing industries, I think the growth would be largely in that sector of manufacturing that has the least impact on the economy of Barbados. So while thousands of jobs may be lost in the garment and manufacturing industry that has a much higher multiplier effect, in terms of employment generation, in terms of overall contributions to the economy of Barbados, yet you may find a relative phenomenal growth, because you can easily get an expansion in the enclave sector of manufacturing, and that would conceal the true impact of any growth in terms of unemployment or in terms of actually contributing to domestic, economic activity.

I believe that he is correct in saying that there has been an increase in the number of tourists visiting Barbados, and one looks forward indeed to see whether there has been a corresponding increase in tourist expenditures.

He drew attention to the whole question of agriculture and that, in the Estimates, there was a provision, as he stated, for some $19 million for agricultural diversification. I believe that if my wise counsel had been listened to many years ago, there would have been a significant sum in the Estimates this year for a subsidy to the sugar industry, which would have a completely different picture in terms of the indebtedness of that sector. I believe in stabilizing what you have, putting what you have in existence on a sound footing, before you start to move forward. I have put my case already for a subsidy. I do not propose to do so for any length of time. There is a difference between a price support and a direct subsidy to the sugar industry.

He has conceded that the unemployment rate in Barbados is the highest since records have been kept.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: What? I did not hear that.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, they are extremely high, 18 per cent. I do not think that that is the figure; I believe that there are far more people unemployed in Barbados. Nevertheless, he has conceded that the unemployment rate in Barbados is the highest since the Barbados Labour Party came into power. I think that that would be a reasonable statement that would cover all aspects of the matter.

He further pointed out that economic growth in Barbados can take place without any visible impact on employment levels. That is true. If you have three years of negative growth and then you have one year in which you record a growth of 2.5 per cent, that is largely in the enclave sector of manufacturing and in sugar exports, then, quite clearly, that could have no possible impact on employment in Barbados.

I noticed that his explanation was slightly different from the explanation that was given in the past, the so-called lag effect between capital investment and employment generation. I tend to agree with his explanation, that with such serious output losses over a prolonged period of time, a modest increase of output limited to two areas, by virtue of the methodology of calculating output in those two sectors, even within those two sectors you could have rising unemployment.

He put great stress on legislation to deal with offshore business, and I saw no commensurate indication within the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill to indicate the extent to which this would boost Government revenues. I believe I saw a figure of some $150 000 or thereabouts. What I believe, as I have pointed out again and again, is that the whole offshore sector must be regarded as the gravy and must not be regarded as being very germane to the process of economic development in Barbados.

I would make another call, as I have done on several occasions, that even if, within the limitations of the employment generation capacity of the offshore sector and, indeed, the capacity to contribute to the Treasury, nevertheless, if you are going to get maximum yield from that, there is an urgency to remove it from within the Central Bank of Barbados and to establish a separate agency where specialized legal and accounting skills can be concentrated, and where there can be a continuous promotional effort in the area of the attraction of offshore business. I would urge the Honourable Prime Minister to review a previous suggestion that I made, that the IDC would be the appropriate place for it. I think that would be worse than the Central Bank, quite frankly.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: That is the only sensible thing you have said so far.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have looked at this whole offshore business and we are faced with a very serious problem. The facts are that we have gone into the situation late, and relatively slowly. There will be plenty of opportunity in the Budget to deal with this matter and I do not want to get into any details, but we have moved in at a time when there has been contraction of demand for additional offshore centres – let us put it as broadly as that – except in one or two specific areas, like the foreign sales corporations. Indeed, even the captives now, as I have seen from the recent Monte Carlo Conference, the re-insurers are looking far more carefully at the chain of insurance and, I believe, around the other legislative instruments in the United States that that might halt the progress of capital insurance business.

I am surprised that younger Members have been complaining about falling revenue due to reduction in the volume of imports. It was that honourable Member who argued the case on the floor of this House, and not only for a high interest rate redeemed in Barbados. He was the man who argued the need to cut back on growth in public sector expenditure in terms of personal emoluments. He was the one who argued for a tight credit policy. He was the one who argued that it was necessary to reduce the standard of living of the people of Barbados by reducing their consumption levels, which would automatically feed into the capacity of this country to sustain given levels of imports. He was the one who, like me, supported the maintenance of the present value of the Barbados dollar in relation to the US dollar. He very strongly supported it.

Therefore, if your import bill falls as a consequence of effective trade deflections by discerning traders within the community from the dollar to the non-dollar area, then, I would say, 'Hats off to the private sector in Barbados,' which has done the country a tremendous job in keeping price levels within some control. It is for the government to find other means of revenue or to cut back on its expenditure pattern.
4.55 p.m.

I am following him step by step. He also referred to a generous contribution, of some $44 million, which the Government has set aside for Government commercial ventures. I would like to say that probably it is $44 million largely to uneconomic down-the-drain commercial ventures.

There is a problem. The character of these Estimates has changed considerably over the years. One of the reasons is that as the public sector has expanded, there has been a lot of off-budget activity not only in terms of expenditure commitments to debts – I will give you that a bit later in more detail – but also in terms of losses that could be temporarily concealed by the running of high overdrafts, and from time to time you only make contact with the estimates on an occasion like this, when the Appropriation Bill is being presented, or when a supplementary is required. I am looking forward to the day when the presentation of the Estimates, we not only have the formal Estimates in relation to the Consolidated Fund, but when – it might be a wise step – if Parliament is to remain in control and be fully au fait with what is going on in relation to public finances, probably we could have the annual budget of the various commercial projects that Government is involved in at the same time as the Estimates. Because I am in no position to comment, from a financial point of view, on whether that $44 million will be well spent with more money going into the Arawak Cement Plant, although the Barbados National Bank might certainly benefit from an injection of capital there, or whether it is worthwhile to be putting more money into Caricargo or into Caribbean Airways. So these are areas in

which I think there should be some kind of consideration given to presenting those budgets as part or in addition to the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill, just as we present the document relating to Personal Emoluments.

On the question of financing, I think that I greatly differ from the Honourable Prime Minister, whom I believe is also Minister of Finance; I am not sure from the releases.

Aside

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: There is a strong objection coming from the Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham). Let me say, who I believe is also the acting Minister of Finance.

I differ with the statement that if you are going to seek to raise $25 million, domestically, to partially finance Government's capital programme, that is not going to create a liquidity problem for the public sector in Barbados. I invite the honourable Member to look very carefully and see what has happened to Governments borrowing from the National Insurance Board, and this will be a major issue in a Budget – I will tell you in advance. You will see the significant distortion that has taken place over the years in terms of increasing Government borrowings from National Insurance, with a corresponding reduction in the percentage available to the commercial banks in Barbados. In fact, that ratio has been considerably reversed.

I also invite him to look and see that the rise in borrowing from the National Insurance Board has always been commensurate with the fall in the level of Central Bank accommodation. This would suggest to me very strongly that if you look at the liquidity situation in Barbados, and take into consideration that sugar bonds are being raised very shortly, this is going to present a serious liquidity problem for the private sector in Barbados. I think that you are going to find that you are putting a further stranglehold on the private sector activity.

I now turn to other aspects of the background against which these Estimates take place. Presumably, if the National Insurance funds were diverted to mortgage financing, we would have had a much greater impact on the construction industry. I would also like to draw to the attention of the Honourable Prime Minister that the unemployment in Barbados has largely become structural, with the pattern of economic development pursued over the past few years, and it is not going to be relieved by spending millions of dollars on capital programmes. Because if you really look at the sources of job losses in Barbados, and we see it in tourism, that trend will not be revised by more tourists coming at lower prices over the short run, because there are other structural problems in the tourism industry, demanding extensive re-financing in that area, and probably in relation to taxation and public utilities. If those areas are attended to, or if help is given in terms of re-scheduling of the indebtedness of the tourism industry and relieving taxation within the industry, I think that the liquidity problems in the tourist industry will be enhanced to the extent that you will find greater job potentials in that area. I would hope that any new financing which the Barbados Development Bank might secure would be on such a basis that twenty-five year loans can be made to the tourist industry, and that the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister, if that is one and the same person, will take active steps to persuade those who have loaned money in the past not to create problems in terms of re-financing existing loans.
5.05 p.m.

In agriculture, I would say the problems of job losses are structural as well. That will not be relieved by any capital expenditures.

I believe I can, with propriety, refer to a former colleague, the former Prime Minister and former Minister of Finance. He did say recently that the job losses in the commercial sector were probably higher than in the manufacturing sector, and I think he put the level at some 3 000 jobs in the past year. That is serious, because in the context of Barbados, when you see those job losses at that level within this kind of economy, you know that there are serious problems in every sector of the economy; because whatever happens in the economy of Barbados, you can be sure that it finds its way into spending in the commercial sector. That has been the pattern of Barbadians' social life and the pattern of Barbados' economic life. You do not necessarily find it in the form of savings in the bank, but you find it in the form of spending in Bridgetown. That is where you can virtually always assess the level of spending in this country.

I am not going to go through the whole area of unemployment at the moment, but the honourable Member, trying to recapture a lost constituency, made one or two noises about the private sector. This is a member of the same Government that has precipitated unprecedented levels of bankruptcies in this country, unprecedented levels of receivership, and unprecedented levels of low profitability throughout the private sector of Barbados. It is the same Government that has opted for a policy, which has been continued in this Appropriation Bill, of effecting massive transfers from the private sector to a somewhat non-productive public sector, which needs to be trimmed within the limits of the competence of effective management. We cannot any longer afford to be transferring resources from individuals, private or corporate, to satisfy the ideological positions of any individuals, or to satisfy the ever-increasing demand of the political directorate to be in

control of a wider and wider cake of economic and social activity in Barbados. Whether it is deliberate or accidental, this is what has happened.

This Appropriation Bill contains very stern warnings by the Minister of Finance, who I have found always to be a man who means what he says and does what he says he would do. He has said that, on a three-month basis, he will be carefully watching Government expenditure, and when they need to be pruned, they will be pruned. But do you know where they will be pruned? They will be pruned in the social services. They will be pruned in those areas which people feel are the primary purpose for which they pay taxes. Inevitably, they cannot be pruned in the uneconomic ventures, because, often, bank overdrafts and debts have to be satisfied, so when you are cutting back, you will cut back on the number of nurses or the amount of drugs in the hospital. We do not want to go down this line today, but when you are going to cut back, you are going to cut back in that area, because it is very difficult to cut back on a project that goes sour. If Caribbean Airways want $3 million, it has to get $3 million, or it cannot fly. On the other hand, you can always send home a few young people from another part of the public sector.

I was surprised that the honourable Member did not, in this Appropriation Bill, which provides for revenue and the allocation of expenditure, speak to the problems of a better social system for Barbadians and for better old aged pensions at a time when these have been seriously eroded by the imposition of the Stamp Duty. I would look forward, as the debate proceeds and we reach that Head, which we cannot deal with now, and which has disappeared altogether from the Estimates now, that is off-budget, to some compensation being offered to the old aged pensioners by the loss of the purchasing power due to the imposition of the Stamp Duty.

These Estimates indicate another change in Government policy, according to the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. (I have to get accustomed to that. He fits into the Prime Minister part, the Minister of Finance part is a little more difficult for the time being). This Appropriation Bill increases taxation for Barbadians. The Government will have to increase taxes. There is a yawning deficit on Current Account and a huge deficit on Capital Account, and that has to be closed somehow, and I will get back to that deficit in a minute. They indicate increased public spending for temporary jobs in a pre-election period. They indicate, to me, another round of heavy external borrowing for the non-productive sector while the productive private sector, which has, historically, created and retained permanent jobs in Barbados, will be put under greater and greater pressure.

I would like the honourable Member to seriously reflect. I know that he is a great believer in capital spending and I have some sympathy with his views. As a matter of fact, six or eight years ago, I ventured to think there was some substance in what he said on capital expenditure. I used to believe that he was probably correct when he said that the private sector in Barbados merely reflect economic activity – they are not creators of the economic activity. All I can say is that, from an objective analysis of this Appropriation Bill, I can only come to this conclusion that over the past year we have had increased public sector spending, generating a deficit, on an average, of over $100 million a year. We have had corresponding increases in unemployment. These are facts that cannot be denied. We have had a progressive reduction in private sector activity. We have had increased operating expenses and increased spending, and at the end of the day you have more and more unemployment in Barbados and a falling standard of living, as he pointed out when he refers to the dramatic fall in our import levels, which in this type of society means a tremendous drop in the consumption index, and therefore the standard of living in Barbados. If you look at the composition of our imports, foods and medicines, and when you are hoping to get $55 million, when you are projecting $55 million from 10 per cent Stamp Duty, which includes food and medicine, if that is the correct figure, then you are really to the bare bones. Just look at the Economic Report and see what the levels are like.

5.15 p.m.

I will now move on to the second part of his presentation, that is an analysis of the trends within the present Estimates, which relates to the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill. In 1984–85, I was surprised to discover that the Current Account surplus was a mere $2.1 million, and we have to recall that that took place despite the fact that we had two Budgets in that year. Indeed, what also surprised me is that if you were to analyse the situation in respect of current expenditure and revenue over the years since 1980–81, you will find that the Government had had an overall deficit during those years, I believe some $11 million, and now projects a deficit of some $17 million for 1985–86. That cannot be said to be good management of the resources of the country, because you are talking about a decade during which, on average, current revenue has made no contribution to capital expenditure, and in fact borrowings had to be made to finance your total capital expenditure programme and make a contribution to current revenue.

If you look back at the deficits on Current Account from 1981–82, you will see that it is only in one area that there was a surplus, but if you look very carefully, you will see, over the four-year period, that there has been an overall deficit of $11 million, and I well suspect this $2 million might well turn into a deficit, and I will

tell you why. I have looked very carefully, and I have had several, not bets but certainly arguments, with your predecessor on the very high level of income projected for March of each year when the Estimates come before the House, and a figure of some $89 million or thereabouts is usually projected. If you look back you will see that that is hardly ever realised. It certainly was not realised last year, I have checked that fact, and I believe that from previous debates, it was not realised. I would not like to vouch for last year, but if it was realised last year, if you look at last year's Estimates, you will see that you did not get the $89 million which was projected.

I believe that at this time in our history we should learn from the lessons of the past. The lesson that we must learn is that this inordinate public sector spending, these high deficits being run by Government year after year, as indicated in this Appropriation Bill, not only tell a story which can be translated into cold financial and economic language, but these deficits have serious human consequences, more appropriately dealt with in the wider constituency of a budget reply.

It is a serious thing when the Government actually is projecting an overall gap of $197 million in its financing needs this year to meet its capital programme and to contribute towards its deficit on Current Account. Indeed, if I may be allowed to glance – as I think the practice has been to allow such glances though not an indepth look – at the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill – you will see that the Government seems to be planning to finance the entire deficit out of capital receipts from borrowings: Canadian International Development Agency, $6 million; Caribbean Development Bank, $11.9 million; Inter-American Development Bank, $20.8 million; World Bank, $11.1 million; USAID, $10 million; European Development Bank, $62 million; and funds to be raised through loans, $135 million.

I think that his job has been made a bit easier, because I understand that the $39 million from Japan has come in. I have heard so, and I was looking for your first statement on the reserves which would reflect the arrival of the loan from Japan. I am not quite sure, but it would be interesting to know; so part of the $135 million has been raised.

I really feel that this situation is very tight, and the way out is not through the line that you are taking. I would readily, although I do not like borrowing money, give critical support to foreign currency brought to strengthen the domestic sectors of the economy. I am cautious, in the light of experiences during the past eight years, to support a programme that is based on foreign currency loans to finance non-productive capital projects.

It is interesting that the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance focussed on a few things that I would immediately have focussed on, and one is the relative decline in the yield from corporation taxes. That is bad news. It has very little to do with the reduction in the tax rate. If you look at it carefully, and if you look carefully at the companies in Barbados that are liable to Corporation Tax and those which are exempt from Corporation Tax, you will see that you are dealing basically with the same problem again, that is, reduced expenditures consequential on your compression programme, your wages policy *inter alia.*

What is also of interest is the relative small increase in Income Tax revenue in a year in which there have been substantial increases, as indicated by the Honourable Minister of Finance, in wages, and where a substantial increase in those wages has occurred in the public sector from persons who are subject to PAYE deductions, and therefore it cannot be said that that falloff is due to any failure of any individual to pay the amount of taxes that they should pay legitimately, as all of us do, of course. I think that that falloff, or the relatively small increase in Income Tax which we have noted, is a reflection of very serious unemployment in Barbados, and I think unemployment in terms of people who would normally be subject to the PAYE system. That is why I believe that a lot of this unemployment has crept from among the working classes, and a lot of it, as you now know is in the middle classes at the moment.

5.25 p.m.

I was also surprised that the honourable Member should have avoided in the Appropriation Bill making a clear statement that he would not seek to appropriate one penny which was the result of increases in property taxes, because he has known the crippling effects which that has had on all the pensioners, the poor people, the retired people within Barbados. Huge areas of St. Michael South Central were looking forward to the Minister of Finance saying that he would amend the Appropriation Bill to make appropriate adjustments in the Land Tax. Areas like Belleville, the Pine, Carringtons Village and Halls Road were all looking forward to that statement from the Honourable Minister of Finance. But he seems to have endorsed the situation where the tax rate can be reduced and evaluations increased, and more taxes levied on the poor people whom I have the honour to represent. I believe there are poor people in his constituency as well, so I believe that in the Budget we can look forward to some relief in that area. I am just making suggestions. The tone of my present speech is principally to make responsible suggestions to the new Minister of Finance.

I note that he has also avoided the vexed question of the present appropriations as reflected in the Appropriation Bill from the Hotel and Restaurant Sales Tax, and I would hope that, as someone who has laboured so hard in tourism, as someone who would wish to see a vibrant tourist industry, he would take appropriate steps

to reduce those impositions via the Hotel and Restaurant Sales Tax as soon as possible.

It has worried me a bit that he was able to focus in the Appropriation Bill on the relatively small revenues as indicated would accrue from foreign sales corporations, and he did not take this opportunity to signal to the country whether he will be part and parcel of any appropriations derived from gambling or casino gambling. The public would be very interested in your approach to these matters of moral significance.

I have referred very fleetingly to the stamp duties. I do not propose to traverse that path again, but I am still worried and confused over this business of a 10 per cent Stamp Duty yielding $55 million. The honourable Member may recall that in 1981–82, when the stamp duties were two per cent, they yielded some $18 million to $19 million. I recall a recent debate in this Parliament where there was a question of whether it would be $15 million or $20 million, and it worked out some $19 million. What has happened over the years, it would seem to me, if these Estimates are correct and the yield is only in the region of $55 million, is that the compression of this economy has been even more severe than was anticipated. There is some possible credence to that latter assumption, as intimated by the very small projected surplus of $2 million.

I also want to draw to the honourable Member's attention two other things. I think the honourable Member should look at the Appropriation Bill again and see whether the drastic reduction in the contribution to Government's revenue from the profits of the Central Bank is really a tenable situation. I also want him to give an explanation as to whether that erosion of profit is due to high expenditures within that institution, or due to high interest payments for short term borrowings, or due to early payments for the debt for the monstrosity which overhangs this distinguished Parliament. I refer to the new Central Bank building which, of course, would not have gone up if we had the final say in the matter, unless, of course, it was also responsible for the protection of the balance of payments which would appear to have been the prime purpose for accepting the loan. We understand these things.

The honourable Member has to look very carefully and see whether the levels of taxation envisaged in this Appropriation Bill in respect of non-tax revenues, largely impositions on people by Government Departments for services for which they have already paid, or thought they had paid, is a policy line along which he would wish to continue. These are points that I am drawing to his attention, because I believe if these things are looked at very closely, the honourable Member might be able to make some impact on the economic management of the country in a short period of time.

I am appalled, but not surprised, that Charges of Debt this year will amount to $105.229 million. In a situation where interest rates have fallen considerably, particularly the Eurodollar rates – I believe that we have one or two Eurodollar loans to start to pay this year; I think the Orion Bank loan comes up this year – which means that, in, relative terms, if you compare the amount spent in previous years, the impact of charges of debt is in fact more pronounced, because although the interest rates will fall, the total amount has climbed up considerably.

I also invite the honourable Member, in the area of expenditure, to look and see whether or not too large an allocation of expenditure is not being diverted towards Defence and Security, and certainly not to seek to justify it on the grounds that you have a lot of security guards being paid out of that vote. You cannot seek to justify spending $29 million on those grounds. I am talking about Capital and Current Expenditure combined, which is a whopping sum, and whether or not some of that appropriation could not be applied to the Capital Expenditure on the Police Force with considerable benefit to a wider number of people employed within the Force, and to a wider benefit of the community as a whole.

There are other areas in which I would prefer to see the priorities of Government spending arranged to be more in keeping with the crying wishes and needs of the majority of people in this country, but I do not think it would be appropriate at this time to deal with those matters. However, I would urge the Government to look very carefully at its allocation to housing and see whether that should not be increased, and at the same time to look very critically at its intervention in the domestic market for credit and see whether, as a direct instrument of policy, it should not be diverting substantially larger amounts of funds to banking institutions for onlending.
5.35 p.m.

My final point is that the honourable Member did not look at the whole question of financial institutions. I think he dealt with what is usually called, by clever-speaking economists, 'in our financial sector,' which usually means the sector that pays away all the taxpayers' money most of the time. I will warn you that unless he takes urgent steps to protect the capital of the taxpayers within a major financial institution, namely, the Barbados National Bank, you might find that we have to put in further equity. The vote for $44 million in equity contributions will have to be substantially increased or he will have to find a new vote, because I think technically, without the guarantee, the capital has virtually been wiped out. It is just a question of which year you get provision for what losses. It is as simple as that.

I think that I have used my wider experience in these matters.....

Laughter.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: .....to draw to the attention the relative neophyte on the other side, the areas on which he should focus on this occasion. I am sure that, should success attend his tenure as Minister of Finance, he will always be grateful for the forthright and far-reaching comments which I have made, even if only in capsule form today, while retaining the major elements for the Budget.

Applause.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): Mr. Speaker, there are many positive and encouraging points about the Barbadian economy and about the fiscal position which have been identified by the Honourable Prime Minister, and which bear repetition. He has referred to the growth of 2.5 per cent in the economy. He has referred to the growth in the tourism and agricultural sectors, the fact that the Government banker, that is, the Central Bank, right now holds no paper for Government and to other positive features. I shall return to them in the course of my contribution, but for now, I merely want to contrast those positive features with the only positive thing that we can identify in the speech made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes). It is the fact, that for the first time – I think he has attributed it to his wider experience – he has not used expressions like, "the economy is about to collapse", nor has he spoken in his usual declamatory style. I think that, in that respect, he is showing some experience, for with the passage of time, I think he has learnt that his extreme and extravagant language like, "The economy is about to collapse", and "the living standards of the people have been ruined", has not made any impact, and that his declamatory style has only served to attract him enemies.

In his speech, however, he has identified a point which constitutes a major divide between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party, and I think it has got to be highlighted and made explicit for all. He criticized the fact that we have constantly engaged in deficit financing in order to carry out our capital works. He said that, translated in human terms, it means misery, and the clear indication is that the Democratic Labour Party now, in 1985, are much like the Mormons – they have learnt nothing and they have forgotten nothing – and they would be prepared, if given office, to return to the pre-1976 position, when they allowed unemployment levels in this country to reach over 24 per cent, when they had the slack in the economy, and not involve the country in massive capital expenditure.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Nobody is going to take a word you say!)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The position is that we have always taken the view that Government has a major responsibility, in the context of the structure of the Barbadian economy, to maintain activity and momentum. I am proud to say that, notwithstanding the fiscal restraint and the stabilization policies which we pursue in the light of the adverse effect of the international recession, we were still able to carry forward and carry through a major public sector programme, 1981–1984, to the extent that we were able to reduce the unemployment from what would have been the pre-1976 levels. I want that policy to be clearly understood.

I want to ask the Democratic Labour Party's spokesmen, what would they have done in the present circumstances, and whether they would have been prepared not to involve themselves in the capital works of recent years, and so have allowed the unemployment figures to be not 18 per cent as they are unfortunately today, but to be 25 per cent and 26 per cent as took place in the last years of their Administration? It is a point of difference of approach which I think we have got to make explicit, because it is a major difference between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party. In that debate, I am proud to be on the side of the Barbados Labour Party, because if we were going to have human misery, we would have to have it under the Democratic Labour Party. They appeared not to involve themselves in deficit financing, prepared not to take the lead in stimulating the economy and somehow think that the private sector can do it in Barbados without Government support and without Government lead.

Before I return to the positive features about the Barbadian fiscal position and about the Barbadian economy on which I started, I wish to deal with another point involving the Democratic Labour Party, because I think that they have spoken within the last weeks in very equivocal tones about their position in relation to the sugar industry. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that on the occasion of a major debate which took place in this House on the sugar industry, the honourable gentleman who has just spoken delivered himself on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party, or so we were led to believe, and said that the Democratic Labour Party was committed to the rescuing of the sugar industry in this country and that they favoured an approach of direct subsidy. It was very noticeable that the Right Honourable Member for St. John did not speak in that debate, and a few weeks after he told the country in a radio programme, and he made it clear afterwards in the course of the interview, that the sugar industry is dead and that he does not think that any money should be put into it. So we have the position of the leader of the Democratic Labour Party –

and he makes no bones about the fact that he is leader – whose position is one of no support for the sugar industry in this country, and we have the spokesman on Finance, the honourable gentleman who just sat down, saying that they are prepared to make a direct subsidy, and I think at one point he mentioned the figure of $78 million.

5.45 p.m.

Which position is the position of the Democratic Labour Party? All of my experience with organizations tell me that you should go to the top of the hierarchical structure when you want to have an official statement.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation: I mentioned $78 million dollars as the totality of the price support plus the support from the increases in the price of sugar since 1982. You cannot get away with that trick!

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I think that he has deepened the equivocation, and even his friend on the front bench sitting by him holds his head down in shame. The position is that if you look at the hierarchical structure and you determine who is at top, and who is therefore in a position to make an authoritative pronouncement on a matter, I have to go with the Right Honourable Member for St. John, and we have to abide with his position, and that is, that as far as they are concerned, the sugar industry in this country is dying and no money should be placed behind it.

I wish to reject the charge too that these Estimates represent any attempt on our part to create short term employment, any attempt on our part to be involved in electioneering through public funds. The facts are that we are now closer to an election than we were last year this time, and last year we budgeted for $189 million for capital works, while this year we are budgeting for $179 million. If we were to follow your argument, we would assume that the nearer you are to an election, the more money you would be spending. But when you are dealing with us on this side, you are dealing with responsible leaders of Government, and we are not prepared to squander any funds simply for electioneering purposes. And the facts do not support that charge.

I return now to the positive features about the economy on which I started. The first point which I wish to make is of a general nature, that we cannot look at the Barbados economy except in relative terms, and we have to appreciate that there are very few countries in the region – in fact, no country in the region – that has recorded growth of 2.5 per cent in the year under review. I believe that Guyana's economy has grown by 2 per cent, Jamaica by .5 of 1 per cent, and there has been decline in Trinidad and Tobago and decline in our sister islands in the Eastern Caribbean. So, looking around the world at countries with our resource base and the openness of our economy, Barbados will be one of the few countries in the world that has come out of the experience of the international recession recording a growth of 2.5 per cent over the last year. We have to see our performance in comparative terms, and we have to recognize that it is a favourable commentary on the strength and the resilience of our economy that we have been able to record a growth of 2.5 per cent.

The second good feature about the economy results from a look at the various sectors. The Honourable Prime Minister spoke about tourism, reminding us that we have had as good a winter this year, thus, far as we have ever had, and reminding us that we have regained the visitor level of 1980–81, which was the high point before the recession stepped in. He concedes that summer constitutes an imponderable at this point and we have to speak with caution, because we do not know whether we are going to have anything like the minimum level which would make for a successful year, minimum level being about 50 per cent during the course of the summer.

Now that we are on this point of tourism, I need to correct the last honourable Member who spoke and remind him that the Barbados Government, this Government, announced, since last October, a package of assistance for hoteliers and for hotels in this country, and that that is being implemented. It is not true that we have stood by idly and allowed businesses, including hotels, to go into bankruptcy without offering them any assistance. We have rescheduled the loans. Many of the loans which people had for fifteen years, such as hotels, have been now extended to twenty years. Many who had ten-year loans have found that the extension has gone now to fifteen years. We have allowed a duty waiver on the import of material for refurbishing purposes. We have undertaken to have a look at the currently high water rates, which constitute an enormous burden on many hotels. All of these elements constitute part of the package which we announced ever since October, and which is already being applied.

With respect to manufacturing, I think the point has got to be made that even though we have lost jobs in manufacturing, particularly in the stitching sector, the manufacturing sector has, in effect, become a more efficient sector, and we have seen the growth of data services, we have seen the further growth of electronics, and there is some further evidence that we may be beginning to regain the market which we lost within the region in furniture through extra-regional exports. We have already sent off the first shipment of ordered furniture to North America.

The point which I have got to make, and it is one which I will be urging very vigorously upon the Prime Minister, is that the consultants who came down here two years or so ago and tried to define for us a new strategy

in industrial development, identified the area of medical supplies and equipment as one of the three emphases now for the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation. I have no evidence that any serious work has been done in that particular area, and I think that we owe it to ourselves to put some pressure on the Industrial Development Corporation to get ahead with promoting medical supplies and medical equipment as an area in which we can attract foreign capital and foreign manufacturing activity, with the same zeal that we have proceeded to attract data services and electronics and other areas.
5.55 p.m.

The retail sector has suffered some decline in activity, but I do not accept that we in the Government have been responsible for the bankruptcies that have taken place in that sector or in any other sector. The point must be made, for the Record, that the Barbados Labour Party Government saved the sugar industry by our price support schemes, that we have come to the rescue of the hotel sector and that, through liberal price control, we gave some breathing space in a situation where inflation was down to the retail sector. But given the depth of the recession that was affecting the entire world, it was unavoidable that there would be some bankruptcies not only here, but everywhere, as indeed there were.

I take the view, however, that there are one or two of the measures currently in existence which may be constituting a disincentive to employment in this country and that we may have to look in particular at integrating the Severance Payment Scheme with the Unemployment Benefit Scheme in such a way as to ensure that they do not constitute a disincentive to employment creation among the commercial sector of this country. I can assure honourable Members that Government is looking to remove these disincentives wherever they exist, and that a study of the matter is in train.

We all know of the problems being experienced in the agricultural sector, and not because of any lack of effort in terms of the matters that fall within our competence. Indeed, we have had, as the Honourable Prime Minister has announced, an increase in output, but we have been suffering a decline in the value of our receipts because of the fact that our dollar is so strong in relation to the European currencies, in which we are paid, principally, for our main product, sugar. But I take some delight in the fact that, notwithstanding the adverse external factors, that is a sector that has enjoyed some growth.

Another factor which I think is positive and encouraging is that at this point, the Central Bank, the Government's banker, has no Government paper holding. That means that we do have some room for legitimate accommodation by the Central Bank of the Central Government.

Some $44 million has been provided in the Estimates for commercial ventures, the Arawak Cement Plant, Caricargo, Caribbean Airways, the Broiler Breeder Project, the National Oil Company and one or two others. The chief spokesman for the Opposition, in effect, says that this is why we are wasting money, because these are uneconomic commercial ventures which the Government has found itself involved in. I want to deal with a few of the projects which this money is intended to support in order to reject and refute the criticism which has been directed at Government.

Let us take Caricargo. Caricargo is a regional project, which started off as a joint project between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Barbados following the 1979 agreement between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Barbados. It is a cargo service and it has been efficiently run. That is the first point that we need to make. It also provides a major support service for manufacturing activities in Barbados, in Trinidad and Tobago and in one or two of the other islands, so any money that we give to Caricargo in order to allow it to preserve its capital base represents a subsidy to the manufacturing sector, because without Caricargo, a lot of the manufacturers in Barbados, for example, who are producing for the U.S. market, using Miami as a gateway, or producing for Puerto Rico, and there are people here in the printing industry producing for Puerto Rico, could not get their goods shipped, certainly not within any reasonable time between the point of production and the point of consumption. So Caricargo must be seen as a direct subsidy to the manufacturing effort in Barbados.

Equally, Caribbean Airways must be seen in that light, because though it is true that we are not currently receiving the same level of visitors from Europe as we did up to three years ago, when I think the figure rose as high as 40 000, there is still sizeable numbers of European visitors to Barbados. And since to date we have not secured an agreement with BWIA, British Airways, or indeed with any other carrier to take over the routes, it means that we have to be out there providing transportation for those who would wish to come here to enjoy our tourist facilities. Therefore, the amount provided for Caribbean Airways must be seen as a subsidy to our tourism effort and to our tourism industry.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to remind the honourable Member that he has just five minutes to conclude his contribution.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As far as the Arawak Cement Plant is concerned, that plant is in its second year of operation. Much of the

money that is being voted represents a continuation, and the finalisation, of the process of capitalisation. In addition, we ought to see it in the light that cement is being dumped on the world market today by other producers. It follows that the Arawak Cement Plant is having a difficult time as far as the marketing of its product is concerned because there is a surplus of cement in the world, and it is not unusual in those circumstances, and given the fact that we have not completed the process of capitalisation of the venture, to find that in the second year of operation we have to provide some capital for it.
6.05 p.m.

I think, therefore, without going any further, that looking at these projects which will be attracting the $44 million, we will have to agree that this represents a wise investment, notwithstanding the fact that it may be argued that it is an investment which is not accompanied by any expansion of the capacity of the ventures concerned.

The Prime Minister made a point about unemployment which I think is worthy of repetition, because though no satisfactory explanation has come either out of the United States of America or out of Western Europe, it is a fact that we are witnessing a post-energy crisis phenomenon in the world, where even though you have a situation in which economies are growing, unemployment remains high in those economies, or may even be growing too. We have a situation in which the United States of America, for example, is experiencing high economic growth, large economic activity, and at the same time unemployment is high. The United Kingdom economy has recovered a lot of its economic momentum, and yet unemployment remains at an all high level, and that is a phenomenon which we are witnessing throughout the world. Unfortunately, it seems to be applicable to Barbados, but I am satisfied that the Government, through the public sector emphases identified and mentioned in these Estimates, and in the opening speech of the Honourable Prime Minister, is making as determined and as bold an attempt, through its road programmes, through its attention to the institutions which could add to productive capacity in this country, through its emphasis on housing, through its emphasis on expanded tourism, as we can get in the present economic circumstances. It is for that reason that I have great pleasure in seconding this Resolution and commending these Estimates, as presented, to this Honourable House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I had decided to go to dinner at 6 o'clock. I have just sent the Marshal to find out if dinner is ready, and if you would just give me a second or two, since we are going to finish at 8 o'clock, I would be in a position to make the appropriate motion.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, I join this debate to give my support to the Appropriation Bill, and I also want to comment on some of those points at issue which were raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. But before I do so, I feel that I have a case to put, because these Estimates which have been put before us are not merely a set of numbers of just a set of facts. They do indeed attempt to embody an economic policy and they ought to be interpreted within the context of the recent development of the Barbados economy, a very sober stock-taking as to where we are at present and an even more sober projection as to where we are trending in the future.

I first want to say that our Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure reflect an economic policy of a Government which has just safely brought this country in a stable condition through an era of economic turbulence, which believes that there is a light at the end of the tunnel and want to enlarge that light to make it more possible for the Barbadian people to enjoy a resurgence in the standard of living that they deserve.

To deal with the state of the economy, it would be true to say that the Barbados economy today is in a very finely balanced state. Over the past three years we have had to endure a relative drop in real activity in the economy, but in 1984 we were able to report a resurgence in activity to the extent of 2.5 per cent. When I say we are in 'a finely balanced state' from an economic point of view, I am just simply seeking to convey the view that the 2.5 per cent rate of growth, although welcome, does not yet in itself herald a sufficiently strong recovery of the Barbados economy for us from the Government side to do those things in terms of social investments that we would love to do in order to improve the standard of living of our people. Not only has our economy grown after three years of relative decline, but we have come through that period of economic turbulence with our balance of payments position in a relatively sound state. Indeed, we do now have four months of reserves, part of which I would be honest enough to admit might be due to a small amount of foreign borrowing. We have not in the three years reneged on the repayment of our foreign debt, and we have brought the level of inflation in this country down to levels which have never been experienced in the past 17 years. In the midst of economic turbulence this Government continued its investment programme in the area of road development and education. In those post-turbulent economic days we also successfully completed the largest industrial plant in Barbados, in the form of the Arawak Cement Plant, and we also successfully concluded the completion of the largest hotel in this country in the form of the Heywoods Holiday Village.

My point, therefore, is that we are now at the stage where we can speak with relatively more confidence than in the recent past of some renewed strength in the

Barbados economy, and our Government's policy is that, to the extent possible, and within the limits of sound balance of payments policies, and equally within the limit of some fiscal policies, we should begin to translate that renewed strength in the Barbados economy into positive benefits for the people of this society. As such, these Estimates have been prepared with one eye on addressing our most urgent problem, the problem of reducing unemployment, and with the other eye towards maintaining a sound external position as well as maintaining a sound fiscal position, because there would be no advantage, as far as we are concerned, in radically reducing our foreign exchange position only for the purpose of bringing forward a one-shot increase in employment. So these Estimates have been carefully prepared to ease the burden of unemployment within the context of maintaining a stable external position and maintaining a sound and prudent fiscal position.

6.15 p.m.

We in economics have to deal in terms of relativities. Numbers do not mean anything to us unless we can express them in terms of relatives. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central spoke in terms of the size, for example, of the deficit, without explaining to us what that means in relative terms. Indeed, the deficit of which the honourable Member speaks represents only 8 per cent of our total output, as compared to corresponding deficits of 20 per cent and upwards, which tend to characterise economies which are in dire distress or are on the point of collapse.

I want to establish that the deficit we are contemplating this year in support of the twin objective of easing the burden on unemployment, while maintaining a sound fiscal and balance of payments position, is not an outrageous deficit in itself, nor an outrageous deficit in comparison with international standards. Later in my presentation I will obviously have to address the humping principle – when is a deficit too high or too low? – because the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has not yet begun to address his mind to that particular issue.

We have also honestly to recognize that, within the context of our financial provisions this year, the extraordinary hump in Government expenditures comes not from our attempts to increase employment through capital works, but the extraordinary hump that is anticipated in Government expenditures comes from our honourable attempt to pay out the wage increase that we have recently concluded with the Public Service. Perhaps the issue that should exercise the mind of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is the issue as to whether we can indefinitely continue to postpone dealing with wage restraint in the Barbados economy. Can we continue indefinitely to increase the personal emoluments component of our current budget by $60 million each year? We are now reaching the situation where the financing of the wages of public servants in this society is growing at a rate faster than the growth of current revenue, and sooner or later the Barbados public will have to understand that a wage restraint policy, properly executed, is part and parcel of the proper financial management of this society, of our efforts to maintain and protect employment, and also part and parcel of our efforts to maintain a sound external position.

I want now to deal with some of the points of issue that were raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. He continues to misunderstand completely what a stabilisation policy is about, and he even more fundamentally misunderstands the triumphs that has been embodied in the stabilisation programme that was successfully concluded by the Government of this country.

We are a small economy which imports 60 per cent of everything that we consume, whether that consumption is for private consumption or involves the use of imported commodities and repayment for investment purposes, and to that extent the availability of foreign exchange and the management of our foreign exchange resources set the limit of our standard of living in Barbados and define the developmental possibilities of this country in general. Whenever the occasion arises where our foreign exchange earnings begin to fall off or are threatened, we have a responsibility as a Government to bring our domestic expenditure in line with our reduced capacity to buy goods from abroad. It is a very simple economic principle, that for every one dollar in new spending that we create, we must expect that 60 cents of it will flow out of this country in the form of the purchase of imports; and if our export earnings are beginning to fall, we have a responsibility as a serious Government to restrain the growth of domestic expenditure so as to reconcile with the availability of foreign exchange. In a nutshell, that has been the totality of our policy over the last three years, that our Government, without banning one import, utilised credit controls and restrictions on the growth of income to tailor domestic spending to keep it consistent with our projections relating to the availability of foreign exchange.

In economics the name of the game is trade off, and whenever we take an action in one direction, we should expect a reaction in some other direction. So if our total economic policy requires us to reduce domestic expenditure in support of the balance of payments, we must, as reasonable people, expect that there will be an economic trade off, and that economic trade off has been that we have not been able to support as many new entrants to the labour force as we would have liked, nor have we been in a position to allow the Barbadian people to spend as much as they would have liked.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has a responsibility to tell this Chamber whether, from his perspective, the maintenance of a sound balance of payments position in a small open economy, which depends for its consumption and investment on 60 per cent of imports, does not supersede any other social objective which may present itself. To blame us for having cut social services in support of the balance of payments is, to my mind, a false view. It is a false view in so far as if we had not taken the stops to protect the balance of payments, we would have reached the stage that Guyana has now reached, that Trinidad is gradually reaching, where bad balance of payments in one area induced the complete social collapse in another area.

I want now to deal with some of the specific points of issue that he raised pertaining to particular aspects of these expenditures. I want, first of all, to deal with the subsidy to sugar. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central reminds me very much of a vegetarian who has suddenly become a meat eater and feels compelled to go all the way to cannibalism. A year ago we were hearing strange noises from the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, how the sugar industry was being run by a bunch of incompetents, how the Government support for the sugar industry was being siphoned off by those same gentlemen and being used for the purchase of race horses and to make investments in manufacturing.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That was four year ago.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what has the honourable Member risen?

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The honourable Member said one year ago. I say that is incorrect. I say it is three or four years ago, 1982.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the late and great honourable Member for St. Thomas would have wished me to yield, and I yield.

He has the responsibility of telling the people of this country how much taxes he would raise to put the subsidy to the sugar industry as an item in this country's Budget. But it is unusual in this society for the Government to make such direct subsidies to privately owned enterprises. He also has to tell us by how much the inclusion of this subsidy to the sugar industry increased the deficit about which he is so very concerned, and whether that deficit would become even more unmanageable within the context of the financial times in which we find ourselves. How could we possibly finance a $78 million subsidy to the sugar industry by way of a direct subvention through the Budget?

6.25 p.m.

Our Government has been the Government which has pioneered support for the sugar industry in this society, and we will continue to give the sugar industry whatever support we judge that it needs, by means which would not impose further taxation burdens on the people of the society. And how can you say that you would put a subsidy in the Budget in order to support the sugar industry, whilst you say at the same time to the people of this society that you would raise taxes in order to give to the sugar barons, when you confessed two years ago that they were incompetent and evil men.

He speaks in terms of the fact that our financing of the Budget being inappropriate, and he criticizes the fact that we are proposing to draw at least $25 million from the banking system to finance this year's total deficit. His argument is that Government borrowing $25 million from the banking system to assist in financing the deficit is going to tighten the liquidity position facing the private sector. His argument is incomplete. We have traditionally taken at least $25 million from the banking system to finance our deficit. So maintaining our banking system credit at $25 million could only tighten liquidity if you could equally establish that there had been a fall off in the growth of deposits in the banking system. And he has not been honest enough to tell this Chamber, and he is in no position to tell this Chamber, that there has been a fall off in the growth of deposits in our banking system. So if he maintains, I submit, that a $25 million draw down from the banking system as a support for our total deficit, in the context of a situation where the deposits in the banking system are growing, rather than liquidity to the private sector being restricted, in point of fact, implicit in our financial policies, is a liberalization of credit to the private sector. I submit this for your consideration, and it is a matter of fact.

Let me also note his strictures against us in relation to our use of the NIS surpluses for financial purposes. Our NIS surpluses represent forced savings of the Barbadian society, and it is to my mind, and the mind of all reasonable people, a good and happy thing that the forced savings of a people should be directed back into activities which are designed to increase their standard of living. That is the broad principle. The financial practice, however, is that in previous years, the National Insurance surpluses used to go through the banking system and then were lent back by the banking system to Government. All we are doing is reducing the interest cost to Government by taking the services directly, rather than taking it by way of a two-step manoeuvre. It is a

cheaper process, and it is using the forced savings of the people of this society as the basis upon which Government finances the investment in the public sector to the people's advantage.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Did you read the Act?)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want more specifically to deal with the question as to when is a defict too large, because, in a sense, that is the fundamental point at issue that was raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I submit, by way of principle, that a deficit is too large if its financing has to be by way of large scale commercial borrowing, or has to be secured by way of massive Central Bank accommodation, or has to be by way of a drain of credit by the banking system away from the private sector and towards Government. It cannot be argued in this particular year that any of these practices have been identified by the Government, because one would recognize, in seeking to finance our deficit, the largest proportion of the financing is institutional financing, which the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central well knows tends to be the kind of financing that one wants to use for developmental purposes, because it is typically long term financing, with a grace period before the repayment of principal at relatively low rates of interest.

Equally, we have already established that our expectation is that our dependence on domestic banking system credit for the purposes of financing this year's Budget will not be at a level which will incur any squeeze on the credit available to the private sector, since we are maintaining commercial banking credit to Government at levels in conformity to previous years in the context of growth in the policy of the banking system. Also, we are not making any provision in this year's Estimates for any large scale, short term commercial borrowing in order to finance our developmental needs. So, by all accepted principles of proper financing, our deficit cannot be said to be too large. An 8 per cent deficit in the context of our stage of economic development is a deficit which we can easily manage, particularly having regard to the fact that our debt position is not yet at a stage where it has caused us to have to restrict our consumption in order to repay.

I must repeat again that a deficit amounting to 8 per cent of GDP cannot, in the context of the Barbados economy at its present stage of our development, be regarded as too large, by reference either to financial criteria or by reference either to developmental imperatives. I support the size of the deficit, given the Government's commitment this year to ease the burden of unemployment on the backs of the people of this country. If the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is truly concerned about the level of unemployment, he has a responsibility to tell this Chamber and the nation what would be the level of unemployment in Barbados, if the Government were not willing to inject $197 million in the economy over and above what it takes from the economy? What would be the level of unemployment in the absence of the deficit?

He also spoke loosely about the need for increased subventions to the housing sector. Apparently, he does not read carefully, because if he were to read the Estimates, he would see that whereas last year we provided and spent $7.5 million on housing on the public account, this year, we are proposing to spend $12.1 million. That is almost double our subvention within the context of straitened financial circumstances.

But let me go forward. In addition to this $12.1 million, he might also be aware that the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation is shortly to get a bond issue of $20 million. And, mercifully, a large part of the USAID housing guarantee loans, which had been earmarked for new home construction, has not as yet been spent. So one anticipates that in addition to the $12.1 million provided in the Budget, plus the $20 million to be raised by bond issues, there will be an additional $8 million of mortgage financing available to the BMFC in order to promote new home construction among low income groups in this society. What more can we do? This is in addition to our Sites and Services Programme, which is designed to give people the sites so as to enable them to build their homes when once the financing becomes available.

6.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a little bit of time talking about the problems of unemployment.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid that the time limit only allows you three minutes to do all of that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We are not at all pleased that the level of unemployment is 18 per cent, but our Government does not believe that the solution to unemployment merely should take the form of a continuing subsidy to our productive sectors. The day we begin to adopt the policy of putting sugar on welfare, tourism on welfare, manufacturing on welfare and housing on welfare, we are going to cripple the spirit of entrepreneurship in this country and entirely collapse our long term prospects. In order to increase employment, we have to do it by three means – creation of new enterprises, expansion of existing ones, and reconciling the availability of skills with the demand for skills as they are likely to evolve. The first two, I submit, are market constrained matters; that the creation of new enterprises and the expansion of new ones depend on the availability of the market. Rather than our continuing to bury our heads in the sand and hope that the economies in CARICOM will save us, I urge the honourable Members on the other side to join this Government in our venture in seeking extra-

regional markets in our manufacturing, in diversifying the scope of our tourism industry and, more importantly, in joining this Government in serious efforts to rescue the sugar industry, though not by means of a direct subsidy in the Budget.

To conclude, this set of Estimates represents fiscal prudence within the context of an economy which is in a finely balanced stage. They are designed to ease the burden of our unemployment without destroying our sound balance of payments position or putting the Government in an unsubstantial fiscal state.

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, what a tonic for me to go to dinner with. It is an economic lecture, and I am grateful to be in Parliament today. Simple language – facts not impressions!

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 7.30 p.m. this day.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the honourable member for St. Michael West was about to make his contribution to this debate. If he so desires, he may now continue.

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

Mr. Speaker, a remarkable thing happened during the debate of this Appropriation Bill. The honourable Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham), in the course of his presentation identified what he called "remarkable phenomena." He said that, in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America, there was a phenomenon that the economies were demonstrating growth and yet there was high unemployment. After having listed those two, he gave the phenomenon of the whole world and he said that Barbados was falling in that phenomenon where there was a growth of 2.5 per cent in the economy, and yet there was the lingering unemployment which was affecting the economy. Then, as he sat down, the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) addressed this Honourable Chamber, and the honourable member for St. Peter, in a remarkable speech, identified, in essence, the real economic policy which should explain to the honourable Member for Christ Church East these phenomena of which he spoke. The honourable member for St. Peter recommended, unabashedly and without any difficulty, an economic policy which is grounded in economic theory, but which takes hardly any cognisance of the realities of life in the communities in which these economic theories are applied or may be applied.

In examining this Appropriation Bill, we are able to see a philosophy which I believe is a divider between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party. I am going to take a few moments to explain to the honourable Member for Christ Church East and this Honourable House why the phenomena which he identified are not really so phenomenal. They are really the results of a specific policy which is grounded in a philosophical belief. That belief is that a certain sector of the community is totally unimportant and that sector of the community does not need to be bothered about.

To define what I am talking about, during an election in 1968 in the United States, when Richard Nixon was making his assault on the Presidency again, he was advised by a young consultant called Greenspan, who, after taking a critical path analysis, recommended to him that he could win the election. All he had to do was to ignore completely the poor cities of the United States, because in those poor cities the blacks had taken over as the majority in the cities and he could ignore the black vote completely if he leaned towards the majority vote in the United States. If he eliminated the blacks from his consideration, he would win the election – and Richard Nixon followed that pattern slavishly and was successful.

In the United Kingdom and in the United States, the present-day economic policies of Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Reagan are policies which, to a large extent, ignore a substantial sector of the poor, the poverty striken in those communities, and therefore, as far as the two leaders are concerned, it really does not matter whether there is massive unemployment. In fact, there is, because such massive unemployment only affects the bottom sector of the population of those communities. It is now accepted that that is part of the supply-siders philosophy of how a country should survive, and it is no big thing that in Barbados we have been the same phenomena because, as I listened to the honourable Member for St. Peter as he explained the policy of the Government, the antidote which he provided for the massive difficulties in this country could be found in his words "the control of credit," credit controls and wage controls, which are the bulwark of the stabilisation policy of the Barbados Labour Party. I wish to say, as we review this Appropriation Bill for these Estimates that we part company with the Barbados Labour Party on this matter. I wish to suggest that a society like Barbados cannot be managed in the same terms as a society like the United Kingdom

and the United States where large sectors of people, but small percentages of the population, could be consigned to the rubbish heap, could be consigned to the ranks of the unemployed when we talk about credit control and talk about wage control.

This, as everybody agrees, is an open-ended economy. It is small, it has only 250 000 people, and when it suits us to talk about our promotions outside of Barbados, we talk about the great resources which we have, the people, but when it comes to discussing the economic development of the country, we see the credit controls and wage controls, following, slavishly, policies that have been designed in other societies for other reasons, as the methodology for having our stabilisation in the economy.

We have heard via another forum that CARICOM has been taken from the Democratic Labour Party. The efforts to forge the region were taken from the Democratic Labour Party very recently in the utterances. Tonight, I heard the honourable member for Christ Church East taking from us deficit spending. I would like to take a few minutes to put the record straight to that honourable Member. The honourable Member for Christ Church East said that this is where the Democratic Labour Party parts company with the Barbados Labour Party, that he was glad to be on the side of the Barbados Labour Party, and he then proceeded to take full credit for the introduction of deficit spending in Barbados.

The truth is that the economic history of Barbados is clear and straightforward that deficit spending was introduced to this country for the first time in the 1960s. It was unheard of and unthought of before that. The Barbados Labour Party Administration of old believed in the principle of a balanced Budget. They so believed in that principle that they thought that any year there was not a surplus on Current Account and on Capital Account, something was fundamentally wrong. It was only with the introduction of the Democratic Labour Party's methods of economic development, and the massive development which occurred in the 1960s, that the country itself heard of such words as "deficit spending." How dare the honourable Member for Christ Church East, in an obvious lapse of concentration, to use such phrases as this being "a great divide" between the two parties.

The Barbados Labour Party has followed in its use of the deficit spending and the method, a method which has been widely accepted as credible for developing countries precisely because the human resource is much more important in a developing country than any of the other resources in the development, not only of the economic fabric, but of the social fabric of the community. A society of this kind, therefore, cannot afford to allow itself to wallow in theories which suggest that it is all right to cut back on spending, that when the public spending is cut back such cut-backs must occur in the social services. For the people of Barbados, a one per cent cut-back in social services is a 10 per cent increase in social suffering.

I am disappointed in the honourable Member for St. Peter in the presenting of his economic theory, which I would say largey lwas correct – elementary, but, correct. In presenting that theory he must then understand that such policies must be fitted within the development pattern of a society that was only a few years ago a passable community. The honourable Member must understand, therefore, that such social services as have been introduced into Barbados must not be seen in purely economic terms, they must not be seen merely as public spending versus private spending, because the level and content of private spending in Barbados is not enough to sustain that kind of economic theory of development. It must be buttressed by a humanitarian approach on the part of the Government.
7.40 p.m.

We in this country can afford to take deficits. We can borrow money and let future generations pay, if a substantial amount of that money will go towards social spending. And we must in forging our economic policies remember that we carry a higher content of social responsibility perhaps than many of the classical conservative capitalist countries in this world.

I want to touch on another point that was raised by the honourable Member for St. Peter regarding what he calls "the NIS surpluses." I suspect that he is using the term in its technical meaning and did not really refer to surpluses of the NIS, but I will draw to his attention that the Act, Chapter 37 of the Laws of Barbados, which informs the investment policy of the National Insurance Funds, is the first consideration which any Government of Barbados must take, because the investment of such funds must be in such a manner as directed by the Minister of Finance by the spirit of the law, that they should be invested to the point where they are secure.

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I hear the honourable Member for Christ Church West uttering, but he was not here and did not hear the speech, and therefore, as a lawyer he ought to know that when he is taking a brief he should take it with a pinch of salt. The fact is that the honourable Member made argumentation capital of the fact that the present Government has been able to use a direct method of investment of the National Insurance Fund, and thereby save rather than passing them through a third institution, to wit, the Banks, but Sir, any proper

investment policy for social security funds must utilise such services as banking institutions where those banking institutions are considered to be blue chip, so that the spirit of the law relating to national insurance is preserved, and so that the national insurance and social security funds do not fall prey to the vagaries of the economic situation in the country at any time.

I draw to the attention of this Honourable House that in the neighbouring country of St. Vincent, through misguided policies such as those advocated by the honourable Member for St. Peter, that country has taken the direct earnings from the Social Security system in St. Vincent, invested them quite unwisely, and now there is chaos in St. Vincent, because the National Insurance funds have been misinvested. I would invite the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance that, no matter what advice he gets from which quarter, when it comes to the use of Social Security funds in this country, he be extremely circumspect in the directions which he gives to the National Insurance Board or any such agency. Even in the mighty United States today, one of the major problems facing that country is its massive misuse of the Social Security funds, and that is why the deficit which is facing the United States now presents it with a gargantuam problem, which is hardly capable of solutions by the powers that be, precisely because they have been less meticulous in the allocation of the Social Security funds in the national accounting as they ought to have been.

Mr. Speaker, I do not usually get involved in these discussions, because I recall that, in a course called Money and Banking a very long time ago, this question of the use of Social Security funds as part of the national accounts was a bone of discussion and contention among us first year students at the college I happened to go to. I do not get involved in some of the methodologies that are discussed in this Honourable Chamber because they are not really useful in discussing how we are going to move forward. I become concerned when these verities, which they are, are suddenly trumpeted forth as provisions and recommendations for policies of the Government. Then, I feel constrained to raise my voice. I suggest that a Government needs to go beyond mere philosophic fundamental or economic fundamental verities, where two plus two always come out to four. In the management of an economy sometimes it does not come out to four.

I want to turn to another area in which I wish to warn the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. In 1980, we had an upsurge of economic activity, and arising out of that upsurge, the Government of the day came to the population and delivered of itself a multiplicity of good news statements, which l·d this population or misled this population into believing that a solution was around the corner. I submit that a growth in the economy of Barbados of 2.5 per cent after three years of no growth to speak of, in fact including years of negative growth .... if you have 2.5 per cent growth and then when you examine the growth, you find that this growth has occurred in two areas, it has occurred in sugar and in the electronics industry. I am not saying that we ought not to feel that something is happening, but I am warning against any attempt to give the impression out there that things have begun to move.

A winter season in the tourism sector is not the basis on which the performance of tourism must be done. I say that not to be contentious – I do not think that we wish to raise contention in this area – but it is only in the months immediately following the winter season that we begin to discover whether tourism has started to firm up, and if you examine the properties in this country which have been under economic stress for the last four years, you will discover that, notwithstanding the good winter season according to the figures, the economic situation for more than 75 per cent of the tourist plant is still one of doldrums.

The reasons are fairly obvious; my colleague has alluded to them, but I think they need to be repeated and expanded. If I may be as simplistic as the honourable Member for St. Peter sought to be, if you have owed the shopkeeper at the corner for the last nine months when you were not working and the shopkeeper has allowed you the privilege of trusting, taking credit, and then you get a job for a reasonable salary for a week – if you go in and pay part of the debt, all you have done is paid part of the debt. It does not mean that the situation between you and the shopkeeper is about to have a fundamental change. It is only if you are able to pay off the debt and then realise a surplus, and start buying your stuff instead of crediting it, that the shopkeeper can begin to say that good times are coming again.
7.50 p.m.

In the tourism industry in this country many of the hoteliers have not been able to do what they ought to do every three years, that is to renew their plant, refurbish their plant, upgrade their plant. Many of the hoteliers in this country have been suffering for so long that they are now punch drunk, economically punch drunk, and are incapable of beating the count. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You gave them a mandatory count).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is what I am saying. The honourable Member has inadvertently alluded to precisely what I am saying. I am saying that it is the duty of the Government to have given them a mandatory count. Let them get the mandatory count so they can recover enough to get their senses and go forward and fight. Instead, you allow people in the corner to fool you that the people were not knocked out, that they only looked so, and now you are telling us that we had growth of

2.5 per cent, that there has been growth in the tourist sector, that there is growth in the agricultural sector. We cannot mislead our people.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You are capable of saying nothing very well!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member chooses in a moment to resume his position as General. The honourable Member, my friend from St. James North, will not get me on this day to go down the lines he wishes me to go.

When the people in your constituencies go out into the highways and byways of this country, let those people tell you what is happening in the country. Let those people tell you if there has been an economic turn around. I make bold to say that there is no honourable Member on this side who does not wish to see an economic turn around, if for no other reason than that the pressures which have been put on their collective pockets have gone past the stage of causing concern.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is saying, not so *sotto voce* that we would like the unemployment to be 40 per cent. We are not like the Barbados Labour Party in Opposition who, on being presented with the information in the statistical documentation to the House in 1976, announced from this side of the House that the statistics were wrong, that in fact the unemployment rate was, as given by some U.N. person, 28 per cent – and the rest of them cheered. We are not like that. We are lamenting over here that even with the bogus statistics which are presented to us, your unemployment is still over 18 per cent.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The documentation we had were the cheques).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Oh, there were the cheques as well, but you did rejoice when you heard about the 29 per cent unemployment, because, like Richard Nixon, you believe that there is a sector of this community.....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: All right, let the honourable Member continue his speech. The Standing Order says that the honourable Member must be able to conduct his debate with the other honourable members remaining silent. He has seven more minutes.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You feel that there is a sector of the community that does not have to be taken care of, but that sector of the community has a voice in this country too. That sector of the economy needs to be taken care of, and that is why I will not quarrel that although you have said that you were not interested in make-work projects, when we drive along our respective countrysides these days, we can see the beginning of crash programmes. Very quietly, like a thief in the night, you have brought crash programmes in. We are not going to quarrel, because we believe, as you must know, that the economic situation for the broad masses of this country has reached proportions that are not acceptable.

When we come to do the Schedule to this Appropriation Bill, we are going to deal with the Estimates *per se*, but if the honourable Member wants me to tell him what I would do to improve unemployment, I will tell him. In the first instance, I would take steps to improve the political situation in the Caribbean. Those steps are underway. In the second place, I would change the emphasis of the Industrial Development Corporation. We would change the emphasis to make a more personal impact on the promotions for getting new industry into this country. There is a feeling abroad that the United States has started, in some areas, to pick up investment. I think that there has to be higher spending in the promotional effort. There has to be.

The honourable Member made the point that the electronics industry is showing improvement. That is not true. The chips industry, in fact, is causing a tremendous amount of consternation among those companies that have been producing, and I go further and say this – I will give you more detail in due course – the one company we have in Barbados that is engaged in the manufacture related to the chip industry has started a systematic cutback of its employment. It is doing it in a very quiet and peaceful way; it is doing it by what may be called attrition. I am not quarrelling with the company, because it falls within the ambit of the total sector of the industry that has started cutbacks throughout the world precisely because that industry has taken a sudden turn and no one is able, so far, to analyse why. But there are other industries in the United States that are showing signs of taking off, and I believe that we have to put some of the very scarce resources we have into those productive areas.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member has just two minutes.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Sir.

We also have to deal with the whole question of efficiency in our output, efficiency in terms of the amount of money we spend in terms of what we get for that money. I am going to deal with that in some detail when we come to the respective Heads, but I will finish by saying this. When one examines the Estimates, one sees that there is, across-the-board, a 13 per cent increase in expenditure. If one takes account of the normal

accretion which occurs in administration, and if one looks at where the bulk of the spending will occur, one sees that, in fact, far from the Government making inputs into productive activity, the Government has gone into a holding pattern.

I believe the new Prime Minister and Minister of Finance should be given a chance to stamp his own views on the directions in which the country should go. When that time comes, he will let us know, but I suspect that he must agree that in some of the areas, when one looks at the amount of money which has been allocated and compare it with areas where money has been cut, that, productively, we are probably nowhere other than where we were a year ago.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Sir, it is now 8 o'clock and I propose to suspend the sitting until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow, However, before we suspend I would like to say a few words very briefly in respect of the succession to the high office of the Prime Ministership of this country.

Events over the past week, and tributes, glowing as they were today, being paid to our late leader and Prime Minister, it would have been a bit difficult, and I know that the present Prime Minister would not have been happy, for us to salute him on such an occasion. However, it would be remiss of me if I did not rise on this occasion and have it in the records of Hansard that I believe that the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Hon. H. B. St. John) has the capacity, the stature and the intellectual power to carry this country on on the road of progress.
8.00 p.m.

For the past twenty years, I have been privileged to work side by side with him. I have seen him in 1966 and in 1971, at, respectively, what one would have considered to be at the height of his legal career and on the threshold of his political career. But God is moving in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform. The Member suffered what could have been considered maybe the shock of his political life in the country, no more than we were shocked last Monday. He sits today as Leader and Prime Minister of this country, a challenge which he has taken up and which, I have no doubt in my mind, he will succeed in and master. He is a man who is recognized in this country for his integrity, his capacity for hard work, honesty of purpose and his love for the Barbadian people and the Caribbean.

I am confident that his stamp on assuming his new office is one which each and every Barbadian can be justly proud of, and will be proud of in years to come. I have no doubt in my mind that his colleagues in the Barbados Labour Party, and in particular his colleagues in Cabinet, have seen him as the true successor, and unchallenged in his post as Prime Minister. I am confident that with God's help, he would carry on the work which he has been part of, the management between himself and the late Prime Minister, that management which he carried on though broken, and that he would be successful.

I pledge my unswerving loyalty to the policies of the Barbados Labour Party. People hero worship people in office for various reasons. I do not hero worship the man. I respect the office. I am a supporter, activist and a lover and a committed person in life to the policies of the Barbados Labour Party, and any man or woman who occupies the office of Prime Minister of this country from this party has my unswerving support and loyalty.

I know the Prime Minister, modest a person that he is, reserved in many respects, will no doubt carve his own image. I am confident that each and every Barbadian will be justly proud of him. I offer my congratulations to him in his new office and wish him exceedingly well.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, in seconding the Resolution for the suspension of the House, I wish to take the opportunity to concur in the remarks made by the honourable Member for St. James North.

I have known the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central from our days at Harrison College and I have had the privilege of studying with him, playing together.....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Playing together? What games did you play. Now tell us what kind of games!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: .....working with him, learning under him, working against him in the law courts and being associated with him in the political arena.

He has one of the most fertile minds to be found in this country, but I think that his hallmark is his steadfast devotion to any cause which he believes strongly in. I know of his association with the Barbados Labour Party in the days when our party formed the Opposition of this country and the heavy commitment which he paid to building up of that party. I was one of the persons who he recruited and persuaded to join the party. I have never regretted that decision.

I am very pleased that on this occasion, we have, before the suspension, moved congratulations to him. I am sure that he will bring to this high office the same high standard of performance and integrity which has characterized his life. He is able to deal constructively

with criticism. I think he has had, perhaps, more criticism than any of us in this House today. But he tends to brush it aside, and in his indomitable spirit comes back to fight strongly for the cause which he so believes in.

I wish him a long tenure as the Prime Minister of this country. I am sure that he will bring credit to Barbados. I am sure that he will carry on the very sterling work done by his predecessor in office, and that when his time comes, in the 21st century, to give up high office, we all would look back on this period in history as one of the outstanding periods of economic growth and social satisfaction.
8.10 p.m.

I join in the congratulations, and on behalf of the back bench and my constituency, I wish to pledge him total support and total commitment to the cause to which we are all dedicated.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself and the Opposition with the words of congratulations offered to the Member for Christ Church East Central on his elevation to the high office of Prime Minister of this country. I think it is a tribute to the qualities of the honourable Member that we could have had a very smooth transition from one administration to another administration. I think that it is also a tribute not only to the qualities of the honourable Member, but also to the basic strength of our democratic institution in this country, including the strength of our political party systems, that we can handle the transfer of power in that particular way.

Unlike the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite), I am not afraid to use the word "power," because that is what politics is all about. It is about power, and what we see in here is that in our Government and Cabinet system we have the kind of hyphen which joins, and a buckle which fastens, the executive branch of Government to the legislative branch of Government, in the words of Walter Bagehot. I think it is a tribute to the qualities of the man that, without question and without any kind of dissention, that kind of transfer could have been made.

One question which was posed to me on a CANA interview was whether I thought there would have been any problems of instability or any such problems at this particular time in our political history. I said unreservedly that there would have been no problem, because the Government had the majority and they had leadership, and, therefore, with that kind of majority and leadership, and good sense, they would have no problems as far as that transfer of power may be concerned.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not going to make the kind of speech that you made. You might have been begging; not me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. Will the honourable Member complete his speech.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir.

I think all of us who have participated in the work of this Chamber realize that in our Prime Minister we have a man who, in his own way, is an outstanding character and personality. As the Deputy Prime Minister, he was never afraid to tell his own colleagues, including the Prime Minister, when he felt they were going wrong, and I have no doubt at all that when he finds his own members going out of line, he will be able to tell them, including the Member for St. James North, to fall back into line, because these are the policies of the Barbados Labour Party Government with the stamp of the Prime Minister, the Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. Deputy Speaker..... Oh dear, *Mr. Speaker*.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I do understand the anxiety of the honourable Member under these circumstances, but that is forgiven. Please continue.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not wish to prolong this debate any longer. I wish that the Member for Christ Church East Central would have a very successful administration and that he would bring all of the talents at his disposal and utilize the resources at his disposal for the good of this country, the people of Barbados and our region, to which we are all committed.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Speaker, I feel that it is incumbent on me to thank both the honourable Members on this side who spoke so highly of me, and to assure the honourable Member for St. James North that I know his commitment. I am well satisfied that he wished me exceedingly well on the assumption of office, and I know that I can rely on him, with all his vigour and competence, when the occasions arise, and I know there will be numerous, to deal effectively with the problems that we have to deal with, particularly those coming from the other side. I know, too, that I can rely on the support of the Member for Christ Church West, and I would like to thank him very much for the desire that I hold this office for a very long period of time.

It is regrettable that the circumstances came about that I had to assume the office as I did, but I believe it is true to say that I was very fortunate in that I have worked with my colleagues for a very long period of time and I had a great apprenticeship for this office, because I have acted as Prime Minister on so many occasions, be-

cause of the way the late Prime Minister used to run his office, and because of the confidence he had in me, which meant that I was never denied access to any aspect of decision-making of the Prime Minister's office. Indeed, on some occasions, he used to call me and specifically request my views on matters. I think that will serve me in good stead.

I would like to thank the honourable Member for St. Michael South. I believe the honourable Member for St. Michael South was very sincere in congratulating me. I noticed, however, that while he wished me a successful tenure of office, he did not endorse the remarks of the honourable Member for Christ Church West, because he wished me a long one.

Nevertheless, I genuinely believe in the expression of one of the Kennedys – I think it was the late President – "that which divides Americans is far smaller than that which unites them." That is true of Barbados also. We are all believers in parliamentary democracy. Whatever we say, all of us really believe that we are part and parcel of a Caribbean nation, and as I had to tell some visitors who came to see me and asked me for my views on the Caribbean, I really feel that the best way of describing our relationship is like many of the relationships we have in Barbados between men and women, that we are married; we accept the meaning of being married, but we have not been to the Church. That is my view of the Caribbean.
8.20 p.m.

I will continue to strive, with all of the ability at my command, with all the influence, for the promotion of Caribbean unity, and I trust that Barbados would progress under my administration.

Mr. SPEAKER: As Speaker of the House of Assembly, it is my duty to congratulate the honourable Member on attaining the high office of Prime Minister. Because of the situation in which the Speaker is placed, I cannot wish you a long tenure in that office, because it might appear as if I am exercising political power.

I must say that you induced me to join an association which was later branded as the "Under Forties". At the end of that period, when I thought I had gone back to private life, you then induced me to take the onerous task of contesting a seat in St. John against the Right Honourable Leader of the Opposition. After I was defeated in that exercise, I gave up the idea of being in politics again, and I can remember you came to court one morning and said to me, "You must run for St. Joseph".

It seems as if the period 1981–1986 will go down in parliamentary history as the most undecided period as to what would happen, because I never envisaged myself sitting in this seat. I do not believe you envisaged yourself sitting in that seat in the circumstances that followed. I wish you luck, I wish you success, and I hope that the country will be proud of you at the end of your work.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 10.00 a.m. Tuesday, March 19, 1985 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
8.25 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, obviously I will be voting for the Appropriation Bill. I wish to say that it reflects a high level of statesmanship on the part of the Government, and that those of us who speak on this Bill should consider the Estimates and look at the Estimates before us in the context of the international recession, which has affected the economies of all of our countries including Barbados.

It is probably now only two weeks ago that I attended a conference in London as a member of a group of experts looking at the security of small states, and among the issues to which we have to turn our attention was the effect of economic development on the security of these states. It was significant that when one turned attention to the performance of Barbados' economy, Barbados stood out among the small states as one of the best managed economies and perhaps we undersell ourselves a little too much in this country by not recognising that the Barbados economy, in very difficult times, had been extremely well managed. That is not to say that we do not recognise our problems and look for solutions to them.

When one listened to the speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), you got the impression that he was making points merely for the sake of criticising the Government. I wish, before I talk about the Estimates, to reply to a few points which he purported to make in his submission. The first related to the tourism sector. I think his broad statement was that nothing of any significance had been done for tourism and that nothing was being done for tourism; and although there was a growth, it was not a growth to be looked at, because many hoteliers had not been able to refurbish their plant. The honourable Member has the facility .....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, I think the honourable Member got most of what I said right, except the very first sentence I did not say that nothing had been done for the hoteliers. The rest of the statement is accurate.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You said that nothing of any significance had been done for hoteliers. Let me give the facts rather than a just sweep of statements. Credit to the hotel sector in 1984 amounted to some $103.7 million, and this was just over 12 per cent of all credit available in the economy to the various sectors of the economy. That is a significant proportion of the resources which have been made available to the hotel industry, and it must be looked at in the context that the Barbados Development Bank last year increased its loans to the hotel industry by $5.9 million, or some $2.3 million above the figure for 1983. The purpose of this significant increase was to provide hoteliers with working capital and at the same time to assist them in refurbishing their hotel plant. As a result, in the hotels and tourist related areas, there was a significant increase of some 60 and 75 jobs. These are facts.

In addition, one has to look at the context of what the Honourable Prime Minister said at his opening. There has been a significant growth in the long stay visitor coming to our shores from our two major destinations, Canada and the United States. The growth rate from Canada has been some 27 per cent, and that from the United States has been some 23 per cent, so the industry has shown very strong recovery in the main markets. And while we have suffered, to some extent, from the strength of the US dollar, to which our dollar is tied, and have not been able to increase the number of long stay European visitors, the fall off in such visitors has not been as drastic as one would have expected. The honourable Member is therefore being less than objective or fair in his assessment of the improvement which has obviously occurred in the hotel sector, and the Estimates reflect the Government's intention to give additional resources to the industry for the expansion of facilities and for promoting the island as a tourist destination, among other things.

A direct grant of $3 million is being given to Caribbean Airways. Can anyone deny that that has had a great impact on helping us to maintain competition in Europe? The honourable Member is probably not aware that destinations such as Jamaica have closed down most of their European Tourist Boards. We have not done so. We maintain a very strong presence in Germany, we maintain one in Brussels and we maintain one in the United Kingdom. There have been several promotion tours to these destinations. As recently as a few weeks ago, I believe the Minister of Tourism journeyed there in the effort to promote the tourist sector.

I want to deal with another part of his reply. He says that the Appropriation Bill shows where the DLP parts company with the BLP. Using the broad sweep of Nixonian economics, he said that the BLP gave the impression of not caring about a large number of people who have been consigned to the ranks of the unemployed whilst we talk of wage and credit controls. I want to answer that charge in two ways; historically and, second, in relation to present day facts.
10.10 a.m.

Unemployment under this Government has never reached the heights that it reached under the Democratic Labour Party. When the honourable Member had the honour to preside as Minister of Trade, I think he was confronted with unemployment that was in the region of over 22 per cent and an inflation rate that reached as high as 40 per cent. When we came in, in 1976, there was some abatement in the inflation rate, but we had to seriously tackle the unemployment position facing this country. I make bold to say that the recession which has occurred between 1981 and 1984 has perhaps been the worst in the history of the world in this century, and yet we have been able to confine and to contain unemployment to a level that is not acceptable to us, but yet which has had not as deleterious an effect on the social fabric of our society as occurred during the period 1973 to 1976.

If the Government is to pursue any proper policy, it must make sure that the total expenditure is restrained in such a way as to protect the country's balance of payments. We have the example of Jamaica where this truth did not sink in to the political directorate, and we have found that the very social fabric of Jamaican society has been affected. If you look at the process of devaluation that has occurred in Jamaica, you will find that the living standards have been more than halved in the last five years. If the honourable Member is recommending a policy that would have no controls at all, there would be a free-for-all in the society, an outward flow of funds either by way of consumer planning or by way of people taking out much needed foreign reserves, the country would eventually find that it cannot buy its medicines, pay for its food or maintain employment, and eventually tensions would result in the very social fabric of the society. What this set of Estimates seeks to do is to maintain a balance between guided and sensible expansion, whilst at the same time protecting the balance of payments of Barbados and allowing stable development.

The shadow Minister of Finance adopted a different tactic. He did not attack the Estimates on that basis at all; he, in a way, accepted the necessity for some restraint. What he was doing was anticipating from a political perspective measures which he was recommending that may possibly look like they are vote catching. That seemed particularly so as his assessment seemed to be that the economy would not allow the Government to do more, but 'I am a politician seeking to gain power and I am going to call on them to do more, although I know that it is not probably sensible to do any more at this time.' Therefore, his appeal was for a reduction in Land Tax, and he is looking forward to greater pensions. But he

made no attack whatsoever on the Government's method of controlling expenditure.

Despite the difficulties confronting the economy during the past three years, the Government has not forgotten the sector of our society that will be at the lower rung of the economic ladder. It is a fact that pensions have been increased under this Government at a faster rate than at any time in the history of the country. It is a fact that we have expanded the number of persons who could benefit from pensions. It is a fact that we have moved towards the promotion of a National Pension Scheme so that every man and woman reaching the age of 65 will find that they can get some form of pension. It is a fact that we have widened the categories of persons who are entitled to some form of Social Security, or what is referred to sometimes as welfare. It is a fact that we have expanded the educational plant in this country at a very fast rate. I think the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition would be the first in the field of education to acknowledge that there has been a rapid expansion in this field, and that the Capital Expenditure in the educational field has not lapsed in any way whatsoever.

Indeed, if you look at the Estimates, you will see where the Government has placed the emphasis, Besides the area of economic planning, the emphasis has fallen on the areas that are vital to maintaining social cohesion in this society. There has been an increase both in the Capital amount being spent on education as well as in the Current amount. If you look at the figures this year, the Government proposes to spend $14.5 million, approximately an increase of $1 million in the field of education.

In the field of housing, the Government is proposing to spend an additional $5 million, and in transport and works the increase is in the region of $34 million. It is to that Ministry perhaps that one must look for the filip being given to employment, but there is no doubt that the Government continues to place tremendous emphasis on the expansion of areas that are vital to helping alleviate the suffering of the under-privileged and poor. The Estimates show an increase of almost $5 million being spent on health facilities in the next few years. So one can say that whatever extra resources are available are being used properly for cushioning the ill-effects which might affect people in the lower economic sector of our society, whilst at the same time not endangering the need for expansion at the economic level.

The Government proposes to spend over last year's budget an additional $9 million on economic planning, and a lot of it is going to projects which are investment-related, or which are collateral to investment-related sectors of the economy. Whether it be CARI-CARGO or the Arawak Cement Plant, it has the effect of sustaining or creating employment and at the same time assisting in the expansion of the economy of Barbados. So any sensible assessment of the Government's policy must recognise that this is not a Government that is merely looking at an election down the road. It is a Government that is conscious of its responsibility to the public and is bringing forth figures to this House for the benefit of the country which it seriously and sincerely believes the economy can sustain.

The easiest thing for us to do is to come in here and pretend that it is possible for Barbadians to spend beyond their means, and look only to the political gain that could come from short term measures, while not taking into account the long term effect that this could have on the fabric of our society. I would not expect it of the Opposition if there were in Government, and I am sure that my party would not take that short term view of affairs. I want, however, to sound a few words of warning to Barbadians; not to the Barbados Labour Party, to the Government or to the Opposition, but over and above the heads of the partisan political battles that must of necessity intensify ever so often when we are looking down the road to elections.

10.20 a.m.

I think that it must have been two years ago that I left this side of the House and went and sat next to my colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford), the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I said to him then that the two major political parties in Barbados had to come to a very serious understanding of their future philosophy and role in relation to the development of our country. I had seriously, as a political scientist – and I know that he is an outstanding political scientist and capable of analyzing political trends carefully – come to the conclusion that the country cannot expand the quantity of welfare services without doing serious detriment to the long term quality of life in Barbados. I said to him that, maybe, it may be difficult in the electoral battle and the partisan adversarial system of politics for any of the two political parties to give an undertaking on this matter, but it seemed that, silently and sensibly, we had to say to Barbadians that we cannot continue expanding welfare, unless we were capable of expanding the overall growth of the economy and growth structure. This was repeated by Dr. Frank Alleyne of the University of the West Indies some time later, and my colleague, who is capable of analyzing these things carefully, readily agreed with me.

The greatest task that we are going to have is how to convince our supporters that we cannot give more and pay more unless we are capable of producing more and making more wealth available in this country. The two great political parties must address themselves to, first,

how to convince the public that they have a duty to themselves as well, and that an expansion of the freeness mentality is not in their interest. Secondly, we must address how to fight our battles or how, given the constraining circumstances of the world economic situation and our limited resources, we could expand what we have and the quality of life of our country. This must mean restraint in certain areas.

I am concerned every time I see that wage settlements are exceeding the rate of inflation without there being any significant growth in the economy of Barbados. We just cannot do it. This is where I part company with the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. He believes that you can expand wages willy-nilly because the economy is open-ended and it sounds a good thing -- and I have never heard him call for a corresponding expansion in productivity in Barbados. If I can have a corresponding or near corresponding expansion in the productivity in Barbados at all levels, managerial, supervisory, working, clerical, then I am quite prepared to say that we could have a wage policy that pays little regard to any constraints whatsoever. But whenever I see a country that is not showing real economic growth, or economic growth that is slight, but we are paying wages over and above inflation trends, I know that what we are doing is merely sending home another few hundred people, in order to keep the balance at work.

I am bit of a blunt politician. It has not done me too badly in my constituency, so let me be blunt. I would prefer that at times we forego a wage increase and keep four hundred people more working than we take a wage increase of 20 per cent and send another four hundred people home. That is what has happened in some of the commercial and tourist businesses in Barbados. It is there for anybody with common sense to analyze.

You find that the people who are negotiating feel that they have to give way. We want industrial peace, so they are prepared to give way. But the next day, you find another fifty people out of work. And that seems to be accepted by those who remain in work. That is not good enough. We must tell our people that they must put the emphasis on higher productivity. There is no case for managers who are incompetent.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said that we have presided over the largest number of receiverships and insolvencies in Barbados.

(Aside: True!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Let me deal with that. The honourable Member perhaps would not have the access which those of us in the legal profession may have to some of the information relating to the insolvencies and receiverships. Within the constraints of my political commitment, I will try to speak about this matter, and the first point I want to make is that some of the insolvencies and receiverships were brought about by very bad management.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: And love of women!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: There is no doubt that, in some cases, the managerial skill was totally lacking. I am not at all blaming the workers for this. I am talking about managers who were more concerned about their personal positions and their personal wealth than about preserving the fabric of their companies.

In the second place, some receiverships and insolvencies came about by downright larceny. One must face that fact. Too many people believe that a company's assets are their private reserves, and they confuse themselves with the companies. They are prepared to sign cheques to purchase things for their own self without recognizing that they are using company funds. There is one case that is now public knowledge. The judge has given a decision in the case, in which the judge ordered a Managing Director to pay back into a company that had gone into receivership, a sum of money which he had taken out for himself and used as personal funds, not leaving the money available for the benefit of the creditors. This is important.

I am happy to say that the new Companies Act is now in operation and the Government probably now has more legal power available to it to investigate some cases. But I would seriously urge the Prime Minister and the Government to have a study done on those companies that have gone into liquidation or receivership over the last five years, in order to draw some lessons on how we can prevent this from occurring again.

At one group of companies, several small depositors have found their life savings wiped out because of the bad management and the downright misfeasance to which I have referred.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have two more minutes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am much indebted to you, Mr. Speaker.

There are persons who have retired from the Civil Service and lost their gratuity. They have found their gratuity gone because of bad management. So it is not really sensible to turn to the Government and say that the Government's economic policies have caused the collapse of several companies in Barbados. The inefficiency of management, the dishonesty of management, has, in most of the thirty-seven cases, accounted for the failures which have occurred.

There has been an under-capitalization of business. Obviously, we have to look for equity capital on a much more long-term basis than has been available. Some people start a business on a shoestring, with a limited capitalisation and limited working capital. We must find within the system, if the honourable Members could address us on this, measures, whether at the governmental or some other level, in order to improve the capital position of businesses, including investment in businesses.
10.30 a.m.

I would like to see the Government look again at the Income Tax Act, which allows people Income Tax incentives on bonus shares and Income Tax incentives on investments in new shares. I think that the approach of the Revenue to this aspect has been a little bit too restrictive and too conservative, and maybe in the Budget the Government should give some consideration to that, because we have to expand investment capital if we are to create jobs, and to create wealth in the long term. This Government has a very fine record in encouraging private sector development and investment, and I am quite sure that when the Honourable Minister of Finance brings his measures to this House in order to give heat to these Estimates, that we will once again see the Government's strong commitment to private sector development as a means of curbing unemployment in our country.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I think there are two points that should be replied to, and I want, first, to deal with the one raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central in respect to the liquidity. I want to give him the assurance that the information coming to us is such that, even with the issue of the bonds for the sugar industry, which have not as yet been issued in respect to last year's price support, the information coming to us is that the liquidity in the system is such now that the demands of the public sector will not crowd out the demands of the private sector.

Mention has been made by Members speaking on behalf of the Government to the fact that the Estimates do contain quite clearly, an indication of the Government's commitment to an improvement in the mortgage finance available to housing. I believe that the honourable Member for St. Peter, in particular, drew this to the honourable Members attention on the other side, and it must be seen in the context of the mini-Budget that was delivered in October last year, in which specific measures were outlined for stimulating housing construction in Barbados.

As we deal with the respective Heads, we will be able to point out more specifically the Government's provisions in the respective departments for stimulating employment. I do not think that this Government could ever be accused, legitimately, of not being concerned about unemployment or the social services. I am going to deal with this question of the social services, because the honourable Member did say that, as a result of the deficit in these Estimates, the Government would be forced to cut the provisions for social services. I want to give all the honourable Members and the entire nation the assurance that the policies of the Barbados Labour Party, which have been always rooted in the assurance that whatever cake is created in this country, it has to be shared to the maximum extent possible, will be continued. So there is no question of cutting social services.

But the honourable Member knows and, indeed from public statements that are now emanating from prominent members of the Democratic Labour Party, particularly those who are economic specialists and who are advisers to the Opposition, they recognize by their recent statements that in periods of recession it is not possible to have the same level of expansion of social services as there is in periods of great prosperity. One only has to read some of the statements that come from a Dr. Alleyne recently, warning nations specifically about it. Of course, we have been saying so for some period of time, but the statement is a direct contradiction to all of the propositions that have been put forward by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central in here for a long period of time.

We will continue our expansion of the Social Services within the context of the expansion of the economy.

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

HEAD 11 – JUDICIARY

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that Head 11 stand part.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): There is a specific reason why there should be a revote because the Governor General's house repairs have not been completed so far. We have to revote the money. That is the reason. That is the specific amount from MTW and others.

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

HEAD 12 – PARLIAMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 12 stand part.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): In moving the passing of Head 12, I think we have an obligation to give honourable Members an update on the progress that has been made in respect of the repairs to Parliament. It is very clear that the cost of repairing the east and west wings of the Parliament Building is going to be larger than was originally envisaged. As a result of an investigation into the conditions of the roof on this wing, in particular, after the preliminary work had been done on the obviously defective sections, it became clear that, because of worm infestations of parts of the roof, it would be unwise to put the new copper covering on the pre-existing roof. Advice was taken by the Government, and the Government accepted the advice that it was better for us to replace the whole roof before we put on the copper covering and that we should have the work divided into a series of packages, so that we would be able to do it in phases within the limitation of our financing. So the first thing we are going to do is to continue work on the roof, but the scope of that work has been expanded to include re-roofing of this area. That is definite, and it is going to cost $800 000. The original contract for that specific area was some $500 000.
10.40 a.m.

We know that, since both of these buildings were built together and this roof has gone, our ideas of a minor repair job on the other roof would have to be reviewed. It is therefore clear to us that just as we are redoing this roof, we are going to redo the other roof, the roof on the west wing, so we have to budget for a similar sum to do that too. The fact that we have to budget for the redoing of the whole of the west wing because that is bad – it leaks badly now – means that we will have to modify our ideas as to how fast we can proceed with the reconstruction of the whole of this Parliament building, because having done one roof, to me, it is sensible that we should start from the top first, we should do the roofs on both sides. We are making provision for the expenditure on this roof.

We were contemplating spending some $2 million a year on Parliament, but it seems to us now that we will have to add on a bit more, and that we will have to rephase this work. We have decided that we cannot do the total repairs and renovations to Parliament in one year. That is an impossibility. It cannot be done; we are doing it in a series of packages. The roof of this building will be done. That contract has been let. We are going to work on the airconditioning. We are going to work on the dining room. We are not clear yet as to the next phase of the work, but we know that we have to spend money to repair and redo the roof on the other side.

I want to deal with the methodology and how this work is being done. I think this is important. At one stage, the Debates Committee was primarily responsible for this matter, MTW was the Project Manager to the Debates Committee, and responsibility for the supervision on behalf of the Debates Committee was the private architectural firm, I think Kenneth Gardner Associates, which is providing the other engineers and consultants for consultancy services. The legal Department has ruled that the Debates Committee is not competent to be the employer of anybody else, so what the Government has done is .....

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Crown in right of the Government of Barbados, but not the Debates Committee as such. This thing arose when it came to the drawing up of the contract and the Solicitor General has ruled very clearly that this has to be dealt with upon the basis of the fact that this is ordinarily a Government job, and that the Government will sign the contract. So we have created a sub-committee, which will liaise with the Debates Committee and Members of Parliament on their views, and MTW will continue to perform the functions of project management and accounting. We are going to have this responsibility assigned to the same Project Unit that completed the Post Office, that is, Mr. Richard Edwards and Mr. Maurice Rocheford. They are going to continue to look after the supervision, acting on behalf of the employer in the same capacity on which modern project management units act. MTW is exceedingly happy with this process, particularly the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Collymore, whose responsibility is the supervision of the finances. So this sub-committee, which consists of the honourable Member for the City (Hon. Miss B. A. Miller), a number of others and I, has now taken over.

As we develop from the area of sketch to the area of plans where all people can understand, because all of us cannot understand concepts that are now embodied in a sketch – and my experience of them reveal that they conceal more than they reveal, and it is not always that the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O Franklin) will tell you – it is always very difficult for you to act – as soon as the plans have reached the advanced stage, we will continue to show the Debates Committee what we are doing. We have not made any fundamental changes from what was originally agreed. The only thing is that we found that it is totally a waste of time to put on an expensive copper cover, which is supposed to absorb the heat and which is supposed to help the airconditioning, only to find that you will have to rip that back up again in two or three years time, so we have stopped. That is the position.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to start this debate on Parliament on a slightly different note, and I want to refer to the matter

of the religious observance which we note at the start of Parliament.

Parliament Debates and Establishment Act, Cap. 10, makes provision for the appointment of a Chaplain to this Honourable Chamber. Since the unfortunate passing of the late chaplain, to the best of my knowledge, this House of Assembly has not appointed any chaplain. 10.50 a.m.

Asides

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Are you starting this already? You cannot tell me how to speak. I am making my point and I will develop my point. I am referring to the Laws of Barbados, to Section 5 of the Parliament (Debates and Establishment) Act, Subsection 2 which reads:

> "The Chaplain of the House of Assembly shall be appointed by the House of Assembly."

I am raising this particular matter because there appears to be a hiatus in that particular office, and the House of Assembly has not been given the opportunity to make an appointment to that particular post, and I am calling upon those responsible in the Government to explain why this Honourable Chamber has been permitted to continue without the appointment of a Chaplain, contrary to the legislation on the Statute Books on this matter. I think this House needs information on that. Furthermore, we would like to know what is the authority for what has been taking place in the absence of the appointment of a Chaplain under existing legislation.

We are very grateful to the Prime Minister for explaining the position in respect of the contract for maintenance and repairs to this particular Chamber. It, of course, is a puzzle to me, as a member of the Debates Committee, that all of these new arrangements could be made and the Debates Committee itself, neither by circulation of information, by round robin, or by any other means, has not been notified of the situation as disclosed by the Prime Minister today. In other words, we have been kept in the dark as members of that Debates Committee on the arrangements as reported by the Prime Minister today. It was certainly news to me. We as members on this side of the Chamber, and there are other members of the Debates Committee over here as well, were certainly getting some information today.

We are talking about Parliament, and Parliament is one of the principal institutions in this country, but what is becoming obvious is that while there are statutory bodies of less importance than Parliament itself in this country, which statutory bodies have control over their buildings, the premises, and whatever may be related to their operations, Parliament itself, we are told now, is not even competent to look after the award of contracts and the management and supervision of works relating to the convenience and comfort of Members. I believe that we have got to look at this whole matter of Parliament and its responsibilities, and that those responsibilities must be vested in Parliament itself.

This is an appropriate time to make the point that Parliament is not the Government or Executive. Parliament is a separate institution and one of the powers in this country, and it must not be treated as though it is merely the plaything of the Executive or of the Government.

(A VOICE: Sovereignty of Parliament)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sovereignty of Parliament! That phrase is a little worn out. Those of us who have been following the development of politics and Government do not really speak of the sovereignty of Parliament, in fact, because we would have to ask where sovereignty actually resides in the political system. Maybe yesterday you used to talk about sovereignty of Parliament, but we have gone a little further along the road than that. I will have to give you lesson 2 in that particular matter.

I want to make it absolutely clear that. so long as I am a member of this House of Assembly, I will be fighting to ensure that Parliament is established and continues as the principal institution in this country, with complete control over matters relating to Parliament. I do not believe that I am pushing a closed door, but the point is that we will have to get the machinery in place. I know the Prime Minister can take a point even though others over there may find a little difficulty in following it.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, before any other honourable Member goes off on a tangent on this matter, I just want to make it very clear that the Government at the beginning was proceeding on the assumption that the renovation of Parliament was a matter peculiarly within the competence of Parliament, and the Debates Committee was assigned a role over the administration of the renovations. The facts are there. However, when it came to drawing up the legal document to execute the work, a point was raised that the Debates Committee, in accordance with the Act, was not the competent body. The Clerk of Parliament is one of those who raised it. Therefore, a legal opinion was taken from the Solicitor General of Barbados, and the Solicitor General's opinion was that the Debates Committee was not a legal entity, that it was not empowered by the terms of the Statute constituting it to do what was envisaged for it. Cabinet therefore appointed a sub-committee, consisting the honourable Member for Bridgetown, the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Transport and Works, Senator Barrow and I, as Chairman, and the Cabinet Secretary is the secretary of this Committee. It is a

special *ad hoc* committee, whose object is to consider the proposals for the renovation of Parliament and to act as a liaison for parliamentary matters and others, but the responsibility for the accounting and the responsibility for the approval of the execution of the contract is subject to a project management team acting as an agent for the relevant body in Government, namely, the Ministry of Transport and Works. I hope that we have it very clear now.

I am sorry if the honourable Member finds himself in a position in which he has to appreciate that the doctrine of separation of powers is but a constitutional myth, that there are some areas in which there cannot be complete separation of powers. The Chief Justice of Barbados does not own the building, the judges do not own the buildings in which they sit. They have to make pronouncements, and if they are expected to sit properly, they must have proper facilities. Parliament is in the same position. We cannot best these buildings in Parliament. That is our position.
11.00 a.m.

Consultation will be as great as possible. We wish to take into account the views of all Members of Parliament, because it is not my building, it is not the BLP's building, it is the Parliament building, for whoever wins the Government, whoever runs Barbados, both Government and Opposition. So the machinery is very clear, very distinct and in accordance with the Laws of Barbados.

I do not want to limit debate, I just want to set the framework.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): When the honourable Member for St. Michael South rose, believe me, I thought he was going to put a case for the appointment of the Clerk of Parliament and not really put a case for the appointment of a Chaplain.

The very person whom you proposed on the last occasion is the exact person we have decided on. To ask a simple question – why has the Chaplain not been appointed? – you had to quote 1 (b) (c) and 1 (e) (d) of the Constitution of Barbados and of the Laws of Barbados. I am really satisfied as to why your students say that they do not get any passes at your college, because you are a boring type of individual.

'Can Members on the other side state why the Chaplain of the House has not been appointed?' A simple, straightforward question. But no! It is "According to 1 (b) (c) of the Laws of Barbados, Cap. 306," to ask a simple question. That demonstrates why you cannot get any passes at the Community College, because they say that you bore them. I tell you what I know.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): On a point of order, Sir: We have a certain tradition of debate, and I am sure the honourable Member, on reflection, whatever else he wants to say about the honourable Member for St. Michael South, would not wish to draw in his other activity at the Community College. I am sure that the honourable Member on reflection, bearing in mind the Community College is a particular institution that has a particular place in the hierarchy, would not want to draw it into the debate.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am quite sure that my friend and colleague and constituent can defend himself better than you can defend him. I believe he would be unhappy this morning if I did not mention that when he was Minister of Education, on one occasion he did not have a Barbados Scholar during his time in office. He is a research person.

I thought he would have been putting a case for a Clerk of Parliament also, because I am very strong that in this.....

(Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am quite capable of saying what I want to say.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You had better practise now. You will have a lot to say soon.

(Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: You can only try to destroy, you can only try to pull down. You are a demolition expert; that is all you are).

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: So as to rebuild. We demolish old buildings to build new ones, and you are an antique, so I will demolish you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, let us get ahead. We are debating Parliament.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am very strong on the view that a Clerk of Parliament should be appointed. We should have the Acting Clerk appointed to his present post. We have had in here for almost two or three years an Acting Clerk of Parliament, and I believe the Debates Committee should pay a lot of attention to that aspect of Parliament, because the Clerk is a very important servant of Parliament. I believe that the Debates Committee, of which I am a member, should sit down and examine and find out why we cannot get a Clerk, and why so many lawyers and other persons would not apply for the job. I am told it is because the salary is too low, and I would expect that a proposal coming from the Debates Committee, of which I am a member, should be sent to the Government making a recommendation to make the salary of the Clerk of Parliament more attractive. I believe this is one of the things we should address our minds to.

As far as the Chaplain is concerned, I can assure Members on the other side that we have already decided that the person whom you proposed on the last occasion has been asked if he would accept the job, and, I am told, he has decided that he would take the job. It is only a matter of time before it is put into place. That is the simple answer to the matter of the Chaplain.

I think enough has been said by the Prime Minister in relation to what has to be done for Parliament. The honourable Member talked about a round robin so as to let you know. I believe that what the sub-committee should do is to keep the Debates Committee, through its Chairman, up to date on what is going on so he himself would be in a position, if any Member asks about the work at Parliament, to tell what he knows. I thought a round robin was something used only when you would like to have something expeditiously carried out. I do not see the need for a round robin.

I am a member of the Debates Committee and I have as much interest and concern for Parliament as any other Member on either side. The Member for St. Michael South does not have to put any big case for Parliament. I am angry, I am fed up with the working conditions in here for the staff. I am even fed up with the atmosphere of certain areas in relation to working conditions of Parliament.

I have always been a strong advocate for supporting democracy, the two party system in the country and the Westminster model. That has been my philosophy and I will die by that, so we have something in common as regards Parliament.

As far as my being a demolition expert, somebody has to be an expert. I am a demolition man, and I hope you will be satisfied if you are demolished sooner or later. Do not say you did not call me a demolition man.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): I am very grateful to the Honourable Prime Minister for outlining the procedure in respect of repairs to Parliament. I am also very happy that the sub-committee, as selected, is as strong a committee as he mentioned.

I must draw to the Honourable Prime Minister's attention that I had the unfortunate experience of attending the last informal meeting of the Debates Committee, at which the matter of the repairs to Parliament was dealt with. The first thing I would like to ask the Prime Minister is this, 'Is there a contract, for instance, between the architect and the Committee, the appropriate body of Government, the Ministry of Transport and Works, at the moment?'

Unfortunately, that meeting did not have a quorum, but the Ministry of Transport and Works felt it was necessary to send a small committee, headed by the Permanent Secretary, to explain to us the difficulties they were having, and I had the unfortunate occasion to read one of the most disrespectful memos ever written by an employee of Government to an officer of Government in a high capacity. It was a memo written by the architect – I do not know if she is still the architect – of Mr. Gardner, in which she as much said to Mr. Collymore, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, who was the Accounting Officer, that he had no authority over her. I saw that memo. It was disgusting. I said to the Speaker on that occasion that, in my opinion, the only thing that would satisfy me would be an open apology to the officer in charge.

11.10 a.m.

Let us be practical. We cannot allow employees of Government, regardless to who they are, to treat senior, respected servants in the Barbados Government in that way. I was one of the most disappointed persons to see that we could have a person who has been drawing considerable fees from the Barbados Government treating an officer like that. I am entirely happy that the Honourable Prime Minister is on a committee dealing with that matter, because the person who we were dealing with is completely disrespectful. I make no bones about it. I am angry. I am sorry I had to go to that meeting. I sincerely hope that this sub-committee will take into consideration that people employed by the taxpayers of Barbados cannot treat their employers in that way.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: In rising as a member of the Debates Committee and as a Member of this side to support my colleague who just spoke, I want to make it clear to Mr. Gardner, and all the other Gardners in Barbados, that in the context of the letter or memorandum which he wrote to the Permanent Secretary, and by inference to the Minister and by inference to the Government, he insults all of us. We are not going to take any partisan position when we have these people who come, from wherever they come from, into this country and believe that they can insult civil servants at the highest level, or at any level, furthermore insulting the Government.

There are certain aspects of that which it might be in poor taste to go into in detail. But the Record must show to Mr. Gardner and every other person who comes into this country that the people of this country have representatives .....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: South Africa. I did not really want to go into it, but since you raised the question, I have reason to believe that he came from South Africa originally. Ever since when I was in the Government and I was trying to find out where he came from. Nobody

seems to know. They say he has a lot of passports. But, you know, I get into trouble for calling people's names in Parliament, so I am not going to go into that in detail now.

I want to take the principle of it. It cannot be right. Let us insult one another in here if we have to, or let Barbadians insult one another – they are a family and they can quarrel with one another – but no Gardners who have earned substantial sums of money off the backs of the taxpayers of this country. I will try and restrain myself in the matter, but we are angry, and I believe we speak for honourable Members on that side.

I also want to say this. I am not impressed with the work he does. One of the worst investments this country has ever made, it seems to me, is the building which the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham) has the honour....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Am I straying? When we come to that, I will discuss that building that the honourable Member works in, the so-called Ministry of Agriculture. That is a building I wish to discuss in the Estimates.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: A demolition expert?

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: What I should like to know from the Prime Minister is if he is going to take steps to see that the appointment of the architect is regularized. It was my opinion when I saw what I saw in the Debates Committee that his appointment was not regularized, that he did not feel bound by any of the rules under the Financial Administration and Audit Act, that he did not feel bound under any rules of anybody, that once he could have communication with the head of the stream, he was God Almighty. That was not only the tone of his letter, but it is my information that it is his attitude, generally.

The Prime Minister has a responsibility to Parliament and to the people of this country to bring Mister whoever he is to christian feelings on this matter. If he is an architect, we have other and better architects, born in Barbados and working in Barbados, who have not benefitted as substantially as he has. I am told by my colleagues who have studied this in more detail that at one stage it seemed as if he would benefit to the tune of $1.7 million out of this contract. It would happen over my dead body!

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Too high!)

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am glad that you have appointed a sub-committee that has some power, but I would like the sub-committee to operate along principled lines. I feel that it will. I think that it would be useful in the context of your executive power, not only to have that sub-committee liaise with the Debates Committee, but to allow – I am recommending this quite seriously – in his capacity as Chairman of the Debates Committee, the Speaker to participate in the deliberations of that sub-committee.

I appreciate that it could create some difficulty if the Chairman of the Debates Committee has to comment on recommendations of the Cabinet sub-committee, but since the Cabinet sub-committee is the committee with the executive power, the Chairman of the Debates Committee cannot now be said to be in conflict, because he can only be advisory. And since, according to the ruling, he will only be advisory, I would recommend quite seriously that he be put on this committee and be allowed to deliberate with it, so that when the decisions are made, we save a lot of contention and discussion. Then we, as Members of the Debates Committee, could charge our Chairman with the responsibility for informing us, because, in the final analysis, a Cabinet sub-committee has no responsibility to anybody but the Cabinet.

There is one other point I wish to raise quite seriously. In this country, there are some matters which, if you raise them, people say you are looking for something for yourself, but it is something which I want to raise because it has bothered me for some time as I have observed it.

In my career, I had to be involved in the protocol arrangements in one way or another of things national. I wish to say to the Government that after nearly twenty years of Independence, we ought to have a fairly well-ordered, clear protocol methodology. I do not believe that each time something comes up that we have to have to be behaving in an *ad hoc* manner.

I think that the table of precedents in this country needs to be examined realistically. We tell ourselves constantly that we have the Westminster model. It is not really true. We have an approximation of it. The Upper House, in the Westminster model, is an Upper House of privilege. The Upper House in the Barbados model is an Upper House of consultation. I am not going to quarrel or quibble about those two relationships between the Lower House and the Upper House, because Members in the Lower House can deal with that in due course. What is important, however, is that, together, the two Houses constitute Parliament, and I think that Parliament, as the co-sovereign indicator in this community, for the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Hon.

DeL. O. Bradshaw), who had some difficulty, apparently – the sovereignty in this country now resides in the Constitution coupled with Parliament representing the people; that is where the sovereignty is said to lie in the system of Government that we have. I am suggesting that we should organize our affairs in such a manner that everybody in Barbados knows where Parliament and parliamentarians stand in the scheme of things, that they should recognize that when Parliament is operating as an executive, it is removed from Parliament in the sense that it is a Committee of Parliament running the executive, and that when we are functioning as parliamentarians, all parliamentarians are deemed to be equal.

It is not right that the honourable Member for St. Lucy, (Mr. R. E. Brathwaite) to take one honourable Member from that side, should have any feeling at any official function that he is less than the honourable Member for Christ Church East, or that he is less than the honourable Member for St. Michael West, or *vice versa.* If we are all parliamentarians, we should be able to feel that way, if we are asked to perform as parliamentarians I wish to go no higher than that.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is saying that feeling is a personal thing. For some people it really does not matter. I think that for most parliamentarians, as long as they get votes, they really do not spend a lot of time worrying about status. I think, however, that in a country such as this, we ought not to have questions and problems. I think that the persons responsible for organizing matters should always ensure that no stone is left unturned to prevent persons from taking umbrage. I think that we all understand what I am talking about, and I do not intend to go into great detail. I am not claiming any special privileges for parliamentarians. I am saying that once you become a parliamentarian, you are representing the people who you represent.
11.20 a.m.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I will tell you privately. We will leave it at that. Let me put it this way. None of the Ministers are likely to understand what I am talking about, but I think the Chairman and the honourable Members on the back bench would know what I am talking about. I am just saying that eighteen years into Independence, we should have these matters fairly straight-forward and fairly clarified.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You understand what I am talking about. You play that you do not know. I am not going to go any further. I am just saying that Parliament and the system need to be regularized.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): I took note of the remarks of the honourable Members for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) and St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) with respect to the contract for the renovation of the Parliament Building. The honourable Members felt that, by inference, a rude letter was written to the Permanent Secretary and to the Minister of Transport and Works. I would like to disabuse the honourable Member's mind. Nobody writes the Minister of Transport and Works a rude letter and if that person is misguided enough to tender a letter in these terms, I think that he would understand that he made a *faux pas.*

We have had problems with the contract for Parliament, but I believe that, as the Prime Minister pointed out, those problems have been satisfactorily ironed out, and persons who needed to be brought to christian feeling have been brought to christian feeling. I do not expect that there will be any further problems with respect to that contract.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I just want to give the honourable Members the assurance that we are very clear in our minds as to how we are proceeding, what we are going to spend, and the manner in which it is going to be spent, and of course, as all honourable Members on the other side know, nobody is above the law in Barbados. All of us have to comply with the regulations, and the Financial Rules are very clear that if you are using money coming out of Parliament, there has got to be some Permanent Secretary in some department who is the principal accounting officer. He can be advised by a variety of institutions, he can have project management, and before he makes his decisions, he can consult with these committees.

I want to stress that the internal renovations of Parliament must be arrived at after consultation with everybody who is going to be affected, the Debates Committee and the individual Members of Parliament. Right now there are a number of contracts, but the sub-committee has settled it. Everybody is clear in their minds that the most important contracts are the two roof contracts. After the two roof contracts, we will then come to the air-conditioning, dining room, to the Members' amenities, the stained glasses and things of that kind. But we are very clear in our priorities.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I want to ask the Prime Minister a question in relation to what he said about the Debates Committee. If that ruling is correct, that the Debates Committee cannot be an employer, can he go on to indicate to us what will be the situation with regard to the staff of Parliament. Because for some time we have continued with what, apparently, is a myth, that the

Debates Committee goes into contract with the union. If the Debates Committee cannot go into contract because it is not a person, somebody has to go into contract for the staff. I wonder if he can explain what is the new arrangement.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, I think that the honourable Member missed a few words..... 'in respect to the works'. I am not saying that the Debates Committee cannot carry out its specific statutory function of making provisions for the staff. We are talking about the employment of a person for the execution of a works contract. In Parliament in the United Kingdom, they have the same problem. I remember reading it in the *Parliamentary Journal.* There is a special Ministry of Works in England whose responsibility it is to deal with the fabric of Parliament, but they have appointed a special all-party committee which, together with a number of outside consultants, are dealing with the renovation of Parliament. There were signs up the last time I went to Parliament in England. "Ministry of Works, renovations of Parliament Building in accordance with..." They had a special sub-committee trying to preserve the architectural heritage of Parliament. So this is no new thing, and we have done it here. We are going to do it and we are going to do it properly. I think everybody who is involved knows that the Government is quite firm that the legal provisions will be carried out.

The question that the sum of $1 308 353, under Head 12 – Parliament stand part of the Schedule – was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 13 – SERVICES COMMISSIONS

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to move that Head 13 – the sum of $316 688 under Head 13 – Services Commissions – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): It may very well be that the questions that I have to ask ought to come under Establishments, but I think that the Services Commissions have the constitutional responsibility and, therefore, I will proceed under this Head. I will be guided by you on the matter.

It seems to me that one of the areas of contention in this country, for some considerable time now, is the whole question of the length of time that persons have to act in various positions in the public sector. I think that it is conducive to low productivity where there is a wide-spread body of persons acting in their posts, persons who are allegedly performing the duties but who do not have the confidence which comes with knowledge that you are secure in your work. I have no doubt there are sufficient and sundry explanations, but I think that in some areas it has really gone on too long. We heard earlier that the Clerk of Parliament acting, and I think that if one looks through the Establishments in the public sector, we will find an inordinately large number of persons acting in various posts.

Whether it is true or false, many of those persons have come to feel that there is no difficulty with their capabilities as workers – witness the long time they are allowed to do the job – but that there is some other infirmity over which they may have no control. That infirmity might be in the eyes of the decider or the beholder. I feel that the Government should take rapid steps, and I am recommending to the Prime Minister that he take rapid steps, to review this aspect of his administration to see that people come to feel that it is not true that you have to know somebody to get appointed to certain top or even middle positions.
11.30 a.m.

I want to be specific in one regard. There are some posts in the Psychiatric Hospital and the District Hospitals, posts that are very far down the line in the total scheme of things but posts that are very important to the individuals that hold them. There are people who have been acting, for want of a better description as "Heads of Departments" or "Heads of a Section" for over five years. There is one post in Barbados where, I am told, the person has been acting in excess of nine years, and it really confuses the mind that any administration could become so settled in its ways. I just do not think that it is fair, if nothing else, for any one man or woman to have to act in a post for so long.

I think that Services Commissions, which is responsible for personnel administration, establishments and training, ought to be given the authority. I do not understand why they have not exercised their authority. Let us put it that way. I believe that the Services Commissions have constitutional power, and I do not understand why the Services Commissions have not been exercising what constitutional power they have. They are answerable to nobody but the Constitution itself, and if they allow themselves to be answerable to somebody, then they are not worthy. I shall go no further than that.

I want to take the opportunity in discussing this Head to raise another matter. Government has a policy that is, in my view, misguided. It has manifested itself in the Ministry of Education, but it is a policy that permeates the entire public sector. It is a policy which de-emphasizes executive training, and I wish to distinguish between a two-week stint at the Training Unit for clerical officers and the kind of executive training which all modern organisations are recognized to have and to need. The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. V. L. Johnson) could readily appreciate what I am talking about when I say that failure to give personnel of

any organization executive training at the appropriate level can only redound to the discredit of that organization.

The policy which sees a number of persons not being able to get training leave to go to the university, or not being able to go to the university in a manner that people used to be able to go in the early days, is a misguided policy over the medium and long term. It may save a few dollars in the short term, but it diminishes the quality of personnel that are available to produce the services and the goods in this community. It therefore contributes to the wastage which can be identified as body politic over the medium and long term.

I believe that when the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham) introduced a Resolution calling for an examination of the Civil Service, these are matters which would have come out of such a debate. In many ways, I have always regretted that we have never had that debate because I do not think that we have ever had a full-fledged debate on the public services in Barbados, what should be done about them and how they can be improved.

We have gone along from time to time in a sort of acquiescent method and according to what we had before. That in itself is not negative, that in itself is not necessarily bad. What I think, however, is that if we can examine it in a qualitative way, then when we do add, we will be adding with our eyes open, we would be in a better position to assess and, if indeed necessary, put some kind of quantification on the amount of resources we put into our public sector and we would better be able to determine whether we are getting a cost benefit analysis, if we are getting as much as we can out of our public services.

I think that a young person who is required to go through school in Barbados up to 'A' levels and then can only get a university education if he or she goes straight into the university from secondary school, or during the career in the Public Service takes "no pay leave", is an unreasonable burden in the context of our society. Many of us who have managed to get tertiary education have had the good fortune to go outside of Barbados, or stay inside Barbados, and to work our way through school. It is a tradition that has existed in Barbados and I do not think it should be seen that the Government is somehow turning this tradition away. I think it is ideal to anticipate that some day we can have all of our people trained prior to going into particular jobs, but it is not possible, and especially in a time of recession, for all of the people who wish to have a tertiary education to pay for themselves either by way of economic cost or by way of a certain economic sacrifice.

I think that some restriction may be necessary in [illegible] no one would quarrel with such a restriction, but where it appears that the practice is being killed off by virtue of a very rigid application of a particular policy, then I wish to submit that we are making a fundamental error for the future. I am saying the quality of service which we will get ten to fifteen years from now will require that even our clerical officers have a First Degree. I know that that may sound strange, but those persons who have functioned outside Barbados know that, in very many of the developed countries, a lot of the clerical work is done by persons who have had a First Degree and sometimes a Second Degree.

At one stage of the administration of the Democratic Labour Party, there were persons who functioned in clerical positions in the Overseas Missions who, in fact, had Masters Degrees, but who, in pursuit of some other goal, recognized that there were not any more jobs for the captains or for the lieutenants, and they decided to be soldiers for a period of time. That has contributed in considerable measure to the quality of our overseas services in some of the capitals. I am suggesting, therefore, to the Government, and indeed in relation to these Services Commissions as it applies to establishments and to training, and any general public personnel policy, that we ought to review that policy with a view to making it easier, especially as it applies to people in the teaching service and people in the lower sections of the Civil Service itself.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for this Head also, since the Education Act created a Teaching Service Commission and we also have statutory.....

Asides

11.40 a.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: When we see Services Commissions, we have tended not to include the Police Service Commission and the Teaching Service Commission in our Estimates. I wonder if the Minister would indicate where the resources for the other Commissions can be found in the Estimates, or whether they form part of this Head. I want to know whether the Teaching Service Commission has a functioning secretariat or whether it exists merely in form. I also would like to know whether the Police Service Commission has a functioning secretariat, or if the Services Commission secretariat services all of these Commissions, including the Judicial Service Commission.

I have a few more questions, but I would like some answers to these before I move on to two other sub-heads under this general Head.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman, before any attempt is made to answer the specific questions put by the honourable Member who just spoke, I would like to make a few comments in relation to the Head under discussion. I support the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) in his contention that there are still too many people in the Civil Service who are acting, many of them acting for as long as five years. One or two members of my own staff, with great reluctance approached me recently and drew to my attention that they were acting for in excess of five years. I was so annoyed that such a thing was in existence – I am talking about degree people who have not yet been put on a permanent establishment – that I called Establishments myself. They did not know at the time, but after some investigation confirmed that that was the position, and I have since been led to believe that efforts have been put in train in order to correct the situation. But I had no doubt that when these persons spoke to me that there was a great feeling of insecurity, and there can be no doubt that people cannot produce at their best when they are not sure how long they are going to have a job. I very much hope, when we address the whole question of the Civil Service in the future, that we can arrive at some formula whereby if indeed you are going to keep a man, and you will know that long before five years, then he gets a permanent position.

On the question of whether we have been training enough people to ensure quality service down the road, I did raise it with the former Prime Minister over the last two years because I have been receiving complaints that enough people were not being trained. To some extent, that was the result of the fiscal restraint which we were practising; that in some areas, there had to be sacrifice, and the sacrifice was in part reflected in that policy of training. Within the last six to nine months, I think you will find that there has been a considerable ease in that regard, and that more and more civil servants are getting an opportunity to be trained.

There is, however, no magic or no direct correlation between training and improved efficiency. My biggest quarrel with the graduate class in the Civil Service, and I tell them this every day, is that, and I think this is a failing of the university, they have not left the university with any love for reading. The result is that there is as high as 90 per cent of the graduate class in my observation in the Public Service who have not read a single book since they left the university.

When I was at BIMAP and at IDC, I saw as many as 75 graduates every year, because I sat as Chairman of the Establishments Committee at both institutions. There were times when BIMAP recruited as many as ten graduates at a time in order to carry the training programme there, and for that we would have to see 50 graduates. My standard question to them was, 'I see you have a good university degree and so on, have you been keeping up your reading?' And I used to keep a count. There were two cases where people told me that they were keeping up their reading, and when I ask them what it was, I stumped them because they were telling me a lie. All the rest admitted that, except for the newspapers – and some even said they were not reading the newspapers – they were not reading, and it was reflected in the quality of their expressions and their work. So we must not assume that there is necessarily any magic. Many people who have risen to heights of distinction had only a first degree; but they built on it; they continued their reading.

A lot of civil servants are interested in training every eighteen months to get the opportunity to go out. That is all good, but, in the end, they must build on their foundation and continue their reading. A lawyer who does not continue his reading will soon find that he is as good as if he did not read the law, and that is so in every profession. The big quarrel that I have with the graduate class in the Public Service is that they have not continued their reading after graduation.

My final observation relating to this question of training relates to what I consider the inconsistency in relation to the application of the policy as to who gets leave with pay and who does not. I believe that it is a clear case of the civil servants involved responding to their own constituents, because the civil servants have larger constituencies to service than we politicians. I hope you have that clear; there is no doubt about that. But you have many instances of people who have done ten to twelve years in the Public Service and cannot get leave with pay to go and study, and people who have just done three years on appointment get leave with full pay. That is a serious bone of contention among the members of the Civil Service. I know of scores of cases like that, and I think that that applies throughout the Civil Service in relation to transfers, appointments and promotions, and that is why I have always made a case for a full time Chairman of the Public Service Commission, who has enough time to say, "For the job that is coming up, give me all the names of the persons who qualify; I will sit with you and make the short list." Then, I, with no axe to grind, will be involved in the interviewing process. I think in those areas of training, leave with or without pay, promotions and transfers, there is still room for the application of more fair play in the Public Service.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Education is not here today. The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) directed a number of questions towards that particular Minister. I do not feel over competent to deal with all the details of that Ministry, but, to the best of my ability, I will answer the questions raised.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West, in relation to the question of training of teachers, is of the view that there is not sufficient and adequate opportunity and scope for the training of people in the teaching service. I beg to disagree. I think that there is no other service that has a greater percentage of people already trained or being trained than the teaching service. It is important that the honourable Member appreciates that over 90 per cent of the people in the primary school system, where most of the teachers are, are trained teachers, and that there is on-going training year after year for those teachers. I do not believe there is a teacher in the primary school system who is not exposed to some kind of training every year.
11.50 a.m.

I have often wondered at the elitist view, perhaps even the colonialist view, that training is something that you get abroad. If you go up to Pittsburgh, or Edinburgh, or Wales, or some place, you get training. If you put on a number of courses at the polytechnic or at Erdiston Teachers Training College, or BIMAP, or at Ellerslie School or the Garrison Secondary School in the summer, somehow or other this does not come through as training. But, if you see it in that context, there is a tremendous amount of training for teachers in the schools of Barbados.

The honourable Member raised the question of the Teaching Service Commission. Under the Education Act, there is no Teaching Service Commission, as far as my recollection goes. The teachers are brought within the ambit of the Public Service Commission. Also, the other services the honourable Member asked about, the Judicial and Legal Services Commission, the Police Service Commission, use and have as a secretariat the Services Commission.

A question was also raised about study leave generally, obviously at university level. At the moment there are no less than 90 graduates of universities in Barbados who applied for jobs in the Public Service – and there are no jobs for them. It is important that we focus on that, because it is very easy to speak glibly about more training without trying to analyse what we want of the training. I have made noise for a long time for a proper manpower survey to be done in this country. We have always looked on a manpower survey as something for labourers, carpenters, casual workers, industrial workers, and technicians, and we have not taken a very close look at that kind of survey for people in the professional classes and the sub-professional or para-professional classes, and therefore we continually overtrain people in the university in areas for which there is no need in Barbados.

Everybody goes up to Cave Hill and does degree in Social Studies, History and Sociology, and there is no demand in Barbados for people trained in these areas. On the other hand, there is a continuing demand for people in Accounts, for people teaching Geography, Physics, Mathematics and Industrial Arts. There is a shortage of trained people in those areas, but people have to be guided. A proper survey, properly publicised, will let Barbadians know the areas in which there is a demand and a need.

I think it is quite wrong to say that Government has unreasonably cut back on training and that there is not sufficient training for people in the Public Service. I think what Government cut back on is people going off to study in fields that are unrelated to the jobs they do in the Public Service. I said in this House a few weeks ago that over half the policemen in Barbados are trained in any one year, and I have already said that over 90 per cent of the teachers are trained, but civil servants work in one department and they want to go off on leave to study in an unrelated area.

As the honourable Member for St. Michael West said, these are difficult times when we have problems with shortage of money; therefore, we cut out the luxuries. We do not want to deny anybody the benefit of a general education, a number of us in here have not done too badly with our general education, but we have to appreciate that when we have times of national stringency, we have to set priorities. Government must identify its priorities for training. People in the priority areas are the people who should be given full pay leave, half pay or whatever it is.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I just want to make the point that I made a distinction between what I call executive training and general training. I was not questioning whether there is general training throughout the services.

What I want to focus on in terms of the effect it is having on the individual would in fact be in the teaching profession, where by virtue of the work, a teacher who gets a degree, no matter what the teacher gets that degree in, should be a better teacher if for no other reason than he or she would learn to read.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I do not buy that argument. I have heard arguments to the contrary. I heard both the honourable Member for St. Michael West and the honourable Member for Christ Church East a few minutes ago give strong evidence to the contrary, that people go and do degrees and when they finish take the degrees they are only semi-literate – they do not read any more. I do not necessarily accept that argument that if you are a primary school teacher teaching children the basics, the three Rs, General Studies and General Science, because you go off to Cave Hill and do a degree in Sociology you are any better able to impart fractions or whatever. I do not necessarily accept that. It is debatable.

The point I am making is that it is not undesirable that people should get a general education. I do not think one loses anything. On the contrary, one gains a lot by getting an improved general education, a degree in whatever subject. Acquisition of knowledge of whatever kind does nothing but enhance a human being. The point is that at a given time, when one has to make distinctions between what is necessary as priority areas for Government and what is not necessary, the choice is there.

The Government has entered into an agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank for millions of dollars to provide a Student Revolving Loan Fund for people to study in a diverse amount of areas necessary at this stage for national development. The Government sat down and worked out with the Inter-American Development Bank the subject areas for study, because these were the areas that the Government wanted to signal to our young people that we needed people. That is one guide, but I do not think it is conclusive, and we have to understand, as the Opposition was saying yesterday – they cannot have their cake and eat it too, they are always blowing hot and cold. Yesterday they told us one thing in respect of Government expenditure.....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am consistent. I said you cannot cut back social services).

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member is telling me now you cannot cut back social services. You have to cut back social services if you do not have the money, but that is not the point I am making, because we are not, in fact, cutting back social services. I am challenging any member of the Opposition to get up and show me anywhere in these Estimates where any of the social services has been cut back. That is a little bit unfair, and it is the sort of report that goes abroad – and people believe it – that somehow, we are cutting back on social services. On the contrary, these Estimates reflect a modest expansion in social services.

12.00 noon

To get back to the point I was making in respect of the Student Revolving Loan Fund, in times of financial difficulty, you have to be more prudent with your expenditure. I do not know that it is a good thing that we should be seeking to provide education right through tertiary level, at the cost to the student at which we are providing it. If we continue the way that we are going, paying for the University of the West Indies and tertiary education for our students, education will break this country.

The Student Revolving Loan Fund has been established to provide long-term, low cost loans to students to pursue studies in certain disciplines, I think that you do not start to repay the money until a year after you have graduated and you have fifteen or twenty years, long, long periods, in which to repay. The interest which you pay is some three per cent, or some such small figure.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Did you try to get one?)

Hon. L. R. TULL: No, I never tried to get one. In the days when I was a student, you had to wash buses and dig ditches in order to be able to study, so I was not in that.

I know, and the honourable Member is free to quarrel with that principle if he feels like, that the Student Revolving Loan Fund was set up to assist people of low income groups to acquire low cost loans. The ceiling was $24 000 when it started. If your family income was $24 000 a year, $2 000 a month or above, you were told to go and borrow money from the commercial banks; that the Student Revolving Fund, on these generous terms, was intended for people of low income groups. It is not that low, because $2 000 a month is nothing to sneeze at. The Student Revolving Fund was set up, according to my recollection, since 1977 or 1978. There were not a lot of people who were working for $2 000 in 1977, so it covers a whole range of people.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: It should be increased.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member is saying it should be increased.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Now.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: I agree with that. That is the policy of the Government. The Government is carrying on negotiations with the Inter-American Development Bank to get the ceiling raised from the $24 000. I am not briefed nor advised by the Ministry of Education, but I am of the impression that they have succeeded in persuading the Inter-American Development Bank to accept a higher ceiling for the loans. I mention these two things as counter balances.

We are spending about $141 million on Education. I think that is what I see in these Estimates. It is an enormous amount of money. And we are living high on the hog. There is no other Third World Country, I say none, in any of the five continents which provides free education for its citizens from nursery school right through university. I am challenging honourable Members – it is a friendly challenge.

Mr. B. M. TAITT rose.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Before I give way – I will give way in a moment – children in Trinidad and Tobago

pay school fees at the secondary level. If you want to answer me now, get up and answer.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, he said it is a friendly challenge. What is wrong with our being number one in something? There is nothing wrong with it. It is a proper policy and we both must maintain it. We are nothing to do with Trinidad or anybody else. Let us maintain it.

Hon. L. R. TULL: All the honourable Member is doing is boasting with me. I do not know what he is quarrelling about.

Asides

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am proud. What are you hectoring me for? You know that if you hector me, you are only going to make me hector you back when the time comes. What is the quarrel?

I am stating it as a fact that, in this country, we have free education from nursery school right through to university, and it is something that we are proud of. I do not know why the quarrel is going on.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Your style is bad.)

Hon. L. R. TULL:. I wish that the honourable Members would take a little time and listen, instead of being so fretful so early in the morning. I am in good humour today, Sir. I am in exceptionally good humour. Why is he bothering me? To change my mood?

Aside

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am feeling good.

The point that I am making is that with the kind of expenditure required to keep that kind of freedom of cost in education, it is posing a well nigh intolerable burden on public finances in this country. However much we may appreciate what we have got and are proud of it, do not let us be proud and foolish. You can be as proud of it as you like, but you also have to count the cost.

The Student Revolving Loan Fund is a progressive measure to maintain the opportunity for people of low incomes in Barbados to get tertiary education without an intolerable burden on them, and without having an intolerable burden on the public coffers. And while we are talking about this question of training, we have to look at the university. The university has also to establish its priorities. Only this weekend, the Prime Minister of Jamaica was telling the Prime Minister of Barbados, in my presence, that he is doing - holding operation on the university expenditure because he wants to do a very close study of....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Gone through the eddoes!)

Aside

Hon. L. R. TULL: University expenditure is getting out of hand. It is increasing at a level beyond other expenditure in areas of Government. We have to decide – it is not a partisan thing – how much we want at the university and how much we can afford to pay for it.

Aside

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am not batting on the Minister of Education's wicket. I am batting from recollection, like the honourable Member for St. Michael South.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Your fifteen minutes are gone.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, since the honourable Member for St. Michael North is suggesting that the fifteen minutes have gone, I would give way. But I am prepared to go into greater detail on this whole question of rationalization of training, because we have a lot of institutions in Barbados that all do the same thing. There is a polytechnic that teaches technical training, there is a Community College that does it. There are the technical wings of all secondary schools, there is a Skills Training Programme and now I am hearing of a National Youth Service Programme. There are several institutions that seem to be stepping all over each other teaching the same things. That is one of the things that we have to look at.

I will come back, if the need arises, or perhaps in the Estimates of the Ministry of Education, to deal with the question of literacy, and who can read and why the other cannot read, what is wrong with our philosophy in education and all that.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I think that.....

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. St. John, not yet. There are other things).

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE (St. Lucy): Mr. Chairman, I should like to make a point about appointments to the Civil Service. The emphasis here this morning is really on degrees and qualifications, but it seems to me that no one is thinking about co-operation. There are lots of people, as we know, who go to school and get their degree, but do not get the understanding that they have to live with people.

12.10 p.m.

The Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) spoke about a five year period. Five years really is not a

long time, because I was on a board in 1976, and I saw people were working in the service, one fellow, in particular, for 30 years, who were never appointed under the regime of the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE: One wrong does not make a right, I agree with you, but I will go further. Our School Meals workers started working in 1961, and the first person who was appointed in the School Meals Department was appointed in 1976.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I think that it needs to be explained that when the School Meals Service was started, it was put on what they call a "temporary appointment," because you cannot appoint anybody until the posts are established. The Establishments Division has to create those posts and have them established. So although the persons were, in fact, working permanently, there were no posts appointed.

Let us face it. If the Chief Establishments Officer creates the posts, then the politicians do not have any jurisdiction over the appointments. But in places like the School Meals, and the Security Services in your time and other similar places, the politicians get a little leverage when they have some inputs into those appointments. That is why it was done. That is why it continues. That is a fact of life on both sides.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I say that they should have established those posts, and I am sure that under this regime that we have established more posts than under the Democratic Labour Party's regime. When you compare the amount of appointments that were made between 1961–1976 and 1976 to now, their record is nothing to compare with ours.

He spoke about degrees. This Head of Department, I am sure, is the honourable Member's good friend, and this individual had a degree. I do not know for what reason, but he tried to question it. He had no fault, worked well, was always on time, but still that chap could not be deemed fit to be appointed.

I definitely believe that we should look into these problems, and when people are well qualified and there is a board, there should be some kind of meeting where such things can be discussed. Because there are some people who do not appoint people because of their political affiliation, and I know quite a few people who suffered under that regime. But I feel that we as a people should try to be fair. Every man has his right to like who he likes, and when he qualifies, we should always try to move him through his sphere.

I feel that we make mistakes with people, because when people find themselves appointed, they always do better because they have a sense of security. But you cannot expect any Head of Department who has someone who is not willing to co-operate to put up such a man to be appointed. On the board that I was on, we would always question him, and he would say, "Leave the appointments to me. I know who to present to you all." That means you could not blame Government on this particular ground. You have to blame the Head of Department, who is a bit slow in dealing with such individuals.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Chairman, processing retiring benefits for clerical officers is taking too long. There are many people who have retired, and some six or seven months have passed without them getting their benefits. This is creating a problem for a lot of them. I do not see why you should have this time lag between the time persons retired and the time they begin to receive the benefits that they are entitled to.

I want to join with the Member for St. George South (Hon. L. R. Tull) that I do not understand how you could plan if there is no manpower survey. Which agency of the Government can tell us what were the requirements for the Civil Service ten years ago, and what are we doing now to make sure that the Civil Service will be ready ten years down the road? There is no forward planning. There is no agency that has been given the job to sit down and see after the requirements of the Public Service ten years down the road, and the needs are becoming more and more complexed as the society and our economy expand.

You are beginning to need specialists in certain areas, and you cannot wait until you need those specialists to look for them. Out of a clear, blue sky the Government now needs specialists in things like offshore banking and shipping. Some agency needs to be established to sit down and work out a ten year development plan for the Civil Service – how you are going to get there, what training facilities you need, and who are the people to take you there. Until you do that, you are going to find that there is going to be more and more discontent, both by the civil servants and policy administrators, who are complaining about the lack of productivity because we have not been planning the development of our Civil Service as such.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, I read into what the Attorney General had to say about free education – some thoughts of the Government, perhaps, to change the question of free education from primary school up to university, in Barbados. Maybe I am over-reading.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member is a gentleman, and I wish he would be a gentleman when he

is representing what I said. I have offered no challenge to the integrity of free education in Barbados, and I did not, and do not propose, to state that the Government is contemplating a change. What I was seeking to say is that the Student Revolving Fund was a provision to allow people in low income groups to get into university – and they usually go overseas – without falling into any great deal of debt. I offered no challenge to the integrity of our system. I only said it was a well nigh intolerable burden.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I am very glad to hear him say what he said. The reason why I came to that conclusion was that he referred to the Estimates and said "How much longer can we afford to spend this kind of money on Education, $141 million? I think that was a fair and reasonable conclusion to come to. But now he has assured us on this side that Government has no such thoughts of changing, at any time the policy as regards to free education, I accept that unreservedly.

I was impressed with what the Minister of Agriculture had to say, and I must congratulate him in his forthrightness as regards the appointment of persons acting in certain positions. What caused me a little concern was when he approached Establishments, the officer to whom he was speaking did not know the period of time that the officer was acting.

That brings me to another point, which I think is of concern. It appears to me that the Government has not been appointing officers to the Establishment. It has done that now, it appears, for quite some time. Officers have been promoted to certain positions, but new appointments in the Service have not been made, or have been made, in truth and in fact, very sparingly, and what we have observed to be happening is that some positions have not been established but have been made into acting positions and then the persons put into those positions in an acting capacity.
12.20 p.m.

I am talking now about temporary posts. It appears that a number of temporary posts have been created. We know that under the Constitution, the Prime Minister has the power and the right to appoint persons to those temporary posts.

Asides

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: All I am saying is that it is our opinion that from time to time it may be very necessary to have temporary posts in the Service, but I hope that the Government will use this provision sparingly.

Asides.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I know it is necessary to have temporary posts created in the Service. I hope the Government uses it sparingly and do not use it as a means of appointing their own people into certain positions.

Asides.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I am surprised to hear the honourable Member say that. I am not going to make a big contribution. I am just going to make reference to a specific set of incidences that I recall.

In 1976, temporary appointments were made to the School Meals Service in the month of August to start to work on September 7. They were appointed and paid from August, although they did not start to work until September. There are over 70 of them appointed, under the hand of the then Minister of Education, Frederick Smith, and he appointed 68 people from the constituency in which he was running a few weeks before the elections – and paid them a salary or wages before they started to work! It is the first time in the history of this country that I have ever heard of anybody getting vacation pay before they could do one single day's work! I cannot understand how the honourable Member can come in here and make those kinds of statements.

What we did when we took over was to create a number of establishments so that people could be given security of tenure and.....

Asides.

Hon. L. R. TULL: We established a number of posts that the people were appointed to by the Public Service Commission.

Asides.

Hon. L. R. TULL: What is the honourable Member fretting about? In 1974.....

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: If the honourable Member would give way. I gave way to him just now, Sir.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I give way.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I am not talking about establishing posts at all. I am all in agreement with establishing posts. I am talking about the possibility of creating a temporary post which was already a permanent post in the Service.

Asides.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I can give an example, but I do not want to do that now. I agree you should not do that. That is what I am talking about.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I think we have obviously reached dangerous ground. I think there are a number of points about the Civil Service on which all honourable Members obviously agree. We would like to see the Civil Service organized and appointed in such a manner that, whatever administration is in power, it receives the best quality of advice and the best administrative skills in the execution of its policies.

As far as the number of senior posts are concerned, my understanding is that there are only two posts of Acting Permanent Secretaries. All the rest are appointed. There are two posts of Heads of Department. There is a Comptroller of Customs post that is vacant and there is a Government Information Service post, I believe, that is vacant.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Consequent upon the acting appointments that I have described, there will be, right through the Service, appointments which cannot be made permanent until these are made permanent.

I agree that there are a number of people in the Service who are acting. They cannot be appointed because of the principle of secondment. There are a number of people in the Civil Service who are seconded to statutory boards or to international organisations, or who are on study leave, and whose posts cannot be filled because of the rules. As I understand it, there are some 247 secondments in existence so far.

I have also been critical of the fact that a number of people have been acting. I have done an investigation. I think that honourable Members should listen carefully for one minute. Some of my own constituents have complained that they have been acting for many years. When an investigation was done, it was found that their definition of acting does not necessarily coincide with your definition of acting, as you have described it here, because many people in the Civil Service in Barbados hold temporary posts and regard themselves as acting, and that is the problem.

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There is a big difference. If you are only the holder of a temporary post, there is no possibility of your being appointed to the post, because the nature of the temporary post is such that you do not make an appointment. You are in a temporary post.

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: In the public's mind, people who hold these posts complain about not being appointed; that is, they want a job that is established, and they want a letter saying that they are appointed permanently, so do not let us confuse ourselves with this.

There are a number of temporary posts and there are a variety of reasons for temporary posts. Honourable Members will recall that former Prime Minister Adams periodically came to the House with Civil Establishment Orders which confirmed the temporary posts as permanent posts by virtue of the Civil Establishment Order, and a continuous review is going on all the time as to which of those posts which are now temporary will be made Civil Establishments posts.

Let us get this clear. The same enthusiasm honourable Members in here share for the movement of these temporary posts into the establishment posts category is not always shared by others, particularly people in the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance has constantly to bear in mind one simple fact that every two years you have a salary revision; and every time you have had a salary revision, for the last ten years, you know that Government has run into problems in the subsequent two years, because you have to work out the impact of the cost of the salary revision. That is a problem that we have to deal with, so either we are going to decide in our minds that we are going to have a flexible system to allow the Ministry of Finance to be able to deal with the eventuality of the total burden of the Civil Service, or we are going to say that we are going to have salary revisions over a longer period of time. Obviously we cannot unilaterally change these matters. I would be very glad if a consensus could emerge. 12.30 p.m.

There is another problem that arises, and, remember, this is a very peculiar problem, because we have a salary structure in which every year you get an increment. The doctrine of increments, in my opinion, was put in place when you had the five year salary scales. Now, you have two year negotiations, but they have never given up the principle of increments, so when honourable Members hear that you have a 10 per cent first year salary revision and a 5 per cent second year salary revision, that is not the true cost, and this year, in particular, illustrates it, and illustrates the difficulties that the Ministry of Finance faces in these matters. So do not let us think that it is easy, from a financial point of view, to convert all of the temporary posts that we have in the Civil Service into permanent post tomorrow. The consequences would be very grave, and the problems that honourable Members on the other side speak about in relation to the retention of social services will then become great problems. It is constantly kept in review.

We must also remember that there are a number of services that we have to do, particularly in relation to project management, which by their very nature can only reasonably be created as temporary posts. Sometimes

we have to explain this to our own constituents. They get a job in, say, the Airport Development Project and they feel that the Airport Development Project should continue forever; in other words, that you must do the same level of capital development continuously.

On this question of the political utilisation of the temporary posts provision, the honourable Member knows that a large portion of the numbers in those posts came over from the previous Administration. It is not true to say that these are all BLP people.

The other thing that we have to have – and I do not wish to comment on it, because a part of it is before the law courts in Barbados – is that there is no doubt that that part of the Constitution which deals with Crown servants and deals with the Public Service Commission is a very grey area in all the Westminster Constitutions, and the question of the unestablished posts and temporary posts and their respective positions, and Crown servants and non-Crown servants is a difficult area.

The other area that I want to talk on is training. I am very grateful to the Attorney General for pointing out that the situation in Barbados today with respect to access by all classes to University education is completely different than it was in the past. Not only are there a much larger number of scholarships available from a variety of Governmental and non-governmental sources, but we also have the Revolving Loan Fund, which was specifically designed to ensure that young people of ability, irrespective of the means of their parents, would have access to University. We also have in Barbados today, a number of institutions which provide training, which were not available in the past. You had to go away if you wanted to do these things. So Government training must be looked at in the light of the fact that more people are coming to Government after they have gone through some period of training at a university. You do not have to send them to university to be trained.

I am told that there are over 90 applications by people who have degrees in certain specific areas, particularly the Social Sciences, and not necessarily the Social Sciences in the broad sense of the B.Sc. Econ., or B.Sc. in Accounting, or B.Sc. in Management. I am talking about the broader social services, Sociology and things of that kind, where the opportunities in the Service are restricted. When I was a young man and you wanted to go into the Service, any degree you had at all, if you had a degree in anything, you could get in the Service because you had a degree. Today the requirement in the Civil Service is not necessarily a General Degree. You must have degrees in specific areas. The number of people that are recruited with good General Degrees is restricted, and obviously preference is given to people who have done the best. If you have a First Class Honours deg in anything at all from any university, you can get a job in the Barbados Civil Service; they make room for you. For an Upper Second, they make room for you; but there are other areas in which you have to have degrees with a vocational content.

We need in the Public Service a large number of people to come forward with B.Sc. degrees in Accounting – I think they have got that now, because the Government paid for it – or even Management or even Public Administration. We must also remember that the variety of skills that are required now in the Public Service means that people must in the choice of their subjects determine that if they wish to have Civil Service appointments, they must do the kind of subjects that the Civil Service needs.

I am fully in favour of the utilisation of other tertiary institutions. I think that one of the greatest things we have in Barbados is the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity. I am a strong believer in it. I am glad to see that it is not only now attracting people who have been working and did not have the exposure of university or other tertiary institution discipline, and who therefore went in there to get a first exposure to tertiary institutions, but also that it is now attracting people who have a General Degree already, and who are going back in to do Management as a vocational subject. They are good people, because they help you, particularly in the communications skills and things like that. They need it and people are going to do it. More and more people are going to use BIMAP as a post-graduate institution to fit themselves in the vocational areas for which there are jobs.

We also have the Community College. The technical section of the Community College, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) would know, is only now beginning to get the respect that it should have got. The whole of the technical section of the Community College, as I understand it, was designed to provide in this society what a polytechnic in the United Kingdom, or Junior College in the United States, does in relation to technological subjects. We are now getting people with an OTD. You are hearing about them now going into the Ministry of Communications and Works as supervisors and things of that kind. The Civil Service is recruiting people with that kind of qualification. In the Ministry of Civil Aviation we recruit people as electronic apprentices who have gone through the Polytechnic.

It is not quite true to say that we are not training. It is true to say, though, and it is a matter of deliberate Government policy itself, that we are not sending as many people abroad for training as we did before, for the simple reason that we have more of the training facilities here than we had before. But we have to be very careful. We have learnt something about training in our years in Government here. Many people who have good contacts

can get a course that precisely suits a particular person, and it is a mystery how it occurs, but it can happen. Before the course is even offered to the Government, the person to do the course is picked, has his ticket and is ready to go. These things happen, and it is a mystery how they happen. The other thing is that there are a lot of courses that are offered to the Government, and you never hear about these courses until after the date for the application has gone. That, again, is another mystery to us.

12.40 p.m.

The last thing I want to say – and I think we had better disabuse our minds very early – is that the Government is not saying that it is cutting down on university education. The Government is saying quite clearly that, like the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, like the Government of Jamaica, like the Governments in the OEC countries, we are all concerned about the cost of university education. It has escalated above the rate of inflation. It is going up faster. It is like legal services, accounting costs, medical costs and health care costs – they are areas which escalate above the general average of inflation – and if you are a great provider of them at a subsidised rate, you must be seriously concerned.

I believe the University Grants Committee meeting is going on now, and it is a matter of public knowledge that all the Governments in the Caribbean are seriously concerned about the cost of the University and their ability to allow it to expand at the same rate at which it expanded in the past. They are also doing – and this is certainly the position of the Government of Barbados – a review of the areas of study in the light of the needs of the community at this particular time.

The question that the sum of $316 688 under Head 13 – Services Commissions – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14 – ESTABLISHMENTS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $6 485 671 under Head 14 – Establishments – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 15 – CABINET OFFICE

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $2 862 989 under Head 15 – Cabinet Office – as amended stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Head 15, page 8, Electoral Office. It does not need a tremendous amount of words to raise the question which I have to raise and to make the point I have to make. It is now some considerable time since I have been asking for and about the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. During the last few months there has been a lot of speculation, and certainly during the second half of last year we had some specific word on this. I believe that it is one of the most important areas of life in the country, and I cannot understand why – and I am asking the Prime Minister, in essence, to answer the question – has the Act not been proclaimed, if it has not been.

I have seen no evidence that it has been proclaimed. There cannot in my view, be any reason why it has not been proclaimed. We have even seen in the public media the names of persons who have been appointed under the legislation, which was a constitutional amendment, and it is passing strange, and quite disturbing, to have those names being bandied about as having been appointed to the Commission, and yet some months after that there is no indication from the Government as to the status of the Commission.

According to the constitutional amendment, there are certain adjustments that would be automatic if and when the Commission comes to work. But, in fact, when one examines the electoral register that was published on the last day in January, one will see, if one is meticulously keeping account of one's constituency, that it is entirely possible that, say, in the constituency of Christ Church West, the figure listed in that register would call for an adjustment under the terms of the amendment to the Constitution automatically, when in fact it may very well be that the actual number of persons in Christ Church West fall below the 10 per cent one way or the other and therefore it would be considerably smaller in terms of numbers than what has been identified. On the contrary, it may be larger. What I am saying is that we are at such a critical time in the development of this country, and especially in so far as electoral matters are concerned, that we ought not to be speculating about this at this stage. If the Commission is to be appointed, let it be appointed and let it get on with the work.

If it is one thing that a politician must have a vital interest in, it is a free and fair election, and if there is anybody that would have a more vital interest than the politician, it must be the person who will elect that politician. This country has a good record, generally speaking, and I do not think that we ought to allow the question of an election to fall within the arena of vicious rumour. We all understand the processes. It is a matter over which we ought not to have any contention, because we all said from both sides of the House that it is

our objective for this country to have free and fair elections. Therefore, I call on the Prime Minister to give the country an assurance today that the Electoral and Boundaries Commission Act will be proclaimed, that the appointments will be made known to the country, and that the office can get on with its work.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I would not like to deal with the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite) because I do not believe this is a matter in which one wishes to exchange barbs.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: You have to sit down sometime, and when you sit down you will hear).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Members on that side are willing to threaten me on the matter. They can feel free, but I know that the Prime Minister must be aware that what I am saying is valid, and the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) joined me last year and the year before.

It is useless to talk about who voted for it and who did not vote for it. It is now the law of the land and you cannot pull it back. The question now of putting it into place is not a partisan issue, it is a national issue, and no amount of utterances coming from that side can change the fact that too much time has elapsed before the Electoral and Boundaries Commission can get on with its work. I defy any honourable Member to get up from over there and say that enough time has not elapsed. Get up and say that you have good and sufficient reason for its not going into effect. Get up and say that your reason for delaying it is so valid that anything we say about it would have to be wrong. Every member of this community has a right to know where he or she will vote. 12.50 p.m.

I would like the Minister responsible for Electoral Affairs to confirm whether it is true that there is a move afoot to make all those persons who do not have a new ID card ineligible to vote.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Oh?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do not tell me "Oh?" Because the Record shows that it has been said. Do no force me to give you chapter and verse about it.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: The law particularly said so.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: What we are saying is that there are persons who were registered in this country on an electoral roll.....

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You came to the people and you told them that you were doing a survey and that the other survey you were doing was not for election purposes. Subsequently, as we had predicted, you changed that system to make the new ID Card the basis for election, and you allowed both to work together. And it is my clear understanding, on very good authority, that it is now being proposed that all those who do not have the new ID Card would be stricken from the list.

I want to say in advance.....

(Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Are you frighten for the polls?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr.? I am frighten for the polls? I have to answer only the people for St. Michael West. The honourable Member for St. Andrew does not vote down there, so he has no say in what happens.

(Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: And you do not vote down there either.)

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Precisely.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Precisely. But I am speaking for the ones in St. Michael West today. They wish to know where they are to vote.

I have in my constituency, on that list that was published on 28 January, even though we have told you that the list is not published often enough, a substantial number of dead people on that list.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. B. M. TAITT: We are saying that any electoral system that is worth its salt should have persons who were dead more than two or three years, off the list. It should not be necessary for anybody to have them taken off, and no amount of barking from the Government side can move me from that position. I am saying that the Electoral Office does not have the facility, it does not have the ability, to do the things that ought to be done to make the list pure. I am saying, therefore, that the sooner we can get on with creating a proper Electoral and Boundaries Commission and proper Electoral Office, with all the facilities we need, the better it is going to be for democracy in this country.

This country has gone as far as Africa, it has gone to Grenada, it has gone to Dominica, it has gone throughout the Caribbean and it has perpetrated itself as a model of electoral decorum and it has offered expertise. I am

saying that you must remove whatever is in your own eye before you go assisting the other fellow with something in his eye, and I am saying that we .....

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am talking to the Prime Minister. I am finished with the others here. I am talking to the Prime Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman. I am saying that we have a vested interest in purifying the system.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Philip Greaves knows about electoral rigging better than you!)

Laughter.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: No, no. I know as much as you!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not taking this discussion into electoral rigging.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not even going to accuse the Government of anything. I am not even going to accuse the Government of bad motives. I am speaking to the Government on a matter that causes me a tremendous amount of pain as a citizen. Apart from the fact that I have a vested interest as a representative, this country has a right to have a pure electoral system, that this country has the means to do it, that the vehicle through which it can be done has been created, and that the Government has been exercising negligence. I am charging the Government with negligence in its failure to have the Act proclaimed and the Commission appointed. That is the gravamen of my charge, and I look forward to its defence.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You sound cool as a lawyer.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am going to be very brief, because we are going to lunch now.

Anybody hearing the Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) grand-charging in here this morning would believe that that was the brainchild of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Did you misunderstand me?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable Member give way?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He is bound by tradition now to do so.

I admit freely that it is the brain-child of the Barbados Labour Party; I have no problem with that. But if it is your brain-child and you treat it so badly, suppose it was mine?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Do you think that you could bring in all black societies in the world on aeroplanes to vote at election time, you joker? You brought down forty-four people in a plane to back you in St. Michael West.

Anybody hearing the Member for St. Michael West arguing this morning would believe that this is something which the Democratic Labour Party had put into place, went out of office leaving it to be dealt with, and that the Barbados Labour Party ignored it and shelved it. I once heard the mouthings of the Member for St. Michael South Central – he is like a mouse in his seat today, I do not know what is wrong with him – up and down this country talking about fair and free elections, as if we are in Guyana or in places like Trinidad where people vote by symbols, would believe all manner of things. But people can challenge the election process in this country, where you have a few names inadvertently taken off or misplaced; twenty or thirty names, not any thousands of people disfranchised in this country.

We wrote the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party in 1976 to make sure that there will be a free and honest system in respect of elections in Barbados, one which the people of Barbados can be proud of, and so that they will know that there has never been any kind of rigging in your time, in the days of the Conservatives or even in these days.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You stole in 1981.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You would know about stealing.

If you were to go out there and ask Barbadians if they believe that elections in Barbados were ever rigged, by the Conservatives, by the Barbados Labour Party Government 1946 to 1961, by their Government, 1961 to 1976 and this present Government, they would say, "No," all except the Member for St. Michael West and Member for St. Michael South Central, and I do not believe that they themselves believe it.

Aside

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: In 1976, this was in the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, on page 2. Nineteen eight-one came and it was never brought to Parliament. We had to examine certain Constitutions, the process and all of these things in the other countries. I can assure Members that the next election called in this country would be under the supervision of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. And you know, the Deputy Leader.....

Aside

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You do not want any election. You cannot win any election, man. Taitt, why do you not keep yourself quiet?

I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that Members on the other side know the names of the two persons that the Leader of the Opposition nominated and they have been accepted by the Government. It is only a matter of time.

Aside

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: He does not know.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: This is a matter of public knowledge. The proclamation of the Act is nothing so big.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, it is. It cannot function unless you put it in.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: There was a date, I believe, which was set or was in mind, but certain events were responsible for a delay. But I can assure you that I would not be surprised – I am not saying that it is going to be so – if the coming by-election or the general election – and you know the 'by' must be called in 90 days – is not held under the Commission.
1.00 p.m.

Asides

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I have no doubt this will be proclaimed and there will be no need for anybody to have any doubts about who is who. I believe this is to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Asides

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You were ready since 1976. "We are ready" – to die.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I want to speak on this.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Since you have to speak, I will give you a chance to have some lunch.

I beg to move that His Honour do now report to His Honour the Speaker progress and ask for leave to sit again.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, before we take the luncheon break, I have a Notice Paper here, and I would be grateful, with the leave of the House, to give notice of a few items.

Mr. SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

PAPERS LAID

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

The Land Development Duty (Rate of Duty) Order, 1985.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to give notice of the following:

Resolution to approve the Land Development Duty (Rate of Duty) Order, 1985.

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Indian Ground, St. Peter.

Resolution to approve the guarantee by Government of a loan of $14,500,000 by the Bank of Nova Scotia to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of financing a redevelopment programme.

Resolution to grant the sum of $1,126,842 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. 42, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Resolution to grant the sum of $69,852 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. 43, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Resolution to amend the Explanatory Note to Head 23 – Loans and Advances, Subhead 1, Part I – Current.

I would also like to inform the House that I would like to deal with these Resolutions sometime during the

course of this sitting. I have no doubt that some of the money should be spent before the end of the financial year. I will be asking Members on the other side to appreciate the purpose of having these Resolutions done in all of their stages during the sitting. I have no doubt they will be circulated in due time.

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2 p.m. for lunch.

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

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

1.10 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. Head 15. The honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Yes, Sir. We were dealing with the Electoral Office, and at the time of the suspension, the Honourable Leader of the House disclosed that Government intends to have the Boundaries Commission in place before the next general election. We welcome that. He also said that the Government might possibly, instead of holding a by-election, have a general election, which means that they are no less....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of elucidation. I know it is a very difficult thing for the honourable Member to understand, at least, me. I had better say that. I said that there is no doubt in my mind that I would not be surprised if the Boundaries Commission is in place for the by-election and maybe possibly a general election. It is "general" or "by". That is the prerogative of the Prime Minister, but you have no reason to even mention that because you are gone.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I am back to it. The Government might have a by-election or a general election, and he reminded this Chamber that the by-election will have to take place in 90 days, 90 days of the seat becoming vacant. It means that if instead of a by-election the Prime Minister is going to call a general election, such election would have to take place within the 90-day period and, as it stands now, much less than the 90 days, because ...

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, may I help the honourable Member? I am quite sure that the Prime Minister can call the general election ....

(Hon. L. R. TULL: Do not tell him!)

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: The law says it must be called within 90 days of the seat becoming vacant. I do not know what you are becoming jittery about. I do not know what the humour is all about. The point I am making is that if instead of a by-election, you call a general election, which will have to take place within the 90 days, now probably 82 days, the Boundaries Commission is still not in place as yet. That is the point I am making. It would be making a mockery of the principle of the legislation if one were to wait until immediately prior to the holding of the general election to have put in place the Boundaries Commission. Its Commissioners should have a sufficient time to review the total constituency of Barbados – I call it one constituency – to be sub-divided into as many constituencies as the law says that we shall observe as regards the number of persons within those constituencies.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if the honourable Member is really saying that he is looking forward to an election in 1987 or 1988?

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I am looking forward to an election at any time. But the point I am making is that we have been told that we are going to have a Boundaries Commission and it is going to be there before the next general election. The Boundaries Commission should be in place so that the Commissioners can do a proper job, because not all is well at this moment as far as boundaries are concerned, and I am speaking now specifically according to my constituency.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Will the honourable Member please tell us what is wrong with his boundaries?

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: That is precisely what I am going to do. You do not have to ask that. I am not going to make such a statement and then do not follow it up. Any time I make that statement, I am going to follow it up. I am talking about my constituency. I will start and finish with mine.

In 1981, the boundaries of St. Michael were changed, and what was St. Michael North West substantially became St. Michael North. At the time when the law was passed changing the boundaries, the boundary of St. Michael North ran in a certain direction. It was

pointed out that that was incongruous, it made no sense, and eventually this Chamber came back and amended it. After the amendment not all the persons who were affected by that subsequent change were placed back in St. Michael North, so, today, there is a substantial number of electors who are living in St. Michael North who were living there in 1981 but voted in another constituency.

The bulk of the persons living in Ealing Road, Rockhampton Road in Grazettes today are in St. Michael North East. That should not be the case. In Rockhampton Road in Grazettes is a dividing line between St. Michael North East and St. Michael North. Some would be in St. Michael North East and some would be in St. Michael North, but all of those living in Ealing Road should be in St. Michael North, every one of them, but some of them are still on the St. Michael North East register, and that is the problem. I believe that the Electoral Office, or the Boundaries Commission, or whoever is in charge of that responsibility, should go back into those areas, do an enumeration of persons living in those areas and have them properly placed where, in fact, they should be. This is something I would want to recommend to the Electoral Office.

In another place, I spoke about my next grouse before. The Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) has also spoken about this in here before. I am referring now once more, because I do not think we can speak about this often enough, to the question of making available a Master List. If that Master List had been made available at the last election – and I had recommended it to the Chief Electoral Officer, who at that time thought it was a good idea – the work at the Electoral Office itself would have been considerably reduced on election day. Some of it would have gone to the respective parties, and there is nothing wrong with that. I am saying that the Electoral List should be made available to the respective parties.

Aside

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: If you do not want to give them, let them buy them. They will cost some money. Let them buy them, but they should be available.

Asides

The honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw) is asking why. I am saying that if they do not want to give them, they should be put for sale and let us buy them. I do not see anything wrong with that. I believe that it will be a help, and not only to the voters themselves, because the Electoral Office found it difficult during the last election to handle the number of enquiries and complaints that were made to the office on that particular day. Some of that burden could be transferred to the respective parties, and I am sure that it would be a welcomed relief to the Electoral Office, because I believe that a number of persons would have found probably quicker where they should go and cast their vote than was the case. In some cases, some people did not vote at all, because it was difficult to get through to the Electoral Office on that day by telephone.

Let us have the Boundaries Commission. I have got the assurance today that the Boundaries Commission will be in place – but let it be in place in time. I have been informed by the Leader of the Opposition that the late Prime Minister wrote to him on the matter of the Boundaries Commission and he also informed him that he wanted to have it in place by the 15 December. We are more than three months away from the 15 December and still we have not had the Boundaries Commission. I do not think it is asking too much for the Government to say today, as in fact the late Prime Minister said to the Leader of the Opposition, that we will have it before the next elections. We should have it quite soon, because it would allay a lot of the concerns of not only us but of the electors outside.

2.10 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): I well recall that in 1980, when I brought to the attention of the Government the dangers inherent in doing an enumeration under the Statistical Act and then using that enumeration for the purposes of an election by an amendment to the Representation to the People Act, and then when I said that that certainly created opportunities for confusion, fraud and rigging of the elections, there was an outcry on the floor of this House, and an invitation by no other than the present Prime Minister and the previous Prime Minister to go outside and repeat those remarks, which I did. But they did not follow me, or they did follow me and retreated very rapidly. In these circumstances, I can foresee further problems arising.

In 1981, there can be no question that hundreds of people in Barbados were effectively disenfranchised on election day because these people were unable to identify the polling district within the constituency, and in some instances, the polling district outside the constituency, at which their names were placed. That is a fact.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order: I would be very grateful if he would tell the House that it happened in 1971, it happened in 1976 and it happened in 1981. Please tell the House that a number of people were unable to vote because they could not find a polling district. That does not necessarily mean that a single election in this country was ever rigged, and I hope your colleagues will dissociate themselves from such comments. I do not believe that your party, when in power, had ever rigged or attempted to rig an election.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, this is the kind of problems that you have when you have to deal with persons of this mentality in Parliament. When the Electoral Officer submitted his report on the events of that day, he was able to say that, lawfully, only a small number of people were disenfranchised in terms of the fact that their names were on the list somewhere in Barbados. I am talking about disenfranchised functionally, that is, they were unable to vote, and there were hundreds involved in many constituencies. That is a fact. I do not think that that came about essentially because of fraud on the part of the Government. What I think happened was that, at the last minute, there were changes in the boundaries as the number of constituencies was increased and the Electoral Office did not have the personnel available in order to do a proper enumeration, nor the capacity even to correct errors when errors were brought to their attention.

I am concerned that only small sums of money have been placed in the Estimates. I see only some $207 000 for administration of the electoral laws and some $290 000 for administration of the electoral laws under the Boundaries Commission.

In an election year there are some things that are absolutely important. If there is to be a general election within the next 15 months or so, the Boundaries Commission should be in place now. Make no mistake about it, it is going to take about nine months to a year for that Boundaries Commission to clean up the existing list in Barbados.

Recently, I have looked at the 1985 list – I am not going to give out any details now, because I have indicated to the appropriate people – and in two polling districts alone in St. Michael South Central, which has the lowest number of registered voters, I have identified over 300 errors by going house-to-house myself, and I have been able to communicate, so far, some of these errors to the Electoral Office. But then, you have another problem, that if you identify 100 people on your list whom you know for a fact, from a house-to-house survey, no longer live in your constituency, you have a big problem, because when you contact the Electoral Office, the Electoral Office is going to tell you that they cannot remove their names from the register unless you can satisfy them where the people are now living. That is bad. It is not the duty of a candidate. We must put the resources behind the Electoral Office to allow them to present a candidate with clean lists, so that the candidate can fight fairly and get a majority of votes of those people registered within the constituency.

As far as border areas are concerned, they are a mess. I have recently had to bring to the attention of the Electoral Office a problem that I brought to their attention way back in 1981. If you go up into Fields Gap and Warners area, the border area with St. Michael South, the list is in a mess in that area. If you go down into Laynes Road, the list is in a mess in that area. If you go into Halls Road, although many of the persons from Ellis Village and Constitution Road have been removed as a result of my intervention in 1981, it is still in a mess. Wherever you go, you find problems in the border areas. If you go over the other areas, even in St. Michael South East, there are problems between St. Michael South East and St. Michael South Central, not many.

It is not fair to a candidate, because you may well be on the same road canvassing on the left hand side and there are people on the right hand side who can vote in your constituency, and unless you have done an analysis of that particular street, then people whom you should properly be asking to vote for you, because they have been placed on your register, since you are going by the legal definition of your constituency, you might find that you have ignored and bypassed. That is something that needs to be corrected.

I think that the Electoral Boundaries Commission needs to be established immediately. I think that there needs to be a full enumeration of the island. In this way, you will have the names of those who have passed away and those who are wrongly placed identified, so that you can automatically make corrections. But you cannot do it only in one constituency; it has to be done in each and every constituency.

One of the big mistakes made when that enumeration was carried out under the Statistical Act was that the party employed yardfowls to do it. It was not in your interest; it was not in anybody's interest. It is important to employ people who are properly qualified to carry out enumeration on the one hand, and on the other hand, I think it is important, if you want to get an accurate list, to have scrutineers from both parties accompanying those people who are appointed by the Electoral Office and doing the enumeration in a given polling district.

2.20 p.m.

There will be problems. Unless you have scrutineers who really know the people and who can tell you that so-and-so is still on the list although he is living elsewhere. Do you think it gives me pleasure to have to file an objection and have the name of a parliamentary colleague, Mr. Clyde Griffith, from the Other Place removed from the list in St. Michael South Central? He does not live there. I would hate to have to do that, but I have checked and seen it. I may have another Member, too, but we will not deal with that at the moment. Having scrutineers can only be helpful to both parties and can

only be helpful to the Electoral Office. They will get through their work much faster, because they will be having two people going along with them who know the people in the given polling district.

Believe me, in my experience, you really need to have beside you when you are going through a polling district, people who have known others for a long time and on a day-to-day basis, if you are able to go through the list and have it properly analysed. Occasionally you will get one person, but someone will tell you so-and-so has been in New Zealand for the past 20 years and he came back to Barbados for the first time in 1984. That is the kind of information that I was able to pick up recently on a particular person I could not find in one of the avenues in Belleville, and whose name appears on the list. I have a profile on every person, but my big problem is that, with the constraints of the laws, I cannot get my register corrected, even though I have done the work.

It is one think knowing they are not there, it is one thing knowing who is there, but it is another thing if you are going to have an objection filed to find out where that person has gone, and where they are living now in Barbados. That should not be your duty, nor is it fair to the electoral process in Barbados. I am not trying to attack the Government on this one. This is an administrative problem, and I am attacking the administration. What has happened is that not enough time is being given between the enumeration and the preparation of the final lists.

Another grave error that was made was to abandon the principle of the publication of the monthly register. Many of us might well be involved right now in the process of transfers to facilitate those new people whom we have met in our constituencies. Under the present law as it stands, as amended, the Electoral Office is under no obligation to publish a register until the end of January next year, so you cannot tell those persons whose names you have written down, whom you have transferred and for whom you have taken the trouble to take the forms into the Electoral Office, that their names have been transferred. When in 1985 they find they have not been transferred, then they may well believe that you went and signed them up, you probably thought that they belonged to another party and threw the transfers in the dust bin. That happened to me once when I sent in four transfers from one home, and for some reason, in the midst of a pre-election period two names came on to the register, two did not come on, and the two members of the family got awfully upset with me. I had to explain to them that this had absolutely nothing to do with me and probably had nothing to do with the Electoral Office. It is just that the whole system was jammed up with transfers coming from 27 different constituencies all at the same time, and those squeezed thro[illegible] and the other ones did not squeeze through at the time. What I am pointing out is that there is a lot of mess in our electoral process which needs to be cleaned up. At the very basis of this is a proper registration system and clean electoral lists.

Those in the rural districts do not have the same kinds of problems as those in the St. Michael and Christ Church areas where there is greater mobility in terms of the population within those areas.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute more.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, I have only just started. The Honourable Prime Minister has ruled that I should speak for another 15 minutes. You see the dictator already, Sir? I have had two interruptions, so it cannot be a minute.

To sum up very briefly, let us try this time to give the resources to the Electoral Office, establish the Boundaries Commission, have a full enumeration of the island, and let us have electoral lists that are as near to accurate as possible, in the interest of the democratic process of Barbados. I think that these are issues that affect all of us on both sides of the House, and there is no point trying to attack me, because they are facts that we have to face. The Honourable Prime Minister has to face that in his own constituency, and he knows that too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He knows that there is the possibility that if he loses by 100 votes, it could happen that a majority of those living in his constituency might well have voted for him and yet he lost the election.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I do not want to prolong this, but I just want to say that a date was fixed for the coming into operation of the Boundaries Commission, and Instruments were drawn. It would have come into operation had certain events not taken place, but in view of the fact that new Instruments have to be drawn, it will take, I understand, about another ten to fifteen days for everything to be in operation. All I can say is that in the very near future it will come into operation.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, when one listens to the Members on that side, one gets the impression that this Government is wary in bringing into force the Boundaries Commission, and that the elections, whenever they come, will not be fought on fair premises. I wish to assure the honourable Members that this Government believes that the electorate of Barbados is entitled to free and fair elections. We

believe that members of the Opposition, and for that matter all candidates, ought to be given a fair chance to be elected to represent the electors of Barbados. We also feel that we owe the electorate and we have a responsibility to them to see that elections are conducted in a fair and free manner. We believe in the democratic process.

I have often said that sometimes you set up a trap which you yourself may even fall into. It does not matter what system, you have, if a Government thinks that by gerrymandering the electorate will fall for that or that it is going to be an advantage they are fooling themselves. I am not one who believes in that. The electorate will fall for the policies, programmes and other things presented to them, personalities and inducements. The electorate of Barbados is a very sophisticated electorate and I am sure that reason and good common sense will prevail during election time.

2.30 p.m.

I would not want to accuse the Opposition, when they were in office, of gerrymandering and having unfair elections, because if that were so, this Government would not have been able to win in 1976. On the other hand, I hope the Opposition does not feel that the electorate will take them seriously if they were to charge this Government with gerrymandering or unfair elections, when, in fact, it is now on record that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central won by a landslide when he ran in the by-election in his particular constituency. If it were that the Government was indulging or did indulge in unfair practices, how then could he have succeeded?

We have seen where, in the recent by-election in St. Peter, the results showed, in the first instance, a tie, and after that, the Government retained the seat in that particular by-election. With all of the accusations and the allegations made by Members of the Opposition, how can they account for the Opposition Party coming near to winning the by-election in St. Peter or even having their candidate declared a winner?

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Pure class!)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: We must understand what we are talking about.

I know, as a politician, that if I were on the Opposition, I would raise the issue, and I would try to alarm the electorate, because that is Opposition politics. But one must be careful about what one says, and understand that you are not talking to fools, to a stupid electorate.

A Boundaries Commission, Mr. Chairman, will not ensure any fair election. We, the ones out there, and the electorate will have to ensure that. That is what is important.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Do you agree with that?)

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Yes.)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Boundaries Commission will set out certain principles or guidelines, for instance, the number of electors that should constitute a constituency, and decide whether or not the constituency boundaries should be amended. That is all. In the final analysis, it will largely depend on the main political parties or the candidates to go out there and convince the electorate that they possess the qualities to represent the people of Barbados. So we must, once and for all, forget this nonsense of thinking that we can talk about a Boundaries Commission and free and fair elections and think that this is going to fall on a gullible electorate in Barbados.

On the question of an accurate list, let us understand this – no Electoral List will be accurate. I want the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central to understand this once and for all. Who is he to believe that we will ever have an accurate list. What is it? There is nothing called an accurate list. We can try to have a list as near to accurate as possible.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I said that.)

Aside.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: But it does not matter. The honourable Member must understand that there are certain factors that must be taken into consideration in producing a near accurate list as well.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: You are doing well, Braddy.)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: He may identify an elector who has lived in his constituency and needs transferring, or even one who needs to be objected to, because they do not meet the qualifications for remaining on the Electoral List, but there is a procedure. After notifying the Chief Electoral Officer, the officers must go out and establish for themselves, and to the satisfaction of the Chief Electoral Officer, that the complaint is justified. That takes time. Sometimes, the officer has to go out and search for the elector. That takes a bit of time. Rather than crying out and creating this sort of excitement, we need to sit down and try to .....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if the honourable Member would give way.

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

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Point of elucidation!)

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Elucidate.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The problem is not with transfers into your constituencies. The problem is when you have identified someone as no longer living in your constituency. You can only find a lawful objection, under the laws, if you look at the form. If you can say that the person no longer lives here, but, in fact, now lives there, the onus is on the person filing the objection. In fact, the Electoral Office is under no legal obligation to go out and find that person, unlike with a transfer into the constituency. I hope you get the legal point.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I take the point raised by the honourable Member, but I am sure that the honourable Member, – although the objection law so stipulates, as he did clearly establish – knows that if he contacts the Chief Electoral Officer and objects to someone who he knew was not living or was disqualified from living in his constituency, that would be pursued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

There are some persons who were alleged to have been living in my constituency. They were put there in 1976 to vote against me. They were not qualified, they were carpenters and masons who were working on a site in Wildey. All of them came on and voted in the St. Michael South East constituency. In 1981, I made sure that I did my homework. I used the Objection Forms and the Change of Residence Forms and I got them all transferred off my list.

It does not call for all of this fuss. Any politician who is interested in running in an election must, first of all, know that he has to do homework. If he does his homework, he cannot be far off the mark. So do not think that you are setting about to convince the electorate that the Chief Electoral Officer or the Electoral Office is not doing the homework. You have got to do your homework. You were given a Constituency Secretary to assist you in doing some of your homework. So do not come in here and blame the Electoral Office. It is not fair to the Chief Electoral Officer. No matter how much staff you provide him with, yet you are going to hear those criticisms.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I was particularly careful to point out that I was not casting any blame on any person in the Electoral Office. It is a question of allocation.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am making a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What the honourable Member is saying does not constitute a point of order. Please let me hear your point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The honourable Member is misleading.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member elucidating something he said? If you want to explain something, say so.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am on a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has spoken.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I wish to make a point of order now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What he said does not constitute a point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I was laying the background in order to establish the point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, let us know that it is not a point of order. You know that it is not a point of order.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That is a point of disorder!)

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

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am sure I have got the honourable Member worked up. I am going to give you a bit more sweat in the months ahead. Do not worry. I know I have you pocketed.

We have listened in this Chamber time and time again, and as Members make their contributions, they give the impression that the Electoral Office does not have sufficient staff.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: That is true.)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It is not a matter so much of staff. It is the quality of staff. What the honourable Members must appreciate is that everything is done in that department to try to produce a decent and proper list. The computerization process is taking place.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is true.)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am aware, as honourable Members from that side are fully aware, that everything is done to clean the Electoral List. They know it. It is rather dishonest of anyone to get up in here and give the impression that the Electoral Office or the Chief Electoral Officer is not doing the work in order to have a proper and decent list for free and fair elections.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: You are distorting!)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am not distorting anything!

2.40 p.m.

(Asides)

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The point is that we all must assist in the exercise. For example, in my constituency, where three-quarters of my constituents live in a housing area, they move frequently. I have to be constantly on my Ps and Qs to follow the movement of these people. People are going and people are coming and there has got to be a reason, but I have to know what to do and I have to do my homework. Some other Members are fortunate in that there is not that sort of movement. Whatever, if you do your homework, you can overcome the problem. I think that I have set up a system whereby I am able to trace the movements of my electors. There are people who are dead and are still on the Electoral List; they were not removed immediately because I did not submit the names. Only just last week I submitted a list of some 30-odd persons to whom I objected to. The problem was that I did not have the time to submit the names, but that is the sort of homework you have got to do.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central knows that he was the beneficiary of some of the slight problems. At Collymore Rock, there were persons who he knew would vote for this party, and because they found themselves on his list, he transferred them off. But there were people who he knew voted for his party; although they were supposed to be rightly placed on St. Michael South East, he kept them on. This is the sort of thing that happens, and I cannot blame him. He knows that in the by-election in St. Michael South Central in 1978, there were persons who were registered in St. Michael South Central but lived in the parish of St. John at the time of election. But the honourable Member did his homework then, and he never transferred those persons from St. John off the list, because he knew that they would come and vote for him. That is the kind of game it is. The result is left entirely in our hands, and we must be tacticians in this respect.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have two minutes more.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Let us understand that there is nothing called an accurate list. There is nothing called a clean Electoral List, because the law says that if someone even goes overseas and takes up residence in North America or some other country, you cannot remove them from the Electoral List until after five years, you cannot take them off just like that. I know of persons who are living abroad but I dare venture to have them removed, because they can come in; that is their privilege. If we were to remove them to produce an up-to-date list or a more accurate list, then I am sure we would be accused of taking off people unfairly. So we have got to be guarded. We must understand the problems that confront the Electoral Office and appreciate them. I hope that, once and for all, we will stop alarming the public and accusing or even insinuating that everything is not being done to produce a fair list for the forthcoming elections.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I believe that within the last year or two, a book made the Best Seller Non Fiction list of the *New York Times,* and it was called "Folly in Government". It examined certain instances of Government decision-making over a wide expanse of time, and it came to the conclusion that Governments of all complexions and in all periods of time tend to make decisions which are not in the best interest of the Government itself, and made those decisions in spite of ample and abundant evidence that the decisions which they were taking were not in their best interest.

I find that in this matter relating to the Electoral Office, Governments of all complexions in this country have tended not to appreciate the seriousness of this matter that we are talking about, and we have tended to treat as though it is a matter for partisan, political advantage. That is perhaps understandable in the nature of things, because politics is about the pursuit of power, and there is a feeling sometimes that we should gain power by whatever means possible, fair or foul. But when we are talking about elections in this country, or in any other country, I want us to be very clear that there is no other area which can cause a country to slide down the role of authoritarian or dictatorial government than this area of playing around with the electoral machinery. One party cries fair and the other party cries foul, and none will accept the results, because they feel that there has been some kind of jerrymandering, if you wish to call it that, shilly-shallying, and all kinds of deceit and trickery around the electoral process. So I think we must get this area very clear in our minds.

The particular folly that I wish to refer to in this matter relates to the fact that succeeding Governments tend to put legislation on the Statute Books but then do not do the necessary impact studies to see that the resources necessary, either financial or human, to translate the objectives of the legislation into reality are actually put in place. I believe that is true of a number of our statutory corporations, and of the Electoral Office. That office has never been staffed with the necessary resources

to carry out the kinds of functions, on an ongoing basis, in order to get an adequate and efficient administration of the electoral laws, organization and system in this country. Too often we believe that elections start some three months or six months before an election, and we then hurriedly put together a few people, without training in the field, to go out there and knock on people's doors, sometimes inadequately paid and sometimes complaining about how much they are paid to carry out the enumeration, and then a job which could have been done more efficiently, is done in a manner that is satisfactory to no one. So we have got to look at this area – and there is no doubt about it, there are problems here.

If the Electoral Office is behind in the area of producing a purged Electoral List, it may be because, and I believe it is because, that particular office is either hamstrung by the existing legislation, which is not the fault of the Electoral Office, or it is hamstrung by the lack of resources, financial and human, in order to get a system in place that would approach what we would consider to be near perfection. We as legislators have some responsibility to bear in the particular regard. The Government, as the leaders in this, have a responsibility to bear, and I believe it is plain and obvious to all of us what is required.

I am not going down the road believing that the mere establishment of an Electoral and Boundaries Commission is going to bring about, or maintain, fair and free elections in this country. That is a good step, but is it not necessarily a sufficient step to bring that about, in the last restort, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission will not have, and it does not have the same kind of independence as the Comptroller and the Auditor General or as the judiciary in this country; they are subject to political direction and policy decisions from the Executive in this country. So I am not the one to say that simply establishing that is going to bring in the millennium, that it is going to bring in a state of perfection. We seem to believe that simply having that in place will do it, but from looking at these Estimates, the only provision I can detect is that you are going to set up another statutory corporation and you are now making provision for a Secretary, a Typist and others to service a body of persons who will meet and who will take decisions. But that is not where the problem is, the problem is actually in the efficient administration of the entire electoral system, including those areas identified by the Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), the Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) and the Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves).

2.50 p.m.

We thought that the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Hon. DeL. O. Brad[illegible]) was also making some very valid points at the start; he was coming on very well. But let us understand what we are talking about. We need to get that system in place in each of the constituencies. We need to have persons appointed and trained in order to carry out the enumeration. We need to get in place a system whereby the representative of the candidates can participate in that enumeration to the satisfaction of the Cabinet. We need a system in which it is easy to draw attention to the authorities that certain changes need to be done, and so that the authorities would have the necessary resources at their disposal to investigate and take the necessary steps to correct the measures.

I do not believe that it is beyond the resources, it is beyond the capacity and competence of this Parliament, when once we approach this matter with the seriousness that it deserves, to come up with the kinds of proposals which will make for a much better electoral system and electoral process in this country. But the Government must listen. It must not be above reproof. They must not believe that, simply because a point of view is coming from Members over here, there is no validity in the proposal being advanced. We all have to work in the system and we should be able to benefit from the experiences of one another, and I believe that in these matters a little understanding and a little charity will go a long way. We are talking about the rules of the electoral process, the rules of the game, and we must ensure that we get those rules in place properly, adequately, efficiently and satisfyingly, so that when we come to fight in the arena, we will be playing according to the rules and, as they say, may the best party win under those circumstances. I think we can ask for nothing more.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I wish to continue where I left off with a little more detail. At the end of January 1985, a list was published. That list is the list which will be in effect for less than a year unless there is a general election or, in the case of St. Thomas, except for that by-election. It means that for the period from February to December, if there is no election, the information regarding the accuracy of those lists respecting the 26 constituencies other than St. Thomas will not be subject to any systematic review by the citizens themselves. When we sat on the Select Committee of Parliament some time ago, we made representation and we pointed out, from a practical standpoint, that that was inimical to the interest of the people. Some five years later, I have examined the system and I have practised in the system, and I still maintain that it is not in the interest of the people.

The same Electoral List showed that in St. Michael West, there were 7 034 persons registered to vote. Of those 7 034 persons, 153 have been dead and for some time. I say that not to criticize the Electoral Office, but to raise questions about the system itself. We are living in

a computerized age. When someone is dead, you have to get a Death Certificate, that Death Certificate has to be signed by a doctor and the doctor declares that the person is dead. At that point it would seem to me that that information has to be committed to some computer, or ought to be committed to the computer. Why is it so infinitely difficult for that information to be transferred to a master list of information of all those people who have died.

It is not fair to the Electoral Office, it simply is not fair. If you examine the staff provided in the Electoral Office in these Estimates, it simply is not fair for us to expect from that office the level of services, given the resources that are made available to them. The point I want to make, especially in response to what the honourable Member for St. Michael South East has said, is that unless we have a department that is sufficiently staffed so that the programme can be implemented, we are going to be continuously making the same points over and over again, holding elections on the same make-shift system over and over again and creating unnecessary dissatisfaction.

Mr. Chairman, you and I must agree, if we are democrats, that it does matter if all of the people in Barbados get to vote and a single member of this society is unable to cast his or her vote, for in this system that we have, that is the only time in this democracy that that citizen has a chance to make a definitive statement, and every time we, either in advertence or for whatsoever reason, fail to allow a single individual to cast his vote, our democracy is diminished by that particular event. I make bold to say that no honourable Member of this House can wish for that, and therefore any criticisms which are made which will lead towards improving the system to the complete elimination of that eventuality must be a criticism that is accepted as valid.
3.00 p.m.

Of the 7 034 members of my constituency who are eligible to vote, there is a difference of 206 between that number and the actual number in the constituency, taking into account those who have been dead and those who have gone away for in excess of ten years. I am able to state that categorically for St. Michael West, but I make bold to say that there is no one in the Electoral Office, or any office approximating thereto, who can make that statement, because they have no way of knowing, and the laws referring to the Representation of the People Act require amendment in this particular circumstance. Because when you say that a person has gone away, unless you are able to state categorically the date the person left, the aeroplane they left on and perhaps the clothes they were wearing, but in any event the address to which they have gone, to the satisfaction of the Chief Electoral Officer, he is unable to remove that name from the list. The same democracy of which I spoke a few minutes ago require that that be so, that a person may not be removed from the Electoral List on the basis of a whim or a fancy. That is proper, but it is also proper that if we have a system, that system should make allowance for the removal of persons who have gone away outside of the allowed time within the framework of the law. There can be nothing more reasonable than that, and therefore it is within our ambit of responsibility to devise and define a system by which that can be done, and in the same system to make allowance for those who return to Barbados to be immediately restored to the list. That cannot be done without proper examination. Such proper examination cannot fall properly to the Electoral Office in its proper form, if, in fact, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission is to take over its responsibility. That is why I welcome the announcement by the Prime Minister, that within ten to fifteen days, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission Act will be proclaimed, because once the Act is proclaimed and the appointments are not made, then a writ of mandamus can be sought.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Let me just say that I really welcome the announcement not for any partisan reason so much as for the simple relief of knowing that this body set up under the Constitution of Barbados will be in place and can bring its considerable independence and its expertise to bear on the decision making in the body politic, because I would make bold to say that an Electoral and Boundaries Commission will not be in the same condition as a Chief Electoral Officer when it comes to making its needs felt and making its demands known. You see, we have the very peculiar situation at the moment where the Chief Electoral Officer is a civil servant, and so, no matter how much he needs, no matter what he requires, no matter how much he demands, he is still a civil servant and, if you will pardon this in its proper use, he has to know what his place is. An Electoral and Boundaries Commission under the Constitution will be sufficiently independent that should the Government, any Government, fail to meet the responsibilities under the amendment to the Constitution, that Commission is able to go to the public and say, 'We are being prevented from doing our work by the attitude of the Government.' That is why it is important and that is why it is a big thing that we have that Commission appointed.

I take the point by my honourable colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael South, when he says that the appointment of the Commission will not by itself, and without more, be the beginning of the millennium. His point is well taken, but that does not mean we have a differing point of view. What it means is that we both understand the necessity for getting the

fundamentals right. All I am saying, and he agrees, is that the election of the Boundaries Commission will trigger the mechanism for getting all the other things right.

My colleague has discussed some of the difficulties attendant on being a conscientious representative going through the constituency. I have no reason to boast from the floor of this House about my conscientiousness as a representative. I would say that my vested interest requires that I be conscientious. I say, however, that there are a tremendously large number of anomalies flowing out of the simplistic system which we have used for delineating who can vote and who cannot vote, and because the computer programme which we have used still has a tendency to be kinky, there are those anomalies which need to be cleared up.

It is entirely possible to find in the master list for 27 constituencies that there are persons who have been registered, that is, whose names appear on the register, more than twice. It has nothing whatsoever to do with rigging, it has nothing whatsoever to do with inefficiency, but it has to do with the programme itself. If a person with the name of John P. Smith registers in the constituency of St. Michael West, that person, with the new enumeration and the new I.D. card, may in fact give information with the new system which differs from the information which they gave when they had the first enumeration under the old system, and instead of being John P. Smith they may be listed as P. John Smith. The computer will faithfully record both of those unless there is a fundamental error in the route of the information that has been given.

I do not wish to take my few minutes to go into why that happens on a computer. It takes very meticulous checking to discover whether John P. Smith and P. John Smith are one and the same person. Every honourable Member in here and large numbers of people outside know that is true and I say without fear of contradiction that in every constituency in Barbados, since we have had the computer, and no doubt before, there are persons who have voted more than once in the same election in the same constituency.

When we talk about free and fair elections we are not only talking about a Minister responsible or the Government as a whole going into conspiracy to change the outlook. We are talking about anomalies which occur in the system that we now have, which allow persons to exercise their right to vote more than once. There are some people who have done it innocently, who really believe that if their name appears on the list three times that they have a duty to vote three times. I have encountered such a person. Unfortunately, they did not vote in the direction that we were going in, but I think that in those circumstances, it does not make sense to go around creating issues when it is not the fault of the person who did whatever he did. And so, when we call for ironing out the kinks in the system, we expect to be joined in that particular chorus. We do not expect anyone to suggest that we are practising opposition politics. I do not like Opposition politics. Opposition politics is not the best politics in the world. We prefer Government politics where we are making decisions.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Attorney General has instructed me to shut up. The Attorney General feels that I am talking too much. I wish to say to the Attorney General that he may very well be right, but on this question of the democratic right of the individual, I think it bears an overdose of talking, less somebody takes it for granted, less somebody believes that we in Barbados are all right Jack and there is nothing wrong with our system, especially when compared, as I have heard it done, with Guyana and other places. I feel that if there is one area where you can overtalk in peace and comfort it would be in this area, and I believe that other honourable Members who have things to say about this system may well say them, because history will judge this group to see what it did with the heritage which it claimed it had inherited.

3.10 p.m.

I hope that when the Boundaries Commission comes that these Estimates which now appear in this Head will not be the only indication that this Parliament has voted money, and that as soon as this has been completed and the Commission starts to function, this Parliament will be given an opportunity to present the Boundaries Commission with a proper functioning system which will be in the interest of all Barbadians in the democracy of this country.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): I will make two very brief observations. I do not want to join in the flood of words I hear from the Opposition. They have pointed out, and we have accepted, that there are a number of anomalies that occur in all the elections we have had in Barbados. There is no quarrel with that, and the Prime Minister has given the Opposition the assurance that, within another ten or fifteen days, the Act will be proclaimed and the Electoral and Boundaries Commission will be set up and all these anomalies and problems they are talking about will be firmly in the lap of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. I am therefore at a loss to understand why, with so much work to be done, we have to sit down and hear all this talk, the same things repeated over and over again, the didactic speech made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford), as if he is talking to a bunch of 'O' Level students, and the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), as if he is declaiming at the corner of Eagle Hall.

The lack of constancy of the Opposition really amazes me. The Opposition used to say after the last election that elections were rigged. They did not only say that in here, they went all across the country and said that the elections were fraudulent, and they imputed dishonesty to the Government, as if those of us over here sat down and worked out some nefarious plan to rob people out of their votes. Today now, they come in here and sing a different tune. That is their style. They are saying the administrators are incompetent. They have switched now from the members of the Government on to the poor civil servants, as is their wont.

I do not know what more we can do. All these things in these Estimates are of such transcending importance to Barbados and need to be discussed, and we have given them the assurance that the Commission will be set up. What more do they want? I can go on and repeat as much as they have, anomalies that appear in my constituency, but what useful purpose does it serve each man getting up and saying that when he took Mary to vote her name did not appear on that list, they could not find her name on the list even though she was living there for the last hundred years? I really think the Opposition is an extremely tedious bunch of people, and I do not know what more we can do.

I reiterate what the Prime Minister has said, that certain circumstances arose which prevented us from proclaiming the Act and getting the Commission going. We have now dealt with that, and in the next few days, two weeks or so, we will have the Act proclaimed and the Commission going. Then they can bark all their orders and do all their bellyaching and complaining to the Commission and allow us to move on to other matters.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 15 stand part.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sometimes it disturbs me that the Government treats this whole question of the discussion of electoral matters in Estimates debates with such levity. I believe that it was a matter of regret to all right-thinking persons when they saw the confusion that obtained at the last elections. I believe that several points have been raised by the Opposition which have not been addressed, because the mere setting up of a Boundaries Commission, without a clear indication from the Executive as to whether they have taken cognisance of the points made, and whether they are prepared to give due weight to them so that when that Commission is established these matters can be brought to their attention at an early stage, is not going to change anything.

One of the questions raised was the question of a re-publication of the monthly list of electors. We have not heard the views of the Government on that particular issue, which is very important in allowing constituents and candidates to monitor what is happening on their lists. It is unsatisfactory to have a list of electors published only once a year, and I believe that this is something that will fall within the province of Parliament, and it is about time that the Government review their decision taken in the past and see whether that should not be looked at again.

The second thing that causes a lot of confusion is this question of placing the cut-off point for registration too near the election date. This is a matter that needs to be looked at, because as has happened in the past – it first started in 1978, it happened in 1981 and it happened, I think, in the St. Peter by-election – when that final list comes out a few days before the election, you might find errors on that list where people have been mistakenly removed, as well as new entrants to the list, and at that stage no one is in a position really to scrutinise a list. That creates a problem.

One understood the reasoning behind it. It was changed to allow as many of those people who became 18 years to vote in a general election by putting the cut-off point as near as possible to the date of the election. That was probably a reasoned argument, but our experience with that has been that not only have these people come on the list, but in many instances, because of computer and other errors, names that should have been on the list were taken off by the time that final list came out. Errors became apparent in that final list that were not there in the list before, and there was no time for correction, particularly in an instance where a Saturday or Sunday might intervene between the publication of the final list and an election date. This is something that needs to be looked at.

The speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw) started off being very reasonable and then ended up with a complete misunderstanding of what I said. I was not casting any allegations on the Electoral Department, as I pointed out, but they just do not have the human or physical resources to meet the demands of 27 constituencies, and in many instances they are not helped by the Returning Officers in the constituencies. A lot of the work that candidates are doing should be done by those who are paid monthly salaries to do the work, which is just not done. That is a fact we have to face.

The honourable Member is talking about this thing as a game.
3.20 p.m.

(Aside: You are repeating yourself!)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In other words, what he is saying is that if you do your homework, you can go

through the list and you can find out the names of those persons that should not be on the list, you view those persons who are likely to support you and keep their names on the list, and you withhold that information from the Electoral Office. Those whom you assume will vote against you, you remove their names from the list. I believe that this is a practice which some people have pursued over the years.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You started it!)

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

The point I am making is that it should not be possible for anyone to operate in that way. In the given circumstances, it is unreasonable to expect a majority of candidates – as only you would do, like myself – who would notify the Electoral Officer of those who should not be there, whether they are Ds or Bs. It may be unreasonable to expect a candidate to go through and work in a constituency and remove the names of people who are likely to support him, since, in fact, he is doing work which he should not be doing, as a candidate anyhow. That work should be done by the Electoral Office and the officers in the field. I think it is dangerous and I think it is an unnecessary burden placed on the candidates. I really feel that as near as accurate a list should be provided within the law.

The honourable Member made the point that you cannot get a totally accurate list. I agree with that. But you can get one about 99 per cent accurate within the law. That can be done, and this is how it can be done. Firstly, there is the registration of deaths. They can be easily picked up, there is no question about that. The dead can be removed. Secondly, those who have moved for more than three months and are still residing in Barbados, there are many agencies of Government that would have their addresses. The honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Hon. A. Truss) can bear me out that there are persons who would have access to the correct addresses of those persons.

Aside

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Never mind. There are people in Barbados who may have moved from an area and bought land elsewhere, their new addresses would be known in the Land Tax Department. There are others who work and pay Income Tax, and their new addresses would be known in that department. There are those who leave forwarding addresses for a given time with the post office, and their addresses can be fully ascertained from that source. All I am saying is that someone who pays attention to detail and has access that information can get access to those people, mail them directly at election time and visit them, when their opponents might not be able to do so. I would daresay that if the Electoral Office had access or could get the addresses from various departments of Government, with those whom you must be in contact, they would have no difficulty in tracing 90 per cent of the people who have moved from a given constituency and live in another constituency at the present moment. That could be done. But as I understand, under the existing laws, the Chief Electoral Officer really has no authority to trace an address other than by posting out a letter and seeing whether or not it is returned or whether the letter reaches the addressee. Thereafter, he has the same kind of problems that you would have as a candidate. So that the information can be made available, even if legislative instruments are required for them to be made available, to the Chief Electoral Officer, because there are several sources within the country.

I believe that in recent times, there has been a record of the ID number on the Immigration Card when persons are leaving. I think this is so, I am not too sure about this. I think that in time, this will give some indication of persons who have left the country longer than the statutory period, although it would not be quite relevant now.

The point I am making is that a little field work, a new enumeration with scrutineers, is necessary. And that point about scrutineers has not been addressed either, whether the Government agrees in principle that when an enumeration is going to be carried out, its accuracy can be enhanced considerably if those carrying out the enumeration should be accompanied by scrutineers. None of these things has been addressed; neither the question of the monthly list nor the question of using scrutineers, which can only enhance the electoral process and be of benefit to both parties. There is no possibility of any party having an advantage over another one if this is done.

There is no point of taking a man from St. Peter and telling him to go and do an enumeration in Hall's Road. He will come up with nonsense. We have situations in which, on a place like George Street, the Registering Officer did not even know which side of George Street was one polling district or the other. If you walk down George Street, you will find that half of George Street is in RC1 and then the other half is on the other side. All that happened in that situation is that one Registering Officer did one half of the street, and the other Registering Officer did the other half of the street, but you can have Registering Officers who do not even know the boundaries of the polling district, to correctly put the persons inside them, far less knowing the people in the polling districts.

I submit that we have put a strong case for a monthly list, for a proper enumeration of the island, a new enumeration and for the principle of scrutineers in order to reduce the amount of errors that would appear on newly compiled lists, after the establishment of a Boundaries Commission. Is the Government in agreement with those principles? Are they going to remain silent and believe that, because they have won elections twice under these circumstances, they can just allow the matter to slide? These are the issues that are germane in this election. We are all agreed on the principle of an Electoral and Boundaries Commission. We seem now to be established on the principle that it should be established immediately and be put to work immediately, so that any errors that occur can be corrected. Do you agree in principle with the question of scrutineers and changing the law back to the publication of regular, monthly lists? I think these things are important for the protection of the democratic base of this country.

Any one of you over there who holds a seat with a majority of less than about five hundred could probably be defeated. You can probably win a majority of all persons living in your constituency and still lose your seat. It could easily happen.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You have gone through the eddoes!)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: No. I am talking about this present time. Because there are other people outside with whom you have never come in contact who might have a completely different perspective of you, as a candidate, from those who live in your constituency, who you have worked for, lived with and who have grown to like you. You can find yourself in a whole lot of trouble. It is not fair. What is also not fair, and what could easily happen is that you can find that people who have left the district can have a decided vote as to who would represent that particular district. It is not fair to the electors, either in the polling districts or in the constituencies. That is my own judgement of the situation.

I believe that I have put a case; not for me personally, but for the democratic process at the very basic level, on the assumption that, on both sides, we are agreed that a well-organized and flourishing democratic process is highly desirable in this country. I have spoken from the realities that I have seen in my constituency and in the constituencies of other people.
3.30 p.m.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If you were to look at the list in St. George North, you will find a very interesting thing.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If you look closely at the St. George North list, you will note, Sir, that your house, where you live, is the first house on that dividing line coming up into Workmans. If you were to look at the number of people listed at Workmans on your list, you would be surprised.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: But in those days I did not know the importance of the list.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: When this matter was raised, the whole idea, as I understood it was that Members on the other side were concerned about the proclamation of the Act. They raised fears that it was too long in being proclaimed and said that something should be done about it immediately. The Prime Minister came in and drew to the attention of the House that Instruments were drawn and the Act would have been proclaimed had it not been for sudden sadden events over the past week or thereabouts, and went on further to give the Committee the assurance that within ten to fifteen days the Act will be in place. In my view, that was the end of the debate.

Since then, we have had views from the other side. They were telling the Chief what to do; how it is to be done, how many scrutineers, where the people should go, and where they should not go. 41C, the amendment to the Constitution, makes it very clear, I hope this is laid to rest once and for all. Dealing with functions and autonomy of the Commission, it says:

> "The registration of voters and the conduct of elections in every constituency or any matters that appears to the Commission to be incidental or consequential upon either, shall be subject to the direction and supervision of the Commission."

But this is even more important.

> "In the exercise of its functions under this section, the Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority."

No Prime Minister, no legal Minister, no Craig, no Haynes, Johnson – nobody can tell them what to do. That is the end of the story. If the Commission feels to put 7000 people in the City and 4000 in St. Michael South, according to this and my interpretation, they shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority.

The question that the sum of $2 862 989 under Head 15, as amended, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 10 (RECOMMITTED)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I would like to revert to Head 10, Governor-General, because the amendments have just come down.

I beg to move that the sum of $458 240 under Head 10, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

CAPITAL – HEAD 71 – PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE – $175 000

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 71 stand part.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): The Note reads, "provision is also made to continue renovation work." Can anybody give me some indication of what renovation work is still needed at the Prime Minister's official residence?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Let us examine this very clearly. Ilaro Court was an old estate house which was run down. The Government has taken it over and renovated it. I have no doubt in my mind that this vote is for over a period of time that there may be certain things to be done here and there. It is not for taking off the roof or swinging around a patio or anything like that. It is primarily, as I understand it, for the purpose of things which may have to be done from time to time over the year.

I know that this Ilaro Court has been a sore point in the minds of some people over a period of time because they thought it was Tom Adams' house – God rest him in his grave. It is owned by the Government of Barbados, which all Barbadians can be justly proud of.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): 'Renovation' is used, I am told, in a very wide sense. It is not just work with the physical structure. It consists of work in what we call the land-scaped, public areas. If you go there, the honourable Member will see that they are building pathways so as to prevent people from walking on the lawn and that kind of stuff, and it has to be done mostly by M.T.W. or Parks and Beaches Commission. That is what it is.

The question that the sum of $175 000 under Capital Head 71 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 17 – DEFENCE AND SECURITY – $19 679 879

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 17 stand part.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I have a few questions which I would like to raise here. One relates to the naval-craft known as "PO1", the pride of the Naval arm of the Barbados Defence Force. I would like to know whether the Prime Minister can give us any information on the accident which that particular vessel encountered. I believe sometime last year, whether a report was carried out, what was the cause of the accident, and whether it was purely accidental or due to human error, mechanical error, or whatever it was. I wonder if the Prime Minister could give us some information on that particular matter. I will take it one by one. 3.40 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Before the Prime Minister answers that question, I am a little concerned about the note attached to this Head – Description – "The functions of this subhead include" – the page opposite page 12. I have a little difficulty with one of the functions which has been assigned to this subhead. In (a), it says "administering..." then, "screening of prospective emigrants for foreign governments."

I do not understand that as a function for our Defence and Security Division. I do not understand why we in Barbados are screening Barbadians for foreign Governments. I do not think that the FBI, or the CIA, or any of the armed U.S. Departments, various Security Departments, would be screening Americans for us.

I am going to leave it at that and let the Prime Minister explain precisely what has been happening here.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): There are two questions. The first concerned the accident that occurred with the Trident. There was a full enquiry, and the conclusions of the enquiry were that there were mechanical faults as well as human errors, and in respect of the human errors, the Board of Enquiry made certain recommendations. The recommendations that have been made have to, before they can be fully implemented, be approved by other bodies, and the opinions of other bodies are being sought in that process.

The vessel is back in the water. The repairs have been carried out here in Barbados. We had the assistance of both local people and Brooke Marine, the makers of the vessel.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Before the Prime Minister moves on, could he tell us the cost of those repairs?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I will check it out. I have the file and I will tell you. I can assure you it is covered by insurance. I will get it and we will answer that before we are finished.

With respect to the question of screening, as I understand it, in truth and in fact, the wording is quite accurate, that, periodically, foreign Governments request information on people who wish to emigrate from the Defence and Security Division of the Government of Barbados information as to whether people have police records or have indulged in Barbados in any activity which has been brought to the attention of the Government, and this information is sent to them. I know, for instance, that there are some foreign countries where, before you can get a work permit, you have to get your finger-prints taken and sent to the Police Department in Barbados before you are given a certificate.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Surely by the very words which the honourable Member uses, he is agreeing that that is the responsibility of the civil authority. It would seem to me that the question of confirming that a person is free of criminal activity is the most any foreign Government can expect, and that the civil authority, that is to say, the police, would be the appropriate authority in Barbados to send that kind of information. The concept of screening in the Security Department would seem to suggest, by its very nature, an activity above and beyond the normal civil activity in ascertaining that none of our criminals is exported to other countries, as they have a right to expect, but I am a little concerned at the idea that it is the Security Division, except in one or two cases, where there is a certain sensitivity arising out of security arrangements between Barbados and other friendly Governments. The fact that it has excited an actual sentence in the Description is what is concerning me, because it would seem to me that this forms a substantive and substantial part of the activities, which gives the impression and I am really seeking clarification of continuing activity.

I get very nervous at the thought of Big Brother out there screening somebody who is going to get permanent residence in the United States when we have all kinds of crackers from all parts of the world coming into Barbados with a driver's licence.

I think the Prime Minister may not be as seized, but he should be, because he is on the Defence Board. I will sit down and let him continue.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have no difficulty with the fact that, periodically, as I understand it, Governments write the Government of Barbados and request of the Defence and Security Division, information with respect to prospective immigrants as to whether, as far as the Division is concerned, they have any information or any knowledge with respect to the person being connected with criminal activities. Sometimes, the nature of the reply is such that under our system, the proper agency to deal with that would be the Police Department, but you cannot stop foreign Governments from writing back to you. We have to do the screening, but the extent of our screening might only be to inform the other people that it is done by a different administration in Barbados. We must remember that we are dealing with a multiplicity of .....

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is the Defence and Security. It is the processing of it. You have clerical labour. You have other labour to do it – once you receive a reply and you are not misquoted. I am assured that it is a very small part of the work in the Ministry.

Secondly, let us not forget that in our system we are in a very hybrid situation, in that we deal with a multiplicity of various Governments, particularly in this area. We have the whole of the Latin American Continent, with all different varieties of Government, and you have North America, whose type of Government, in one case, is similar to ours, and then you have the other. People do write to you, but I am told that, very, often, in respect of specific things, the nature of the reply is very simple.

I am getting specific information on the cost of the repairs.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: While we are waiting for that information, I wonder if the Prime Minister could give the House the assurance that this screening or any related activity for screening does not include in Barbados what is commonly called 'eavesdropping on the telephone.' I wish an assurance from that particular Minister that in Barbados at the moment the security forces are not tapping the telephones of certain individuals in the country.

I will tell you why, and I do not even mind if this is not made public, but it is a matter concerning me; as a matter of fact, on second thought, I think I must make it public. Arising out of certain experiences when we have been making telephone calls in our household, we have come to believe – we are not saying that it is so – that from time to time other persons, and not necessarily as a result of a crossed line, have been the beneficiaries of our conversations.

There are all kinds of reasons why that can be so, but I would be comfortable and peaceful if I can get a categoric assurance from the Prime Minister that it is no part of the policy of the Government to eavesdrop by way of telephone tapping on the citizens of this country. I wonder if the Prime Minister is in a position to give me that assurance. That is all I am asking, nothing more.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I can give the honourable Member this assurance, that consistent with the security interests of Barbados, this Government is fully committed to the concept that the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution of its citizens and of the residents of Barbados will be fully respected.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Is the Prime Minister suggesting that if it is consistent with the security interests of Barbados to tap the telephone of individuals that that would be done? I am asking the question, if it is consistent with the security interests of Barbados to tap an individual's telephone, would that be done?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Barbados Government will maintain the Constitution of Barbados. If the honourable Member has a good look at the Constitution of Barbados, he will see that the constitutional rights of citizens are subject to abridgement in certain circumstances.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is customary in countries that have Constitutions like ours, when it is necessary to get a wire tap, to seek the assistance of the Courts. Is it part of the methodology of the present Administration to seek in those cases where it deems it desirable under the Constitution and consistent with the security interests of Barbados to tap certain telephones ..... let me put it another way. Is the Prime Minister in a position to tell us whether that is done by and with the assistance of the Courts, or whether it is done as an Executive act?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not think that Executive acts are disclosed in Parliament. Quite apart from that, I am not aware, since I have been Prime Minister, of any telephone tapping. If the honourable Member wishes an assurance, I can give him the assurance that I am as much a constitutionalist as he is, and the Cabinet of Barbados is equally concerned about the limitations upon abridgements of constitutional rights.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I just want to thank the Honourable Prime Minister for the assurance which he has given this House, that tapping of telephones does take place provided there is a reasonable abridgement of human rights under the Constitution of Barbados and consistent with the Constitution of Barbados. I must say that it is a far more candid.....

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: The honourable member has really out-done himself on this occasion. The Prime Minister never said any such thing as the honourable Member is seeking to put in his mouth, and I wish that in matters of high sensitivity, the Opposition will show a little bit more responsibility than such as we have heard in the statements by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am quite capable of interpreting the subtlety of language used by the Honourable Prime Minister, and I indeed do appreciate the fact that he answered in that way, because when this matter was raised on the floor of this House, it was said that we had made deplorable accusations, and that there was no technology in Barbados to facilitate such action, and, indeed, the authority of the Telephone Company was invoked in order to make this Opposition appear to be telling lies to the public.

We understand the constraints, and we appreciate the answer given by the Honourable Prime Minister. I must say that there is a certain candour about his answer and we on this side would like to put on Record that we appreciate the fact that he has reported to Parliament the manner in which it is done, and has not sought, I would not like to say to mislead, to brush the matter aside and to obfuscate the issue. We understand the constraints that we have placed on him in terms of his reply, and we appreciate the honesty of his reply. I believe that from time to time when honest statements are made even in a sensitive area, they should be appreciated by this side and I do appreciate that.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I wish to turn to another aspect of this matter, and it relates to the wider security interests in the country. I know that the Prime Minister has only recently assumed responsibility for the portfolio of Defence and Security, and I really do not wish to press very hard on this particular matter at this stage, but I think it would be a little remiss if I did not refer to the proposals which were recently aired about the creation of some security pact for the region. That particular arrangement did not find favour with the Opposition. We certainly believe that we should look at our own defences or our own defence arrangements, and wherever possible enter into discussion with the other territories to meet specific problems, but going into a full-fledged regional pact with all the costs and imponderables involved, we do not believe that we have reached the stage for that kind of commitment.

I found it somewhat irksome to learn of the demise of the pact from a non-national of Barbados, indeed from one from a foreign country. I feel that that kind of information should be told to this Honourable Chamber or to the people of Barbados by those who have responsibility to Barbados and Barbadians for these matters. I wonder

if, as a result of the presence in Barbados of the Heads of other Governments and representatives of other Governments, the Prime Minister can say whether he had any discussions relating to this military security pact, and whether, in fact, it is dead, or what is the exact position relating to it. If he is not in a position to give any information on it as this stage, I would understand.
4.00 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I can tell the honourable Member that this Government is firmly committed to the view that it is in the interest of Barbados and the whole of the Eastern Caribbean to have a definitive agreement respecting mutual self-defence in certain given, defined circumstances. I will not renege at all from that position, irrespective of whether the honourable Member's party agrees with it or not. I am, therefore, a full, firm and committed advocate of the pursuance of such a policy.

Further, 'security' must be used in its widest sense, not only as a threat to the overthrow of the Government, or a threat to the subversion of the Government and the morality of the people running the Government, whatever is the reason. All of us who have looked around must understand that these little islands in the Caribbean are faced with probably one of the biggest threats that any little island can be faced with, by the fact of geographical association, the propensity for the consumption of drugs in the United States and the determination of the growers and others.

Whether it is popular or unpopular, this Government believes that the best way of attacking that is to attack that in a comprehensive manner, and that we shall do.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We have heard that very strong statements from the Prime Minister on the matter, and of course we will study its import.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, if the honourable Member will give way so I can make a comment before he moves on to something new, I think it is wrong to say that there is any demise in the Regional Security System. I do not know where the honourable Member got that information from. He said a foreign source.

The Regional Security System was set up about three years ago to pursue certain defined ends. I am very well aware that there has been no question at all by any member of the System as to the validity or continuation of the System. Further, only last month the System admitted Grenada unanimously to be a member of the Regional Security Council.

I do not know what the honourable Member is talking about. You must not confuse yourselves with things you do not quite understand. It is a very different thing from the Regional Standing Army. If you want that information, ask for it, but do not come in here and give the impression that somehow the Regional Security System is on the brink of collapse, or has collapsed. On the contrary, I can give first-hand evidence that it is alive and well.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is what Parliament is for. That is what we want the Minister to do. If he is able to make a distinction between the Regional Standing Army and the Regional Security System, here is the place for him to enlighten us and the population. The signals which come from what is said in here are not only important signals for us, they are important signals for the rest of the world.

We have been led, because we do not have access to the information the Government has, to believe a number of things arising out of reports which emanated from Kingston. The sensitivity of our own security would prevent me from discussing some of the things I have had coming out of Kingston in a different environment, and I think that those of us who served in Government know that there are certain things you simply do not say, but we have reason to believe that the Standing Army was linked with the Security System, and if there is a distinction, we invite the honourable Member to make it for us.

My understanding of what has been said so far is that the Standing Army is to be divorced from the Security System; that the concept of the Security System expanding into what the Americans proposed for the region as their mutual defence group ..... You are forcing me to go down the road. I see signals there telling me not to go down those roads. I will not go. What I wish the Minister to do is to tell us to the best of his ability. We are not trying to be partisan here, but we think that you owe it to us and the community, in so far as you can go, to enlighten us. Do not let the Prime Minister of St. Vincent enlighten us about what is happening. Do not let the Prime Minister of Jamaica enlighten us. I want to hear from the Prime Minister of Barbados, or the Foreign Minister of Barbados, what the position is, so that when I am talking to my colleagues, either in Government or Opposition, within the region, I will tell them they are talking foolishness because my Prime Minister said A, B, C or D. Up to this moment I have been in the position where all I can do is listen. I need go no further than that. My colleagues are in the same boat as I. They want information from you.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: I just gave you the information).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is the information you gave me? Then I have to give you some information, because if the Minister is telling us that the fact that Grenada has been admitted to the Agreement at Dominica some time

ago – and let me remind the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs that when the Agreement was made at Dominica, it included the Head of the Defence Force, the Police Commissioner, and the Prime Minister himself, in his capacity as Minister responsible for Defence and Security, came into this Parliament and outlined the Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Agreement, and he left us to understand that that was the foundation of a force.

You will recall that when we were having the crime debate, he indicated that in relation to certain emoluments which certain persons were getting, those emoluments included such perks as would emanate from the Regional Defence Force. The Regional Defence Force also named a Commander. We are not going to hang on the word "System" versus "Force". We do not know, we want you to tell us. The Force is dead, but the System is alive, then. Is it reasonable to make the assumption that the Force is dead but the System is alive?

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member likes his own voice so much that he never knows when to stop. I have said, and if he wants me to repeat it in terms in which the Opposition will understand, since they say the same thing over and over and over again, that the Regional Security System that was set up about three years ago is still alive, and well, and functioning.

I do not know of any entity called a Regional Defence Force that could be dead now. Something has to be born before it can die, and I have never known of a Regional Defence Force. He has the information, not me, so I cannot give it to him. I am going to sit down and be all ears to hear all about this Defence Force about which he speaks.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Is it reasonable to assume then, that instead of saying that it is dead, which to all persons who speak English meant that the idea of it which was promoted and promulgated, one should say it is not dead, it is stillborn?
4.10 p.m.

The honourable Member must know that they had a military conference in Washington, at which this whole question was discussed; that it is only when the budget for the entire arrangement was presented that it suddenly became clear to the Americans that they would have to carry the cost continuously, *ad infinitum;* and that the Americans, who were up-front with the proposals, suddenly resiled from them, precisely because in their own Parliament the whole question of cutting back on public spending, including military spending, is now so sensitive an issue that the Americans cannot be seen – at least the Executive arm of the American Government – to be engaging in the creation of other and different ways to spend what is called 'defence spending' in the United States. The honourable Member must know that.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: I do not know that.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do you not know that? Mr. Prime Minister, through the Chair, change him from the Ministry! He does not know, and therefore he is negligent and you should change him. Let the honourable Leader of the House, who has some knowledge in these matters and who has an interest in the matter, take on the portfolio.

I do not understand how the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is responsible for our treaty obligations, who went to Dominica and participated in the signing of a treaty that committed us, can now come in here and tell me that he does not know. I do not believe him. I think he is baiting me.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I wish the honourable Member would not, in his usual spouting of words, say that he does not believe me. I do not like to be accused of lying.

Aside

Hon. L. R. TULL: What are you doing then? I do not like it. I said I do not know of all the things he spilled out about what happened in Congress. As a matter of fact, what he said happened, I know is not true. I do not know it as a fact. I know that it is not a fact.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do you see now that he knows? Do you see how he got in here saying that he does not know? If he does not know, how does he know what is true and what is not true? How can he know that what I said is not true, unless he knows? What is the truth? Get up and tell us what is the truth, as man.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Defence and Security.

Hon. L. R. TULL: He gained the light on me when he said that I participated in the signing of an agreement in Dominica. I am sorry to say it, but that is a diabolical lie.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I apologize. I withdraw it. The information which I got from the Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Defence and Security at the time and the photographs indicated that it was a treaty.

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes. A treaty at Dominica. The photograph in the newspaper, in which the Brigadier, who was then a mere General.....

Aside

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think we are.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am finished, Mr. Chairman, if that is the attitude which the Government is going to take. They are making it seem as if I am talking about something that happened on Mars. Every citizen in this country who reads the newspaper saw it in the newspaper. I do not understand why the Attorney-General and Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs would seek to make out as if I am misleading the population.

What does participate mean? Only one person can sign. How come when it came for the Minister of Agriculture to sign the other Agreement, you rushed and said that you are the only one who could sign, and now today, you are saying that you did not sign? I made the assumption that you signed. I apologize if you did not put your caligraphy on it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You do not have to participate personally. When you send an ambassador to perform for you, as Foreign Minister, you have participated. Do not split hairs with me on these matters. You know you participated as a Foreign Minister, and now, you get up in the House trying to give the impression that you were not there personally. That is true. Do you think that the Prime Minister can go and sign any Agreement without your advice and you remain Foreign Minister? You are not so psychopathic. So do not put me in the position where you are making it seem as if I am making false statements and *jeune* statements. I do not like that either. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the foreign affairs of this country, so if we go into a foreign agreement, he must be aware of it, otherwise something would be wrong.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Why not let us debate foreign affairs when we get to it,.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Because it forms part.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: .....because that is what we are doing right now?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. With respect, it forms part of our Defence Pact.

The reason why I have to mention Foreign Affairs is that you cannot enter into a pact with anybody unless it comes through the agency that is responsible for our foreign affairs. A military agreement between parties in the Caribbean must take the form of a foreign affairs activity. So if I mention Foreign Affairs, it is only by way of the instrument.

The present Prime Minister knows that we are on good ground over here. I should really like him, without really revealing the secrets of the country, the mammoth large number of secrets that we have which we do not wish to share with the population in the interest of security – I do not wish him to declare any of those, or even to tell me what they are – but what I would not like him to do is to give the impression that when we ask questions, we are being foolish. We are asking, not because we want to create mischief.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: You do not ask. You are saying it. You are talking foolishness.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am telling the truth though, because you engage in a lot of foolishness. That is the real problem.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, you have.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: .....address the Chair.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the problem is that what I am saying is foolishness because this play-play atmosphere which some of the Caribbean Governments have engaged in, behaving as if they are powerful Governments when in fact, they are poverty-stricken Governments, is foolishness. Some of the discussions which have occurred concerning this region have been in the same vein as the Turkish-Russian arrangements. If you hear some of the things they have proposed and some of the things they have suggested, you would think that we were among the most mighty of the military establishments around. So, yes, I agree that it is foolishness. That is why we are hearing it in the House. The foolishness of it has come to light when you get down to the bottom line, which is the dollars and cents.

I accept what the honourable Prime Minister has said so far as the security is concerned, especially as it relates to drug smuggling, gun running, money laundering and all the other activities for which we created the Coast Guard initially. I am glad to hear the Honourable Prime Minister say that he is committed to the concept that all the small islands in the Caribbean have to oar in the same direction. I have no quarrel with that. What my colleague, the spokesman responsible for Defence and Security, sought to discover was based on common information, common knowledge which emanated from Kingston, Jamaica, after a summit which was reported widely and which was the subject of a communique – he was not asking questions out of the blue – according to public

information. Indeed, the Prime Minister of St. Vincent commented on it and the Prime Minister of Barbados responded to it. So we are seeking information. That is all we are doing.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, it is quite clear that the elaborate plans for a Regional Standing Army have collapsed, because the Government of Barbados has been unable, on one hand, to attract uninamous support from other territories within the Eastern Caribbean and, on the other hand, to obtain appropriate levels of financial support from the United States and also support in terms of the necessity of the military objectives of such a force. I think it is to the advantage of the taxpayers of Barbados that that has happened, and that the Government of Barbados will now have to focus on the essential elements of our security, as partially expanded on in an earlier statement by the Prime Minister.
4.20 p.m.

I do not think that there is any point fooling around over the question of the collapse of the plans for the regional Defence Force. The announcement came from a high military official in the United States Navy. It also was communicated to us at the highest diplomatic level that the Americans would not be pursuing that kind of military objective in the Caribbean, and would not be putting its resources behind any plan to establish a Regional Defence Force on the scale envisaged by the Barbados Government. So the whole plan has collapsed, let us face it, and let us focus on what appears to be much more reasonable.

It is common knowledge that the new Government of St. Vincent indicated at an early stage that it would have no interest in committing the taxpayers of that country in supporting any such Defence Force. It is also common knowledge, because I heard it on a radio broadcast, that the Government of St. Lucia made a statement to the effect that they would rather spend their money on developing a special unit within their own Police Force to meet the particular needs of St. Lucia. So it has collapsed because it was unrealistic, and because it did not attract the support of the United States, either politically, financially or militarily. Let us call a spade a spade; that is what happened.

Let us then turn now to the whole question of Defence and Security, in respect of patrolling the coastline for smugglers and other illicit activities. The first question I would like to ask the Honourable Prime Minister is whether or not he is aware that there has been a plan, I do not know, to acquire a new vessel, a 102 feet vessel I think, either to supplement or replace the activities of the George Fergusson or one of those vessels. If so, whether those costs are reflected in these Estimates, whether it would be a gift to the Barbados Government or whether or not we will be paying for it under some surprise credit arrangement? I do not know.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The honourable Member, I think, should consider the line of his inquiry, because he is pursuing a line of which I am not aware.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I do appreciate the fact that the honourable Member might not be aware of it, and I am not surprised, but I can give you an assurance that there was a plan to acquire such a vessel from the United States of America and that the financing would have been largely off-budget. I do realize that you only have just taken over the Ministry and would not be quite *au fait* with all that has been going on. Indeed, the position was taken by the United States to reinforce the position that it took in relation to limiting the activities in the area of defence and security to the kind of objectives stated under Subhead 2: "defending the country from foreign invasion and attacks, and patrolling the coastline for smugglers and other illicit activities".

On that second score, I would like to speak a bit. We are all aware of the United States' position in relation to drugs. We have seen that they are not reluctant to seek the co-operation of other Governments being destabilised by the activities of drug smugglers, even to go to the top, in some instances, and making arrests, as recently happened in the United States, in respect of another Caribbean state. We are aware that the United States is not only concerned about the immediacy of the impact of the trafficking in illicit drugs on the moral stability of its own country, but in the long term, the weakening of the moral fibre of the nation itself, and also have now identified the cocaine drug smuggling operation within the Caribbean as probably undermining its own diplomatic and other efforts in what it perceives to be its role in stabilizing the situation in Latin America, particularly in Central America.

I believe there was a very excellent article not so long ago in the *Jamaica Gleaner,* and I think also in the *Business Week,* and it appears that this whole cocaine-for-guns operation in the Caribbean was being monitored as far back as the Carter Administration. In fact, it was significant that the name of our friend, Mr. Peter Bourne, from St. George's Medical School, a former adviser to President Carter, was in a position to confirm the surveillance that was being kept on this operation even at the time of the Carter Administration.

It is therefore important that Barbados should look at the wider aspects of this whole question of illicit drugs and recognize that we must step immediately to dismantle any domestic regime that might attract and promote the propagation of the trade in illicit drugs, whilst at the same time erecting the most solid barriers which cannot

be penetrated by the smugglers with impunity. So I welcome the statement that the naval sector of the Defence Force will be focusing very much on the control of illicit drugs.

I would also like to bring to the attention of the Prime Minister once again that authoritative sources have brought to my attention that the kind of surveillance currently provided by the Coast Guard in respect of our outer harbours is not adequate to prevent drugs from slipping through and, therefore, it is essential to ensure that there is greater police surveillance of our inner harbours. It has been drawn to my attention that it is quite possible that the many small vessels, which might well come under surveillance of the Coast Guard in our outer waters, may well come into the Careenage in Bridgetown and may not be subject to the kind of search and scrutiny which they might well have been subjected to prior to the abolition of the Harbour Police operation. I believe that this is an area of weakness. There is no point of spending millions and millions of dollars patrolling our outer waters when, in fact, the type of surveillance that would normally be done by the military division at that level would not be in such detail as will be done when the boat comes into contact with land in Barbados. There is a weakness at that point which needs to be addressed.

I do not think that I need to pursue this matter further. I think that I have addressed three points which I wished to address. I hope that I have put this debate on the question of control of illicit drugs in a wider Caribbean and hemispheric context. From all the information coming to me, it looks to me that there will have to be some very serious emphasis by those responsible for guarding the security of the hemisphere in respect of the ever-escalating drug trade, despite all the effort of Governments committed to protecting their citizens from these matters.

4.30 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I want to get this in quite clear perspective, because I would not want to raise the question of the wider meaning of security, and I do not want any misunderstanding about it. The Government of Barbados is committed to the view that, in the context of the wide meaning of security today, a regional approach, particularly in the Eastern Caribbean, is the best approach for Barbados. The Government is reinforced in this view by the recent events which have taken place in another part of the Caribbean. The magnitude of the problem is best illustrated by recent events which have taken place in at least two areas, so do not let us have any illusion that this is a matter that does not have to be addressed.

The honourable Member, can take this as an assurance, there is no way that money can be spent in respect of any service in Barbados which is not voted by Parliament. I am assured that there are no provisions approved by the Defence Board or approved by Cabinet for the buying of any 102 metre boat. The honourable Member must understand that very often kites are flown, and people, in all professions, have concepts which they float for reaction. So we must not be disturbed if we hear these things in the corridors of gossip. The Estimates are the ones that we must go by.

I am very glad in a way that one question has arisen, and that is the question of coastal patrol. For a long period of time, the Government has had under discussion the question of the most effective way to deal with coastal patrol, bearing in mind the sensitivity of respective jurisdictions, and also bearing in mind the fact that in a small country like Barbados, we have to take cost consideration into account. My understanding of it is that there is an area in which joint operations take place. It may be that it was so successful and it has been done in such a manner that even the honourable Member, with his perception and with his source of information, is not aware of that fact, because he says there is a deficiency.

My understanding is that, in respect of the inland patrols, joint.....

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The only inland that we can have in Barbados in the context of this kind of activity would be within the three mile limit.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation. By 'inland' I mean within the harbours of Barbados, that is, when those launches come in and they are tied up.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is precisely what I am talking about. The Port Authority has jurisdiction around the whole coast of Barbados, up to I think, three miles, and joint operations do take place.

I do not want to go into the history of this. There has been a lot of debate on this, and there has been continuous review, but everybody has recognized, particularly since you have a shallow draught and you do not have an inner careenage, that more work has to be done policing what one calls Carlisle Bay. This work involves Customs, because they have an interest in it, Immigration has an interest in it, the Police Department has an interest in it and the Coast Guard has an interest in it. Joint operations do take place, so I leave the House with a clear understanding that the Barbados Government is not backing away in any way from its viewpoint in this area of security.

Security is a wide word today in the context of particularly a small island, and we are also very conscious

of the fact that there are some areas in which a joint operation is probably the best way of dealing with these matters. In fact, we are trying to establish this not only at the regional level, but to establish machinery, and this is the point, so that whatever we do, it can fit into the hierarchy of treaties, and if one so desired, we can register the document in the U.N. Treaty section. In short, there is a legal person working on the framework, because when you are dealing with a number of sovereign countries and you do not have specific documentation, then disputes can arise, and there are many precedents in other parts of the world dealing with this matter. There is one between Senegal and Gambia. There is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and others, but we must shape and fashion the documents to suit our particular circumstances and pockets.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I think it is necessary for me to throw a little bit more light on a number of questions that have arisen during this debate.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West does not understand. Sometimes it is difficult for him to listen and learn. I made the point, and I will repeat it, because I do not want the wrong thing to go on Record.

The Government of Barbados has not signed any treaty arrangement on regional defence. What the honourable Member is talking. about, and if he would have kept quiet for a while I would have told him – he says he is a bit of a lawyer and therefore should understand the meaning of these things.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I object most strenuously to the honourable Member talking about "a bit of a lawyer". In this area I do not refer to the honourable Member or anybody else. Do not talk about this "bit of a lawyer." That is cheap.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member is not a lawyer. Sorry, I gave him a little bit more than he deserved. The honourable Member is not a lawyer and, therefore, should refer to people who are professionals in these things.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is why I am referring to the Honourable Prime Minister. I cannot refer to you.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, are you going to protect me from him or you are going to let him get up shouting all the time? Because you have a big voice, must you keep shouting all the time?

The Government of Barbados has not signed a treaty arrangement with other states in the Eastern Caribbean with respect to security. The Dominica arrangement that the honourable Member is talking about was a Memorandum of Understanding, which does not have the validity of a treaty. He never learns.

The Prime Minister just got up and explained to the honourable Member that the discussion about a provisional treaty, which can be registered in the U.N. Register of Treaties, is something that is being considered. But there has never been a treaty, and I resent the honourable Member repeatedly shouting that I participated in the signing or whatever of some treaty at some stage.
4.40 p.m.

It is important that we get to understand that the security of small states is not something to trifle with. At the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in New Delhi in 1983, I think it was, the Commonwealth Heads gave a mandate to the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth to do a study on the problems of small states in relation to their security and to report back to the next Heads of Government meeting, which will be held in Nassau, in October of this year. The Commonwealth Secretary-General set up a task force of about fifteen individuals who have been looking at the problems, and only recently in Nassau, about two months ago, there was a meeting focussing on the problems of security of the states of the Caribbean. The Prime Minister pointed out that he would consult with everybody who has to do with these things, and that security cannot be seen only in the context of physical protection of borders, but it must be seen in the wider context of all the forces at work that can undermine the stability of a community.

In many of our states, these problems are economic. We feel that if there is sufficient social and economic progress in communities, it is far less likely for there to be instability in that community, but it does not totally exclude the question of physical security of boundaries. In these days, when a large number of small states have gained independence over the last twenty years and they are no longer under the umbrella of the colonial power for defence, they are very vulnerable to the machinations of international mavericks. We have seen the situation, for instance, in the Comoro Islands where a group of ruthless men were able to move in, depose the Government and take over the country for a while – and I think there were probably only about two dozen of them. We in Barbados have seen a similar type of machination in train for an assault on this island and we have seen the situation in respect of Dominica, and I believe there are still people serving prison sentences in the United States for their part in a conspiracy to move in and take over Dominica by military means.

It therefore alarms and dismays me that the honourable Member for St. Michael South, the spokesman for the Opposition, continues to say, and I hope I am not misquoting him – if I am he can get up and say so –

that the Opposition was and is against a regional security system. Now what is a regional security system? Getting together – initially there were five, but St. Kitts joined two years ago and Grenada joined last month – a group of Eastern Caribbean states, including Barbados, to deal with many of the problems that confront small island states? And this is not a military operation; it deals with oil spills and marine policing, contraband goods, illicit drugs, drug trade and evasion of customs, and all these are mentioned in the agreement.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I was intending to speak and to clarify the matter during the course of my speech, but I want to make it clear that what I was talking about in relation to the position of the Opposition was the rumoured Standing Army in which a number of territories in the region were supposed to participate. That was being floated around. We have debated the pact to which you referred, the Regional Security System, already in this Chamber and our position was set out in that particular regard.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I will deal with the Regional Army, but at the moment I am only dealing with the Regional Security System. It dismays me that the Opposition can be opposed to a system where like-minded Eastern Caribbean states can get together and use their resources, their coasts guards, their policing services and their customs services, to work towards co-operation in the field of national emergencies, search and rescue, immigration control, fishery protection, customs and excise control, and the prevention of smuggling. This is the heart of the agreement, the Memorandum of Understanding between states in the Eastern Caribbean, and I cannot understand what it is they are against in that kind of co-operation, particularly the honourable Member for St. Michael South, who repeatedly says that he is very strong for co-operation and integration of the English-speaking Caribbean states, and in areas as vital and as critical to our interest and development as the ones I outlined, he states the position of the Opposition as being against that.

He talks about the Regional Defence Force, the Standing Army, and I want to make one or two quick comments on that, because it is always easy to set up a hypothesis and then knock it down. I was making the point, when we were having the intervention by the honourable Member for St. Michael West with a great deal of volubility, a lot of shouting and near bursting of the ear aorta, that although there was talk around the region among the various territories about the feasibility of the establishment of a Regional Standing Army, no decision was ever taken by any group of territories in the Eastern Caribbean on such a formation. That is the only point I am making, that it has been talked back and forth. I have heard the Heads of Governments of the Eastern Caribbean states talk about it back and forth and, to use this neologism, this new word, nothing ever concretised, and, therefore, for honourable Members to say that some big discussion in Congress in the United States and so on poured cold water on something that had not even been conceived is misrepresentation of the problem.

The question of drugs has been plaguing much of the world, and the Caribbean is an area that we must be concerned about. The Caribbean is a very useful stopping off point for the transporting and reshipment of drugs between South America and North America. Everybody knows that Ecuador, Peru and Colombia are some of the biggest producers of drugs anywhere in the world, and the archipelago of the Caribbean, dotted as it is with a number of small and relatively unprotected islands, with a whole set of small airstrips, is a very attractive place for people who would transport and transship drugs from South America to North America. This problem has been addressed at several meetings and several conferences in this hemisphere. Only last November, I attended the General Assembly of the Organisation of American States in Brazilia, and one of the matters that exercised the attention of the Ministers at that meeting was this continuing and threatening problem of the drug trade.
4.50 p.m.

Barbados, this small island, has open shores. There can be as much talk as you please about patrolling the coastal areas and the inner harbours. The people who would come in on small craft with a shipment of drugs in Barbados are not so simple as to pull their craft into the Bridgetown harbour. On the contrary, there is evidence that small craft have been coming in for a long time in many parts of the island, quiet little coves and placid beaches and waters around the island – not in the Bridgetown harbour; there are customs officers, policemen and security guards in the harbour – and it is difficult for us to be able, within the limit of our existing resources – I do not mean what money we have, I mean the resources available to the Coast Guard and the Police at the moment – to do a comprehensive scan of the little island of Barbados.

It is easy to talk about letting the Coast Guard do the work out there and let the Harbour Police do the surveillance around the island. Anybody who has gone on a small craft and been along the east coast of Barbados will know that the police cannot handle that. Hardened sailors cannot put up for long with the waters along the east coast of Barbados, so let us talk sense – do not let us talk just for the sake of being heard and being emotional.

There are any number of places on the east coast of Barbados where small or medium-sized craft can come in in the middle of the night, deposit a shipment of drugs and move on. We do not have the type of resources in

terms of vessels and trained men and so on to do the type of scan that is necessary. If, indeed, the Coast Guard should come into contact with people who are involved in this kind of activity off our coasts, and those people escape, we feel that we have a better chance at them if we have an agreement with St. Vincent, a hundred miles away, and their Coast Guard come into play, or Antigua, or Dominica, so that we could mount a joint operation to get to the bottom of this kind of problem. What is wrong with that? Why is the Opposition against it? What is it they are criticising?

The whole of Barbados, including the Opposition bar one, applauded the decision of the Government of Barbados 15 to 18 months ago to take part in the Grenada operation, and honourable Members on that side – I was not present, I was off the island at that time, but I read what they said – got up one after the other and recited their support for the Government for the decision it took to participate in that particular operation. I said bar one, because the Opposition quite often finds itself – and we heard it in here yesterday as we were debating the Second Reading of this Appropriation Bill – out of step with its leader. They take one position, the leader takes another. The honourable Members on the other side got up one after the other and did as they did in cottage meetings around Barbados in another era, they all testified, each and every one of them testified and said "we support the action of the Government in Grenada." Then, two weeks after, the Leader of the Opposition sang a different song and put under or over his pen – I do not remember which one – an article that was scathing in its attack on the position taken by his other nine colleagues.

I do not understand that. If we are interested in serious business, and we consider defence and security, the integrity of this island and the protection of our way of life or the institutions in our system, we have to stop making partisan comments out of these matters. There are a lot of fruitful areas for partisan confrontation, but I believe that when we come to matters of defence and security of this country, the Opposition would do well to approach it with a greater sense of responsibility than I have seen so far.

The honourable Members in here raised questions today in areas of the utmost sensitivity. In any civilised country where there is a system of Government such as ours, a democratic society with free parties, it is understood, it is an unwritten rule, that Government and Opposition sit down and talk to each other privately about security matters. If the honourable Members on that side had come to us on matters of the utmost sensitivity in relation to the security of this realm, we would be glad to sit down and talk to them about it, because there is no partisanship when it comes to that kind of activity.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I will wind up, Mr. Chairman.

I have had the good or ill fortune to serve in the last four years as the second of two Ministers on the Defence Board, and therefore I have a pretty fair understanding of what has been happening. It does not help to put out a lot of unworthy rumour. I, as a member of that Board, have heard for the very first time today that the Government was contemplating to buy a 102-foot boat. But when one considers the source from which that emanates, it fortifies me in my view that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central – I want to put it in such a way that you do not have to ask me to withdraw it, Sir – is the greatest threat to our political system that has ever walked up those steps. Repeatedly, just for the sake of impressing people and to hear himself, he makes statements of the utmost irresponsibility, statements that are consistent with the personality of the man whom I have known for over 40 years. You do not play around with these things, you do not play around with defence and security like the foolishness he talked over revenue and expenditure. You can listen to loads and ends of drivel when it comes to that, but in these matters, we would feel more assured if we could speak to someone as responsible as the honourable Member for St. Michael South, who is the spokesman for the Opposition on defence and security matters. He can approach us and we will let him know what is happening. These things are too important for the recklessness of people like the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. He will hear more from me.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am very pleased that the Honourable Prime Minister has been able to assure us that he knew nothing of any plans in relation to the acquisition of a 102-foot boat. We may recall that we were also assured in this House at one stage that there were no plans to order a military aircraft, and were later informed that it was to carry breadfruit to St. Vincent. In 1981, it was said that we were lying over the question of the purchase of the Trident, that we were lying to this nation.

I say categorically now that if as a member of the Defence Force, as a Minister of Government, the honourable Member does not know, I got it from the same sources that adequately informed us in respect of the purchase of the Skyvan, the purchase of the Trident and the attempt to purchase helicopters at one stage, when it was denied on the floor of this House, and when the Commander of the Defence Force came down here, then all of a sudden the previous Prime Minister came in here and said it was a leak from Barclays Bank and he would have to do something about it.

5.00 p.m.

I am not surprised at what is going on here today. What is going on here today is that certain people are stuck in the groove that they have been going in for years in respect to disclosing information to this House. I can say for the Honourable Prime Minister that I believed him when he said he knew nothing about it. He would never accuse me of lying. He said that some people fly kites. He would not come in here and say that I am a threat to democracy, that I am lying and all of that. I was grateful of what he said and I believe that he might have, without expanding, and I did not expect him to expand, probably correct when he said "flying kite" in a particular matter, which indicated that there was some substance in the enquiry that I made – not a statement in this House.

We see a new regime beginning to bring a level of consistency and accuracy in statements to this House, and you see another regime still hanging on to the coat-tails of dishonesty, misrepresentation and abuse. I asked that statement because I am satisfied that it would have never been reflected in the Estimates itself. It is also perfectly possible that the present Prime Minister would have known nothing about it. I was abused wrongly over the question of the Skyvan, and up to today, this House was never told that the Skyvan was bought for military purposes by Aero Services, but we had the ridiculous story put out that it is to carry breadfruit to St. Vincent. We all know that it is a military capital expenditure, and so was Aero Services a military capital expenditure. Up to today, the Minister responsible for Defence and Security never said that Aero Services was a military expenditure. That is what you are hanging on to, but thank God they are seeing a different light now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg that this sitting be now suspended for twenty minutes.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.
5.10 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE took the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. The Prime Minister has a reply to one question.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I have the reply to one of the questions which one of the honourable Members on the other side asked about the cost of repairs. First of all, I give the honourable Member the assurance that the vessel was insured with the Insurance Corporation of Barbados. Once the vessel was insured, and the Insurance Corporation having accepted our claim, then, as the honourable Member would know, the responsibility for dealing with the repairs falls to the Insurance Corporation. I understand that they entered into a contract with Brooke Marine and that the original estimate was 110 000 pounds. That, of course, would be subjected to a variation in the event of anything unusual being found when you took off the outside of the outer steel plating of the area, because there would be the inner parts and nobody would be able to tell you exactly what they found inside until they took off the outside. That would give you an estimate, having regard to the damage done outside and the deck, in particular.

The Insurance Corporation is making these payments. The maximum possible liability of the Government would be what is called 'deductible', and the deductible in this type of policy is $25 000. They have not asked us for the deductible. I believe that the repairs have been done and it would probably be subjected to what they call trial, and subject to confirmation of acceptance.

The terms of the contract between Brooke Marine and the ICB was 30 per cent down on the first payment, 40 per cent and then 30 per cent. Seventy-seven thousand pounds has been paid so far, and my understanding of it is that the final figure that it can possibly be is 147 000 pounds. But our total exposure would be 25 000 pounds, which is deductible.

I have answered already the question of the cause of the accident and I have said that there is a recommendation from an appropriate authority – for I would not call it a major offence – probably a minor transgression of certain rules in relation to being present at a certain place at a certain time. The allegation is that somebody who was supposed to be present at a certain time was not there; not that the person was absent altogether from the ship, but he was not in the particular place where he should be when the operation of moving and removing was proceeding. That is my understanding.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am grateful for the explanation of the Prime Minister, and we will not pursue what obviously will be a charge of dereliction which somebody will have to face.

I wish, for the Record, to comment on what the Attorney General said with regard to the question of the agreement reached in Dominica. I am disappointed that the Attorney General, in his understanding of what constitutes a treaty, suggested by his response that the only way a treaty is a treaty, is if it is deposited in the United Nations or some such other place, because he said, as I understand him, that we did not have a treaty at Dominica.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Please, Sir.....

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

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member will give way.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has given way.

Hon. L. R. TULL: For the Record, I never said that a document is only a treaty when it is deposited in the United Nations. I wish the honourable Member would not do that to me.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am going on to make the point that an agreement was reached at Dominica, and the honourable Member, who is a lawyer should.....

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I cannot trouble you. You are not in a position to be troubled by me in regard to the law.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us not be provocative.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I can trouble the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), but you, never could I trouble you!

The point I am making is that he left this House with the impression that the agreement at Dominica did not constitute a treaty. For the Record of this House, I wish to say that a treaty does not have to be a formal document. All it has to be is an international agreement, that is to say, an agreement by two or more states recognized by those states and governed by international law. It may be written and, indeed, it may, if the two states accept it, be oral.

I am stating for the Record that we were told that there was a Memorandum of Understanding. Treaties in international law have been designated Memoranda of Understanding, among other names, and we were told publicly that an agreement had been reached at Dominica among a number of states, Barbados being one of them, with regard to a regional security pact. Indeed, the word "pact" was used in the public information which I believe I saw. If I am misrepresenting the former Prime Minister, I would apologise in advance, but I believe that when we raised questions in this House, the statement which he made with regard to the agreement which had been made at Dominica led all of us to believe that there was an international agreement within the context of the treaty at Chaguaramas. Further, our understanding was that the obligations of the treaty saw our own Commissioner of Police being placed in a particular position with regard to the implementation of the agreement.

There are in international laws such things as executive agreements, but I submit that it is not outside the veil of reasonable suggestion that what was reached at Dominica was a treaty obligation for Barbados. Partly because we do not require treaties to be laid in this House, such agreements as are reached between the Executive branch of this Government and any other Government do not necessarily come for our particular scrutiny, but when we have been given general information it is not unusual and unreasonable for us to come to certain conclusions.

I regret very much that the Attorney General, in a flight of rhetoric, the design for which I did not understand, sought to give the impression that what I was saying was incorrect. I think the Record has to demonstrate and clearly show that it was not.

I would like to touch on the Immigration Service, but if the Prime Minister would prefer us to finish the debate as it applies to the Defence and Security before going to the Immigration Service, I would be prepared to give way to allow the Shadow Minister to continue.

I would say before I sit down that there are certain professional standards which all of us expect from each other. I hope that the last which I have observed today will not recur again.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think I made the first intervention in this debate on this side and I would merely wish to join with my colleague, the Member for St. Michael West, in expressing appreciation to the Prime Minister for the way in which he has responded to the queries which we have raised. When I started out, I indicated that if the Prime Minister was not in a position to respond because he had just assumed responsibility for that particular portfolio, we would understand and we would not press the matter, but it was from the front benches that we were told to go ahead and ask our questions and press on, and I am really sorry that the

debate has evoked a certain measure of heat between rational people.

Asides.

5.35 p.m.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: You do not have to notice him. I will notice him for you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. The honourable Member must not interrupt his colleague. Order, please!

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I would like to clarify a few things for the record. This Opposition has never voted against the Memorandum of Understanding. When the Minister for Foreign Affairs was making his contribution, he said he could not understand how it is that the Opposition has voted against the Memorandum of Understanding. We did not vote against the Memorandum of Understanding. Our bone of contention was that in matters that deeply affect the security of this country, the Government, contrary to the principles of the democratic open Government, went behind the backs of the people and the Parliament of this country and entered into a secret treaty abroad. I, myself, introduced a Resolution in this Chamber in 1983 condemning that particular action on the part of the Government. The Government used its numbers to defeat the Resolution, but the points which we were making were still valid nevertheless.

I wish to get some hard information. According to the Estimates, Subhead 2, the functions of the Barbados Defence Force includes defending the country from foreign invasion and attacks and patrolling the coastline for smugglers and other illicit activities. I wonder if the Minister responsible could give us some information on this since the Defence Force assumed responsibility for these matters, let us say, within the past year or whatever period the Minister may have information on, how many smugglers have been intercepted and any information on illicit activities which have been discovered as a result of the operation of the Defence Force. I believe that we are entitled to that kind of information.

I am very glad to hear that the Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Defence and Security is committed to a role that would bring the Defence Force into the area of protecting the economic resources of this country. I am very pleased to hear that he has placed emphasis on that. It is clear for those of us who observe the different nuances in the development and evolution of a military policy that there is a redefinition going on, and those of us who observe and listen for each phrase and word will detect that there is – I would not call it a revisionist policy – a change of policy, a shift. We can see the parameters, and the areas that the Prime Minister is now laying emphasis on will find hearty support from over here. The Prime Minister referred to the emphasis on smuggling and drug trafficking, and I wish to point out that we made it absolutely clear – and instance this is in the manifesto of my party, which still is the policy in terms of defence of this country – that our emphasis in these areas would be on the saving of lives at sea, assistance to vessels and aircraft in distress, protection of the territorial waters and enforcement of our navigation, marine and other laws including laws relating to smuggling and drug trafficking. So it is clear that the area of emphasis as outlined by the Prime Minister falls clearly in line with the very clear and perceptive thinking of the Opposition in respect of military matters and the integration of military matters into the broader parameters of the national policies of this country. There need not be any great divide in that particular matter as far as the Government and Opposition may be concerned.

I know there is one area in which there would not be any revision on the part of the Government, and that relates to youth training as far as the Defence Force is concerned, and in that area there will clearly be a divide between the Government and the Opposition. We will maintain our position, and we will put it to the people of this country once again, that we do not believe that youth training should fall under the aegis of the Defence Force. We believe that youth training is a matter for the civilian authorities in this country. Under the Defence Force, it has dangerous potentials for our country. It is customary for Governments to ignore these kinds of warnings and suggestions, but that is the policy of the Democratic Labour Party, and it will be the policy in the upcoming election after the by-election.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other honourable Member wish to ask any other questions under this sub-head?

The question is.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is not a question of the question.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to get you to wind up this debate.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, no, not in this area. I think the best way of dealing with this is for us to nail the points raised by the Opposition as they arise, because in debating defence, the Opposition think they are smart. They really agree with what the Government is doing, but for them it is not politically advisable to appear to be so doing, and what they are really trying to do now is say that the Government's policy is their policy, but they will not get away with that. Obviously, the use of the Defence Force has to change from time to time to deal with particular attacks, potential invasions, potential smugglers and illicit activity.

The honourable Member's manifesto is totally deficient, and I disagree with him, because it leaves out drug smuggling. If the honourable Member was so perceptive, he would have made it clear in his manifesto that one of the fundamental purposes of the Defence Force would be to deal with the question of drugs.

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is precisely the point I am making. Defence Forces must change and adopt their role in the light of the nature of the matters that they have to deal with.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way, because I do not want him to spend a long time on a point that does not apply, on page 36 of the manifesto, he obviously missed what the honourable Member said: "(v) revitalize the Coast Guard Service with emphasis on the saving of lives at sea, assistance to vessels and aircraft in distress, protection of the territorial waters, and enforcement of our navigation, marine and other laws, including laws relating to smuggling and drug trafficking." He said it, but you did not hear it, so I would not let the honourable Member go down that road. That is the policy, so now we are *ad idem*. You agree with the policy entirely.
5.45 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Let us continue. I do not want there to be any doubt in anybody's mind about this, money has to be spent to equip the Defence Force for this new role. I have before me here an article from the *Observer* newspaper of Sunday, 17th March, 1985 dealing with the situation. I am going to get it photostated and circulated, because it deals with the situation in Belize. The headline is "Soldiers wage war on Belize's drug trafficking." Do not let us fool ourselves that here in this part of the Caribbean there is no potential danger.

I am not giving the honourable Member any information, because I do not believe it is in the interest of the security of the state, as to how many smugglers have been found, I do not want the other people to know that. I am not giving you that, because the campaign that we are dealing with is a very, very serious campaign, and you cannot expect that it is in the interest of the security of any country to answer on the floor of the House of Assembly questions popped up on these kinds of matters. I am sorry I cannot give the honourable Member any information in respect of that.

I can tell the honourable Member that the Government is convinced that people are living in a fool's paradise if they do not believe that each and every one of these little islands in the Eastern Caribbean is not being looked at and observed with a view to perverting the forces which would prevent the rigid enforcement of these laws. Do not let us fool ourselves.

I am now going to deal with the question of the aircraft. I was here when the Prime Minister made the statement, but you see, the problem with the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is that he never really understood the former Prime Minister. The former Prime Minister was very adept at leading the honourable Member on.

The honourable Member came in here and made a categoric bold statement, without qualification, that Aero Services had a military plane, and the Honourable Prime Minister was quite correct in denying that statement. I say so today because a great part of the work of Aero Services is to ferry day tour passengers, carry cargo and things of that kind. The honourable Member did not say that. He could not have said it, he was in the difficulty that he could not have alleged that the Government was trying to get the money under one guise, when in truth and in fact it was wanted for something else, so he came in and made this bold statement. It is like today with the titbits, the gossip about the 102-foot boat.

I have found out now what the honourable Member was talking about. Apparently there was some foreign officer who did a survey of the forces in this area and said that an assessment of the equipment in the area, in his opinion, indicated that they needed a supplementary vessel of the size the honourable Member spoke about. So what? I want everybody to understand the fact that, because an American officer, or a British officer, or a Polish officer says something is his opinion does not necessarily mean that we must accept it. That is foolishness.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of explanation. You may recall that I did ask a question about whether or not the Government intended to purchase a boat. You were very polite in saying you knew nothing about it and that it was a kite. The abuse of me came from another source, not from you. You do realise that I was not lying to the House. I am not threatening democracy by asking a question. I am very pleased that you have put the matter in perspective for us. Thank you very much.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We have to get accustomed to the fact that these islands will engage the attention of a multiplicity of people, and very often, once they hear or they perceive that there is a need, a number of countries will be sending their military salesmen down to sell you goods. It happens all the time. A classic example was when LIAT was being re-equipped. There were so many salesmen coming down from all over the world trying to sell aeroplanes! The public must get accustomed to the fact that every day, once there is a perception of a need,

a whiff, a possibility that a particular Government might be interested in a particular piece of equipment, as many salesmen as there are on that type of equipment will come down trying to sell and tout for the business. That is the way it operates.

The position is quite clear. The Defence Board makes these recommendations, and the Defence Board's recommendations are not necessarily accepted by the Cabinet. On many occasions the recommendations of the Defence Board are modified or rejected altogether. That is how it operates, because we have to justify in our own minds and to the House and to the public a reasonable expenditure on defence.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I enter this debate with a certain degree of reluctance, because at the moment I am one of a team of experts who have been looking at the security of small states in the Commonwealth, and obviously a lot of the ideas which are at present fermenting in my mind would have been influenced by the information coming before me in that exercise.

Part of the problem about the debate on defence is that, in many respects, it is a new subject to the self-governing countries of the Caribbean, including those self-governing countries which have achieved independence since 1948. Although the process of internal self-government was developing from 1948 onwards, and in our own country specifically in the Fifties, the subject of defence and security was the last one to be given up by the colonial power. Even when we had internal self-government there was a limitation on the power of the Premier to intervene or to control matters relating to internal security, and he certainly only played an advisory role in relation to external security. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is almost – I believe the expression is neophyte – approach to this subject. It is one that excites the populace and it is one therefore that excites those persons who are more intimately concerned with the formulation of policy for the defence of their country.

My party is on record as saying that we did not have the need for a standing army, because at the time we conceived of the defence of Barbados as reasonably secure from marauders such as John Banks and Sydney Alleyne. Events were to prove us incorrect in this respect, and it is a measure of the intelligence and the resilience of the Barbados Labour Party that we went on record as stating to the public that defence has now become an important consideration in the political management of the country's affairs and it is necessary that we should use some of our resources for this purpose. The Barbados Labour Party's statement is clearly expressed in its manifesto for 1981, in which it gave a comprehensive concept of how it saw the issue of defence in the rest of this century. It is a policy that nobody should find difficult to accept. It takes into account the major considerations of defence, whilst at the same time looking at the scarce resources available to us for dealing with the problem.

5.55 p.m.

The Government has consistently pursued this policy from the time of coming into office and being faced with the Cubana affair and then the Sydney Alleyne affair. The Government has husbanded, very correctly, the limited resources available to it to get the maximum benefit from expenditure on defence. The Government has pursued initiatives which any right-thinking and sensible Government cognizant of the Caribbean would do in relation to regional security. In this exercise, the Opposition has unfortunately gone about, in almost an excited way, putting forward to the public that the Defence Force was not playing the correct role and that it was usurping the role of the Police; secondly, that the Defence Force was taking a larger segment of the resources of the country than it should rightfully take, and, thirdly, that the Defence Force was apt to get out of control and there was not enough control over it to make sure that it is subject to the civilian powers.

That type of approach is one that is liable, no doubt, to find some sort of acceptance with those people who might not have on their thinking caps. It does not do justice to the public affairs in this country, if the criticism which the Defence Force meets, at the hands of the Opposition, are not properly based on objective analysis.

I believe that the states of the Commonwealth have begun to focus in an objective manner on the problem of small states. There is no doubt, as the honourable Prime Minister and the Attorney-General have said, that the problems are real. They are not figments of the Government's imagination. They relate to smuggling, drug trafficking, safeguarding our economic exclusive zone, mercenary activities and other forms of destabilization – all of which would mean that our defence policy must be inspired by intelligence and must have an intelligent unit. We must also have some form of a standing army and we must have a very strong Coast Guard Service.

It is impossible for Barbados, as a small state, to take on the full defence of the Eastern Caribbean. I do not believe that the revenue of our country, or our capacity to generate enough revenue would help us in this regard. We can only take on that task if a lot of the hardware and software is provided by friendly states. On the other hand, Barbados' security would be much more guaranteed if we could share with our neighbours a regional security system.

The Government is quite correct in pursuing such a policy. The late Prime Minister, early in our regime,

sought to implement this policy by a limited security arrangement with St. Lucia and St. Vincent, our two nearest neighbours. That has been expanded in the second term in office of this Government. Hopefully, it may be possible eventually to get some sort of treaty arrangement maturing from a Memorandum of Understanding into a proper Defence Pact. I am not privy to Government's detailed policy on this, but I hope that the Government will not allow the churlish criticism of the Opposition or the uninformed politics about defence to prevent it from pursuing rapidly a proper security arrangement for the Eastern Caribbean, including Trinidad and Tobago, if possible, and also having stand-by arrangements with powers whose democratic system of Government accords with ours.

It is folly believing that we will have any security arrangement with Cuba. Our systems do not mesh, no matter how Caribbean Cuba might be. It is folly believing that the security of Barbados will be guaranteed by the Soviet Union. Obviously, our closest allies in this regard must be the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom. I would like to challenge any politician in Barbados to campaign in my constituency against a security system in which we are seeking regional co-operation, together with an alliance with bigger states such as the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. I would take on the whole Opposition, if possible, on this issue, because I think it would be silly to believe that, in this day and age, small states are not exposed to dangers which before were within the portfolio of the metropolitan power. That is why the Government has to be firm on this particular issue and try to educate the public, in the public's own interest.

Hopefully, by the next Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau in October, 1985, the Commonwealth Heads of Government will have a report for them, parts of which it may be possible to make public. By then, honourable Members, as well as the public, would have a considered view of the sort of problems which are confronting small states, including Barbados, in the maintenance of their security, and, perhaps, in the future we will see a higher level of debate and a better approach, and a non-partisan approach on this issue of the security of small states.

I believe that the Government has done everything in its power to make sure that the military is subject to the civilian power in this country. Of course, there is a fear of anyone who bears arms, but I think that the democratic institutions of our island, the by-partisan political system and the common sense of our people are sufficient to inspire or influence Government policy to control the soldiers and to make them pursue the areas that are reserved for them.

I think that the Government has been balancing very finely, and correctly, the division of resources between the military and between the police. It is not in the interest of the country that we should hear a continuing harping on this problem. Rather we should be seeking ways and means of promoting harmony between the two quasi-military forces in our island and ensuring that such criticism as we offer is for improving their relationship with the Executive, rather than putting in the heads of one or two who may be misguided, ideas that eventually will not be to the credit of Barbados.

I wish to deal with an issue on which the honourable Leader of the Opposition has spoken and that is the youth training. There is no one model about youth training. I heard the Opposition saying that youth training being placed under the military has always proven to be a bad thing. That is not true at all. Right near to our shores, within the Caribbean, in Martinique and Guadeloupe, if the Opposition wishes to see an example of proper youth training schemes which have been conducted under the aegis of the military, they would see one, as practised by the French.

They are happy examples, where some form of military training, some form of regulation, some form of discipline have paid off in the training of youth. Of course, in systems that have depended on the United Kingdom as their model, it has not always been so, but it is not necessary to have youth training under the military in order to find that you have young people who will take to arms. These countries face more danger from the "isms", the Communist Movement, those people who will misuse the peace movement in this country to spread propaganda, undermining the democratic system of Government from training its youth in a proper military discipline.

I would like to see the day when at all of our schools in this island, training in the Cadet Corps is compulsory. This is something we could instil in our young people. I would like to think that we have the resources, under whatever form it is, whether it be under schools or under the military, for this purpose. My son spent some of his years, just prior to becoming 20, at an institution in Canada, modelled on the Scottish system, in which it is compulsory for every child to belong to the Cadet Force, and I can testify to the difference this had made to his concept of discipline, decorum, punctuality and of understanding some of the set-up, both military and civil, of the country at which he was at school.

6.05 p.m.

I can see nothing wrong in this, provided that the safeguards are there for looking at this subject seriously. I do not believe that the Government is so committed to one model that it will not be conscious of other models. It is aware of the dangers which exist, and I would hate to think that looking at the form rather than at the substance is the only criticism which the Opposition can bring to bear on this issue.

I believe that both political parties owe the country a positive statement on the necessity for a Defence Force. Rather than the harping criticism which the Government continues to face in this respect, one would welcome objective and constructive policies for ensuring that the military, which we must keep, is subject to all of the controls which are necessary in a democratic state such as us. Very frequently, I hear criticism. Very seldom do I hear constructive suggestions on how to deal with the rightful fears and concerns of the Opposition and of the Government. I am not saying that the fears and concerns are not rightful. They are rightful fears and concerns, and since we are the representatives of the people, we must voice them. But I make bold to say that we should do more than voice our fears and concerns, we should advance in public debate the constructive ways in which we can harness those fears, control those concerns, and build the basis for a sensible defence, to fit the budget resources of Barbados, and to answer its needs in the context of the Caribbean facing the dangers that small states face in the 20th century.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I shall like to turn to Subhead 3. I beg your pardon, I will give way to my colleague.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS (St. James South): I am an advocate of a youth programme for Barbados, but, along with so many others, I am totally opposed to that youth training being placed under the Defence Force, and for a number of reasons. There are not all youngsters who want to be in a Defence Force and, therefore, it is not necessary for it to be in the Defence Force. It is a misconception and a fallacy that you can get discipline in an Army. That is a joke. I was part of an Army, and if you were to go to any school in Barbados and ask any teacher what is the standard of discipline in the schools among the cadets, they will tell you that it is just the same as among the other boys. So this idea of having discipline depends on the persons involved in the organization, and whether or not they adhere to rules that are set down. It is as simple as that. You do not have to go into the army to learn punctuality or how to clean your shoes, or to be respectful to somebody. That is a joke. In fact, if you want to learn the most abusive language, you can join an army, and that, to me, is no attribute for anybody to try to achieve. So this is a fallacy.

There are certain religious groups which do not believe in military forces. Are we to exclude them if they want to join the programme? We in this party have advocated a youth development programme which, to my mind, is better. We spoke about that some years ago, and we have been criticised and laughed at about our programme. Up to today, I have not seen anything coming forward from the Government about the start of their programme.

Under this Head, there is a provision to provide adequate accommodation in connection with the National Youth Training Project. I want to know if this so-called training project for youngsters is to be voluntary or compulsory, where is supposed to be the headquarters, when it is supposed to start and what are the numbers envisaged. There are between 3 500 and 4 000 school children coming out of school this year, and every year we put back some programme, the worse it is becoming. Let us start something, but not under the Army. As I have said this time and time again, the Ministry of Education has all the skills possible to run the programme. They are more knowledgeable than the Army to take care of a programme of this nature.

Asides.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: I know more about youth than you can dream about. You have never dealt with youth yet. You might talk about it, but you know nothing about it. And it is nothing you read in a book either, you have to work with children and be able to understand their problems in order to come to the solutions. Also, the problems of youth in Barbados are not necessarily the problems in Martinique or Cuba. We are dealing with Barbados and the problems facing the young people in Barbados, and it is foolish to talk about the Army. The Army, as structured in Barbados, is totally different from the Army in Martinique. Ours is an Army geared to defending the country. You do not want to put young people under this. The young people want to have skills, want to be part of the total development of the country. The Army can only direct them in how to use guns, that is all they know, or how to march. If you were in the Army in England or America, marching is second class anyhow. They do not even go to parades now in England and America, so we are barking up the wrong tree.

Asides.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: I am not going to say here what our policy is going to be. I will say this that when we recover this Government about 5 000 of them will be in a programme within six months, because we have the plan and we have always had it.

Asides.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Do not mind what they are doing. You will know what they would do when the time comes. But this is foolishness. I have already presented to our party two papers of various youth programmes, and it will work. Half of you who are talking about youth, you have never worked with youth yet, so you do not understand what the youths want, what their problems are. How can you present a programme for them?

They have heard about boy-soldiers so they think that it is okay for Barbados to have boy-soldiers. In England where you have soldiers, the boys go in under a type of school programme. The youngsters were invariably in trouble with the law; they learn skills and they come out. It is a different type of set up altogether – nothing to do with the Army. As a matter of fact, if anything, you will find that they have a lot of civilians training the youngsters, which is totally different from the concept in Barbados.

When the Democratic Labour Party ran the affairs of the Government, we tried to acquire Carrington, and if my recollection serves me correctly, it was intended that 500 youngsters live at Carrington. I believe at that time the initial cost of the programme would have been some $3 million a year to start. Eventually, it was intended that the programme would be self-sufficient, and it can be self-sufficient if you have the correct inputs and components.

I am not the only one saying this. All of the agencies that deal with youth in this country have come out on this programme under the Defence Force. It is not the Opposition alone. We are not opposing a programme for young people. What we are saying is that if you place it under the Defence Force, you are making a mistake, because the Defence Force, as it is so designed, is down one street. Even if you were to speak to some members of the Defence Force, those who have had experience in teaching cadets, they will tell you that it is not suited for the Defence Force. I am of the opinion that even those who were appointed to look into it disagreed with the Government's policy of putting it in the Defence Force, so I am asking the Government to think again.

6.15 p.m.

I would like to know where the headquarters will be, when they will start, and how much money they will spend. I have only seen here under Subhead (3), that they intend to provide accommodation. I want to know where the accommodation is going to be. I also want to know what you hope to achieve at the end of it? These are my questions.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): I sat here a few moments ago and I almost could not believe my ears when I heard one who served in the Royal Air Force, although he did not achieve the rank of private, say that the military did not make or does not make provision for training and that it just goes down one avenue. It made me cringe.

I do not know if the Royal Air Force is that kind of a model. I suspect it is not, because I know many men who served in the Royal Air Force and who now are skilled artisans as a consequence of that service. Among the things that the military does – I am speaking of the Royal Air Force and the United States Armed Services, and I did not serve in the Royal Air Force, I served in the United States Army – is that some of the finest opportunities for youth training that can be found anywhere on this earth is in the training programmes as set up by the Armed Services.

I do not know why people on that side are always inclined towards the view that anything referred to as military must necessarily be horrific, and that we must groan and cringe in fear in our boots because somebody is wearing a uniform. I believe that we have come of age in Barbados and we are adult and mature enough to recognize that what used to obtain once upon a time can no longer obtain now. It was possible many years ago in this island to leave your house open and walk all about without worrying about people breaking into your houses. That is no longer possible. That kind of trust and confidence has now been replaced by burglar bars, and what is happening on the domestic family scale is also true on a national basis. Just as they have domestic pirates who spend their time pillaging and taking advantage of citizens, so they have on the international scene lawless people flying mercenary banners or prosecuting the interest of other misguided men with enlarged concepts of hegemony. Therefore, we in Barbados have to take seriously into consideration the security and safety of our nation, and I believe it is possible for us, small though we are and with the limited resources such as we have, to be able to afford for ourselves a security system that meets our needs.

I am prepared to support a military programme in Barbados that answers the legitimate concerns of our people and of our nation as a state. I would strenuously object to any misguided emphasis upon military expansionism merely for the sake of accumulating military hardware and for diverting scarce resources from social programmes to put into military programmes. I am prepared to support a balanced view and a balanced approach to the legitimate security concerns of Barbados in a programme.

One can look at training from a variety of angles. The honourable Member for St. James South seems to believe that the only model for training is that model that resides down at Trents. I am not conscious that, when we speak of youth training, it necessarily means taking people into a camp environment for six weeks, that parents get rid of their children for six weeks and they go on hikes and have camp fires. That is not what we mean by training, and when you presented your two White Papers or whatever colour papers they were to your Government, I am sure that your model concept dealt mainly with that sort of boy scout business. We are

dealing with training for national development and we are thinking in terms of equipping our youngsters with, (1), the necessary discipline and, (2), the necessary skills to usefully incorporate themselves into the labour market in Barbados.

The honourable Member said that you can belong to the Royal Air Force and disregard the orders of your Sargeant – he did not put it in those words. I am just computizing it for him – that in the Royal Air Force you learn some of the best curse words and that you do not necessarily have to respond to discipline, you can do as you like. I know that you cannot do as you like in the Army. In peace time, that would put you in a brig, the equivalent to Glendairy, for a longer time than you would care to remember, and in war time the treatment can be far more emphatic than that. I do not know too many persons who failed to respond to disciplinary measures in the normal regimen of military life and who were able to continue in that course of rebellion with impunity, and I will maintain that there is no organization under the sun outside the Church that can prepare a person for a life of disciplinary action like the military. The facts and the hard realities dictate that you carry into a battle situation persons who are mentally, physically and emotionally prepared by the rigours that that campaign would impose. That is the only way you can go into battle and that is what Armies are about, they prepare people for war, and the only way you can sustain the Army in those extreme conditions is by discipline. Otherwise, when you hear the first fire cracker go off behind you, you would run.

(Aside: Are you speaking from experience?)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, will you take the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves) from off me?
6.25 p.m.

When you think in terms of preparing young people, I believe that one of the options available, and one that has a history about it, is the use of the military as one of the legitimate agencies for the purpose of youth training. There are a number of skills, aircraft technology being one. People who are now skilled in aircraft mechanics working up at the same Grantley Adams Airport learnt their mechanics in the military. There are people who are medical laboratory technologists who learnt their skill in the Army. There are lathe men, masons, carpenters. The construction batallion on the United States Armed Forces is a classic example. It does not engage in fighting at all. The CBs is a construction unit with all classes of heavy equipment operators, with all kinds of skills. That is what the military can do.

I am submitting, with the greatest humility, that one needs to examine the prospects and not dismiss out of hand this notion of the military as a legitimate arm of the training programme merely because the word "military" is involved in it. I think that we do a disservice to ourselves and to the country when we seek to scare people into believing that if their children go into the Army for two years, they are going to come out with blood on their hands or blood in their eyes. It does not have to be that way. We are talking mainly of peace time operations. They will learn not only a skill that they can use, but they will learn, in the event of a national requirement, the skills that will equip them to come to the aid of their country.

I think that when we are looking at these matters, we ought to approach them with the greatest objectivity. When we are speaking in terms of Barbados in so far as military national security is concerned, we ought to bear in mind – and I do not think that this is something beyond the grasp of the Opposition, I believe that there are people over there who recognise this – that Barbados in this day and age, without proper Coast Guard services, without a proper defence system, is going to be prey to all of the ills that plague modern generations like ours. I would just caution all of us in here, our side as well as that side, in examining the needs of Barbados, to let us not pretend that we have suddenly become the United States, Britain or Moscow, but that we should tailor our resources to meet the legitimate needs of Barbados so that we can provide the security that we need at a price that we can afford.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I think that we have to take note of what the honourable and gallant Member who has just sat down had to say. He is a product of the US Armed Forces, and I think that what he said was said in sincerity, but he mixed some sage comment with some misunderstanding of the position which we are taking over here so far as youth training is concerned.

The honourable Member who just sat is a practising member of a religious organisation in Barbados which can take credit for having instilled in the young people who follow that faith probably the highest standard of discipline that can be found in any one group *per se* in Barbados. The Pathfinders, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, the Cadet Corps, the various youth organisations in Barbados, can boast of a large number of committed persons who by their endeavours and by their very expertise have been instrumental in providing youth training for national development in the past, and I think that where we seem to have a parting of the ways is that we are saying that, given the size and the social conglomeration of our society, and given the perception of what constitutes the military, bearing in mind in fact precisely the points which the honourable Member was making, but looking at the reverse side of the same coin, depending on your point of view, it is precisely because

there may be a misconception of what constitutes the military that we feel that the military training has a certain connotation for it is not only from the point of view of those who perceive it, but those who implement it.

What we are suggesting is that, given our resources in Barbados, we cannot afford the experiment of seeking to discover whether the military is the area where we should put our youth training for national development, especially since we have had experience with youth training for national development in the past. We feel that the Government has a responsibility to take the initiative in this area. We are not denying that, and all we are doing is joining with a large number of organisations and persons who have come independently to the same conclusion. By coming to that conclusion, they are not casting aspersions on the military hierarchy in Barbados. They are not saying that by definition, the military would not know how to train or might not know how to bring in youth trainers or trainers to get on with the business. What we are saying is that our resources are so slender that we ought not to be taking that chance, given the very large propensity for misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the implementation of a training programme under the aegis of the military. We are saying that we cannot afford it.

The experience of the United States Armed Forces have been offered as a model, an example of what can emerge from those Armed Forces. There can be no doubt that within the ambit of the United States Armed Forces can be found perhaps the largest single training programme anywhere in the world, but that is a country that has in excess of 250 million people. It is a country that went through precisely the experiences we are going through now, in its stage nearly 200 years ago, of emerging development. It is a country that had to go through a civil war before it could come up with a proper military strategy as it applies to the domestic scene.

The honourable Member who just spoke would be aware of the meticulous nature of the laws which govern activities of the military internally in the United States *vis-a-vis* the activities of other agencies for domestic development in the United States, and it is specifically the result of the experiences over the history of the United States where misunderstandings as to the role of the military led to a number of experiences which were not germane to the proper development and proper path of development for that country. So if the United States, after a long history of trial and error, has reached a certain plateau in its development and its military approach, we ought to benefit from the experiences which that now-developed country had when it was in the process of developing and evolving, so that we do not make the same errors.

It is precisely out of those experiences that some of us had come to the conclusion that societies of this size are more apt to be misled and, therefore, we should remove certain labels and take certain forms out of the arena where they can be misrepresented, and that can lead to the wrong result. We should avoid having a debate which attempts to pit one military system against another military system. We in Barbados have got to and must de-emphasise any militarisation of our society. That does not mean that we are not to engender a sense of the need to defend ourselves. It does not mean that we in this country must not have recourse to certain aspects of military discipline.

6.35 p.m.

There is nothing that amuses me more than the fact that many people believe that I am inherently against all things military *per se.* I used to be 758 Private in the Barbados Regiment.

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is true. Yes. I was also a cadet.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, if the honourable Member will give way, see if you can get this 758 in your chest now. I am tired hearing you.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: After you had a refreshing nap, you can afford to get up.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 7.15 p.m.

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

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

6.40 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is 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 resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. The honourable Member for St. Michael West may continue.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, when we broke, I was just making the point that I did have some experience in military affairs. I was making the point that there are a number of people who believe that if you utter words about the military, you are anti-military training *per se*. I was making the point that I was in fact a member of the Barbados Regiment, having been a member of the Cadet Corps at the school which I attended, and therefore at the age of 14 when swinging my arms as a Private in the Barbados Regiment, I was proud.

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I have no doubt that the honourable Member, when he was serving in his capacity, whatever the rank was, was equally proud. It does not mean that now we have reached a certain level of maturity, we cannot bring to bear our other experiences in discussing the role of military persons in our society. It does say something for us that we in Barbados, on both sides of the House, can recognise that on ceremonial occasions and on other occasions, we are proud obviously in terms of the *esprit de corps* and the general demeanour of a uniformed force.

I think that where the division has come between our two sides has been more than adequately outlined by my colleague, the shadow Minister for Defence and Security on this side, and in terms of the youth, I will wind up by saying that when we have taken the position that we wish to see the training of youth for national development removed from the ambit of the military, that is not to be identified as casting aspersions on the military so much as it is a case of husbanding our meagre resources and eking from them all that we possibly can get, and at the same time achieving the objective of giving our young people some kind of national development training.

We have observed in other Caribbean countries what can happen if militarism becomes one of the major factors in the development of the society, and I certainly will continue to warn against any concept of the civilian Government giving way to military pursuits or military dreams of any individual or individuals in the society.

Those countries that have emanated from the British colonial experience have had another experience in their evolution towards the systems that they will eventually have. We have seen in African and other Commonwealth countries that the pattern of the development, irrespective of the 'ism', has taken a turn which we in this country must reject. So when we say that we do not wish to see our young people under the aegis of the military, we are merely seeking to preserve that which we have and that which we love.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to say a word on the Immigration Service, but I believe my time on this occasion has expired, or is in the process of expiring. What I wish to say on immigration will take just a little bit longer than the time I have left, so I will defer to any other honourable Member who wishes to make a contribution at this time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other honourable Member wish to make a contribution? Go to the other subhead.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I move then to Subhead 3 — Immigration Service. I do not intend to spend a lot of time on the Immigration Service, but there is an issue which has emerged arising out of the laws which we have dealing with residents and citizenship which I wish to draw to the attention of the Government, and which I wish to urge the Government to take steps to rectify.

There are a number of persons in Barbados who are Barbadian nationals, who were serving outside of Barbados either in the diplomatic corps or in some other area of service to the country, or indeed as citizens working in other places. Their children were born in those other places. Those children have returned to Barbados as infants and have spent anything from ten to twenty years in Barbados functioning as Barbadians. They have been to Barbadian schools, they took the 11-plus, they have evolved right through the system. They have now reached a stage where they are over 18, and to their consternation, from time to time as they travel out of Barbados and they come back in, they are discovering that they are having difficulties because of the nature of the law governing immigration and citizenship where at the airport they are being challenged as to their status.
7.25 p.m.

I think that neither one of us in here would wish to deny that category of person any status in Barbados, but the Laws which we have concerning citizenship now require that persons be given first an immigrant status, followed by citizenship. And where the authorities in the Immigration Department are under any doubt, they have tended to award immigrant status to these children and then they have required the children to actually apply. I cannot fault the authorities, because the Letter of the Law requires that particular procedure. I wish to recommend to the Government, however, that this is a category of person which requires some consideration. This is a person who has lived as a Barbadian in Barbados from infancy, sometimes for six months, one year, two years, and has practised all of the cultural exploits which

we have practised as Barbadians, I think, for such a person to be told at age nineteen, or twenty-one or twenty-two that they are to be treated indeed, in some instances, differently from even the casual tourists coming in, that is not a state of affairs which either of us would like. I am therefore inviting the Government to examine that with a view to finding an accommodation within the law for that particular category of person.

There is a second category of person who is having an equally difficult time. I would use one example....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: ..... that I know of. There is a man in my constituency who came to Barbados from St. Lucia in 1928. He joined what was then the Road Board and worked through the Road Board through the Central Government, MTW and retired in Barbados. He was getting a pension from the Government, MCW. He carries an Identification Card, which is the old ID Card, and he was getting his pension from the Government without any problem.

A new administrative requirement, which is proper on its face, has indicated to the authorities that for a person to get pension, he should have a new ID Card. When, however, that man, who has lived in Barbados in excess of fifty years in this case and has practised as a Barbadian – he is a national of St. Lucia according to our law – however, has gone to get the new ID Card, another administrative requirement now is that he has to demonstrate that he had the proper immigration status. If he comes from a middle class family, he may indeed be able to acquire the proper immigration status without too much difficulty. But when he is the kind of person I am now describing, you can see that the application for citizenship, which requires a fee, is a burden to him. It is a new burden which he never had before.

All I am suggesting here is that there is a compassionate requirement that the Minister responsible exercise some waiver discretion, which I do not know that the Minister now has, under the law. So it may be necessary for the law to be amended to give the Minister, in the very few instances when this will occur – because by an influxion of time, those persons who fall into the category that I am now describing will disappear and there will be no problem of that kind – some discretion. In the meantime, however, great distress is brought to a number of persons through no fault of their own. They are caught in the administrative maze, which, as you know, for a person who is in his or her seventies, can be a very frightening and stressful experience.

I am therefore recommending to the Minister that for persons who have lived in Barbados for long periods of time and who qualify, who have actually given service to the community, a way to be found to deal with them compassionately. Because the point I am making is that it is really the fee to apply for citizenship; even though it may be only $100, we know that for some persons in that category, $100 is a substantial amount of money.

There is one other category of person which I have discovered in recent times. These are anomalies, but this one is a peculiar one. It seems that this person was born in Barbados but there is no record of either a birth certificate or a baptismal certificate. I know, because we have spent a long time examining the records of St. Mary's Church and James Street Church where the person thought she might have been baptized. There is no one in her age group, who is sufficiently older than she is, who can give the necessary affidavit to attest to the fact that this child was born in wherever it was born at that time. And so, we have a person in Barbados who is, for all practical purposes according to our laws, stateless.

I think that is an anomaly that requires some attention by us as law makers. There may not be many, there may only be five, but, in fact, if there are five, those five are entitled to some sympathetic treatment by us.

I am told that there is a method by which the person can gain citizenship. But try as I might, and I have been in touch with the Registrar, we cannot seem to identify with the method that we could use, because in the absence of an affidavit, a person who says, "I am sixty-five years old" and cannot prove it, has a tremendous difficulty in terms of going on the Social Security register. You cannot even five years later look at the person and say, "You look like you are over sixty-five," because, as you know, there are some people who look like they are over sixty-five and who are, in fact, younger; and on the contrary, there are some people who look younger who are in fact in their seventies.

These are anomalies which have come up in the course of my experience as a representative which present me with some difficulty, and which I thought merit my mentioning them here on the floor of this House with a view to influencing the Government to take note, perhaps even respond, and then even, if able, to enlighten me as to what steps they intend to take, or if they are hearing of these kinds of anomalies for the first time. But I am drawing these to their attention in the hope that, together, we can find solutions.

There are other aspects of immigration which require some more penetrative analysis. But I would prefer to pause, since I do not wish to link that analysis with what I have said just now, because what I have said just now, I think is very serious and important, and quite different from the other analysis which I want to make.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There are two outstanding things that I want to deal with. One relates to a matter that was raised before we adjourned for dinner, and that is the Youth Training Scheme.

It is a great pity that the public relations programme of the Government in relation to its proposals for the youth generally does not seem to be as effective as it should be. There are a multiplicity of schemes which are in existence, and which are funded by the Government, to deal with the problems of youth in a comprehensive manner. The National Cultural Foundation has a role, the Ministry of Education has a role, and perhaps the biggest role of all, certainly in relation to training and employment, is that performed by the National Training Board.
7.35 p.m.

The National Training Board was conceived by the Government as the principal co-ordinating instrument which would provide and supervise youth training of a non-institutional type. For a considerable period of time, there was the viewpoint being held that a National Youth Service would supersede the efforts of the National Training Board. Cabinet has never viewed it in that light. As a matter of fact, when the National Training Fund Levy provision was made, it was always envisaged that the National Training Board would be the primary agency for the disbursement of funds for youth training. I find it difficult, therefore, to understand at this stage how it is that there is still the feeling that the Government tends to bring in a compulsory Youth Training Service whereby all Barbadians of a certain age would have to undergo this training. That was never the intention of the Government, and I wish to point out again that it is not so.

A considerable amount of representations were made to Government by a variety of organizations when Government invited public comment on the provisions of a National Youth Service. The Government has come around to the view, after examining all the pros and cons, that under a National Youth Service, a percentage of the youth in Barbados will be supervised by the Defence Force. It is not intended to be the total scheme, it is not intended to be compulsory, but it is intended to deal with a category of youth who wish to spend part of their life in carrying out the kind of service which that service involves. So we really are going to have the National Training Board performing its role, the Education Department performing its role, and the National Youth Service performing their role. They are not going to be competitive, they are going to be complementary.

I was very interested to hear the Member for St. James South (Mr. N. K. Simmons) saying that, as long as 1976, it was envisaged that we would need $3 million a year to start a National Youth Service. If one were to translate that into present-day costs, even using the increase in inflation that is taking place, which is far less than the increase in the lowest level of comparative wages paid in the Public Service between then and now, I think that would be in the vicinity of $9 million.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Check a maid and see what she got – $42 under the Democratic Labour Party. Today, it is $200. The Government's minimum wage for maids is $200, we are talking about $12 million, and we are being very reasonable. I do not think that the total vote of the National Training Board and Youth Service, and the Department of the Ministry of Education which is devoted to skills training, would not come to that amount.

I wish to re-emphasize that despite the objections that some may have to a scheme in which the Defence Force is providing the training for those young people who wish to undergo that, the Government is going to continue with it. But let it clearly be understood that just as the Manpower Service Commission in England, as part of the youth training scheme, subcontracts part of the work to the RAF and to the military for the teaching of certain skills and for the training of certain people who wish to be trained in a disciplined atmosphere, so, too, the Government of Barbados will be doing part of its youth training in that light, and I want it to be just in that light.

Part of that training will be done in St. Lucy. There are a number of buildings in St. Lucy already. Just as the honourable Member mentioned that Carrington, an area in which at that time I believe may have been misused as being surplus to the requirements of Cable and Wireless – I think it was owned by them at that time – and the Government was dealing with that, there is St. Lucy. I do not see that great dissimilarity.

I know one thing is that the honourable Member's plan for training 5 000 people in a short period of time could never have happened at Carrington. You cannot train 5 000 people at Carrington, there is about 60 acres. So, obviously, the honourable Member is thinking of a scheme in which there will be a multiplicity of institutions training people and not a single institution. So why quarrel with us?

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not know where you could hold 5 000 people in one area in Barbados and train them; not even in Guyana. I believe that Guyana probably has as large a youth training programme as any other country in this area, and you could not find 5 000

in one place there. So we are not talking about a single area.

My understanding is that the numbers that we are talking about will be some 500 in the first year. By the time we get to the Ministry of Labour, we will have the facts for the honourable Member, and we will point out the total number we expect to have under our schemes of apprenticeship, skills training, National Youth Service, at the Polytechnic, in the evening in particular, and the other Ministry of Education schemes. But you must bring them all together, and then you will see that what we are really talking about is providing training in our community for that group of young people who leave school and who are not going on to tertiary education and not going on to a formal institutional institution. Therefore, they will be getting supervision. It is that mass you will want to deal with.
7.45 p.m.

The honourable Member said 3 500 leave school a year. I am sure you have to deduct from that 3 500 the proportion that goes on to the University, that emigrates and that is going into stipulated apprenticeship programmes. What you are trying to get at, according to my understanding, is to deal with a core of people who would stride aimlessly around the society, and you would wish to provide guidance and training for them so as to prevent them from being misled and influenced to indulge in undesirable activity. That is what we are doing. You have to break it down.

It is clear to me that when we talk about the Coast Guard, the part of the Defence Force that seems to be totally accepted by everybody, it should not be strange if the National Training Board subcontracted to the Coast Guard the provision of training for certain skills that one would regard as desirable for young people who are interested in a career at sea. I think that in the context of Barbados, since you do not have a merchant navy, the Coast Guard would be the most competent institution to teach them, because I do not know how else you can teach them. You do not have a merchant navy that you can apprentice them to, but if you want marine navigation skills, seamanship skills and things of that kind, the only place that would be competent to provide them would be the Coast Guard.

The Training Levy Fund would be divided between the National Training Board and the Youth Training Scheme.

I think some Members are confused by the fact that a team went to Martinique to look up the French model that they had there. The fact that they went to Martinique and they observed the French model, and they observed that the Army there does provide training in some of the skills which are provided by the National Training Board in Barbados in other areas, should not have got honourable Members excited, because we do not intend to have duplication.

I think that more use can be made, and Cabinet has accepted this, of the community centres. In some areas, more use can be made of the existing training institutions to provide some institutional training, and we hope to increase and expand this. The honourable Member may not have noticed it, by virtue of the fact that he might have been busy, but there were a lot of advertisements recently for Demonstrators in a variety of areas, because the funds have now built up and we wish to disburse them. We envisage a much greater increase in that type of activity. There is a sort of a nine-month orientation programme so that they can go to work.

I want to say that a youth programme cannot take place with only the efforts of Government. There are a lot of non-governmental organisations which have a useful role to play, the Scouts and others, to help in training.

The Trade Unions in Barbados are a peculiar lot. I have said it repeatedly in here. I find it quite strange that in Barbados, the Trade Unions are not particularly interested in ensuring that they are in control of apprenticeship in trades. In the United States, in some trades, certainly the construction trade, from what I have been told, there is no way that you can become a construction apprentice, particularly the electricians and plumbers, unless you go through the Plumbers Union — and you cannot get into the Plumbers Union unless your father is a plumber or a godfather and things of that kind. What I want to say is that trade unions have a role to play, and they have been constantly consulted.

We also have, and the Honourable Minister of Labour will deal with it, some other problems with the Apprenticeship Scheme. One of the problems is the fact that there is an exaggerated view of the value of an apprentice, and that employers do not wish to hire an apprentice if they have to pay too high a proportion of the wage of an apprentice. That is a fact, they do not feel that it is worth it. It is true that in some professions you have to pay to be an apprentice, but nowadays, you have to get paid to be an apprentice.

I do not think that Government's programme in this area — it is a well thought-out one, and it is a programme which has been arrived at after the maximum consultation — is readily accepted, and I am very happy for the opportunity to make it known. We are not saying that the part of the National Youth Service run by the Defence Force is going to be compulsory. We are not saying that that is going to be the only programme. We are saying that it is part and parcel of a multi-farious effort to deal with the youth, particularly those young people who, when they leave school, are not clear in their

minds that they are going on to university or other tertiary institutions, or on to an apprenticeship scheme.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Under Immigration Service, Subhead 3, I have been watching very carefully the gradual increase in expenditure under this Head over the years. I notice that this concerns (a) control of immigration and emigration; (b) processing of applications for work permits, residence, citizenship, passports and visas; and (c) deportation of illegal aliens. I recall that there was a time when all these services were performed by the Royal Barbados Police Force. They were performed efficiently, were a credit to this nation, and the police not only dealt with the administration of immigration and emigration matters, but also constituted part of the front line struggle in terms of the security of this country, about which all of us should be concerned.
7.55 p.m.

I feel that it was a fundamental error to have transferred responsibility for immigration from the Royal Barbados Police Force to another agency of Government. I am not saying that trained police officers should be responsible for the ordinary clerical work that takes place in the Immigration Department. There may have been a time when trained police officers could have done this within the context of the demands of the Police Force, and done it successfully. What I am talking about is responsibility for immigration, and immigration is an important part of the package of national security.

I understood, for example, that the present system that exists sometimes causes the police more work than anything else. A man comes into Barbados and is given 17' days stay and then he cannot be found, and when the police are called in, they have to go in search for the man. I understand that when there is such a problem arising under this system, it creates more and more problems for them. I also understand that when immigration was handled by the police, there was a back-to-back card system that was used for every person entering and leaving the country, so that at any time there was a breach either in terms of criminal offence or in terms of a breach of the time that people were allowed to stay here, then immediate action could be taken by the police, who were able to ferret out those who were involved in criminal activity or those likely to be involved in criminal activity.

As I said, I am not suggesting for one minute that trained police should be required to do the routine work, because I believe there has been a genuine increase in the work-load in the Immigration Department over the years. What I am saying is that I think it probably would have been better if the police retained responsibility for immigration in Barbados. That is my personal view, and it seems to me, from talking to many persons who have seen both systems in operation, that the situation where the police are in control works better.

I understand that there have been situations at Grantley Adams Airport where problems have arisen that, probably if the police had been up front in dealing with the matters, the criminals would have been caught, whereas because of the kind of way these things were handled by the Immigration Department and by the Customs, the evidence would have been so dissipated in a way that by the time the police were called in, then the matters could not be dealt with in a way to lead to a prosecution. In other words, there seems to be a difficulty in the police being able to use police methods in investigating techniques in relation to immigration or breaches of the Laws of Barbados because of the division of authority at the Grantley Adams International Airport.

I have heard several complaints that, for example, in a matter of drugs coming through the airport the police may not wish on a particular occasion to arrest a given individual, who may have half an ounce of marijuana, at that point, but may wish to be able to follow that person in order to get to the wholesaler or get to the contact in order to try to break a particular ring, but the intervention of other agencies, without a proper understanding of the investigative techniques that can be used in such a process, have often frustrated the efforts of the Drug Squad of the Police Force. I have just picked that one area, but there are several instances that have been brought to my attention where more effective control of the movement of illicit drugs through Grantley Adams Airport could probably be achieved if the police had greater prominence and authority within the airport.

I have known a situation at the airport where it would seem to me that nobody knew what to do in a given situation. I think I have mentioned that on the floor of the House, so I do not need to go through that again.

It would seem to me that the problems in relation to immigration in Barbados have escalated since there has been this transfer of immigration authority from the police elsewhere. On the floor of this House, and I believe that the Executive responded to this, there have been many charges made in relation to the Immigration Department, and the Government, I believe, as a result of certain Cabinet decisions, took certain steps in order to assure the public that the Laws of Barbados were being complied with and to try to reduce the incidence of any corruption that might have existed in relation to work permits and citizenship. I believe that Cabinet itself took notice of complaints within the society and instituted certain corrective measures to eliminate certain complaints that were made in the late Seventies and early Eighties.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I agree you have not heard any for a long time. I said that Cabinet itself appeared to have taken action that might have been effective, so I do not wish to make that charge on the floor of the House today, although I felt very free to make that charge three years ago. What I am saying is that there seems to be a breakdown in the tightness of immigration control since there was this transfer of functions from the Commissioner of Police and his Police Force to a different authority. I think in a small society like this, where we have to conserve our resources, it was probably a mistake to have taken that particular decision. I have expressed that view before on the floor of the House, and I think that now there is a new Administration, there should be an opportunity to look and see whether more efficiency of the entire Immigration Service, particularly where this impinges on security and on the area of control of illicit drugs, would not result in some improvement in this area.

I am not saying, and I want it to be clear, that the present system perhaps cannot be improved in order to take care of the same kind of objections which I have raised. All I am saying is that it seems to me to be more than coincidental that these problems have arisen after the transfer of that authority from the Commissioner of Police and the Royal Barbados Police Force. I believe that there can be a case made out, looking back historically and seeing what has happened over time, the kind of problems that have arisen within the country over the years since that transfer has taken place, and see whether or not it might not have been a mistake to have done so.
8.05 p.m.

I know that when a Government has taken a decision, even when those persons have left office and sit on the back benches, they feel very strongly that they have to defend the decisions that they have taken. They have to defend them. On the other hand, a new Administration, a breath of fresh air, gives an opportunity to review all those decisions that have been taken, and the Government need not necessarily regard itself as a caretaker Administration, it can take bold initiatives and correct errors that have been made in the past. I rather suspect that this has been a costly error, not only in financial terms but in terms of a wide area of undesirable social consequences. The social landscape of Barbados today might have looked a bit different if immigration had remained under the control of the Police; not only different, but different in terms of a better image.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member is in breach of the Standing Orders. He is repeating himself. He has spent 15 minutes making one point all the time. I do not think he is conscious of how boring he is becoming, but I must draw it to Your Honour's attention.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am very grateful to the honourable Member.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, have you heard me use the words "social landscape" before? I have not used those words at all. I am now talking of the effects of the change in the structure of the Immigration Department. I will not go further at this point in time, I will just leave it at that, that the social landscape of Barbados has been altered for the worse, consequential on this transfer of functions from the Royal Barbados Police to another department. I will come back later.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Chairman, Subhead 3, Work Permits. I checked, and I note that the expended revenue for the year is $630 000. My question to the appropriate Ministry is what machinery is in place to make sure that these organisations that have been granted work permits against the background of training Barbadians to take those posts that work permits have been granted for, are doing the training. I am not satisfied that this is so in Barbados.

There are a number of institutions that are getting work permits repeatedly and are not making any efforts to train Barbadians, and they are finding all kinds of flimsy excuses. They are bringing in people who cannot benefit from the training, particularly to satisfy the requirement to bring in expatriates to work, and I would like to have some indication from the Ministry about how closely the work permit policy in Barbados is being monitored, and what provisions are there to make sure that the procedures for training Barbadians to take these posts are being carried out faithfully and in the spirit of the law.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I can reply to the question on work permits. I am sure the honourable Member does not feel as strongly about work permits as I feel. Each Ministry that is responsible for the particular area of Government in which the work permits are applied for, if the work permits are of a category that has not already been certified by the Ministry of Labour, their comments are invited periodically by the Chief Immigration Officer on particular applications. Certainly in Trade, in Tourism, and in those areas, my Ministry's comments – I did not necessarily make the comments myself – were always asked by the Chief Immigration Officer.

It is open to any citizen in Barbados, if he is dissatisfied with a work permit, to put his views to the Chief Immigration Officer. I know the gentleman. I really am positive that if any citizen writes to him and complains about a work permit which in his opinion should not be granted, an investigation will take place. I know the gentleman, I know how he operates. That is how it is done, so we have procedures in existence.

I do agree that sometimes the newspaper advertisements are not clear. There is scope for improvement in the description of the applicant, for more precision in the duties to be carried out, and the

qualifications required. But there are two points to this. It has been pointed out that when particular firms are named as applying for a work permit, it is possible for people, because of the fact that they applied for a work permit, to develop a feeling against the particular firm. That is one of the reasons why they do provide some evidence of anonymity sometimes in some applications, but I want to give honourable Members the assurance that if any of them finds that there appears to be work permits which should not be justified, make your complaint to the Chief Immigration Officer and copy it to the Minister of Immigration. I am positive that it will be investigated.

I assure the honourable Member that there are a number of recurring decimals in the work permits. Accountants are short in Barbados. There is no question about that. There used to be a shortage in certain areas of the hotel industry, but that shortage, I am pleased to say, with the exception of top chefs, and reducingly so, and food and beverage controllers, is dropping. You will find that very few work permits are issued in that area.

I also want to tell the honourable Member this. As a matter of policy, when I was the Minister of Tourism, I used to barter – at least my views amounted to a barter – and I would say that if any one of the chain hotels in Barbados could demonstrate that they were willing for every work permit they had here to take on apprentices and send them abroad for training, particularly young managers and things like that, I would permit them to have a period of time here on a one for one basis. That used to work. You would go into some of the chain hotels and see that there are people in areas that you felt Barbadians could occupy that area, and as part of the process of granting the work permit, a condition was extracted, that they would train Barbadians.
8.15 p.m.

It is more difficult for that scheme to work today, because all over Europe, it is exceedingly difficult, in any field at all, to get a work permit. You cannot get one, because unemployment there is exceptionally high. So that scheme has been broken up. It cannot work as before. There is no possibility of it working with the United States of America. But they used to use that as a way of ensuring that whilst somebody else was working here, a Barbadian was abroad in order to get exposure, particularly to languages. Because a number of our people has gone through hotel schools in the United States or in Britain, or they have gone through the apprenticeship training here and they have risen to the top, but if you are going to be a hotel manager of a certain international competence, you have to have at least one language in addition to your own. You are fooling yourself, if you think that you can be a hotel manager, well recognized, without having at least one language.

The construction industry is a difficulty too. They never came to me, but I believe that they would have gone to the other Ministers, because the Minister laid it down as a policy that the particular Ministries in respect of the category of work for which the application came should be consulted, and the Chief Immigration Officer used to carry that out.

Aside

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Even jockeys. I understand that there are specific conditions. They can only ride a certain number of days, and as far as Britain is concerned, they had to give the assurance that when the English race horse trainers come down here and they like an apprentice, he has to have a year up there too.

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am to answer a question on citizenship.

I agree wholly with the points that have been raised. There is a provision for waiver of fees, which is not generally known, but it is almost impossible to draw a Citizenship and Immigration Law in Barbados to deal with all of the contingencies.

I have come across people who were born in Guyana of Barbadian parents, particularly from St. Joseph. They got their birth certificates, and as soon as they were born, they were sent back here to be raised by a grandmother. They have never taken out anything, and now have to go under the section of the Constitution which says that if, at 1966, you could prove that you were the children of a Barbadian, you are automatically entitled to citizenship. But because of the immigrant status, and because of the lack of disabilities on immigrant status, the temptation of a lot of people in the Immigration Department is to forget all the investigation and take the immigrant status. It is easy, nobody is going to trouble you, you would have nearly all the benefits of citizenship, and you certainly would get the benefits of citizenship, after that period of time.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: You would be a citizen.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Eventually.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Eventually, if you were born before.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Certainly. What I am saying is that the immigrant status is being used as a substitute for situations where, on further investigation, further probing, after more work, you would find that they are entitled to be registered automatically by virtue of the Constitution. It is a question of getting the

documentation on one hand and ease on the other. I understand that the hourly rate of the immigration lawyers in Bridgetown is second only to that of the accident lawyers. We do have a few problems in that area.

We are constantly reviewing the situation with respect to immigration. But people do not understand, and I want to deal with the points raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. There is very close liaison between the Police Department and the Immigration Department. There are programmes going along for computerization, and there will be integration of information.

The pressure that the Immigration Department has now is to a large extent a reflection of the fact that, with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, in the Eastern Caribbean, Barbados is regarded as the most desirable place to live. If you have a lot of people with some kind of family connection, which a good proportion of the Guyanese have had, you have that problem. What are you going to do with them? What are you going to do with the Windwards and Leewards, from which there has been immigration to Barbados, from Dominica down, for all of these years?

It is almost impossible for you not to have a case in which a young person of age six or seven is sent up here with the aunt and the aunt puts the child to school. We pick up more problems now, as a result of the Eleven-Plus, than before. We can now deal with the kind of problems that the honourable Member for St. Michael West talked about. I know from my own personal experience in my constituency that there is nothing harder than a case in which people can come and show you that they have been to primary and secondary school in Barbados, and just as they are about to work, they have to leave Barbados. To them, there is nowhere else they know. They went through all of the schooling system. So whether they are entitled, on a derivative basis or not, it is one of those categories about which the late Prime Minister used to say, "You always have to have a category in reserve to deal with people whose connections are so close to Barbados and who can demonstrate that it would be inhuman to send them out."

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am very glad to hear that the late Prime Minister did have such a category. What I am recommending to the Government is that that information, apart from its being said here, be transmitted to the appropriate officers in the department. Because when a child who has gone to school in Barbados, and everything it has ever done was done in Barbados, and it goes, say to Britain for a month's holiday and comes back to the airport, it is a psychological body blow when it is hassled at the airport, when the child indicates, "Look, I am working at Cave Shepherd."

I know of the experience of one young lady. She went through the same process. She came home from the United States when she was six, she went through Queen's College, on to the University of the West Indies, and she is working in a job in Barbados. Her father died suddenly in New York, she went to the funeral, and when she came back the immigration officer told her at the airport, "I do not care where you are working. You have an American passport. I do not even know if I am going to let you in." The girl has a more Barbadian accent than anybody in this Honourable Chamber. Eventually, he gave her a week. There is not much you could do about it when they come to you for advice. But if, in fact, the late Prime Minister had a category, that category..... .

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I know that you can apply for immigrant status. That application for immigrant status came *ex poste facto*. That Law came into effect a few years ago. Those persons who came back here as children would now have to go and apply, just like the people who came in a year ago. I think – and this is the whole gravamen of the point I am making – that the Government can, by administrative action, give that category some automacity. To require someone whose cultural ties are Barbadian to now go and apply for their status, and in the case of the man I spoke about, who came here in 1928 and is retired from working in MCW, to ask him now to go and apply for immigrant status is really putting an unnecessary burden on him. There are not that many of them, and I think we can deal with it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): There are two points on which I should like to address the Committee, following on the speech made by the honourable Member for St. Michael West.

I think that the Immigration Department will say that there is no Member of Parliament in this House who is more often in communication, written and oral, with that department than me. The reason probably is that I have the largest number of non-immigrant persons who were not born here living in my constituency, a large number of Vincentians, Dominicans, St. Lucians, and Grenadians – not necessarily in that order, although I am sure the Vincentians out-number a lot of people. In many cases, some of them have been here over eight years, but their problem is that they really have never thought to regularize their status, despite the amnesty which was given by the Government and extended from time to time.

8.25 p.m.

My experience differs from that of the honourable Member for St. Michael West. I have found the Immigration Officers, whether at the airport or at the department, more than understanding. They do require, as

they should require, proper documentation to establish the genuineness of the length of residence of the person here, and also to establish that they have no police record. Obviously, to some people, this might be some inconvenience in that it takes time to collect the necessary evidence. I find that this is a matter of education. Very frequently, in my constituency clinic on Saturday, I encourage such people to come and talk to me and advise them on how to go about their business, rather than hide away from the immigration authority, and wait until emergency occurs to seek to have their status regularized.

I agree that there are some persons who have connections with Barbados, who may have been living here for as long as the gentleman at the Road Board, who have never sought to get a Barbadian passport since 1966. Prior to that it was not necessary; you had a British passport; even if you had been born in Panama, you went to the British Consul there. This causes a problem. Sometimes it is almost impossible to trace the records from Panama. Although we have diplomatic relations in Panama and an Honorary Counsul in Panama, we do not have a Mission that is geared to consul, who would feather out this information, and it takes some time to give the relevant information to the Passport Department.

In my experience, one has had to go to the Chief Immigration Officer or his Deputy and give affidavit evidence, and it takes a little while. But I do know that the Immigration Department will give a temporary passport to facilitate any emergency which occurs. Perhaps honourable Members, in dealing with your own constituents, would want to use the facility of the temporary passport, which is issued for up to a year, until the persons establish their *bona fide*.

I think the category of which the honourable Prime Minister spoke is the category in which it is under the heading of humanitarian reasons or grounds. This category has been operating for several years, in my experience, because there are several persons who are not really, in the strict sense, of refugee status, but border on refugee status, and there may be several reasons why you would allow such a person to remain in Barbados. Where we have some problem, and I have detected this both in my professional work as a lawyer as well as my work as a politician among my constituents, is the eternal triangle. You may get a position where a lady comes over here and establishes a friendship with a Barbadian man and she is either upsetting an ongoing arrangement or she is upsetting a marriage, and invariably the other party feeds information into the Immigration Department about that lady, and the immigration officer, sometimes in his enthusiasm, finds himself giving this lady walking orders without proper investigations. I have had instances as well where there is a quarrel between two persons and the immigration officer is automatically given information about one of those persons. Again in his enthusiasm he probably says, "You cannot show in your passport that you came in legally, although you have been here for five years, you have to go out and apply." That does cause some inconvenience.

I have taken up with the department, and indeed with the Parliamentary Secretary who is responsible for Immigration, the existing rule, which I think is totally unnecessary. If you are in Barbados and you are applying for immigrant status, you have to go outside of Barbados for a day so that the application can be taken as being made outside, and then come back into Barbados after or during the time it is being processed. This is unnecessary, in my view. I have had that on several occasions.....

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member asked if I could give way, Sir.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I will give you the reason why. After the case involving the question as to whether a visit outside of Barbados was continuous residence – you will recall the case – the Immigration Department of that time, and forever thereafter, decided to take no chances. They insist in terms of the allocation of citizenship, following the United States in this regard, that the person must break the residence and go out and give the Immigration Department the freedom to refuse to admit them. I agree with you that it is unnecessary, but the reason calls for that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I understand the reason, but it is possible to amend the regulations in order to deem that period of residence not part of the continuous period which is necessary for qualification. I believe that the Immigration Department should at the earliest opportunity make a recommendation to their Ministry for some amendment in this respect. It is a fiction to believe that a person who takes a flight to St. Lucia one night and comes back in the next is not breaching the Immigration laws in complying. You are really just giving the airlines money unnecessarily in those instances, and that is an aspect of the policy that really passes beyond my imagination.

By and large, we have a very efficient Immigration Department. I believe that the courtesy being extended and the efficiency with which work-permits, passports, immigrant status applications and citizenship applications are dealt with stands up to scrutiny against the same system operating in the United States, United Kingdom, Switzerland, France and elsewhere in the Caribbean. I believe that the department can be well proud of its performance. The allegations that one used to hear before

of instances of fraud, where it has been known, for instance, that people have had stamps in their passports back in the early '70s, as citizens without any record being there – those allegations have virtually disappeared. There were one or two cases on the floor of the House certainly a year ago, but one does not hear the same allegations being made about work permit applications or any of the other areas.

I believe that issue has now been virtually removed from the political domain. One of the reasons for this is because those applications for work permits that are granted, are published in the *Gazette* for anyone to see. So are the lists of persons given immigrant status, the lists of persons who have been made citizens, and the list of persons who are made permanent residents. Indeed, I keep for my constituency a list of such persons, and I am always writing to them welcoming them into the family of Barbadians when the status is conferred on them. I normally do the bulk of applications in my constituency, so I know what is going on, and there is a tremendous improvement.
8.35 p.m.

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do the applications for my own constituents as part of my constituency service – without charge, I would like to say – and follow them up very carefully. Part of my job as a politician is to look after them.

The department's efficiency has improved. I would like to think that they become more computerized, and that they can therefore trace the breaches that may occur in the immigration laws.

I disagree with the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who implied that I had to defend the Government's position from the back bench if I thought it was wrong. He implied people who moved to the back bench, he did not call any names. He has the certain feeling that the transfer of immigration matters to a civilian department is not efficient, or not as efficient as if it had remained within the Police Department. He has never explained the reasons for that feeling. He has no empirical evidence that that is so, it is just a hunch that he must defend.

The first reason for transferring immigration matters out of the Police Department, was because we found that the police's time was not being as effectively used for the amount of money spent on the Police Force, and that the duties which they were performing in Immigration were not sufficient to justify the training and the cost of the policeman doing that job. That is a fact, and we had the empirical evidence of several other jurisdictions in which this was proved.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member would give way; first of all, I was not attacking the honourable Member. Secondly, I said responsibility for Immigration, and I did take some time to point out that you did not necessarily have to use police personnel below a certain level.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am going to answer all the honourable Member's positions on the responsibility. The first point I wish to make to the honourable Member is that the establishment of the Immigration Department had a complement of 95 people, of whom 76 are immigration officers. Of those 95 people, 37 are still people who came over from the Police Force and were trained as policemen. A very senior former Police Superintendent, a very competent man, heads the Immigration Department, and in crucial areas of the Immigration Department there is still police training, and this, indeed, includes some of the best detectives, persons who were in the Police Department and who are still in Immigration. So the honourable Member is mistaken to believe that within the department itself there is no police experience.

The second telling argument against the honourable Member's case is this. The honourable Member believes that these departments are all kingdoms in themselves and that there is no inter-department collaboration between Government departments. The same argument advanced by the honourable Member can be advanced for keeping the police in charge of Customs, because a lot of the offences of which the honourable Member spoke do not occur at the immigration level. They occur when the person goes to the Customs Officer and tries to take through Customs contraband goods, including drugs. It is at that level that detective work is called for, rather than at the Immigration level, but the honourable Member ought to be aware that any efficient system of administration at your main port would have an exchange of information between the Immigration Department, whether the Immigration Department is manned by civilians or police, Customs and your main policemen. That happens at any recognized port.

The honourable Member may have a case for arguing that what is needed at the airport and in the Immigration Department is a proper computerized list, a master list of people who have committed serious offences or about whom there is intelligence information which can be used with discretion by the immigration officer to deny or to admit persons who seek to come into our country.

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: When the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central's son in the next century becomes a Member of Parliament and has the

opportunity to hold this office, the honourable Member will understand. The honourable Member's son. He would not hold the office, his son would probably get the chance.

The honourable Member must not challenge on this point. It is a point that I think Government is very strong on. The Government in this field has expertise, and the detailed knowledge of the former Right Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the present Attorney-General, who has made a study of it, the present Prime Minister and, I say with some diffidence, I. It is a field that most of us have looked at with a great deal of attention because of necessity, in our practice as lawyers, we came face to face with it, and we have had to study it over several years.

I suggest to the honourable Member that if he looks at the views of the immigration system in two countries which are really first class – not even the United States because they have a lot more technical expertise – look at the systems in Britain and Canada, he will see that Barbados is doing itself well by having a civilian service which perhaps has more efficiency and less of the disadvantages. You do not want your Immigration Service to become a detective branch, because you can infringe the rights of your citizens as well as visitors, but you want the Immigration Service to be sufficiently informed that it co-operates effectively with the other services, Customs and Police, and carry out its duty properly.

I think the honourable Member has a hunch about this. I would seriously advise him not to believe in the hunch, but to look for the empirical evidence to see that, in the long run, a separate Immigration Service, civilianized, can be effective and can, at the same time, save money in circumstances where you will be training a policeman at high cost to do a service which could be done at lesser cost.

The other point I will tell the honourable Member, because this is history, about the Immigration Service, is that even when Immigration was under the Police Department, it was becoming more and more civilianized, and that the people who were actually doing the book work, day to day, were almost all civilians, with a few officers on top. It was a police officer at the airport who did nothing but sit down and look at immigration papers and was not available for the policing that was necessary.

In addition, the honourable Member ought to know that the Government did not take the decision lightly. We did have full consultation with the police authorities, their Association and took into account expert advice from people in the United Kingdom who had had vast experience about the operation of these services.

I feel justified in defending the Government's decision. I congratulate the Government on the way in which the Immigration Service has developed. I am pleased to say that it has become less and less contentious between the two parties, and that the debate in this House about it is how to get it more efficient in order to give value for money in the context of our limited resources.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have taken note of the points made by the honourable Member for Christ Church West. We would just have to take more time and see what happens, although I do not think that he really dealt effectively with the question of responsibility being retained by the police, although I think he dealt quite efficiently with the question of the day-to-day work by clerical staff.

There is one particular point which I would like to address, and that is the unnecessary financial imposition on many people in Barbados in the process of applying for papers for citizenship and other related matters. Take that medical form that has to be completed. First of all, there is need for a clinical assessment, which is reasonable. Then, a mandatory chest X-ray is required. There was a time when the Government services would provide that X-ray free of cost. This is no longer the case, and a chest X-ray probably costs an individual some $50 today. That chest X-ray requirement in terms of Barbados probably was something that went out once tuberculosis was controlled in this country, and probably should only be a mandatory requirement for persons seeking to come into Barbados from areas where tuberculosis is likely to be a problem. That is the first investigation that is quite unnecessary.

8.45 p.m.

The second one is a VDRL test for syphilis, which is also a requirement. It is relatively pointless, because you often ask people who have been living in Barbados for 15, 20 or 30 years to go and get a VDRL done in order to get their position in Barbados made lawful when they apply for one category of status or another. I think it is largely a waste of time, because certainly if there was going to be a public health hazard, they would certainly have spread whatever they had a long time ago. So it is a waste of time, and the excessive use of antibiotics in the system in Barbados is not a major problem. I think it is about time that you should be worrying more about AIDS than worrying about a positive VDRL in terms of immigration, and you are talking of probably about $60 that a person would have to spend unnecessarily.

There is also a requirement for a stool examination. Again for someone applying for citizenship from most parts of the United States, Canada, most of the western industrialised countries, in fact many parts of the Caribbean and certainly anyone who has been living in Barbados, I would say it is a totally unnecessary

investigation. Basically, what you are looking for are parasites in the stool, and I can say that after practising in this place now for 18 years, I think I have only seen one person who has lived in Barbados for any length of time with any kind of intestinal infestation resulting in clinical disease, or at a level that would spread to other people. In fact, with that person it was difficult to determine whether it was a Barbadian problem, because the person had travelled, I think, to St. Lucia, and the other case was a case of Giardia Lambliasis in a person who had gone to Mexico and returned, and it was probably contracted in Mexico.

I really think that these three requirements should be dropped. There could easily be a list of countries where a specific test should be required because it is burdensome for poor people, and like the honourable Member, who gives legal advice to his constituents, I sometimes have to help my constituents, and you may have a whole family of six poor people applying at the same time to have their immigration status sorted out, and you may well be talking about over $400 spent in tests alone – unnecessarily. Of course, there are other expenses involved, so I would strongly suggest that those medical requirements be looked at because they really represent a monumental waste of money and time.

Perhaps the only thing that is worse than that that I know is that requirement at the beginning of the year that you have to produce a food handler's certificate in order to serve drinks at a party or some foolishness like that. An examination can be done one day, then the patient can go to the bathroom the next day, contract the diseased and can pass it on. It is a foolish requirement, but, of course, the Government having laid down the requirement, after the Public Service got overloaded within a matter of a few weeks in the first year of operation of the requirement, then instructed the doctors that they did not need to do any investigation because the Public Service could not handle it. So what happens is that the doctor just writes a certificate, which is completely meaningless anyhow, if you see what I mean, because you just cannot handle 10 000 people for chest X-rays, 10 000 stool examinations and 10 000 VDRL examinations in the first week of January for people in the service industries. That was a kind of mad piece of legislation, and, similarly, I feel this needs to be looked at, because I can attest to the fact that it is a serious burden on poor people to ask them to have unnecessary investigations. A directive should be given to the various public laboratories and X-ray departments that they should do investigations free for people certainly who have lived in Barbados and who have contributed to the society and who are just going through the formality of having their papers put in order. Thank you very much.

The question that the sum of $19 679 879 under Head 17 – Defence and Security – stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 72 – CAPITAL – DEFENCE AND SECURITY

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $4 827 400 under Head 72 Capital – Defence and Security, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Under Head 72 – Defence and Security, I wonder if this question of providing for professional services under Capital Expenditure for the Defence Force.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, it is now five minutes to nine and I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. L. R. TULL: 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. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until Wednesday, March 20, 1985, at 10.30 a.m.

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

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

8.55 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is 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 resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

HEAD 72 – CAPITAL – DEFENCE AND SECURITY RESUMED

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): A question was asked yesterday in respect of $65 000 for professional services.

(Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: $650 000).

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am sorry, $650 000. The answer is that the professional services is the local cost component of the loan service officers. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with the British Government, which has been providing us with training, and we have a number of loan service officers – I think that is what they are called – and we have to pay local costs. That is it. The provision started in 1980–81, so it is nothing new.

I beg to move that Head 72 stand part.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Just two brief questions here. Under Subhead 2, Description (b) in the Explanatory Notes relates to the completion of projects started in the last financial year. I am wondering if the Minister could give us any indication as to what these on-going projects are.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Any honourable Members who pass the Garrison every day will discover that obviously a great deal of repair work is going on on the buildings at the Garrison, and to tighten the surround fence. Up to this morning I saw them buttressing a wire fence. I saw a tremendous amount of old wood which appeared to me to have come from an area looking like a floor or a roof, because there were long beams and cross beams visible there, and they are using them now as part of the boxing while they are doing the surround fence. A lot of work is going on at St. Ann's.

There is also the finalisation of the outside area nearest the Hastings Police Station. You will remember that there used to be a road going down there, and I see work has started on the closure of that. You cannot have a headquarters with people having access through there, and it was decided very early to extend the road, and a new road was built near the Hastings Police Station.

There is work going on at Paragon and there is a continuance of work on Fort Willoughby. These are the major areas that I am aware of where work is going on.

Some electrical work is being done also, because I have just seen an award of contract in respect of that. Obviously some of that is going to lapse and come into this financial year. That is an upgrading of what is called standby equipment, a caterpillar. I see that an electrical contract for maintenance has been awarded and they were seeking approval of the Tenders Committee to award the contract to a particular contractor. It is a very substantial contract, about $400 000.

Those are the areas – Paragon, St. Ann's, the doing of the outside, the electrical work – and there would be of course, quite naturally, some maintenance, but a very small amount of work is being done in St. Lucy and at Fort Willoughby.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Just one more question. This does not include the hospital or health facility, that has already been completed. I would be grateful if he could give some information on that as to exactly how it will be staffed and the kinds of cases that it is supposed to deal with.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not see that project on the list here, but I do see in the professional services, in addition to the loan service officers, an item marked Medical Expenses. My understanding is that under professional services loan service officers would be the major component, but there is a charge for medical expenses here.

If there is any further information on this I will get it during the course of the Estimates, and before we finish I will give it to you.

The question that the sum of $7 024 000 under Capital – Head 72 – Defence and Security – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 18 – AUDIT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $182 416 under Head 18 – Audit – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): I would like to know from the appropriate Ministry what is the procedure. I noted that there was an Audit Report on the Child Care Board which was critical of that Board in certain aspects, and then more recently I saw an audit done by a private firm of auditors.

I wonder what is the procedure here. Would the Audit Department still have the authority, if they so want, to audit those accounts done by the firm of private accountants?

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW (St. Michael South East): The answer to the honourable Member's question is that the Auditor General is empowered to audit any accounts so long as the money comes from the Consolidated Fund, and the funds which are allocated to the Child Care Board are funds coming out of that Fund.

The question that the sum of $182 416 under Head 18 – Audit – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $6 626 438 under Head 19 – Ministry of Finance and Planning as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): I note that within recent times the section formerly called Organisation and Methods that was attached to the Ministry of Finance is no longer functional, at least under that name. I would like to enquire from the Minister what agencies of Government now carry out those functions that used to be carried out by Organisation and Methods, since it was my knowledge that that section was originally set up as consultants to the Government and it carried out various studies on certain departments of Government in an effort to recommend to the appropriate Ministries the streamlining of departments.
10.40 a.m.

In the absence of such a department, I should like to enquire what agency now carries out these functions for the Central Government, and then I will continue from there.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I see a Head here, "Management and Accounting". I also note that the scope of the work of the Establishments Division has been expanded. So it is, apparently now, a combination of the Management Accounting Division and the Establishments Division that would be doing the work which the old O and M used to do. That is, in fact, how it operates. There used to be a gentleman in there called, Mr. Stuart, who was particularly involved in advising Government departments of a quasi-commercial nature, with heavy revenues, on their accounting procedures.

As far as the establishment part of the Government departments are concerned, the Establishments Division looks after that.

We must also remember that Government has the Data Processing Department, which provides advisory services to Government departments in data processing. That is because we wish to have a linkage, and we wish to have the computerization of other Government departments proceed upon the basis that it must be compatible with the main fame computer that Government has. In short, they have been advising people only to buy equipment, where they are buying micros, to buy them from the manufacturers whose equipment is compatible with Data Processing.

So, Government departments perform a variety of advisory services which would have been performed by O and M. I should also say that today, as a matter of practise, Government makes use, both in the statutory boards and in the Government departments, of the services of professional management consultants. You will notice that there have been a lot of reviews of various areas. Certainly, in my own division, when I was Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism, Government approved, under the heading of Professional Services and Research, surveys on the Board of Tourism and on the Industrial Development Corporation; one was done by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co. and the other was done by Pannell Kerr Forster and Coopers and Lybrand. I also know that the Ministry of Transport and Works has had a study done, by Booz, Allen, Hamilton, I think.

There are a variety of institutional arrangements. We are not wedded to the idea that the best method of doing what used to be done by the old O and M was to get only the old O and M department to do it. There is a very good reason for that. It is that it is better sometimes to bring a fresh outlook into these kinds of areas than to rely on people who spend most of their lives in the Civil Service and who, therefore, would tend to regard what they are familiar with as the best. So we use a variety of things.

But there is a Vote. You will find it under Capital in the Ministry of Finance. There is quite a large Vote for Professional Services, under which we hire consultants to do a variety of services, including an examination of Government departments.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I should like to look at a broad matter, which relates to the Ministry of Finance and to the concept of Treasury control.

The Notes here indicate that one of the functions of the Ministry is to look after, very closely, the expenditure and revenue operations of Government in respect of the public finances. We know that, sometimes, this whole business of what is called Treasury control tends to relate directly to the question of ensuring that the funds provided by Parliament and allocated to the several Ministries and departments are spent within the limits of the legislative authority of Parliament. But I believe that in recent times, there has been another stress in terms of the functions of a Ministry of Finance and the concept of Treasury control, and that is that greater importance should be attached to the concept of value for money. I think I did hear my friend and colleague, the Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), referring to that particular concept, I believe yesterday or the day before.

In terms of the broad operations of the various sections of the Ministry of Finance, for which the Prime Minister has responsibility, or it may be one of the other departments under his control, Organisation and Methods or whatever it may be, I wonder whether any specific look has been taken at a department to determine whether this country is getting value for money. I am not charging that we are not getting value for money, but I am wondering if, in terms of the Government operations, that kind of activity is carried out.

I should like to ask a question specifically in relation to the Central Purchasing Department. I recall that when this particular department was established, there was a feeling that considerable savings could be achieved, if the entire purchasing procedures of Government could be co-ordinated, streamlined and centralized, instead of having separate purchasing officers in various Ministries and departments, each pursuing their separate purchasing policies and procedures. There was this feeling that if everything was brought together, through bulk purchasing, storage and control of supplies greater efficiencies and savings might be achieved. However, I believe that the establishment of that particular department created certain major problems for some of the Government departments in need of supplies, stores and materials, and there had to be an allocation of responsibility to certain departments, I believe like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, for them to do their purchasing directly in order to speed up the operations so that they would not get too entrapped by the bureaucratic procedures which may have tended to slow down the entire process.

I want to know whether over the years – and the Central Purchasing Department has been established for a number of years now – any review of the operations of that particular department has been undertaken, particularly from the viewpoint of whether value for money is being obtained by the operation of that department, and whether the time, effort and money in establishing and maintaining that department is justifiable. I have no information one way or the other; I am simply asking a question, because I believe that sometimes in the exercise of our responsibility of parliamentary control and scrutiny, we tend to look to see how much money is voted and whether a particular vote has been exceeded, but these larger questions of whether we are actually getting value for money tend to be lost sight of.

10.50 a.m.

Hon. H B. St. JOHN: I am very pleased to answer that question, because the honourable Member is only mirroring the views of the Planning and Priorities Committee. The responsibility of the Director of Finance and Planning is large enough, in our view, to cover not only the administration of the finances of Government in the sense of ensuring that money that is voted in Parliament is not exceeded, but also in ensuring that in the execution of the policy of Government in the purchases of goods and services, we get competitive prices, and proper service and work in accordance with standards, so that we get good value for our money.

This is dealt with in a variety of ways. The Central Purchasing Department is the purchaser of goods for most of the Government departments. The honourable Member will know from his experience of Government that the Central Purchasing Department is not always popular with some divisional heads. Each time an allegation is made about the Central Purchasing Department, an investigation is carried out by the Director of Finance and Planning, and, as a matter of policy, if there is disagreement between the civil servants of the two departments and the civil servants report to the Minister that they are dissatisfied with the resolution of the matter, the Minister has to bring it to Cabinet, and the Minister sometimes gets Cabinet to overrule the Ministry of Finance.

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It happens. There probably is a slight difference in the operation of the Cabinet with this Government and the last, because the Minister of Finance has to suffer from the fact that although the office of Prime Minister and Minister of Finance are the same, Cabinet overrules them. It has happened many times.

I think that in respect of the position of drugs, the Central Purchasing Department no longer purchases them. Honourable Members will recall that we had to come down here for an amendment of the rules to permit it. Since that precedent, other departments are pressing, but for a vast majority of the departments, the Central Purchasing Department is still there, and we will not depart from the rule unless there is a very good ground.

We have had a survey done on the competence and efficiency of the Central Purchasing Department itself, and we got somebody from the Crown Agents to do that. There is a report on that, and I understand that the Director of Finance and Planning was quite pleased with the general tone of the report, which was that in respect of a large variety of items, the Central Purchasing Department could demonstrate that as a result of bulk purchases on a great scale, great savings were made to the Government.

The Central Purchasing Department was requesting a warehouse for a long time, but the Ministry of Finance would not agree to the warehouse until it could have been proven, independently, that what they were saying

was correct, and in this year's Estimates you will find the sum of $750 000 for a warehouse. You will also notice that the Central Purchasing Department was given a new headquarters at Fontabelle. The fact that they have a new headquarters at Fontabelle and the fact that we are giving money for a warehouse now should be an indication that there is a measure of satisfaction with the administration of that department.

I wish to make it clear that it was not always felt that the Central Purchasing Department operated in a manner with which everybody was satisfied. But whenever an allegation is made, it has been the policy of the Government not to hide. If an allegation is made, we will have it investigated to the hilt. Anyone who feels that they are not receiving justice is entitled to put it in writing, and we will investigate it. Not the politicians, the politicians do not do these investigations; it is the Director of Finance and Planning; that is his responsibility, as being in overall control. That is in relation to goods.

In relation to services, Government is exceedingly concerned about the charges that Government is called upon to pay in respect to services, whatever the profession. It is a very serious thing. In the award of service contracts for the Government development programme, we have the Planning and Priorities Committee, which is the overall controller of the award of professional service contracts for jobs above $100 000. The Ministry has to make a recommendation. I would like to see more competitive bidding in that. There is no use showing us a scale fee that comes out of Britain because there has not been a review lately, as far as I know, to show that the scale fees that are applicable in Britain are fair in relation to Barbados. Nobody has done that kind of review in the construction industry. The cost of office accommodation, technical staff and things like that in the United Kingdom are not necessarily the same as in Barbados, but the professional organizations in Barbados do not regard it as their function to do that kind of specialized management accounting so as to justify their fees.

I would like to see more competition. I know for a fact, certainly in my time when I was studying in England and was doing specialized Contract Law as one of my optional subjects, that the local authorities in England never paid the same scale fees to professionals as the private sector, because there used to be consideration for repetitive work, the size of the contract and things of that kind. This Government certainly has not been blessed with such considerations, and there is this problem also with legal fees.

I think it is time that we deal with these things, because these matters are now matters of great concern. The fact that we may incur criticism does not mean that we must not deal with them – we are a small community and there is a lot of jealousy in the community – and all professional fees in Barbados are matters which come within the purview of the Government, because the Government is one of the largest employers.

We would love to see a periodical review being done of the professional scales, in the wider sense – I am not dealing with an individual profession in Barbados – because we would want to know whether the hourly rate is justified or not. It is very difficult when you receive charges on a percentage basis on the particular project to decide how many hours have been put into the project, and whether they are wasted hours or not. It is very difficult, too, to compare the professionals one against the other. Other countries do studies periodically. I believe that in the United Kingdom there is a big study going along now on comparable professional charges.
11.00 a.m.

The Government does not fear. I think the professionals should understand it. The fact that I made this statement in here might incur the criticisms of professionals outside, but that does not mean that I am not going to make it. It is our function to make it, because since we are the largest employer of professionals in a member of areas, we must have an interest in knowing whether the Government is getting value for money. I am very glad that the honourable Member has raised the question, because it has given me the opportunity to answer in the way that I did.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I wish to take a look at Subhead 6, which refers to energy and natural resources. First of all, we note that this subhead provides for advice on energy policy and natural resources development, and we are told that pricing policy and petroleum products fall in this particular area.

I am not going to go into this matter in any specific detail, but I would like the Government to explain why in a market where the prices for petroleum products, generally speaking, including crude, are falling, we are not seeing that general fall in the level of prices for crude and other petroleum products therefrom reflected in the price of petroleum products in this country. I would like the Government to explain why we are not seeing the results of that at the pump or in terms of the other products that are bought.

Other Members on this side may wish to expand on that particular matter. Basically, I wish to talk about our whole management of the petroleum sector, including the operations of the statutory corporations, which may have been set up in order to administer and to determine a policy and to carry on the day-to-day administration of our petroleum policies.

It is true to say that the whole of Barbados was shocked when we had most of the members of a particular Board dismissed, a Board which had responsibility for the development of policy and administration of that policy, and control and responsibility for staffing that statutory corporation, because of a difference with the Minister on this particular matter. That came as a shock, because that particular Board was composed of persons who are independent professionals in their own right, who have a track record of dedicated service to this country, and the impression did come across that certain actions were taken which appeared to be somewhat hasty, or even capricious, in terms of what was done to the members of the Board. I think I can put it as strongly as this, that the members of the Board were held up to public ridicule by the actions which were taken against them.

I believe that in areas where we are calling on nationals to give service to the people of this country, we should hold them up to public ridicule or to take action against them which, on the face of it, does not appear to be an appropriate measure for the kinds of problems which may be encountered. I think the Government owes this Parliament an explanation of its general policies in relation to the appointment and the retention of members of statutory corporations. I think it is one of the weak areas of publc administration in this country, and in terms of the kinds of problems that it has created for the Government, I believe the Government has not worked out an adequate policy and response to that whole area of the management of statutory corporations and the resources for which those statutory corporations are responsible, specifically in relation to this particular matter of energy. I believe the Government should make a comment on that particular matter.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): I wonder if the Minister in replying can be so gracious as to bring us up-to-date as well on any agreement that might have existed with any company, Mobil, I think, is the name, for offshore drilling; in terms of that agreement whether or not it is still in existence or what alternative arrangements are being made for exploration of our offshore resources.

11.10 a.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am very glad the honourable Member has stopped at this time. With respect to prices, one of the very simple reasons why you have not had it at the pump is because it has gone into the Treasury. The Government believes that part of its energy conservation policy should be to discourage waste in energy, and the pricing mechanism that we use is the one that obtains in certain parts of Europe as opposed to the one that obtains in the United States of America. I think I can also say that the prices have not increased in the last three years, so to the extent that there has been inflation in the last three years, the public has in fact received a reduction in their energy cost. The prices have stayed stable for three years.

The Treasury has had to share some of the differences between what goes to the manufacturers and the price with the distributors. We have allowed the price at the retail to remain the same, but we have redistributed the difference between the ex-refinery price and the marketers to be given the retailers. I have to use very technical language, but there are such things as marketers and retailers. I am talking about those people who own the gas stations, who have to pay cash before they can get the gas and who have to give the public credit sometimes. They were complaining about their margins and they have been allowed to share with the Treasury. The marketers have got a little piece.

In the last eight years, we have been doing a review every six months. The Government likes to have any decisions that it has to make come into force on 1st January and 1st April by the Budget, and the other one is when you look at it from the point of view of six months reviews. But we have a very old agreement with Mobil, and it was predicated by the average price of the Caribbean refinery platts. The problem is, and this is something that we have to face, that nearly all of the refineries that were designated are out of refining now, because, as you know, there has been a tremendous contraction of refining capacity in the Caribbean area, using the Caribbean in the wider sense as including the Venezuelan coast on the Caribbean and the Dutch Islands of Curacao and Aruba. I understand that certainly in Aruba, if the refinery is not closed, there is a plan to close it. So we will have therefore to have another look at that agreement in relation to how it will affect the prices.

In respect of the other question on the management of the oil resources in Barbados, there seems to be a fair amount of confusion in many people's minds, some on this side and some on the other side. I have not heard of any problems with the National Petroleum Corporation, and that is the statutory corporation. The Board of the National Petroleum Corporation has not been changed, and the National Petroleum Corporation is the statutory corporation that is the boss. The Barbados National Oil Company is a subsidiary of the National Petroleum Corporation, but the largest shareholder in the Barbados National Petroleum Corporation is the National Petroleum Corporation. I think that effectively answers it.

In addition to that, Government has in the Ministry of Finance and Planning an Energy Section, a whole corps of people, including a chief technical officer, still in place, and we have our geologists, engineers and our

advisers. One of the things that I am very proud of is the fact that in the last eight to ten years we have built up in Barbados quite a respectable group of professionals in the area of oil and gas, and it was done over the course of a period of time by a judicious use of UNDP aid, Government aid and scholarships that were awarded. I can think of the geologists, I can think of the petroleum engineers and the petroleum economists that we have now, because we have had some people who were economists who came into the Ministry and became fascinated with that branch of specialisation in Economics known as Petroleum Economics.

All of that is going on, and I would not say that there has been more than a ripple. That is all I will say. There certainly has not been a hurricane or anything of the kind. The waters may not be as calm as the honourable Member is accustomed to seeing them. There may have been a ripple, but it certainly is not a storm.

Statutory boards, of course, is a matter which is of great interest to the honourable Member as a student of Government. I think that our record is better than theirs over the course of our period of time. I still think that the security of tenure of staff, irrespective of how long they have been with corporations, is certainly better with us than with them, and I think that the staff very much appreciate that. But until we really settle the problem of the chairman and the chairman's role in management in statutory corporations in Barbados, I do not think any great change is going to take place.

There are some people who hold the view very strongly that there is need for a recognition of the fact that the chairmanship of these bodies is really not a part-time job. If one looks at the pattern of the equivalent in other countries of the world, I think many of them have come around to the view that there is a role for full-time training and a role for full-time managing directors. Many countries have come around to that view. Certainly the French and the Italians have always had that view. In fact, continental Europe always had that view. At the beginning, the United Kingdom did not have it, but if one looks at the National Coal Board, Sir Ian McGregor is generally regarded as being the *tour de force*. Sir Ian McGregor is Chairman, I do not think he is Managing Director, and there are others in that area, so that is a very important thing.

I know that Barbadians do not like the idea at all of the American style of Chairman and Managing Director – there was a view that you should solve it by making the person chairman and managing director – so we have a difficult area here to deal with in our management structure. We have tried to grapple with it. I think we have had some outstanding success in this area, and I believe it is true to say that if you took a census of all the chairmen who served under our Administration in all of the Ministries, you will find that we probably, as a whole, gave more freedom to chairmen to operate within policy lines than any other Administration in Barbados.

I think there are a couple of moral lessons to be learnt that these Ministries which gave greater freedom probably had lesser problems. All those that wish to participate in every minute detail probably had more clashes, but that depends on personalities, and I do not think that even students of Government could devise a system to cater to all the varying personalities that you had, whether as Ministers, chairmen or managing directors.

11.20 a.m.

The question of offshore drilling. We have an agreement, I believe, with Cluff Oil Company. The honourable Member will appreciate that very often you sign an agreement which is for a period of time, and you have a period within which you have to do the work you promise to execute. I will get the full details for you, but there is no allegation that the agreement is being breached in any way. It is just that the time for the carrying out of the totality of the obligations has not arisen. There is a time period; after it is cut off, we will be free again in relation to that area.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Under Subhead 6, Energy Conservation Programmes, I wonder if the Minister is in a position to indicate to us – I have heard a lot about energy audits, what type of impact the Energy Conservation Programme has had. I still see the energy bills for different Government departments continuing to get bigger and bigger. In the last supplementaries, we had most of them were for payments to Light and Power and the Water Authority. I wonder if the Minister could give some indication of the stage these energy conservation programmes are at and the type of results we are getting from our efforts.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is a very interesting point, because there are a number of reasons for the increase in the amount of money. The sum under Utilities is a very difficult thing to estimate in respect of Ministries. For years there was great difficulty in people getting bills from one particular utility, namely the Waterworks Department. I believe that now most of the Ministries would have cleared up all the disputes they have had with the Water Authority in respect of arrears. At least, I hope so; I really hope so.

We also have to recognise that there has been an expansion in the use of air conditioning in a number of Ministries, simply because of the fact that with the great increase in traffic, a number of Ministries just could not possibly operate with the windows open.

The audit did take place, and the results of the audit are now being implemented. We reckon that we can save considerable sums in specific areas, and the money we are voting here for energy conservation is specifically to allow the recommendations of consultants to be implemented. Specific sums of money will be voted. It is under Capital. When we come to that I will give you the exact areas, but the Government accepted at the Planning and Priorities Committee the recommendations of the consultants, who had suggested that we spent in certain departments who are heavy users of energy relatively large sums of money, because the pay back would be short and it would be the sort of demonstration to the community of the seriousness with which energy conservation should be taken. We believe that there is a benefit, and I will get it specifically for you.

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): I heard the reply of the Honourable Prime Minister in relation to a question raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) in relation to the dismissal of some of the members of the Board of Directors of the National Oil Company. The Honourable Prime Minister made the point that the statutory corporation was the National Petroleum Corporation, which we all accept; that the National Oil Company is not a statutory corporation, which is quite correct.

What we were concerned about, I believe, were the reports that the Minister responsible for Energy had terminated the membership of certain members of the National Oil Company, and what we are concerned about, and what the public is concerned about, is whether a Minister of Government has the power and the authority, if he did terminate them, to so do. This is the first question which has to be raised, whether the Minister in fact did terminate the appointment of members of the National Oil Company, and whether he, as Minister, had the power and authority to terminate the appointment of the Board of Directors of a private corporation.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): I first wish to deal with the question of energy, since it has been raised by my colleague, in relation to Subhead 6.

I wish the Minister to give us a definitive statement, if he can, on the experiment that was alleged to have been carried out on the construction of a building in which is housed the Ministry of Agriculture. That building was trumpeted some time ago as an excursion by Barbados, because it is in the tropics, into new techniques and new technologies as part of an overall energy policy. We on this side have a responsibility in such circumstances to allow such experiment and such excursions to take place, because we all have a vested interest in energy conservation, but during the course of the period since then there have been statements regarding the failure of the technology and/or the inefficiency of the design.

We have had discussion and we have raised questions on the substantial cost of the cooling system, among other things, and always we would get a response which either suggested, that we were not on good ground, or that enough time had not elapsed. I am now saying to the Minister responsible for Finance that enough time has elapsed, that we are getting indications that members of the Government, including the Minister who is housed in that building, have reached the stage where they are prepared to admit that that might have been a colossal mistake, not necessarily because or on the part of even the Minister of Planning, but because the project itself was allowed to get out of hand and a particular individual was allowed to exercise his whim and fancy in such a way as to create difficulty even for the Government.

I believe that this is a situation in which we could have some candour. If I am wrong, I would like to be wrong. This is an occasion when I would prefer to be wrong, because one hears about the so-called modern building for the tropics, and when one looks at some of the elementary technology which was put forward as advanced technology, when one recognises that such efforts have been tried in places like Intel unsuccessfully, according to our information.....

Aside.

11.30 a.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not get involved in the technical aspects of it. I am not going to pretend that I have any esoteric knowledge in the area of architecture and/or building technology. But I know, from my judgement, that if the country spends a large amount of money on a project, especially in the face of honourable Ministers and other Members over there and over here saying that common sense tells us that it should not work, when the project has been implemented, we think that there should be an accounting. I should like to know, therefore, what has been the total cost of the construction of the new Ministry of Agriculture? What has been in particular, the cost of the air-conditioning or cooling system, and whether it has been successful? What are the prospects of its being successful? What is the prognosis for the building and the plans which were incorporated into the setting up of that building? Is the Government satisfied that the new Ministry of Agriculture has met the needs or is meeting the needs which was envisaged when that construction was embarked upon.

I think I will stop there and let the Minister help me with the information.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Human beings are here to err.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Ministry of Agriculture's building and the Standards Institution .....

(Aside: The Government Laboratory.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: .....the Government Laboratory were two buildings which were selected by the Government for a research and development.....

Laughter.

(Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: A research and development building.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: They were in a research and development project. They were buildings in which the Government wished to discover whether the technology of solar cooling could be applicable to Barbados. Those decisions were taken at the time when the whole world was concerned about the escalating oil prices, and in the Caribbean area, there was a hotel in St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands which was selected as being the guinea pig, so to speak, in respect of the research in this area.

I believe that the first system that was put in the hotel – it is Frenchman's Reef, I remember it very well – was the greatest failure of all the experiments.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Wait a minute. As far as I am concerned .....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do you hear that? The greatest failure!)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: As far as I know, there has been a great measure of satisfaction with the system that has been put in the Government Laboratory.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not only dealing with details. I am talking about the principle.

With respect to the one at the Ministry of Agriculture, from the very beginning, there was a conflict of opinion....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Right!)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN:.....as to whether, I had better put it this way, that particular technology was the best available technology. This is a matter of public record. I believe there was public correspondence in the newspaper between an engineering firm and those who were involved in the design of the building. I remember this. But the Government was not foolish in this exercise. The Government approved a design which was, in fact, put in, and the design was not the original design, but a modification, my understanding of which is that the Ministry of Agriculture can be air-conditioned by a chiller system which can make use of natural gas in the event of the failure of the solar.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Get to the details.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The details of the success of the Ministry of Agriculture building are that I understand that it works, although I understand the reliability factor may not be as good as the reliability factor that is in existence in Culloden Road. It is not true to say that it has never worked. It is not true to say that it is a total failure. I would say that it is a fair and reasonable conclusion to say that the technology is proven, but that the performance does not measure up to what one would call the highest standard of an acceptable standard. The full details will be given by the Minister who is actually in the building, but to say that there is no air-conditioning at the Ministry of Agriculture's building would be untrue; and to say that it is a total failure would equally be untrue, as it would be to say that it is a total success.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am going to rely on the Minister of Agriculture for better information, because I see that the Prime Minister himself is not sufficiently versed with the reality of it.

I never said that it was a total failure. If it is a total failure, that would mean that it never worked at all. A one per cent success would eliminate the word, "total". What I would say is that it has been a colossal failure. But I would defer to the Minister of Agriculture, he works with it every day. I would hear him on it, and, he, I presume, has the best office in the building.

Since the Minister says that the occupant of the building will advise us, I will wait for that advice. So I give way to the Minister of Agriculture to properly inform us with the usual candour.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): As indicated by the Honourable Prime Minister, I will address this matter in the course of the presentation of the Estimates dealing with the Ministry of Agriculture. I just wish to say now that the expression, "colossal failure" in relation to the performance of the solar cooling system at the Ministry of Agriculture is totally misplaced and totally ill-merited. The system has its weaknesses, but there can be no support for the viewpoint that it is a "colossal failure".

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Would you give way and let me explain "colossal" then? "Colossal failure" here is in relation to two factors; the cost and the level of expectation which we were led to have.

You see, if a man is a cripple and he runs a 100 yards race in two days, he is not a failure, because one

expects him to take two days. If, however, Carl Lewis runs a 100 yards dash in 20 seconds, he is a colossal.....

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Metres.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, no. I am using yards. I am staying in the medium that I know of.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Alright. If he runs a 100 metres dash in 20 seconds, that is a colossal failure. I recall – and the Deputy Prime Minister of the day was with me on this; I believe he has forgotten – that when we were being given these grandiose ideas and concepts, we were told, we were almost guaranteed, that there would be at least an 80 per cent success.

I have heard ....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): I rise to interrupt on a point of order. Listening carefully, I was under the impression that the Member for St. Michael West got up on a point of order, and then gave way to the Minister of Agriculture. Now, he goes on to make a speech. Do not be so unreasonable, man.

Laughter.

Asides.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: I give way. Mr. Chairman.)

(Hon. H deB. FORDE and Mr. B. M. TAITT rose.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, it is with a little bit of diffidence ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me bring some order to this matter. The honourable Member for St. Michael West .....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Minister ....

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

The question is, who is on their feet? Who does the Chair recognize? I recognize the Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The point that I was making, however, apart from the fact that there can be no justification for the epithets used, "colossal failure," .....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do you agree, "failure"?)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I will be informing the House in more detail about the performance of the cooler system at the Ministry of Agriculture when my turn comes. I just wish to remind the honourable Member that the Government has a claim against the architect which is currently being pursued, and I believe the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) may, without revealing the nature of his instructions, say something more about that.
11.40 a.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): With a bit of diffidence, I speak on this subject. Let me say that the building in Culloden Road has been a success. Both projects were research and development projects coming at a time when there were very high energy costs, and as a way of using automatic energy savings, it was decided to construct the Ministry of Agriculture building and the building.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way so that he does not go down that path,....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But he has given way. How can it be bad manners?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is a Chairman of this Committee. If honourable Members will not address the Chair, I will not have it. On what does the honourable Member rise?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I rose on a point, and the honourable Member has given way, and I wanted him .....

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has given way.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I wanted him to avoid an unnecessary comparison. I did not allude at all to the building where the National Standards Institution is located. I dealt entirely and only with the building for the Ministry of Agriculture, because there are two separate architects.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please let the honourable Member for Christ Church West continue.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Since the honourable Member said there were two separate architects, the consultants on both projects were the same. It is a fact that some of the technology used on the building in Culloden

Road was used on the building at Graeme Hall. The Israeli firm was sub-contracted for the solar cooling element of the project, and there were some difficulties with the Israeli firm. There were also some difficulties with some other sub-contractors to the project and suppliers, including a supplier in New York, who, during the course of the contract, went into liquidation, causing a delay for which, of course, the contractor had to be given time, and this added to the overall cost of the project.

I do not think that the Government can be criticized for going on an exercise such as this. In my view, the efficiency of the building in Culloden Road justified the Government's experiment completely. There have been difficulties with the building at Graeme Hall, as far as I know. If the honourable Member is concerned about the time it took to construct the building, he has to look at it in the context of the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture. The Government may well have a very valid case against the consultants to the project. What the honourable Member has to appreciate is that the Government does not – and I am sure he does appreciate this, because it is so obvious – build buildings. It relies on the skill and expertise of consultants, and if it is relying on the skills and expertise of consultants or contractors, and because personal differences, negligence, and circumstances outside of the terms of the contract add to the cost or to the performance of the building being contracted, then Government will have to begin to take action against most of these experts. In many cases they do carry insurance coverage for negligence liability, and I think that although Government may in this case, according to the arbitral award have to pay an additional sum, it does seem to me, as one of the persons who appeared in the arbitration – and I am quite familiar with the facts of this case – that the Government must get its legal advisor to give it advice as to against which and how many of the consultants it should take action.

The files revealed quite early that the then Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and the then Minister had to come in at times to settle disputes between two main consultants on a job. That is a fact. And in circumstances where an employer would not wish to interfere with the day-to-day administration of a contract, the circumstances also revealed that obviously the award consultant, who was advising on the contract, must have advised on a contract that, in his words, in the arbitral proceedings, "even if the contractor complied with the terms of the contract, he was wrong; and if he did not comply with the terms of the contract, he was also wrong."

Government therefore, is at the mercy of the consultants and at the mercy of its experts from outside, and it is not only the Government. I believe that the Prime Minister, me and a few other people, but particularly the two of us, have a wide experience in these building disputes and building arbitrations. Whenever you have a period of quick development, as occurred in the construction of the Graeme Hall building, you do have great difficulty in getting contractors to be on time, not only because they themselves are under stress, but because the consultants, architects, and engineers are not up-to-date with their technical drawings and instructions. You also have the problem of suppliers, and because we are a heavy importer of most of the supplies, steel and a lot of the other things that go into constructing a building, there are times that you cannot get the suppliers to agree to the terms of the subcontract and give the guarantees that are necessary for building contracts such as these.

My experience tells me that during the period of the construction of this building, the industry, both in the private and public sector, was under tremendous strain. Obviously, it had run hot, and part of the effect were the difficulties for the employers and an increase in the budgeting cost for most of the projects during that time. A few projects, like the Caribbean Development Bank Project has come on stream and on time, but that did not come in the high peak of construction. I can point to several building disputes, some of them still current, involving the private sector where similar difficulties were present.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am not making any excuses for any of the consultants on this project. The honourable Member who is saying *sotto voce* "So what?" does not understand. I do not believe that you can put a case by not looking at all of the factors. You have asked my view on this. In my view, purely from a legal point of view, it seems to me that the Government may well have a strong case in proceeding against parties advising the Government other than the contractors in this dispute. The evidence is there and it is a matter for the Government to pursue its remedies.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member said a number of things and in the course of winding up, he said that he was speaking from a legal point of view. That is for the courts. In here, it is from a political point of view that one views these matters, and whatever else you may say, the honourable Member attempted to put into capsule form an apology for a number of things that had happened, which, in other circumstances, would be identified as incompetence and wastage.

11.50 a.m.

No one expects the Government to build buildings. Not one of the Ministers over there are expected to build buildings, so that question does not arise. No one expects the Ministers to be contractors or architects in the construc-

tion of any building in this country, not even their own homes, so that does not arise. What every one expects is that where we have experience in dealing with certain persons and companies, we are to be guided by that experience, and if it can be seen that in spite of certain difficulties, in spite of the kinds of situations where a Permanent Secretary and a Minister have to intervene between the two main contractors, a Government persists in making use of the particular individual or individuals, as if they are the only individual or individuals who function in the arena, then you have to start asking the Government if the Government is doing its job. My question ....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the honourable Member will give way. The honourable Member obviously must recognize that Government has a panel, on which Ministers do not sit, which recommends consultants for a job. In fairness to all of the consultants, the Government tries to pro rate the jobs that are available so that people who employ persons can keep them in employment. Nobody is specially selected.

From my memory of what occurred in the arbitration, intervention of the Minister at the same time came almost towards the end of the contract, when personality differences were surfacing between the two main contractors. But there were also very serious problems with the suppliers which would have delayed the contract and, as the honourable Member knows, if there is a delay in the contract.....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am just explaining first, Sir. There are two consequences. I will finish on this, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want you to go into it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, Sir. The two consequences can be either an extension of time without compensation or extension of time with loss and expense.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is aware that almost all litigation in the question of building has to do with precisely the problems he has identified. He has come like Christopher Columbus this morning explaining to us in minute detail what causes these problems. That is why you have the law courts, and that is why you have arbitration. That is not the issue here, and the honourable Member knows, unless he wishes me to go and speak in absolute details, that there are areas which I am trying to discuss in a particular way.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Let us hear the issue).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It has to do with the meticulousness with which the Government prosecutes its responsibility in the awarding of contracts. It has to do with the meticulousness with which a contractor working for the Government has fidelity to the project, to the Government and to the people, as opposed to fidelity to a particular individual or a particular concept. It has to do with the need for any contractor, who, after all, is only a contractor, to recognize that in the face of good advice and good common sense, to move on in an arrogant and holier-than-thou manner is to do an injustice to the people of the country as a whole. It has to do, therefore, with my raising on the floor of this House matters which should put the Government on notice, if nothing more, that there are certain practices that may have preceded the Barbados Labour Party Government, to put it in proper perspective, but I am saying that the Government has a responsibility in the last quarter of the 20th century to be as hard-nosed in the awarding of contracts to any individual in the world.

I find it extremely difficult to accept a number of reports which come to me about the behaviour patterns of certain contractors, especially with regard to Government projects, and I think that it is not enough for the honourable Member to be saying that the Government must take legal advice. I think that the Government has to be hard-nosed in the matter and ask for its pound of flesh, because the Government represents all the people who pay taxes, and even those who do not.

Does the honourable Member wish to say something?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I think that if the honourable Member had been in the House earlier, he would have heard the official Government position on the question of professional services. I had made a very long statement and expressed serious concern about the whole gamut of professional services, charges and responsibility, and I also made a statement on the fact that we in Barbados have to operate against a background in which we are using imported scales of fees and things of that kind.

I said that the Planning and Priorities Committee was going to do something about it, not only from the point of view of having a review done on the stability of the expatriate scale of fees in relation to the economy of Barbados, but, also, with respect to the method of selection. I have done a lot of reading in this area and I know that in the United States of America and other countries, the concept of value engineering was introduced, and the object of a value engineer is to take the professional advice which is contracted to him in the normal way, pull it to pieces and help one's client to understand where savings can be made without detriment to the aesthetics and things of that kind.

That is the stage we have reached right now. And I am making it clear, I am not accusing anybody of anything. What I am saying is that we need to have a scale

of fees in which your remuneration is a percentage of the total cost. You must have some check to ensure that, directly or indirectly, the costs are not puffed. I say so.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: To that, all I can say is, 'hallelujah.' I am in it with the Prime Minister and will not pursue that direction any further. That is all I am asking no more. I am sorry I was not here earlier, because if I had been, it would not have been necessary for me to make the point, but I am glad I did so we can know, and those who come will know, where we all stand on these matters. There must be no divide between the political parties on certain matters relating to the interest of the people of this country.

I move on from that and raise a question relating to energy still, but it has to do with a mild warning; perhaps, not so mild.

I have noticed that there are, from time to time, varying announcements as to the quality of oil which we are producing. I am very pleased. The honourable Member who is Prime Minister would know, from a perusal of the files where he followed me, that we had pursued a policy on oil exploration and oil development which would be in the interest of the people of Barbados, but I wish to issue a warning.

I think we have to be extremely careful that in our thrust to be able to announce high levels of oil production, we do not make fundamental errors. I know that if there is one person who understands what I am talking about, it is the Prime Minister. This whole question of how many wells we dig, where we dig them and how we space them is an area on which we must tread very slowly and take very firm and good advice each time. We cannot allow an additional 100 barrels a day to get in the way of the ecological destruction of this very small and frail country.

I am not accusing anybody of anything. I am saying that from my past experience in the Ministry and the kind of advice which one used to get, it seems to me that there is a certain rapidity of well development, especially in the Woodbourne area. I would be grateful to be advised in more detail as to what specific policy is being followed with regard to well spacing, and if there has been a reversal of the policy on which, at one time, we were all *ad idem* with regard to the same well spacing.
12.00 p.m.

I am not saying that we should reduce the amount of exploration. I am saying that we must treat it with caution. We cannot allow the mere fact that we wish to produce more oil to interfere with our need to exercise the greatest caution. There are areas in the United States that are pot-marked with wells that have been dug willy-nilly and without proper advice. As a matter of fact, there are vast areas of the United States that have been killed ecologically. They are dead for all practical purposes as productive areas for oil or anything else.

I do not think I have to belabour the point. I know that when the Prime Minister was responsible for Energy, he used to follow a cautious policy in that regard, but I have noticed in recent times an upscaling of the number of wells. I wish to be assured that we are taking good ecological care of the heritage we have.

I should also like to find out from the Prime Minister if he is in a position to tell me what is the position with regard to offshore or marine drilling and marine exploration. Some time ago there was an announcement, I would say a hot and sweaty announcement, that we had located a field to the north. I saw it in the public media and it was confirmed indirectly by comments from, I think, the Minister responsible for Energy. In any event, it was said that we had located some kind of field in the north, we had located oil just off the north shore. I am sorry, that we had good prospects for the north shore. Let me leave it like that. I do not wish to be unreasonable.

(A VOICE: It was said that a study had shown that.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is not what he said. That is what you might have said. I know that the impression left after I heard the statement on more than one occasion was that it would only be a matter of time before we start rivalling Trinidad.

Quite seriously, I wonder if the Minister could let us know what steps have been undertaken in the exploration of the marine areas. He knows that one of my pet questions has to do with a commitment I had made the previous explorers give to the country, and he has explained it in the past, but since then I had heard talk that there was no rig that was available at the time, but at that time the oil situation was what they call fullish. With large quantities of surplus oil around now, I think that rigs are available that could explore the areas within our territorial waters. I have not in recent times seen any indication that we are proceeding along those lines, and I would be grateful if he would inform the House about what is happening with our marine exploration, since we are all satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that exploration of our marine areas is warranted. That is a different statement from any suggestion that we have already found evidence of oil off the shores of Barbados. I do not think that that is correct, but if it is so, I would be glad to hear it.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I wonder if the Honourable Prime Minister will give some indication of what is the position with the storage, since I have seen an article

credited to the Minister which said that Barbados had lost large sums of money because there was not enough storage available and crude had to be sold, I think to Venezuela, at a very cheap price. I just want to find out if this is likely to happen very often and if we will continue to lose large sums of money, or if the storage is adequate now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are there any more questions on this subhead?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On the subhead relating to energy, Subhead 6, Energy and Natural Resources, I would like to ask the Honourable Prime Minister whether or not in the area of pricing he does not think it is about time that Barbadians get the benefit of falling oil prices throughout the world.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That question had been raised when the honourable Member was not in his seat, and I do not propose to entertain debate on it again.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will make a statement on it. I have not spoken on this subhead yet, and under the Rules of the House a Member can speak for 15 minutes. It has not been voted on and I will make a statement, I will not ask a question. I am speaking to the question of oil pricing in Barbados and the pricing of petroleum products.

The Barbados economy in the Seventies, as a consequence of the very marked increase in oil prices, came under severe pressure. In the late Seventies further pressure was brought on the Barbados economy because of further increases in oil prices. Over the past three years, one of the very favourable signs on the horizon which has tended to relieve many of the Third World economies to some measure has been the fall in international oil prices. That fall has been consequential on two things, the weakening of the OPEC cartel because of increasing production of oil by many of the major industrial countries, particularly the United States – increased production within the United States – and because some smaller Third World countries increased their production of oil. The next effect has been that there has been a downward pressure on oil prices, to the extent that the present obsession of most of the major oil producers, including OPEC and Nigeria, is to find a formula to hold oil prices at the present level and prevent a more significant fall.

It is anticipated that there is a likelihood that oil prices might well fall to about $24 per barrel this year. Only recently I read an interview between the former Secretary of Energy in the United States, producers in the Gulf area and also the experts in Egypt, and there is every indication that the price of oil will hold and that unless there is some kind of arrangement among the oil-producing countries to cut back on production or to keep the levels of production down to certain margins, then there will be further fall in the oil prices, even below $24 per barrel. The point I wish to make is that despite the fact that there has been this drastic fall in oil prices – and we must bear in mind that three or four years ago, some days the spot price you had to pay for oil was about U.S. $14 per barrel above what it is today – Barbadians stand out as among the very few in this world who have to continue to pay the very high prices for gasolene, for all petroleum products such as diesel, for electricity, for water – and all these things impinge very heavily on the amount of money that people have to spend out of their wages week after week.

12.10 p.m.

I make no apologies for saying that if Barbados were importing its clean oil products today, the price of electricity would probably drop by about 20 per cent, the price of water would probably drop about 20 per cent and the price of gasolene and diesel would be down about 30 per cent. If you were to look at your electricity bill, you will see there is a fuel charge in there. That fuel charge is two cents per kilowatt hour per year, and that would involve about $6 million a year. I know what I am talking about. I took the trouble of intervening in a public utilities hearing, and I know what it would cost the Barbados Light and Power if they imported their Bunker C fuel directly rather than having to go through the present mechanism. The saving, according to the Manager of the Barbados Light and Power in evidence before the PUB, would be about $6 million a year, which is equivalent to about two cents per kilowatt hour in the rate structure of Barbados. That is a fact. It is approximately $3 million from one cent per kilowatt hour, so when you talk about $6 million you are talking about two cents every time that dial on your metre goes around.

The question arises whether the Minister of Finance does not think that the time has come when there should be a review of Government's energy policy with a view to achieving an overall reduction in energy costs in Barbados. But I understand very clearly how the Barbados Government has got itself into a situation where it cannot pass on the benefits of the reduced prices of oil and energy to the consumer and maintain the viability of the Barbados National Oil Company at the same time. I understand clearly what has happened. On the assumption that there would have been a continuous upward spiral in oil prices, then there is a reasonable possibility that those policies initiated four years ago might have had some relevance, but we are now trapped in a situation where you have to maintain these prices in Barbados because of the Government's commitments to a given policy in relation to energy.

I say this, and I speak not with the benefit of hindsight. I stood on the floor of this House and I bore the

many assaults in December two or three years ago over the acquisition.....

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am talking of the pricing of petroleum products in Barbados, and I am demanding on the floor of this House.....

Hon. H. B St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir: I must ask that you give a ruling as to whether it is proper in the Committee stage of the Estimates for a Member to make a statement as though one were debating the general principles of a Bill, because that, in essence, is what the honourable Member says he is doing.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I was speaking to the pricing of petroleum products specifically and nothing else.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We do in the Estimates allow some little latitude in these matters, but I must warn the honourable Member that he must certainly confine his remarks as near as possible to the subhead with which we are dealing.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Thank you very much. I intend to stick only to Subhead 6.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Not including the intervention, for which I have made provision, you have just two minutes to finish.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, I shall make maximum use of those two minutes to say that it will be the policy of the next Democratic Labour Party Administration to ensure that the benefits of the lower oil prices which now exist throughout the world, and which we confidently anticipate will remain for the next few years, are passed on to all Barbadians, including old age pensioners who have to pay their electricity bills and their water bills. To everyone with a motor car, there will be cheaper gasolene and cheaper lubricants. All oil products will be cheaper in Barbados.

I spoke very slowly to use the two minutes with maximum grace.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I wish to say that the policy of the Barbados Labour Party will be to continue endeavouring to ensure that the public of Barbados does not waste energy, and we will continue to pursue a policy of energy conservation. We are convinced in our own minds that the public has benefited greatly from the fact that we have produced a far greater percentage of oil since we bought the oilfield which Mobil had, and we will continue to have a rational exploitation of those resources.

There are a number of questions we have to deal with and I want to deal with them one by one.

We were asked about the offshore exploration. A contract has been entered into with Cluff Oil Company in respect of an area which has been defined as the Cluff block. It is in the north west section of the economic zone of Barbados. The terms of the contract are that certain geophysical work has to be carried out as a first obligation. I understand that within a matter of days, a week or two at the maximum, the ship would be coming to do the three hundred kilometers of more definitive seismic in that area.
12.20 p.m.

There is no question of the concession holders breaking the obligations under the agreement. The honourable Member would know that in these areas, we did, with the UNDP Programme, outline seismics, and before others would enter into an agreement they would want to do their own detailed infill seismic, so that is going along. We are pursuing the policy of encouraging interest from a multiplicity of people. We managed to get Cluff interested in a particular area. I understand that there are other negotiations with respect to the south. It would not be politic for me to say who the people are. The honourable Member knows that in the oil industry nobody likes anybody else to know. But the point is that with respect to offshore exploration, every effort is being made to ensure that concessions are awarded with a view to getting someone to commit themselves to the real McCoy; that is, to put their money where their mouth is, at the drill. That is the position.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way; are you in a position to tell us whether you would let us see the results in a usual manner, in the context of what you can let us see, of the seismics which you have done. I expect that that information has, in fact, been made public. I think you know what I mean.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: In respect of the work that was done by UNDP, there is a package which is out for international bid. I would be delighted to let anybody who wishes to see the package, including the House, look at the one which has gone out. Certainly, there is absolutely no problem with that, because from my memory, the terms of the project were that a package would be prepared which could be cited by international bidders. The House is equally as entitled. I have no difficulty with that at all. That, I think, effectively answers that.

With respect to the drilling in Barbados, there is no one more conscious of the need and necessity to be cautious, having regard to the fact that we have had a lot of experience in the past of what one would call over enthusiastic drilling, or over enthusiastic exploitation, of

sands that have been found, and because of the fact that our geology, as it is, is such that if you over produce, when once you have started to produce, there is a tendency for the wells to collapse. The Ministry of Energy still has the benefit of the advice of the same Chief Technical Officer who was there in the honourable Member's time as in my time. As I explained earlier, a lot of people have missed the point. The Chief Technical Officer is responsible to the Ministry. He is the controller of every contractor.

The National Oil Company is but a concession holder, because the Government bought the leases of Mobil. That is the way how it was structured. So as far as the National Oil Company is concerned, it is in the same position as Mobil – it has to be governed. It will be governed, and it is governed.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Am I to understand then that in his capacity as Chief Technical Director, he would have at least as much direction and control of the contracts as he did as Chairman?

Hon. H. B St. JOHN: I do not know about any chairman, I answered the honourable Member for St. Michael South, and I tried desperately to explain to him that he must not allow himself to get confused. I think I have to give the honourable Member the same advice.

The National Petroleum Corporation is a statutory Board. The Barbados National Oil Company is a subsidiary. BNOC is a leaseholder, as successor to Mobil, as Mobil was successor to General Crude. So the way in which BNOC operates is that they have to operate within the framework of the concessions and within the framework of the supervisory mechanism that has been established. I am sure that the supervisory mechanisms are working, and they will continue to work.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way: I think he knows that I am aware of all of the information which he has just vouchsafed. Surely he must agree with me that whereas the Chief Technical Director in the Ministry is one and the same person as the head of what he now calls a subsidiary, a contractor, because that is what it comes down to, then he was in the position as the head of the contracting agency to whip the statutory corporation, he was in a position to direct their policies. Since he remains the Chief Technical Director and, as the honourable Member says, he is in control of and advises the Minister on all contracts, he is in a position to control such contracts as have been negotiated with what used to be his company at one time.

Are you following me?

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sit down.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There is something slightly wrong with what the honourable Member says, because I have never heard that the Chief Technical Director was the Chairman of the NPC. I specifically said that the only statutory corporation was NPC.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: This is a question of mathematics now. If a part is greater than the whole, then your thesis is right. But if the statutory corporation owns, is a shareholder, maybe the only shareholder, in any agency, then the statutory corporation supersedes what it owns. That is all I am saying.

If he wishes me to break it down in little finite pieces, I can.

I honestly to God think that you are missing the point, because you seem to operate on the false assumption – I must say you are not unique in this respect – that BNOC was a separate statutory corporation as well.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: A company.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Correct. Anyhow, the basic position is that the policy in respect of the supervision of contractors at the Oil Company is exactly the same. The supervision is done by the Technical Division of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources. I pointed out that that was a division that every Barbadian could be proud of, because we have had, over the course of the last eight to ten years, a number of Barbadian people who by dint of study and hard work have earned a great deal of respect in the oil and gas industry in the Caribbean. A lot of them are young people and they operate in all of the areas of discipline, from Geology right through to Petroleum Economics.

I have no fear about us proceeding carefully, and I think that the honourable Member should have no fear. We all know that we have to be careful. What has happened – and this is the difference between the honourable Member's time and my time and today – is that as a result of the drilling which took place, the cumulative knowledge which is now in the possession of the Geologist and others, we know now that the spacings that used to be regarded as safe before were exceedingly conservative. There was a time in Barbados when they only allowed you to drill a small number of wells in a hundred acre spacing. The honourable Member changed that, I believe to either a twenty-five or five acre spacing. Nowadays, I think even that has been changed. But it has been done in the light of the geological data that has come out of factual experience.

12.30 p.m.

Geology, like Economics and like a lot of areas, is not an exact science. You have to change your conclusions in the light of the factual information as it arises and as you experience it. We are producing more oil because we are indulging in a programme partially of more infill drilling, but we are still pursuing that limited area of what is called outstretch drilling that used to be pursued in your time and in my time, except that we are a little bit bolder now – and we are a little more certain now, because we have done more perimeter drilling and we have less uncertainty.

This is a great thing, and that is why I must profoundly disagree with the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. As a true-blooded conservative, the honourable Member would never take these risks. This kind of area of operation involves risk-taking, which is completely outside of his character. He needs certainty, he does not like to take risks.

The other area I must deal with is the Energy Conservation Unit. I promised honourable Members the information. The Energy Conservation Unit did a review of the major consumers of energy in Barbados, and they are: Grantley Adams International Airport, Treasury Building, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Psychiatric Hospital, National Insurance Building, the Government Analyst Laboratory, the National Stadium, Barbados Water Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, Graeme Hall.

Aside

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, we are not afraid of these things. Honourable Members on the opposite side feel that the fact that you try and you do not succeed 100 per cent means that you are a failure. That is not the philosophy of this Government, that is the philosophy of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. We believe that you must try; human experience is such that you must try, and if you fail, you must try again, and try to succeed on the next occasion. You must not be really a coward.

A number of recommendations were made, and in these Estimates we have selected the following buildings as being the ones that we feel merit the expenditure in this financial year, because we do not have the money to follow through on all the recommendations. We will work on the Grantley Adams Airport, because the savings there seem to be high and the cost benefit is really great. For instance, they claim that on an estimated cost of $374 400, the first year savings will be $573 000; so the payback is great. The Treasury Building, $212 000; the first year savings will be $56 000. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, $344 000; $199 000 payback in the first year.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The last figure is the equivalent of the amount of money you would save in the electricity consumption having regard for the new energy conservation measures represented, and the first sum I read is the cost of the measures.

We have not accepted to follow the recommendations of the Psychiatric Hospital for a number of reasons, because it costs $230 000 for savings of $63 000. In any event, the Psychiatric Hospital is the subject of a project which we wish to undertake, should we be provided with the aid, with a view to deciding on its suitability for the original purpose and its replacement. The National Insurance Building; they claim that on the expenditure of $38 000, we should save over $63 000. That is a good one. The Government Analyst Laboratory – this is interesting – $27 000 and we should save $16 000. The other one was the National Stadium, which we have rejected for the time, because they said it is an expenditure of $168 000, and we would only save $37 000.

We have selected the buildings which, in our opinion, would provide us with the greatest savings. We expect to spend $966 300 on energy conservation measures, and the projected savings are $909 500 in the first year. I do not believe that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central will disagree with that. If there can be disagreement, it can be that we should have spent only $800 000 to save $900 000 – that being his philosophy. You must have a profit. We are going to pursue the other two areas in the next financial year. I will wind up by saying that I have quite frankly pointed out to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central that the savings the Barbadian public have received can be computed in the following way: what we have not saved in the pump, we have saved in the Treasury; and what we have saved in imports, the difference in the price of imports, we have saved in foreign exchange savings, because if we had bought from outside, we would have had to pay foreign exchange for it, and the amount of foreign exchange that we are paying for repayment of our purchase of the National Petroleum Oil Company is less than if we did not have the exploitation of our energy. In any event, we believe, as a matter of philosophy, that if this is a natural resource that God has endowed Barbados with, we should do everything in our power to exploit it, just as we exploit our sunlight in the production of sugar in an era now when we should be importing sugar, according to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, because there is absolutely no doubt that we can import sugar far cheaper than we can produce it at the present moment.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have listened to the argument very carefully. If one is thought to be conservative because one is concerned about the prudence of the savings of taxpayers in respect of public investments and

to become concerned about losses in public enterprises, then I am happy to be dubbed a conservative.

To start where the honourable Member left off, quite clearly, where you have a massive investment built up over a time and you have to support that by a higher domestic price for an end product, that is a different matter from a situation where you enter into a new dimension of public investment and find yourself locked into that situation.

I am very pleased indeed to see that the Honourable Prime Minister has looked at the amortization costs of the investment in the oil industry and taken that into consideration. Of course, taking all matters into consideration, you will see that in the long run, if this economy had been relieved of these high prices, it would make a major difference to the situation which we could have achieved in Barbados over the past few years.
12.40 p.m.

I also want to deal with Government's attitude towards energy conservation. Energy conservation through technology? Yes, I support it. Energy conservation through education? Yes, I support it. Energy conservation through architectural design as a subsidiary point in respect of technology? Yes, I support it. But energy conservation, as a copy of what went on in the industrialised countries, energy conservation through high price levels in these kinds of economies, I say "No".

There is a very authoritative work done on the impact of the transfer of the concept of energy conservation through price levels in industrialised countries to Third World countries. As a matter of fact, the document is entitled "Energy Conservation Through Prices In Third World Countries: A New World Crime". I would not like to use that term, but I am just telling you about the document, which sets out very clearly the kind of pain inflicted on Third World communities through this concept of trying to control energy conservation through prices and the inhibitary effect that it has on overall development.

Traced to that have been a whole series of things that follow from that basic concept. If you were to look at the whole concept of pricing of utilities, where the high price structure in relation to conservation remains at all times a Government consideration, you will see the extent to which this has distorted costs in Barbados. One only has to look at the origin of the whole concept of long run marginal costing in respect of public utility rates as it impinges on energy – a clear departure from the principle of the lowest feasible cost to the consumer whilst protecting the integrity of the deliverer of the service by the public utility company. If you take those two concepts and you match them one by one and you look at the final output of prices, you are talking now about a differential of some 40 per cent.

I was shocked, indeed, to see a document circulated recently by a group of chartered accountants, who apparently were commissioned by the Government of Barbados – I am not sure about this, but either by the Government of Barbados or by a public utility company – and who are now recommending that this whole question of marginal costing of public utilities should become a permanent feature of the pricing of all public utilities in Barbados. This is a serious step that you are taking, so that when you talk about energy conservation, let us be clear. We support the things you are doing in terms of Government buildings and talking to people on television, but let us stay clear of this whole question of pushing prices up in the energy sector or maintaining prices in that sector, because the negative effect it is going to have throughout the community could be fantastic.

One can attribute about 15 per cent – 20 per cent of all job losses in Barbados to energy costs. I had the opportunity to look at hotel costs and the cost of water and electricity, bearing in mind that 57 per cent of the cost of water at the time I examined it was due to electricity, and look at the energy cost inside there. I have looked at a wide spectrum of the accounts of hotels, large ones, those in the middle grades and those in the smaller grades, and when you look at the impact of their cash flow in relation to their energy bills and their water bills, which take a priority over the wages of the people they employ, then they have to send home people in order to pay those bills. The Government itself, in the last mini-Budget, even recognized that fact by admitting that the time had come when it has to review the cost of water to the hotels in Barbados.

Make no mistake; it not only impinges on the wider viability of the whole sector, but in human terms, when that is translated, where high energy cost relating to the pricing of petroleum products is concerned, you are talking about unemployment, you are talking about sending home people. You have to be able to have the vision to look at the wider aspects of the Barbadian economy and realize what a high priced energy policy would have throughout the economy. You just cannot take the narrow view that you are taking. I can quite understand that, coming from someone who has been the Minister of Energy and who would like to see his portfolio succeed and continue to succeed, it is quite possible to look at it in its narrow perspective. But I have to look at it in a wider perspective, because it is my responsibility to shadow macro considerations in the Barbados economy and also to look at their impact on micro considerations. I have to look at all times on the impact of energy prices on every single aspect of Barbadian life.

I did not give evidence, but there are other areas. If you were to take the manufacturing sector – although I

was surprised, I must say this, on the information provided by the manufacturers as to the impact that the increased energy charges had –....

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: About two years ago the manufacturers came up with a statement to the effect that the high energy costs affected their operations to a lesser extent than I had anticipated. I was surprised, rather pleasantly, I must say, if they were correct, that the impact on their operations was not as severe as one would have anticipated. But, at the same time, they did confirm that those costs were high enough to be an important factor in the level of employment which they could maintain and ultimately afford in terms of their viability. That was their own statement, they did not support my argument. My argument at the time was that the unnecessary high cost of energy was having a significant negative impact on their operations. They came out and issued a statement which partially contradicted what I said, but they did admit that it reduced significantly their capacity to maintain levels of employment.

You speak to any of your colleagues who maintain offices in Barbados, even in the legal profession, and let them tell you about their overhead costs relating to energy in their offices in Bridgetown, and you will find out what is going on. Many professionals in Barbados would probably normally employ another person if their energy bills were about 30 per cent of what they have to pay. There are small buildings in this country where the cost of air conditioning can be in excess of $50 000 to $60 000 a year, buildings that are well insulated, the same buildings in which, five to ten years ago, the cost would have been about $7 000 to $8 000 a year. So what I am saying is that in the professional sector, in the commercial sector, in the tourist sector, in the manufacturing sector, but probably not in the sugar industry, the regime of high energy cost in Barbados has had a negative impact on the possibility of the various sectors to maintain given levels of employment and has, in fact, resulted in unemployment. Those are facts. 12.50 p.m.

I have spent almost two years between 1979 and 1982 paying the most detailed attention to the basic principles behind energy costing and its impact on the wider aspects of the economy, and I will tell you where the major change took place. You know perfectly well it was in 1979 that this doctrine of energy conservation, through high price levels, was first invented at that major conference in South America. You may recall when it was.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We are coming to an end, but I find it remarkable that the honourable Member can make a statement that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the job losses is due to energy. If one analyses the economy of Barbados, one will see that in agriculture it is totally impossible for that to have occurred.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation, I did exclude the sugar industry.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The sugar industry is not the whole of agriculture in any event. As far as manufacturing is concerned, the honourable Member has had to concede that he was surprised at the very small percentage of energy in relation to manufacturing cost. And I would like to know what has energy got to do with the restrictions that were introduced in Trinidad and Tobago.

The fact of the matter is very simple. A number of the job losses were occurring in Barbados because of the lack of demand for the particular product and the structure of the manufacturing industry. So what has energy got to do with that? In any event, in relation to energy cost in Barbados, the Electric Company has repeatedly pointed out that on a comparative basis throughout the Caribbean, with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, we are lower than anywhere else, and these were our competitors within CARICOM market, so your argument cannot hold water in that respect. It can hold water if you are talking about that part of our manufacturing that exports back to third countries, but there again, an examination of the enclave manufacturing sector will show that their employment has gone up, notwithstanding the question of energy cost. Their concern is not energy cost; their concern is reliability of delivery of energy particularly from the Light and Power, because they say that when you talk about Puerto Rico, when you talk about the Far East, Barbados has the best reliability factor in relation to the production of electricity. Again, you are barking up the wrong tree.

In respect of tourism, it is known that in tourism a great part of the loss of tourists coming to Barbados arise from factors outside the control of Barbados. And since the recovery of the United States economy, the tourist sector is going back up. In addition, there is scope for energy conservation in the tourist industry, and we have done a lot of work in relation to that.

The only other area would be the distributive sector, and the job losses in the distributive sector simply arises from the job losses in the other sectors, and the people do not have any money to buy the goods that the merchants sell. That is where you get job losses. So you have to get at your productive sector, the primary sources of earnings in your country.

I want to make it very clear that this question about public utility pricing, which the honourable Member has consistently espoused in here and outside,

has never received the cloak of judicial recognition, because the honourable Member was shut down by the Appeals Court for saying that his propositions were untenable in relation to the law of Barbados. They may be your views, and you are entitled to them in this democratic society.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order; I never went to any Appeals Court. Do you think I would be so stupid as to go up there and risk having to pay legal fees of almost $300 000 to $400 000 and get wiped out? I never went to any Appeals Court!

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The last thing I wish to say is that there is only one germ, and I will concede it because this is my nature in arguing. There is scope for the pursuit of rigorous examination of the waterworks costs in Barbados. This Government does not hide the fact. I am one of those people who thought that one of the prime agencies that should be pursuing the question of utilisation of wind power for production of electricity ought to be the Waterworks Department, and I have repeatedly said so. They have been mandated to do it, and they are going to do it. So do not say that energy pricing has caused any 15 per cent to 20 per cent loss. You would have to have brought an elaborate study showing the methodology in the study for me to accept that. The honourable Member's word on that is not acceptable.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, in moving that you report progress, I must say that one can depend on the honourable member for St. Michael South Central to always send us to lunch with his very uncomfortable statements, but I must confess the most innocuous I have ever heard from the honourable Member, I heard today. I am no economist, but in my very simple way, if you go to a hotel they will tell you, "we do not see the tourists coming, therefore we know we have no jobs."

Only yesterday the honourable Member for St. Michael West told this Honourable House how he would create more jobs and what was responsible for the job loss. He said he would go to Trinidad and he would make sure he had a chat with Mr. Errol Mahabir and with Mr. Chambers, and there would be a reconciliation between the two countries, and that we should put more money into IDC and create more jobs. Today, you hear a different story from the very party!

These inconsistencies, these innocuous statements, are statements to catch the ears of the Press. But let me tell you something; as Leader of the House, I am prepared to let you go on with this. You can take two days to debate one item, and if you believe that you can set the stage in here, we can out-talk you today and catch the Press. I do not know why the Chairman of Committees does not ask some of you to sit down.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. L. R. TULL: 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. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

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

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

1.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is 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 resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. The honourable Member for St. Peter has caught my eye.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I join this debate to reinforce the sentiments of the Prime Minister, but particularly to reflect on two points of issue which were raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. The first concerns the relationship between the price of energy and the need for conservation, and the second has to do with the relationship between our energy policy to cost of energy and utilities in general, and the level of unemployment.

The acceptance of the need for energy conservation – and I take it that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central accepts the need for energy conservation – implies the inferential acceptance of two other considerations. The first is that there is a need for energy conservation, because energy is a scarce resource and we have to do whatever is necessary to reduce its utilisation, whether this be in the form of reduction per unit of consumption or whether the reduction takes the form of a fall in its use by the industrial sector. Secondly, the acceptance of the need for energy conservation

implies that we accept that the resource energy is now being used relatively inefficiently and that we have to do whatever is necessary to rationalise its use.

For us in small Third World countries, there is indeed a third consideration. For us energy is still very much an imported commodity, and its import stakes a claim on the use of an additional scarce resource, foreign exchange; so much so that we have to attach to the use of that scarce resource, foreign exchange, a social cost which is in fact higher than the market value of energy itself.

My point, therefore, is that if we accept that energy is a scarce resource, and that it is necessary for us to devise measures to reduce its use, I fail to understand, and indeed the imagination boggles as to how we can succeed in encouraging the private sector of this society as well as the household sector to reduce the utilisation of energy for conservation purposes by lowering its price.

I would urge the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central to reflect for a minute on his theory that the way by which you would encourage the people of Barbados to reduce their consumption of energy is by making the energy cheaper. If we understand conservation to mean that we ought to induce our industrial sector to use energy efficiently, given that they are not using it efficiently at present, I also fail to understand how such efficiency could be induced by removing the penalty that now takes the form of a realistic price for the resource. Clearly if at existing prices energy is being used inefficiently, it must follow that if we were to reduce the price, the incentives to bring about an efficiency that we see and we think are desirable would in itself vanish. So on those two grounds there can be absolutely no argument at this juncture in our development for the lowering of energy prices if our objective, through an energy conservation programme, is either to reduce the consumption of energy or to bring about efficiency in its use.

Perhaps the argument can be stated in a far more simpler way. We have since 1973, if the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is not aware of it, had to live in a world in which one of the principle economic features has been an astronomic rise in the cost of energy, and it would seem to me that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central would want us in Barbados to create an idealised world of our own, a world in which the Government would be the only people on the face of the globe who practised a low energy pricing policy in the context of the situation where for the rest of the inhabitants of this globe the price of energy has increased.

I want, above all, to deal with the question of the relationship between the cost of energy and the level of unemployment, and I want to submit to the Chamber that the argument advanced by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is merely an argument of convenience. When it suits his purposes, he tells us that the level of unemployment in this country is caused directly by the high level of Government taxation and can be particularly seen as being related to the high level of stamp duties, consumption taxes and the like. That is when it suits his purposes. Equally, when it suits his purposes, he tells us that the high level of unemployment in this country has to do with the size of our fiscal deficit and the way in which that fiscal deficit squeezed credit to the private sector has reduced its capacity to employ. Again, when it suits his purposes, he tells us that the high level of unemployment in this country has to do with the nature of political differences between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Trinidad, leading to a loss of jobs in the industrial sector. Today, it suits his purposes only in so far as we are discussing this particular item to deal with the problem of unemployment from the perspective of an energy related problem.

I want to deal with the facts as they stand. In our major productive sectors in which energy is a factor, the reality is that energy constitutes a fractional part of the total cost of production. In the tourist industry, in which I will concede that the energy burden per unit of output is the sternest, the reality is that energy does not constitute on average more than 10 per cent of the cost of production. Indeed, a typical situation is that energy represents about seven per cent of the cost of production. He has indeed admitted that he is not prepared to accept that energy and the cost of energy represents the basic cost of the loss of employment in manufacturing. So that it is altogether an entirely erroneous impression when he says that we can hold the price of energy responsible for as high as 15 per cent of the total loss of jobs in this society.

I want to suggest, as has been suggested by the Honourable Prime Minister, that a large part of our unemployment problem has to do with the availability of markets. And as I have said in my previous submissions in this Estimates debate, I would urge the honourable Members on the other side to join us in steering our economy away from markets which are largely dead towards markets which have a degree of vibrancy, and will enable the people of Barbados to look forward to the prospects of growing in terms of employment as those markets grow.

I would also argue the case that this low energy policy that is being advanced by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is but part of his idealised approach to economic policy. He would have us believe in this country that we can live in the context of a situation in which you can have a low interest rate, irrespective of the rate of interest which applies abroad, just as we can

now have a low energy price irrespective of the price which prevails abroad. He would have us believe that we in this country can live without a fairly substantial public sector deficit, as if he does not realise that in the public sector deficit there is a grain of hope for increase in employment. He would have us believe that we in this country can grant subsidies, perhaps as much as $78 million, to the sugar industry, as if the granting of such substantial subsidies would not be in themselves a means by which we have to increase taxation on the backs of the people of this society. He would also have us believe in his idealized scheme of things that we can meet any social programme without reference to the sources available for their subsistence. I see the statement by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central as purely a political statement on the eve of a possible election, which is meant not to convey a serious economic policy on the part of his party, but merely to gather votes from unsuspecting persons in this society. 2.10 p.m.

In the context of a situation in which we understand that energy conservation must mean that we have to reduce its use or find methods to encourage the productive sectors to use that resource more efficiently, then I am suggesting to the honourable Member that it is total nonsense to tell the people of Barbados that we can cause the total consumption of energy in this society to be reduced by making that resource cheaper. I equally submit for his consideration that there is absolutely no way that we can cause people in the productive sectors to use a resource more efficiently if we seem to do so by making that resource cheaper than it presently is.

I am pleased to support the very strong arguments advanced by our Honourable Prime Minister, that we in this country must maintain a realistic energy pricing policy which recognize that we have to attach to the use of energy, a social cause which might be higher than the market value that you attribute to the resource in question.

Applause.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I have never heard on the floor of this House, the rubbish which the World Bank approve at Paramaribo in June 1979 find such unconscionable expression as far as it affects the people of this country. I have already said that I support an energy conservation policy by using methods other than unreasonable increases in the price of energy. I am irrevocably opposed to unreasonable increases in the prices of energy in Barbados as a tool for energy conservation, bearing in mind the social consequences of such a policy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I believe I heard the Prime Minister say.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am responding to what he just said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If you would.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He just said that I said "low energy prices". I said, "Unrealistically high energy prices".

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I just want to know if my hearing is correct. I think I remember hearing the Honourable Prime Minister say there was no increase for three years.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is not correct. I participated in a Light and Power hearing only year before last. There has been a substantial increase by almost seven per cent to seven cents a kilowatt hour. If the honourable Prime Minister said so, he was incorrect.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, if the Honourable Prime Minister said so then, it was a mistake. I was an objector in the rate hearing only year before last, when there was a substantial increase in the cost of electricity.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You are an objector, period!)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Let us deal with this first point of using prices as a conservation technique in a society of this kind. You are talking virtually, as some people put it, of the effect of a tax on the pockets of people. You tell an old age pensioner in Barbados that you want her to use less energy by increasing the price of energy to her, you go to St. Peter and argue the case. I am not prepared to go to St. Michael South Central and argue that case in the context of Barbados. In the context of the United States, yes, but not in the context of Barbados.

He said that when we are talking about taxation, I said that this has contributed to unemployment in Barbados. Yes, that is so, but we were not talking about taxation. He said that I said that the size of the Government deficit, since it has to be met out of taxation and other means, has contributed to unemployment in Barbados. Yes, I have said so, but we were not talking about the fiscal deficit on this occasion. When you talk about political differences between Barbados and Trinidad contributing to unemployment. Yes, I have said so, but we were not talking about that on this occasion.

The point is that there are a multiplicity of factors contributing to unemployment in Barbados. And in the discussion of energy, I am prepared to deal with the proportionate part played by unrealistically and unnecessarily high energy prices in Barbados. I have put that figure at between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of job losses in Barbados, that is, somewhere between 2.7 per cent and 3.6 per cent of the existing 18 per cent

unemployment in Barbados. I am saying that between 2.7 per cent and 3.6 per cent can be attributable to unnecessary high energy cost in this country.

I have followed this debate in this Chamber. We have locked horns with the honourable Prime Minister, when he was responsible for energy, on many occasions. He knows my views. I know his views. I have been informed, to some extent, in some of the energy details that he has given on the energy sector, and he, I believe, has benefitted from things that I have said in relation to energy over the years. So this is not a discussion that started today. And for a newcomer to come to this Chamber and insinuate that anyone is talking nonsense in relation to a continuing debate in this Chamber over the past five years, I think is the most despicable height of arrogance.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You need not be provocative.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think it is appalling to hear this kind of unconscionable thesis being put forward in this Chamber.

We had a responsibility to put a case before the Public Utilities Board, two senior economists and I, and many other people examined, very carefully, the impact on unemployment, the effects of unemployment on the household. We discovered that when a man gets paid his weekly wage or his monthly salary, there are certain deductions that come from that automatically, and high on that list of what has to be paid is the cost of energy, electricity bills and gas bills. As they rise, plus as the cost of other things like food rises as a consequence of high energy cost, he has less money to spend to employ people in his household.

Domestics have lost their jobs in Barbados because of the high energy prices in this country. That is a fact. A man who is faced with a $200 a month bill for electricity now who used to pay $100 a month, has to cut back on certain domestic expenditures. There is only a limited extent to which he can cut back on food. He can cut back on his electricity bill only to a given extent. If you look at how the rates for electricity are structured, you would see that there is only a certain amount that you can cut back on. Therefore, I would say that a number of the job losses in homes has been due to the high energy cost that people have to meet in their homes, electricity, gas and water costs, 57 per cent or thereabouts of which you can attribute to energy. I have said it on the Floor of this House before. So you start off in the home.

Now the man has got a larger amount of money taken away from him to meet these essentials. He has to pay his Light and Power bill, he has to pay his gas bill, he has less money to spend on food, which itself has become more expensive because the supermarkets have higher energy bills. So he spends less, he has less disposable income. And when he spends less in Bridgetown, that is going to create unemployment in the commercial sector in Barbados.

2.20 p.m.

The same businesses which will have fewer customers spending less money now find themselves with a higher energy bill. That is another factor that is going to militate against their capacity to maintain the same levels of employment. You can, for example, take BICO. I can get down to the basics, because I have gone from business to business in Barbados and looked at the energy bills when we were trying to impute the unemployment levels in this country. We did not just go into a PUB hearing and shoot our mouths off just like that. We did a detailed study on the impact of energy prices in Barbados for three successive hearings relating to energy in this country and the sending home of people, and to be told that you are talking foolishness.....

Certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) at this stage were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: We understand what goes on at the business level in this country, and we know that when a man is faced with water bills and electricity bills, and other inescapable fixed costs, then he can only try to keep his business afloat by cutting back on those costs which he can reduce. That means putting people on short time or sending home people. That is the first step they are going to do. That is the way it operates in Barbados.

We have looked at this matter very, very carefully. We have looked at it in relation to tourism, and we were satisfied that it was a very important cause of unemployment in the tourist industry. It also tends to exacerbate the seasonality of employment, apart, of course, from the fluctuations in income coming from the tourists. Those fixed costs have been one of the factors that have forced many hotels to close their doors during the summer in the past two or three years, when they would have maintained minimum staff. That is a fact. People that would have gotten a few days work got none because of those high fixed costs in the hotel industry. Yes, energy costs, very high water and electricity bills in the hotel sector.

We looked at this in detail. As a matter of fact, Sir, there is another study that has been done by an independent group in relation to energy in Barbados. I believe, but I am not sure whether the Government was involved in this and whether or not the Prime Minister, when he was Minister of Energy, initiated that study. The impact of energy on unemployment in the hotel sector

has been looked at. I have conceded that we probably went a little overboard in our estimates in relation to the impact on the manufacturing sector, we probably over-estimated the job losses as a result of energy in the manufacturing sector, because we were not in a position to challenge the manufacturers on their statements. But since they are the people more intimately involved in the exercise, we accepted what they said, and, in fact, when this matter was dealt with, we made that concession in respect of the manufacturing sector.

We are talking facts about people who have been involved in these not only on a conceptual basis, but also looking at the viability of hotel plant by hotel plant, size by size; by going into Bridgetown and looking at the operation of the stores in Bridgetown and the impact of energy costs on them. We have gone so far as to look at the impact of energy costs in the supermarkets. We have seen what has happened to the prices of goods which have to be continuously kept in a deep freeze or kept cool, and we have got information from one or two of the major supermarkets as to the impact of those prices. We have looked to the cost of storage of perishable items in Barbados. We have gone to the main private storage depot in this country and we have looked at the escalation of costs and the impact of those costs to the final consumer of Barbados. But he tries to discredit what I say by saying I am talking nonsense. This is five years of work. We have travelled around the world collecting data relating to the impact of energy prices between 1978 and today, so I will issue a word of caution. Remember that when you are talking, you are talking to people who have been dealing with these matters and people who know and can identify persons who have lost their jobs in specific enterprises as a consequence of energy costs. I can take you down the west coast and show you hotels in Barbados that, for the first time, closed for the summer immediately after the increases granted to the Light and Power the year before. That is one of the factors that influenced that decision.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not saying it is the sole factor. I say of the 18 per cent unemployment, between 2.7 per cent and 3.7 per cent can be attributed to the accumulative effects over the years.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is one of the factors, and an important one. When you translate that into the number of heads, you will see that you are talking of domestics and shop assistants, of a whole range of people in Barbados. There are many men in Barbados who you used to see driving a truck and would always have another helper on that truck. Talk to them; they will tell you that since the increase in costs of gasoline over the years, they now find it difficult to work with another man, although they would prefer to have another man. Talk to the taxi drivers and you will find out the impact that has had on their operations.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will come back again if necessary. I think that I have made my point, that it is one thing to get up and talk in vague generalities without looking at the human suffering and translating that into human terms in the context of this country, which I am sure could have a lower energy price structure if Government had taken a different overall policy towards energy. But it is a little late now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I listened to the speech of the honourable Member for St. Peter, and I did not think that the soft words he spoke would have generated so much heat. I will urge honourable Members to conserve their energies.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is obviously hurt and very much wounded. I would suppose that after five years of sterling effort and one were to challenge his research, particularly if one is the most junior Member of the House, he would be hurt, and that he would want to indulge in abuse.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to know what rule has been broken.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I welcome the challenge from the most junior Member, but I think he is most discourteous to be talking nonsense.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order, whatever.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If after five years of study, he came up with the astounding conclusion, by whatever methodology, that there is a relationship between the price of energy and the layoffs of maids in the households, I would think that we ought to suspect that research and wonder whether five years of research was done, and whether or not the honourable Member should not have used his time more profitably in his chosen profession.

I submit for the consideration of the honourable Member that he is really overstating his case, and my argument is two-fold. One, if we want to live in an idealized world, then we contemplate a policy of cheap energy prices. But the world around us, since 1973, has been a world in which the price of energy has risen, because of factors entirely outside of our control.

2.30 p.m.

My second argument is that if we understand energy conservation, to apply measures to reduce the consumption of energy, or alternatively, measures to increase the efficiency of the use of energy, then I fail to understand how he will encourage people to reduce their consumption of energy or to rationalise its use by making energy cheaper than it is presently today, a clear relationship, if you must know, between the price of a commodity and its consumption.

In addition, my argument in relation to the question of the unemployment effect is a simple argument, to the effect that the honourable Member might well, indeed, be overstating the extent to which we can attribute unemployment in this country to the fact of rising energy prices. I recognize that there must be some relationship between the two, but I can advance for the consideration of the honourable Member on the other side that the rate of increase in the wages in this country over the last three years has outstripped the rate of increase in energy prices. Am I not, therefore qualified to argue that we can perhaps even more attribute unemployment to the increases in the rate of wages? He is overstating the case.

The only sector of the economy in which he is prepared to say that the energy factor has an impact is the tourism sector. He says this is no problem to manufacturing. He has even conceded that it is no problem in sugar, no problem in agriculture. It is a problem, he says, in tourism, and within tourism we are arguing on this side that in the sector it accounts for 10 per cent of the cost. The position I put before us is that if in the context of the tourism sector it accounts for only 10 per cent of the cost of production, I fail to understand how his five years of research could lead him to the conclusion that a rise in the cost of energy could lead to a 15 per cent change in the level of unemployment in this country. I would urge the honourable Member to reflect soberly, and without abuse, on these considerations.

My final point is that if he wants to live in an idealized world, we will have no interest rates, no Government deficits, large subsidies to manufacturing, large subsidies to the household sector, large subsidies to tourism, a grand gift to sugar and the like. That is, I am suggesting to him, the context in which his policy not only in relation to energy but in relation to the management of this economy as a whole, would be constructed. Our policy, however, recognizes that there have to be economic trade-offs, that we are living in an increasingly difficult world and that we must in setting not only our energy policy, but general economic policy, effect such trade-offs as are necessary within the prevailing context of the time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: This is not my view. It is statutory time and I would like to speak again on the matter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But the honourable Member....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Let us get this straight. It would appear to me as if there is an ensuing argument between the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the honourable Member for St. Peter. We have our different views, and you must call on the honourable Member to stop this repeating himself, otherwise I will surely have to introduce the guillotine on him. You just cannot continue all the time.

He has been lectured by an economist. This self-appointed, self-centred economist has been bluffing and arguing all day with a trained mind, and every minute he gets up, and is tumbled down. He has a back like a crocodile.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I would just like once again.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I cannot say one sentence?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member must take his seat.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The honourable Member is getting up with the sole intention of repeating himself.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And he has indicated it from the first few words that came from his lips.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You all can enjoy yourselves.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This subhead has had very extensive time for debate and....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I would just like three minutes to deal with this matter, which I am entitled to.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will let you speak for three minutes and after that I will hear from the Minister on the Government side, who will wind up the debate on this Head.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Not the Head, Sir, on the question of energy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, the subhead.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is on the question of energy. Let us understand this clearly.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Dr. R C. HAYNES: Sir, there are one or two points I would like to make. The first point is that no one seeks to advance the policy that seeks to isolate Barbados from the international movement in energy prices. What I am concerned about is the domestic factors, that is, Government policy, which has led to unnecessary levels of energy prices in Barbados way above those that would obtain in relation to the movement in international energy prices. That is the point at issue.

We are not trying to introduce an energy prices regime in Barbados which is unrealistic and unrelated to what obtains elsewhere in the world, which seems to be the main burden of the argument of the honourable Member for St. Peter. What we are saying is that there are domestic factors, as the Honourable Prime Minister knows only too well, which has led to a situation where we cannot, in Barbados, enjoy the benefits of a reduction in oil prices over the past three years. It is that aspect of Government policy that I am focussing on.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I did not say only in the tourist industry – the whole transport industry. Unemployment has been generated in the whole transport industry in Barbados because of high energy costs. Let us get that straight. And as anyone who has lived in Barbados and knows the life style that middle class Barbadians lived in over the years, would know, the high energy cost is the factor which has led to a reduction in the number of domestics employed in Barbados, or the domestics working two days or one day a week.

Every morning I used to see ten or 12 domestics passing in front of my house going to work. They came down to nine, they came down to eight, they came down to seven. Now, I see one or two on occasions. The number of people who have domestics have them on a part time basis, and the domestics will come and tell you from time to time about what used to be in the bridge and what is no longer in the bridge.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The three minutes that you agreed on are over. This will be the winding up on this subhead.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that Head 19 stand part, and in so doing...

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, you cannot entertain that, because you cannot use the guillotine until the time has expired and we are dealing with subheads within a Head. You know that very well.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member must understand that nobody is talking about a guillotine now. I am asking a Minister of Government to wind up the debate under this subhead. That is what I want to do to get ahead with the business of the people.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 19 stand part, unless my colleague.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to wind up. I think we have had a long and interesting debate, and I think that it is quite clear that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has, in the end, considerably qualified his position.

Aside

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, there are none so blind as those who would not see.

We cannot accept the honourable Member's contention that the public has not received the benefits in Barbados of the acquisition by Government of our energy resources, nor of the Government's pricing policy. It has been repeatedly pointed out that energy prices have not increased over the course of the last three years, and the mere fact that they have not increased over the last three years in itself amounts to a decrease, because the rate of inflation over the last three years is at least a minimum of 12 per cent, so therefore, by prices staying constant, the Government has passed on some benefit to the consumers.
2.40 p.m.

Secondly, and we must repeat this, by virtue of the fact that the Government has deprived the oil refinery of the benefits of the reduction in its cost of operation in relation to the cost of crude and has appropriated that benefit and shared it between the Treasury, the distributors and retailers, means that the consumers and the community has benefitted. Because if we did not get Government revenue from that source, through taxation, we would either have had to get it from another source, or we would have had to have had a reduction in capital expenditure of Government expenditure. As a matter of fact, – some of the wages that have been paid out in the increase in civil service salaries can be attributed to the Government's present energy policy. So you cannot have your cake and eat it.

On the question of domestics, it is my view, and I believe this will be shared by many others, that the general level of increase in wages paid in the hotel industry and other industries, and to Government maids in particular, is probably responsible for the fact that middle class people cannot afford to hire domestics more than anything else. While there is an economic theory that wage rates can create more unemployment than any other thing, it is a theory, I think I would like to see your evidence in relation to this area, but let us proceed. We have had this debate and the Government's contention

is perfectly correct, that it is impossible for the honourable Member to demonstrate by evidence that energy pricing in Barbados has caused a reduction in employment of the order of 15 per cent to 20 per cent.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that the sum of $6 626 438 under Head 19 – Ministry of Finance and Planning – as amended stand part of the Schedule.

Honourable Members in favour please say "Aye", honourable Members against please say "No".

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, there are one or two other areas under this Head that I wanted to look at. I notice that under this Head.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: I understood that Head 19 was passed. Is that correct? Did you not put the question that Head 19 stand part? Seek the Clerk's advice on this. I am quite sure it is recorded that Head 19 was passed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question was put and the "Ayes" voted. The position would now be to declare that the "Ayes" have it.

What really slipped me was the fact that the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) had indicated that he had some comments to make. He can possibly do so when it comes to the Capital Estimates, where land valuation or whatever it is could be raised.

HEAD 20 – REVENUE COLLECTION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $4 051 509 under Head 20 – Revenue Collection – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): I want to start off by asking one or two questions. The late Prime Minister of Barbados and former Minister of Finance, in talking about corruption in Barbados in the last public interview with Mr. David Ellis, talked about corruption in Bridgetown and in the Customs. Is the Honourable Prime Minister aware of any corruption in the Customs Department? If so, is he aware that this corruption probably militates, to some extent, against Government's policy in relation to illegal imports of garments, a factor which has been occupying the attention of the manufacturers in Barbados for some time? My recollection of the interview of the late Prime Minister and former Minister of Finance is that there was a clear suggestion that there are certain groups, or certain individuals, who might have been able to bring some sort of influence to bear on customs officers, and the net result of that would probably prevent us from seeing the full effects of Government's policy in relation to the illegal importation of certain garments.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): There is a view amongst some of the manufacturers that one of the causative factors of their problems in the garment industry, in particular, is that a small number of customs officers are under the influence of some importers in Barbados. I have heard that view expressed. Whenever it has been expressed, I have always pointed out that Barbados has a Director of Public Prosecutions, it has a Commissioner of Police and a Public Service Commission, and in addition to all that, I have said, and the former Prime Minister has said, that if they could provide any evidence of whatever quality they had, we could give them the guarantee that a full scale departmental investigation would take place. That is the position of the Government.

There have been one or two investigations into allegations with respect to customs officers and improper conduct. One or two of these cases, I believe, were settled by nature of the fact that while the investigation was going on, the relevant officers closed investigation by resigning. A man is free to resign. If you make an allegation against me in respect of my job, I may say I do not want you to have any investigation on me, and I resign.

We in Barbados have had for the last eight years that I was a Minister more than one group of experts examine the garment industry in Barbados. Indeed, the latest examination was an examination that took place at the whole level of CARICOM, and there have been more confirmatory views and more unanimity among the investigators that the causative factors of the problems of the garment industry are that the manufacturers are simply not producing to a large measure, at the requisite price, the goods that the people who have to spend the money want, rather than illegal garments. I am not going to say that there have not been illegal garments in Barbados, I am not going to say that there are no illegal garments in any part of the Caribbean, but I dispute the statement that the cause of their problems is the fact that illegal garments come in.

2.50 p.m.

We do not want to see illegal garments in Barbados. As a matter of fact, as a result of a meeting that was held – I believe it was in November, 1983 – a whole regime was agreed upon by the manufacturers, the importers and the Ministries, and that regime has been put in place. The regime consists of a tightening up of the labelling laws to ensure that there is an integration between the grant of a licence and the disclosure of the imports in relation to the particular licence, a great increase in the penalties and a general tightening up of the inspection powers, and it has been backed up by a tremendous increase in the number of enforcement staff.

I can disclose it, since the honourable Member asks us about it on the floor of the House. The Government has brought in as an advisor in the Customs Department, a specialist obtained from the United Kingdom, a man whose specific background was many years of enforcements in a particular area in the United Kingdom. I am not giving you his name, because it would be wrong, but I am telling you that we have working along with the Customs Department in Barbados an advisor looking further at our systems, and we have passed the laws.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: We know his name).

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am glad that you know it, so you can tell your friends in the Manufacturers Association that the Government has set up the machinery, and all the information they have about illegal garments, go tell them. I am not an investigator of illegal garments.

The position with the Government is that we pass laws and we facilitate them that the people can do the jobs. Let your friends in the Manufacturers Association, instead of trying to play politics, understand that the machinery is in existence. Let them prove before the courts, before the Commissioner of Police, before the Director of Public Prosecutions, who are the illegal importers. I am more interested in that. I can give them the guarantee that if the Constitution allows us, anybody we find guilty and they do not belong to Barbados we will deport them. I have always said that. The former Prime Minister has always said that we are not interested in covering up anybody in relation to these matters, so there is no question of insinuating or suggesting that the Government wants to go soft on anybody. The Government is not interested in that.

On the other hand, you must recognise that one of the problems about the garment industry is that any Government that tries to provide the level of protection for a garment industry which the consumers in their country do not feel is the right level, suffers from the problem of the consumers finding ways and means of circumventing the laws. It happens. The United States, with its quota system, has the problem. The United Kingdom has the problem. Trinidad has the problem. Everywhere that I know of, if you have too high a level of protection, you have this problem of circumvention.

This Government is convinced in its mind that the proper way to deal with this matter is at the CARICOM level. That is why we moved the Resolution to have a common method of protection. That is why we strongly supported the Garment Industry Commission. That is why we have sent and made our comments on the report, and we will continue to do that.

I am aware of the fact that allegations have been made. I am aware of the fact that one or two specific instances have been investigated, and I am aware of the fact that, certainly in one case that I can recall, one officer resigned when once the investigation took place. The honourable Member can draw what conclusion he likes. I think it is more confirmatory of the Prime Minister's position that there is a scintilla of evidence, that there is some truth in that allegation, than it is otherwise.

I am not telling you how it is done. I do not even know how it is done, because that is the job of the Customs. I can tell you that we have created at the top level a number of new posts to provide promotions and things like that. I can tell you that we have people being trained in California now, and some went to France. We have this advisor, and we have also instituted a surprise search system. I am not telling you how it is done. I do not even know how it is done. I do not want to know, I only want to know that it is done thoroughly. That is our position in relation to that.

Yesterday the question was raised, and I will draw it to the honourable Member's attention again. We said that in the area of Customs we had an Acting Comptroller, and this was one of the two jobs in the Civil Service at the higher level – there were two Permanent Secretaries, you will recall I said yesterday, who were acting, and there were two Heads of Department. I said Customs was one and Information was the other – and we are trying our best .....

(Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Transport and Works, too).

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That was probably the Chief Technical Officer. The position is that we are trying our best to see that the post of Comptroller is filled at the earliest opportunity, which I believe would also help.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think we have had a pretty comprehensive answer to the questions. I think that basically the Honourable Prime Minister is not in a position to say that there is corruption, although inferentially there is a possibility, one can say, that he will support the view that there might be.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member always seeks to put words in the mouths of other honourable Members.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, I think the Prime Minister can speak for himself.

I think it is important to have had this matter scaled down somewhat in size, in that the general tone of the presentation by the Honourable Prime Minister would suggest that if there was corruption in the Customs Department, then only very few people are likely to be involved.

He also sought to convey the message that the problem has its genesis in the failure of the manufacturers in Barbados to respond to changing circumstances at an international level in relation to their own businesses, in

two ways. One, that Barbadians expect a higher level of finished product at a lower price and, secondly, that the manufacturers have to look very carefully at the long term dangers of an import substitution policy in the overall development of the country.
3.00 p.m.

It would seem to me – and I can speak on this – that if there are illegal garments coming in, then every effort should be made to stop that. If it is Government policy not to offer undue protection to the local manufacturing industry, in the longer term interest of the manufacturing sector itself, then I think the Government has to carry out a more effective educational programme and has to put resources behind the manufacturers to enable them to convert plant into a producing unit that is no longer dependant on a local import substitution market or even the narrower CARICOM market, but which is geared to international markets. And it is one thing to tell the manufacturers to do that, but when you look at the type of plant that we have here in Barbados, particularly in clothing, in garments and in furniture, you would see that a substantial re-investment would be required if those factories are to be geared to take advantage of the kind of larger markets in the world at a competitive level. I would not go any further than that.

I do not know whether or not the manufacturers are right or whether the Government is wrong; whether in the midst of an economic crisis some element of protection should not be retained while you strive towards the longer term goal of reversing what was partially an import substitution situation in Barbados, where Bajans have to pay very high prices for quality garments and so on. It is a fact that they have to face. I am not like you all. I do not have to go out there trying to fish for votes, so that I cannot take into view the longer term interest of Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Revenue Collection, please.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Back to Revenue Collection, Sir. I think that I have made the point in my own way. It is for the Government to put the point in their way. They are in the saddle, we are not in it.

It would seem to me, and I believe that this point of view was canvassed in the House on two occasions, that if you were to look at the composition of Barbados' imports...

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: This is the same Head. This is the Head on Customs. I am talking about stamp duty collections. If you were to look at the composition of Barbados' import, and you were to subtract the re-exports and you were to look at all the exempt goods, take the totality of all the exempt goods.....

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am going to be circumspect on this occasion. I am going to say that if you subtract all the tax exempt goods then, in my view, a Stamp Duty of 10 per cent should yield more than $55 million in a fiscal year, because you are really talking about $550 million in imports. I do not have the documents here with me, but I think if you take food and medicines you would probably make some $350 million. I cannot remember the exact figures now, but I last looked at it about six months ago, and it seemed to me that, apart from food and medicines, if you are talking about $550 million, you are leaving very little there.

The questions I want to ask are these: Is this due to any inefficiency in the collecting system? I do not know; I am just asking, I am not suggesting that it is. Is it due to such extensive trade reflections from hard currency to soft currency areas in such a short period? That, I doubt, because looking at the supermarkets, I still see the same dominant brand of trade names, which I always understood was the limiting factor of inducement for importers to switch from hard currency to soft currency areas, in that they fear that they may lose a part of their market if they change the brand name, which they would not be able to capture in the future when other brand names might well be more familiar to the Barbadian public. This is how it has been explained to me by some of the barons in the commercial sector in Barbados. I do not know if that is correct, but that is the view that has been put forward to me. Of course, I was doing my best to encourage them to go to the soft currency areas for their imports – not to frustrate Government policy, of course, but in order that the consumers would get cheaper goods; not to stop the Government from getting as much revenue as possible. I would not do a thing like that, Sir.

My final point relates to the question of Customs collecting revenue for certain forms of gambling. I would be very interested in hearing the views of the Prime Minister, to see whether they would have changed with the assumption of office, on the question of casino gambling.

There were two persons who, by his silence, I could always have relied upon in the past to support me on casino gambling in this Honourable House, and they were the Honourable Prime Minister and one other honourable Member, by their asides. I know that office is weighty and could sometimes cloud judgement. I would be very

interested to know what his views are and how he feels about it. I sincerely hope that his views, which were that we should not have casino gambling in Barbados remain the same.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I should like to speak a little bit on the Transport Levy. Should we take it now in case we do not get – the Transport Levy comes under almost every Ministry, I am not taking any chances with it – to the Ministry of Transport and Works.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We will get to Transport and Works.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions on this?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I must answer the question in relation to the suggestion that the Customs Administration is not as efficient as it should be, and therefore we are losing revenue.

It is a matter of concern – I say so – that a superficial examination of the total imports of Barbados and the exemptions from the Stamp Duty reveals that we ought to be able to collect more than $55 million. At first sight, this is so. Within the group of Ministers who deal with trade, industry, import control and finance, this debate has been going along. The more and more we examine it, we have come to the conclusion that, partially, it may be to some lack of precision in our collection of machinery.
3.10 p.m.

But we also have found out a few things, and I think that I should say them, because they tend to debunk the theories that have been propagated by the honourable Member here. The nature of the exemptions from Stamp Duty that we have in Barbados are far greater than many people realize. One of the greatest is that if you are bringing in goods of $100 000 and over in value, you only pay $10.00. When you think of our imports, and when you understand that, in the context of Barbados, a large part of our goods are immediate goods, machinery in particular, you will understand that it is not possible to do an assessment by only deducting re-exports – one has to go further and do an in-dept analysis as to the utilization of the retained imports in Barbados.

This is another important fact. We also have to bear in mind that because of the nature of our manufacturing, there is a higher proportion of our imports that are, in fact, inputs into production and not eligible to pay Stamp Duty than one would normally think. So we have to do a much more sophisticated analysis of this. We also have the applications for exemptions, which are tighter and tighter. We set up machinery, because we feel that if you give off Import Duty and Consumption Tax, you have to pay some element of contribution to the Treasury in the sum of Stamp Duty.

It is interesting to note that there used to be cries on the part of many people that Barbados was breaking the CARICOM Agreement by having a Stamp Duty. We knew when we introduced the Stamp Duty that there were a number of other countries that had Stamp Duty, and when an analysis was done by the CARICOM Secretariat, I think it was discovered that eight out of ten of the territories had it, and one of the ones that did not have it has just introduced it. So I think that the utilization of a Stamp Duty is now common form in the Caribbean.

We are investigating whether there is evasion or inefficiency in the collection processes at the port and the airport.

I am not going to deal with the question of protection, because we are coming to Industry, and it would be irrelevant to this.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If you will just give way for a second, so that you can deal with this point without me having to get up and speak to it again, I understand that one of the problems in the collection is a question of training staff in the Customs and the number of staff. I understand this may be a problem, I do not know. I hear those complaints coming from those who should know. I do not know, I am just asking.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I know that the Government has nearly created 50 posts. I know that the Government has created promotional opportunities. I know we have people on training. I know we have people down there on a two or three year contract training staff. I cannot say this is a problem. We have been doing our best. It is in the Government's interest to have the maximum efficiency in its revenue collection departments, because then the honourable member would not be able to come in here and say that we have to raise additional revenue. There is no question that the Government is not interested. We are doing everything that we can to ensure that there is maximum efficiency. There is a feeling that there may be some question of under-invoicing. We are looking at every particular facet of the revenue collection. We are investigating it, we have got help, and we are trying to work on it.

The honourable Member is not going to, in any way, be able to score political points on gambling as an issue. If there is one thing that I think a consensus has been reached on on both sides of the House, it is that the Bill that was recently passed, with the support of the other side, with a complete and frank debate, in which

all sides recognized and understood that there is a limit which the public of Barbados will tolerate, it is that Bill. That Bill is the Bill that I supported on the floor of the House, and I am going to support it to the hilt, because it passed this House of Assembly, both sides of the House supported it, and it relates to sporting organizations and their freedom to raise money for their purposes. That is the Bill that we are going to support. If the honourable Member wants more freedom and he would like to change that Bill let him bring in a Private Member's Bill. Then he would see what our position is.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Under Subhead 1, VI, Land Development Duty Act, I particularly refer to the Order designated for the Land Development Duty Act. Within recent times, there has been a lot of concern about areas included under the Order, particularly the one dealing with the Spring Garden Highway. There should be some machinery that allows the public to comment and bring certain discussion to bear on the inclusion of separate areas under the Order, because it is a very delicate area whether or not a particular section will benefit from the infrastructural work carried out by Government and to what extent you will have any appreciation in value.

There is an area in Black Rock that takes access off the Black Rock Road. It is a *cul-de-sac,* but that is included in the Land Development Order for the Spring Garden Highway. Now I cannot in any way bring my mind to see how that particular proportion of land could have benefitted in any way different from the portion on the other side of the road, which is not on the Order, from the construction of the Spring Garden Highway. But those particular owners of land have no redress and no procedure open to them to make a case for them not to be included within the Order. I would like to hear the Honourable Prime Minister's views, or whoever deals with this, on the making of the Order and the concept that people involved should have the right of representation as to whether or not they should be included in the Order under the Land Development Duty Act.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): I want to lend my support to what my colleague, the honourable Member for St. Philip North, has had to say on this matter. I am not so sure if sufficient thought has gone into this Land Development Duty Act. The Honourable Prime Minister has said that we have experts in various fields, and I would suggest that he brings down an expert in this field as well, because not every parcel of land within the catchment area under the Order has necessarily appreciated from what works Government has done.

I have a case where a man bought a property in 1980 for $80 000. He sells it now for $115 000, approximately five years after. The way land values have moved within that five year period, as indeed evidenced by the Land Tax assessment, cannot be attributable to the Spring Garden Highway, but yet, at the same time the vendor of that piece of land has got to pay somewhere – I have not done any proper calculation yet – between $5 000 and $10 000 to the Government, when, in fact, his property cannot necessarily be said to have benefitted from the Spring Garden Highway or any other work that is carried on in that area.
3.20 p.m.

I know it is difficult. I cannot at the moment suggest any other way that the Government can set about applying this duty, except within a specified area, but I must repeat that not every bit or parcel of land of every property has necessarily appreciated because of these works. And when this happens, it really creates a hardship on a person who has sold his property expecting to get a reasonable price, perhaps expecting to move on to buy some other place. He has now to take a sizeable chop out of that sale price, and then find extra money elsewhere to buy property otherwise.

I would like to ask the Government to have another look at that again. I am not saying that it is all wrong, but it needs looking at very carefully, along with the question of Land Tax itself. In some respects, it is my opinion that some of the values have been placed too high for assessment purposes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I can state quite confidently that we really do not have a problem, that these problems are more imagined than real. If the honourable Members have a look at the Estimates of Revenue, they will see that this great tax that has caused all of this hardship, that is causing so much concern, only brings in $100 000 in the Estimates for this year.

The truth of the matter is that there has always been a lot of misunderstanding about the Land Development Duty. The Land Development Duty seeks to capture a percentage of increase in income in the value of the land within the scheduled area, and it is based on the assumption that if industrial works have been introduced in an area, it will result in an increase in the value of the land. So you have to have a base, and what we have found is that the pre-existing valuations very often are of such a level that because of the introduction of new works, there is not necessarily a significant increase in the value. And if you are on the perimeter, your argument is even stronger, because, by the very nature of being on the perimeter, your increase in value is far more difficult to prove.

I know people get frightened when they see these works. I remember the whole of the Cave Hill. I will never forget the Cave Hill arguments.

With the Land Development Duty, they started off with the East Coast Road, then the original Deep Water Harbour area, which would be now Fontabelle, then we had what used to be the Urban Development Corporation, the corporation that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central used to be associated with. Remember, we have abolished the Betterment Tax, because we have said that if you have changes in valuations every three years, you would be picking up on an incremental basis any increase in value, so you cannot get it twice. What we are left with now is that amount of increase in value which would be payable on the hypothetical situation of a sale, a realized sale, and the mitigating factor is that for each of the years that come subsequently, there is a percentage deduction. What more do you want? That is why we are only getting $100 000. That is nothing at all.

It is only imagination. It is fear. I believe it is only because of the fact that we have major highways going along now, and the potentiality of a little indirect political whip, that we may have heard this raised. But, as far as my memory goes, the originators of this concept, and certainly the embodiment of it in law, are the two honourable Members who raised this question.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I take no responsibility whatsoever for originating that concept. As a matter of fact, when I joined the Government in 1965, it was already on the Statute Book. It is the 1962 Act, if I remember correctly.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: All I am seeking is machinery whereby persons can make representations as to whether or not they should be so placed on the Order.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE (St. Lucy): I would like to add a little bit to this particular point as far as valuations are concerned. As a property owner, I do not really understand a particular problem in the parish of St. James. The value of a house is $234 000; then about a quarter mile away, five acres of land is valued at $800 and the value of the house is $923; and next door, five acres of land worth $80 000 is being valued at $802. I think that something is radically wrong as far as the Valuation Office in this country is concerned, and I would really like to have these things investigated, because there is no way we can have that fear.

Agricultural land, as we have said, is something that is not paying. You have to move from cane to cotton, you have to try peanuts, you have to try everything, and right now, percentage wise, it seems to me that land in the built-up areas is much cheaper than agricultural land.

I questioned the valuers, and they gave me the assurance that land in that area is being sold at some $25 000 an acre. I do not plan to sell my plot of land. I bought the land for my personal use, and when you are going to value my land, which I do not intend to sell, and when I am just doing agriculture, I am very concerned about it. They are trying to tell me that if I had this land to sell, I would get $25 000 an acre. But at $25 000 an acre, and it is five acres, that still would not reach $234 000.

How did they arrive at $234 000. There is an area at $923 and the other one is $802, and mine is all agricultural land being worked. It is not the levy or anything like that, it is land that is being cultivated, so I have to say that something is radically wrong with the Valuation Office in this country.

3.30 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I understand the honourable Member. Again, this illustrates the point. The system of valuation that we have is to base the valuation on what is called the *bona fide* and improved value, which is based upon the market value and its best potential use.

I do not want to have to give the honourable Member any free advice, but there is also a provision in the law that if the land is, in fact, used for a purpose which is not its best use, he can apply to the Valuation Department and get it valued at its existing use. And all land is presumed to be in agriculture, so the honourable Member can get a substantial reduction.

Aside

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It does not affect that. I know it happened in my constituency a lot, in Enterprise, because there were many people in Enterprise who had yam-growing land and Land Development Limited came in there and put in roads, water and light, and a revaluation took place in the whole of Enterprise. It is very simple. You put in your forms and you apply and you say that this land in fact is still being used at its pre-existing value and you get a certificate. Do not get frightened.

The problem with Land Tax is that it is such a mystery to people, and people get so afraid of it. There is also an Appeals Court. You may disagree with a valuation officer. I think a Mr. Husbands from Mandeville used to be the head of one, and I know that Mr. Haynes used to be the head of one, but we have Valuation Appeal Courts and little use is being made of them, so do not get afraid. There is machinery in the existing law to deal with the situation, and I do not think that the honourable Member for St. Lucy, in particular, would object a little later on, when he is not quite interested in the land for agriculture, to its true valuation, by which time it may be $40 000 an acre, that is, when he gets his Town Planning permission for sub-division. But that area is frozen.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It cannot be unfrozen so. You know that, too.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I must seriously defend the Valuation Department on this occasion. Taking everything into consideration, I really believe that they have done a good job in this recycle. I deal in this area daily, I deal with appeals, and I can tell you that from the quantum of appeals, when you consider that they are handling 63 000 parcels with the staff that they handle them with, I think they have done a good job. Obviously, there would be little problems, like the one the honourable Member for St. Lucy brought to our attention, but the procedures are there. I would also say that in the department you have officers who will listen to you, and if you put a good case, they would adjust it, so you need have no fear as far as that department is concerned.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I would like to raise one or two wider aspects of this whole question of land and property taxation in Barbados. Prior to, I believe it was 1978 or 1979, land taxes in Barbados for the overwhelming majority of people, people who had some sort of income, were not taxes as such, in that there was a concept of a gross rental value, which represents a very small percentage of the assessed value of the house, and against that punitive income of a gross rental value individuals were able to write off their Income Tax of money paid as land taxes, and, therefore, as far as the Treasury of Barbados was concerned, the payment of Land Tax in November and December largely represented probably over 90 per cent of cases in a situation where Government's cash flow was being improved at that time of year. Under the usual propagandist presentation of the Barbados Labour Party, they said that a man no longer had to pay for the right to live in his own house, therefore the nominal income of a gross rental value would be abolished and property taxes would no longer be deductible. The net effect of this, basically, was that land taxes became net overall revenue to the Treasury of Barbados.

Over the years, we have seen spectacular increases in the net amount of tax accruing to Government as a consequence of two things, valuations reflecting inflated values of properties in Barbados, and, secondly, the fact that these revenue are now totally net revenues. When the last valuation was done, and I pointed out that that valuation would probably yield an additional $4 million to $6 million in revenue, it was alleged that since the rate of tax would be reduced at the same time, then there would be no additional revenue to Government, and that the purpose of the valuation was principally to get around the cumbersome problem of land acquisitions, so that for the future, there would be no longer any argument between Government and the person whose property was being acquired, since the current land value would form the basis for the acquisition, a clear stimulus for people who lived along highways, or who live in the path of areas designated for future development, to go to the Treasury and get their valuations improved. I must say it was a very smart way of dealing with the matter politically, but the fact is that for this year, and I believe there is a mistake here in the Estimates, the estimated figure would be $27 million as opposed to $26 million last year, a year in which it was increased, as opposed to $21 million the year before, which means that the recent valuation, despite the lowering of the tax rate, represents a $6 million increase in property taxes for the people of Barbados. Looking over the seven year period, it means that the net inflow of property taxes to Government has moved from virtually a zero position, since as I said they were predominantly tax deductible way back in 1978, to about $27 million.

The first point I want to address, and I would like to deal with these things consecutively, is this: in a country where it has been stated that probably over 60 per cent of the housing stock of this country needs replacement, and a substantial number of the rest of the housing stock needs maintenance and needs improvement, is this a justifiable level of taxation to be levied on householders and potential householders? My feeling is that it is not. I think it is quite wrong to be looking at every possible source of revenue and, irrespective of the social consequences, just tax people right, left and centre in order to conform with certain pre-conceived notions of the developmental goals for which one should be aiming. I feel that Government has to look very clearly at this question of taxes, and if they want to buy your property for half a million dollars and you know perfectly well that under the current market conditions if you go to sell that you cannot get more than a quarter of a million dollars or $150 000, let them value it at whatever they want to value at, but let the rate of tax be substantially reduced in order that people will be able to pay a reasonable tax and continue to live in comfort in their homes.

3.40 p.m.

I have warned this Government again and again that the many impositions on the households of Barbadians will ultimately have a destabilising effect, particularly when you are dealing with property and housing, which represents the principal form of savings, and often the only form of savings for over 95 per cent of people in this country, and certainly the only known form of savings which people aim towards which gives them some protection over the long term effects of inflation. Deep in the psyche of Barbadians from generation to generation has been the principle that one of the things you wish to do is to own your own home, and the Government might well find itself promoting social instability through the levels of taxation in the home. In the Budget, I will deal

with other aspects of property taxes and other things that have occurred, which are very serious, as far as the home is concerned.

There is little point talking about housing a nation and not looking to see what is happening. What the honourable Member for St. Lucy was saying is absolutely true, that there are many situations where the taxes levied on property in Barbados are confiscatory of the assets of people. There are many old age pensioners who retired from the Public Service ten or fifteen years ago and are probably collecting a couple of hundred dollars a month, who may have a house in Rockley or somewhere like that that they built 20 or 30 years ago with the sweat of their brows and the blood on their hands, as weekend after weekend, night after night, they built those houses with their friends, probably costing them about two or three thousand dollars, and who, now that they have managed to reach retirement, find that the taxes they have to pay on their property wipe out three or four months of the pensions that they receive. And now they have to become beggers, be dependent on their children and surrender their cherished independence which they have gained over the years. I do not think that is right, and this is reality.

Do not tell them that they can appeal against it. Many of them do not want to appeal, because there was a clear statement on the floor of this House not very long ago that whereas you can appeal and your appeal might be successful because you are poverty poor – listen to the words very carefully – an appeal might be successful but the liabilities might build up against your estate. Understand clearly what was said, that a man can have a house on which a value might be put at half million dollars but he cannot pay the taxes, that he can get a relief from the tax via an appeal, but over the years those taxes, those liabilities, will accumulate, so that when he comes to the point where he wants to pass on that property to a child, then the child will start off with that liability. That statement has been very damaging to the appeals procedure, and you will be surprised to know that it is not only in the middle class in Barbados, but throughout this society people are so *au fait* with matters relating to property and succession and so on that there are many people who would rather borrow and pay the taxes and go without eating than go for an appeal. The answer does not lie in an appeal, the answer lies in a more rational approach to the whole question of property taxation, to looking very carefully and see what has happened over the years.

I am saying this $27 million which will be yielded this year is a fantastic increase, probably a 2 000 per cent increase in real net yield to the Treasury of this country, and I am saying that this is wrong in Barbados.

I want to address the narrower principle of the methods of valuations of the market value. To me, it is fundamental nonsense to attribute the market value to all the properties in Barbados at any one given time in the year, because if they all came on the market at the same time, they could not have the value attributed to them. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that this valuation, which is alleged to be the approximated market value or the market value, is in many instances far above the market value. Try to sell a property today in Barbados that you bought three years ago for $150 000; you are lucky to get $100 000 for it. Speak to the commercial banks in Barbados and see the many offers they are getting, and foreclosures. There are many foreclosure situations where the banks started off with between 50 to 60 per cent equity in the property that was being acquired. For some reason or other, there has been default in mortgage payments, and if you look at the foreclosures, even the banks cannot recover today the proportion that they have in the particular property. I am saying that at the time of this valuation there was a substantial reduction in the market value of properties except for those who are living in a dreamer's world, and those who would seek to extract taxes from people at any cost whatsoever.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: With your usual courtesy, Sir, you would give me a minute.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You can have a minute to wind up. I do not think the Committee would object, but there are other times when you can come back to this when we get to other Heads. Have a minute, if you wish.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: There is one final point, Sir.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that Head 20 stand part.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is not so willing, but do it very quickly.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will leave it at this point, because I do not want any question on this.

The question that the sum of $4 051 509 under Head 20 – Revenue Collection – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

3.50 p.m.

HEAD 21 – STATISTICS – $264 703

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $264 703 under Head 21 – Statistics – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Over the years, there has been a lot of heated debate in this Parliament over the question of the functioning of the Statistical Department, the reliability of certain figures and the methodology used in certain areas, particularly in the area of the compiling of statistical information in relation to unemployment. Many battles have been fought on the floor of this House. Without going over ground which we have gone over for several years, my recollection is that it usually ends up one or two ways; either we are using the same statistics or the same methodology that have been used down the years, or you are casting aspersions on the integrity of civil servants in the Statistical Department. In these circumstances, and I think with a partially new dispensation, not quite as clever as using percentages as that to which we have been accustomed, I believe the time has come for him to look very seriously at this question of the collation of material, the methodology used and the accuracy of our statistics in Barbados.

Only recently, I pointed out to another honourable Member that there was one year where there was almost a hundred per cent error in the original presentation of the Gross Domestic Product of this country. It was corrected, but that was debated on the Floor of the House, even that particular error. The point I want to make is that I believe that we, in this country, have reached the point where we can have an independent Statistical Department outside of Government.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir; I have with me Debates of the 1984–85 Estimates. He started the same way on that occasion. I would like you to keep them in your hand, Sir, and see if the honourable Member is not going to recite the identical thing, word for word, as he did last year. I have been following him here all the time. It is a recitation, time wasting. He says the same thing over and over every year.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: It shows how honest he is.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Is that a point of order?

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress .....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Is that a point of order?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Leader of the House is entitled to do this and I am very glad he is trying to do so.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: .....for a ten minute break, and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: 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. S. CRAIG: I beg to move, Sir, that this sitting be now suspended until 4.10 p.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

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

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Thank you, Sir.

When I started to address myself to Subhead 1, Head 21, Statistical Department, I started with a very brief preamble that every year we have very heated debates on this subject and very seldom do we get anywhere. I do not propose to proceed along that path this year.

I believe that we, on both sides of the House, must be interested in the most relevant statistical information, because it is fundamental to the planning of Government that they must have this information available to them. It is equally important that those of us who are responsible for portfolios on this side that depend heavily on statistical information should have the information available to us as well, and the information should be correct. I do not believe that there is any area of Government that I know about where there is any need for any secrecy in relation to the collation of statistical material in Barbados. I believe, and I would strongly recommend to the Government, that the time has come when we

should probably be looking towards the build up of an independent Statistical Department, where information would be readily available to members of the Government, members of the Opposition, people in the private sector, to the entire community, because it is in the interest of all of us in order to be able to properly plan, and for the public to be properly informed about what is going on in the country.

If you were to look at the statements published in the Press on what is happening in the tourist industry, sometimes one wonders what on earth is going on in the tourist industry. One particular group comes out with one statement, then a couple of hoteliers, who might be doing well at the moment, come out with another statement, and those who are not doing so well come out with another statement. Almost every week you get a different picture in relation to the tourist industry. This kind of thing creates difficulties for people who are planning for the future. Indeed, I believe that one of the problems that has had an adverse effect on the private sector's capital position at present is that if you look very carefully at the investment portfolios of many persons in the private sector during 1979–1980, who may well have taken decisions for inappropriate expansion at that time, based on information fed into the private sector, then you begin to understand how important it is, in the interest of the owners of capital, in the interest of Government, in the interest of every single person in Barbados, to have a reliable statistical source in which they all have confidence.

I cannot help but refer in this particular instance to the former Prime Minister. I think he was dealing with this confidence aspect when he made the very valid point that until statistics appear in the monthly statistics of the Central Bank, they do not have the same credibility, although the sources are the same and although the Central Bank always indicates its source of information. That was a very valid point that he was making, and what he was in fact seeking to raise was his confidence in information made available to the public.
4.15 p.m.

I really do not believe that unemployment in Barbados is only at the level of 18.5 per cent, but I am not going to get into that argument. We have got into that again and again. It has been a sterile argument, and unless I am challenged on that, I am not prepared to pursue it. That is just my personal view.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order: As a Member of the House, I believe that my colleagues would like to hear from the Member of St. Michael South Central why he does not believe that unemployment in Barbados is at 18.3 per cent, as put out by the Statistical Department and the other Government agencies. Tell us why you do not believe it? I would like to hear. I would be grateful. I would like to be able to say, 'Yes I agree with the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, he is correct.'

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I believe that those informed on statistical methods have addressed their minds to that particular problem on the floor of this House time and time again. As I said, if the same built-in error or the same erroneous methodology is applied from year after year, then the relative percentages might well be correct. I said that it depends on the types of errors. In other words, if 15 per cent was wrong because of a particular error, when you get to 18 per cent, 18 per cent might still be absolutely wrong if the errors are the same. And in terms of planning in the area of job creation, you might get a completely wrong picture as to what you really need to do to address the problem of unemployment in Barbados.

It is that kind of intervention by the honourable Member of St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig) that eviscerates any sensible debate on statistical matters. His capacity to absorb the simplest concept is so miniscule.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Is he on his feet, on his head, or on his mouth? Which one?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, we are dealing with the statistical matter.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I just rise for the honourable Member to be able to help people like me, people like the fellow out in the street on whose vote he has to depend; not the member for St. Peter or the statisticians – simple, foolish boys like me. Tell me, is it higher or lower? I will put my neck on a block that you will say that it is higher. I am confident that you are going to say that it is higher. You do not agree with the Statistical Department; their methodology is wrong. But I would bet it has to be higher. You could not say that it is lower.

R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, there is no point wasting my time trying.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Help my brothers out there in your constituency. I can help myself. Tell them in simple language.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I believed that the honourable Member was only uneducated, I would speak to him. But he is ineducable, so I will not waste my time.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Just help the others out there like me. There are thousands of them out there like me.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You are ineducable. I will not waste my time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Both honourable Members, order, order please.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am still on my feet, I am not prepared to argue with the honourable gentleman about the methodology of statistics – I do not know anything about them. I am asking him to help the others out there like me. How does he arrive at it? If there are inconsistencies in the Statistical Department, I have no doubt in my mind that the figures can be either higher or lower, and I will bet that there are higher for him.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To continue, I believe that in the area of unemployment data, we need to move into a new era. I believe that the time is long passed when we should have a proper manpower survey done in this country. We are talking of a small population of just around a quarter of a million souls, and I believe that it is possible to get into every home in Barbados, not by a sample survey, and get the actual basic information as to what is going on in this country in relation to unemployment.

I do not believe that it would be an expensive exercise. I believe it can be done at the same time when a registration of the island is being done. You may have to invoke both the Representation of the People Act and the Statistical Act, and maybe have two sets of personnel going on – I do not know – but what I am saying is that it probably can be done at the same time for the convenience of the public.

It would seem to me that you need that kind of information not only to give the total number of people in need of jobs and to get better information of the types of jobs that need to be created in this country. It would help the Government and private sector very much in its overall planning, it would help all of us to get better information.

I cannot see how anyone can reasonably object to better information. Just as it is important that periodic reregistrations should be done for electoral purposes, similarly, timely and adequate revision of that information can be done. We are not a country of 200 million or something like this where it is impossible to go through this exercise. We are talking about a quarter of a million people, a lot of whom are outside of the work force anyhow. So it is quite possible for us to be able to get that basic information, and once it is done, I believe that all this argument over statistics in relation to unemployment will go.

There has been some argument, for example, as to whether or not in 1982 the forecast of our balance of payments position was correct or not. This is a technical area that I do not wish to get into. But what I do know is this.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Leave that for the Budget.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am dealing with statistics.

What I do know is that there are experts in this field who felt very confident that the prospects in respect of balance of payments position in 1982 were probably overstated. I said the projections in relation to our balance of payments position; in other words, that it was felt early in the year that it would be worse than it really turned out to be.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: No, not politicians. These were economists taking different positions. As far as I am aware, these were some criticisms levelled by economists at the projections by those employed by Government. I was an outsider in this business, so one might be right and one might be wrong – I do not know. It was bad enough anyhow; luckily, it was not worse.

I am prepared to get in the cut and thrust of other aspects under this Head if presented with the challenge from a source with a mind.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The challenge is time. One minute.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: A source with a mind; not the honourable Member for St. James North. You need a full manpower survey in Barbados an independent Statistical Department to which all sectors of the community have ready access, except, of course, if any very confidential material should arise.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): This is a subject on which I can speak long and with great passion, because I have had recently to make my living through economic research, and the availability of readily, precise and timely information obviously is a matter that has been of concern to me. But I want to make the point and say that in recent times, there has indeed been a tremendous improvement in the timeliness, precision, and the quality of information to the general public, and more precisely so to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, because we might well remember the numerous and various occasions on which he has brought to this House documents containing very important information for the purpose of seeking to embarrass the Government.
4.25 p.m.

Before I say other things, I want to salute the work that has been done by the Central Bank, in particular, in improving the quality of public information available to this country at large. I think I should also salute the work that has been done in the agricultural sector, by the BASIS system, in providing us with instant, precise and quality information in respect of agricultural production in this coun-

try, the prices of such production and, indeed, on many occasions, quality forecasts as to the situation in prices and quantity of production. We may also make mention of the work of the Manpower Unit of the Ministry of Labour of this country, which is now publishing a quarterly newsletter containing very vital information about the dynamics of the labour force in Barbados. Mention could also be made of the quality of the output of the Caribbean Tourism Research Centre, which is for sale and which might not be in the possession of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central purely because it is for sale. I do not believe .....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member will give way for a minute, the honourable Member must not poke fun at my poverty in this manner.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: My apologies to you, Sir. But, indeed, it is perhaps only an error that we can speak in this day and age of the policy of information in respect of the tourism industry in Barbados, and indeed in the region at large, because specialized institutions have indeed been evolving to cope with the problem of the availability of information, and I think that at this juncture our minds perhaps should be constructively exercised in respect of the manner in which those particular efforts may be strengthened.

There is one particular area that I really want to touch on, because I feel that the private sector in Barbados, as well as in the rest of the Caribbean, sits on a vast wealth of information which can be of use both to its academics and policymakers, but because of the predilection of the private sector towards being lobby groups rather than adopting a relatively large intellectual view of the world, a lot of the information which ought to be available to it is not properly collected, collated and published in a form that could inform public information. If we are going to be speaking in terms of institutional strengthening of our systems for the collection and presentation of information to this country, we have to recognize that the private sector institutions in this society have a tremendous role to play, and that it ought not to be seen as beyond their resources to really engage small but competent research units to provide jobs for economists, and sociologists as well, in order to address some of the deficiencies that face them where the availability of information is concerned. I think that until that day comes when the private sector, which sits on a large part of the information which is now missing, those institutions such as the Barbados Manufacturers Association, the Employers' Confederation and the Barbados Chamber of Commerce, see themselves as also having an intellectual role to play in this society, our system will always be relatively short on some of the more important information that is required to inform public opinion.

I want to touch on the notion of an independent commission to deal with the collection of our statistics. I am not aware of any country in the world where such a situation pertains, and it is not immediately clear to me how making the department responsible for the collection and publication of our statistics an independent commission will improve the system, until such time, as I said, we have addressed the problem at the core, which is to get those persons who really gather the information organized in such a fashion as to bring that information before the commission, whether or not it be independent of the state.

Sometimes there is great danger in having commissions which are independent of the purpose. Indeed, you do find sometimes that commissions which are not guided by public policy goals can very often get themselves caught up in red pieces of herring, very abstract pre-occupations. In this respect, I do not want to appear to be unduly harsh to the University of the West Indies, but it might well be true that a lot of its own research – and I am not only speaking of the problem of economics – undertaken in an independent frame of mind, has not really been sufficiently geared by considerations of public purpose. It is that kind of difficulty in getting independent commissions to define their own particular data in relation to public purposes which would urge me at this junction to suggest that we perhaps need to focus at this point in strengthening the sources of public information rather than concerning ourselves as to whether the commissions are independent or not independent. Indeed, I cannot understand what is the difficulty caused by not having our Department of Statistics constituted as an independent commission. I do feel that what is necessary, of course, is for the Department of Statistics to be so strengthened in terms of its institutional structure as to be able to provide us with better quality data, to be able to change its methodology as the structure of the economy has changed.

If I may give the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central an example, my own view of the situation this year is that the extent of stagnation in the industrial sector as reported by the Department of Statistics overstates negative growth in that sector, simply because our index of industrial production has not changed to accommodate itself to changes in our industrial system. Indeed, important areas of economic activity such as the information processing sector are not now part of the index of industrial production in this country. So, to my mind, what we need to do is to strengthen the existing institutions that we have to give them the capacity, whether it might be by way of computer facilities linked into more advanced computer systems or proper personnel, and facilitate the imagination to change the methodologies to accord with changes. We have to focus on these things with a view of getting the kind of information that this public really requires.

I particularly want to stress the importance of our bringing the computer in a very serious way to the whole

business of information collection and presentation in this society. The House may perhaps need to know that we have taken an initiative in the Ministry of Finance and Planning to start the business of computerisation of the Public Service with the Data Processing Unit as the core of the system, linked by way of network to a large number of participating institutions throughout the Public Service.
4.35 p.m.

Finally, I cannot help but make the point that I can understand the diffidence of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central with accepting some of our information, though as I very well recall, when we were at the height of economic difficulties, he had absolutely no problem whatsoever in expressing his confidence in the bad things then reported, whether it was by the Central Bank or the Department of Statistics. I cannot help but wonder whether his sense of diffidence has anything to do with the fact that the news he may have been hearing of, particularly in this year, is somewhat better news than the news he might have been hearing over the last four years.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW (St. Michael South East): Again we have listened to a clear demonstration of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) trying to throw doubt on certain established information. The honourable Member sometimes does not remember that the Barbados Statistical Service was set up in 1975 under the Democratic Labour Party regime, and in its first report, published then and available now, stated that there was an unemployment situation in Barbados as high as 22.5 per cent. It is the same Statistical Department, compiling the same statistics, making the same publication, that has published the recent unemployment statistics of 18.3 per cent. If the honourable Member doubts, or is throwing doubts, or seeks to establish that these statistics are fictitious or do not represent accurately the unemployment situation, then I can only say that he should ask himself, and honourable members from his side should ask themselves, why the same department which they set up is giving these figures. You have to doubt the statistics given in 1976 when they were in power as well as the ones in 1985, or you accept them in 1976, which most people in Barbados accept, as they do accept them in 1985.

I do agree that there is always some margin of error. Statistics are not going to be entirely accurate, but, nonetheless, we should take what has been a proven source of compiling and producing statistical data, and we should recognise the importance of the sample survey as conducted presently.

The honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) has struck a very salient note. With the use and more use of the computer, I am sure that we would at some time in the not too distant future be able to rely more heavily on the statistics as put out by that department. The situation is that in compiling these statistics, various departments, institutions and sectors are invited to participate, and when the information is compiled and ready, it is circulated throughout Barbados. It is based on such information that Ministries or Government departments are able to set about to look at the employment situation, the age group in which unemployment and employment needs to be addressed, and in the agricultural as well as the tourism sectors. All of them are scrutinised as a result of such statistics.

The honourable Member would convey to this Honourable Chamber, so I gather from what he has said, that there needs to be one department in which various sectors and organisations come together to assist in producing this information. That is even more difficult. You cannot do it by going house to house and asking questions. That is not the established practice. The honourable Member does not understand. The Caribbean Tourism Research Centre compiles information on tourism, and this information is not only accepted in Barbados as showing pointers and identifying the movement in tourism, but it is also accepted in other Caribbean territories. It is an internationally-accepted institution, and if the Government takes the figures as put out by that institution and quotes them in its Economic Report, then one could not question the integrity of that institution. But the honourable Member is now known to be one who grandstands and who is always politicking, and he has got to understand that at some time someone is going to question him and take him to task.

I said in here a couple of days ago that the public is a sophisticated electorate. You cannot take the Barbadian electorate for granted. They will show contempt for you when you seek to mislead and misinform them. There are some institutions that are accepted and their credibility stands high, and higher sometimes than the honourable Member's mouthings.

The Ministry of Labour has already set up a Manpower Unit with a view to collating and analysing certain statistical information, labour market information, and the Ministry of Labour has already put out several publications looking at areas such as population, the labour force and the employment and unemployment situation, including youth unemployment and employment. This information is available. It is available to the Barbados Employers' Federation, the Barbados Chamber of Commerce, the people involved in the agricultural sector, the Ministries, even to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. One would have thought that this sort of information is not available. One would have thought that the Government is not doing everything possible to produce information and statistics that could help us to determine a proper policy for the future of Barbados. This sort of approach must be stopped.

People must understand that reports and hard work, professional work done by professionals and people who are well qualified, unlike the honourable Member, must be respected. What, in fact, he has said today is tantamount to throwing aspersions on the people in the Statistical Department when he questions the analysis put out by that department.
4.45 p.m.

We in this Government are trying our best to find ways and means to have a more accurate picture of the employment and unemployed situation, and to this end, the Government has already allowed certain officers in the Ministry of Labour to go overseas to undertake certain courses so that they can return here and lend their experience to the development of such labour market and statistical information. I want this Honourable Chamber to know that the Government, while agreeing that we need to look closely at the statistical information, is not sitting down on its laurels and doing nothing, because we know that in order to develop this country and to be able to formulate proper policies, we must have proper and reliable and important statistical information.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Every year we have to go through the same exercise in this House of Assembly when it comes to the matter of examining the statistical information that is presented for the information of the public of Barbados, and particularly for the information of honourable Members who occupy this Chamber. Each year we have to endure a situation where the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) seeks to create the impression in the minds of the general public that there is a substantial element of unreliability inherent in the statistical method, and therefore we are not to trust any of the information which we get out of that available body of data. We have come to be accustomed to this approach by the honourable Member, but, nonetheless, I believe it is important that each year, as often as he gets up to cast aspersions and to bring questions to bear upon the reliability of the information, it is our duty to stand up as often as he does to give the lie to what he says, as long as that information that he brings is in itself unreliable.

During the time the Democratic Labour Party was in power, by their own statistical method, unemployment, as one example, stood at substantially over 22 per cent in this island. By that same statistical method today, not manipulated by politicians, because politicians are not the statisticians, and therefore one might expect that they would be inclined to bring a measure of subjectivity to bear upon the numbers, unemployment is down. The numbers are analysed by competent professional statisticians in the Ministry in the various departments responsible for that data, and with modern sophisticated computer systems they are able to analyse this body of data and they arrive at information which, I submit, is as reliable as any statistical data can get.

Reliable statistical methodology permits a standard error to be built into the system. In other words, one can assume that the data is based upon the degree of confidence or reliability that you want. One can build in a plus or minus five per cent element of reliability in the data, so you can say – and this is standard accepted statistical practice – that when you bring data it is plus or minus 5 per cent, or, depending upon how precise you need to be, you can even draw it closer than that. But it is foolishness for any sensible individual to stand up and say that in order to get reliable data in this day and age, one has to go around and count the head of every single individual. It is impractical, it is costly and it is foolish.

In the United States of America, in Great Britain and in places where statistical methodology is a very precise science, they are able to predict the outturn of elections counting 1 200 people in a population of over 250 million, plus or minus one or two per cent. The reason they can do that is because the methodology employed is sophisticated. That is a randomised sample. It gives everybody in the population an equal opportunity to be selected. That is the sample survey employed. Therefore, in a little puny place like Barbados, where you have to deal with 250 000 people, one can assume that competent statisticians can go to 250 or 1 000 households, as they choose to go, and out of that survey can bring back reliable information as to the number of people employed or unemployed in Barbados.

It does not suit in a sophisticated House of Assembly like this that we belong to, and with an informed electorate that we have in Barbados to deal with, for each year somebody to be getting up and saying that because the information does not suit them, the methodology was wrong and therefore it is unreliable. If it was good in 1976, it is good now. And the methodology has not changed, the only thing that would have happened is that it has improved – because you have computer assistance and you have speedier analysis, it has got better, more precise – and if the unemployment rate in Barbados at the moment is hovering somewhere in the neighbourhood of 17 per cent, then that is what it is, and that is still better, by any definition, than it used to be during the time the Democratic Labour Party was in power, bearing in mind that at the time when the Democratic Labour Party was in power the number in the work force was 89 000 and today there are approximately 112 000 in the work force.

We have enlarged the work force. These are not my numbers, these are numbers put out by the Central Bank of Barbados. I do not have anything to do with those numbers, and if you are to tell me that the people at the

Central Bank with Master's degrees in Business Administration, Masters of Arts and Ph.Ds in Statistics, are putting out wrong information just for the heck of it, then something has to be seriously wrong with our society.

Can we trust the institutions that are here to guide us or can we not? The same Central Bank which will serve you, if you ever get back in power, with the same people that you sit down in here day after day and cast aspersions upon, they are the same ones that will inform your judgment and guide you when it comes your turn to preside over the destiny of Barbados, and it is foolishness year after year to come in here and talk idly about the statistical outturn.

There are other areas of information. Government is always saddled with the responsibility of putting data for the information of other people everywhere else in the world, and Barbados is no exception. People who have interest in certain information must feel some responsibility to keep their own numbers so they do not have to say the numbers given are wrong. It is quite possible, given the present circumstances of Barbados, for the Manufacturers Association to get information on imports. They can get the information from the Customs Office and from the Ministry of Trade. The Board of Tourism can go to the airport and down to the seaport and get information on arrivals and departures, the Hotel Association could use that raw data and, out of that, they can cross check whether or not the information coming out of the Government agencies is reliable. So it is useless to constantly say the information is wrong.
4.55 p.m.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has been able to get everything in this world.

Aside.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I believe he has my Marriage Certificate and my Birth Certificate. He gets everything he wants. He should be able to get all of the raw data that is available to all of the persons who feed information into computers and get out numbers, and he should be able, therefore, to tell us, based upon the same raw data we use, whether the information is wrong or right.

He does not bring any evidence to show. He said he did five years of research. Five years of research and then to come up with a wrong conclusion! If he can do all of that, he and his colleagues over there can certainly tell me what the labour force of Barbados is and what the unemployment rate is. They can tell me what the inflationary situation is. The inflation of Barbados is 4.5 per cent.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: What was it when they went out?)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: When they went out? The Lord knows! It was up by 40 per cent, because the honourable Member for St. Michael West himself agreed with us in here it was 40 per cent in 1975.

(Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: What is that?)

(Aside: Who was the Government at the time, the BLP?)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Before they went out. Who was the Government of Barbados in 1975? Was it the Barbados Labour Party? The point is that during your Administration, inflation was 40 per cent.

(Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Sit down, Mr. Priest. I am going to read out for you the Central Bank's information of what inflation was in 1975.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Before this day is over, I am going to get up and read out for you the Central Bank's information on what the inflation rate was in 1975. It says here, "The Background" – I am reading from the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto, which is already a document of the House –

> "Since the BLP was last entrusted with the management of this island's affairs, all countries of the world have been afflicted by the economic perils of inflation, with prices rising dramatically at an average rate of around 25 per cent per year"

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: It continues:

> "Although our bill for fuel oil and lubricants rose from $22 million to $69 million between 1973 and 1975, we managed to reduce the rate of inflation from 40%"

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To be honest.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member has just told me that it was never 40 per cent. I have just read from his own manifesto, his own admission. If they did not trust the statistical information, they would never have put that figure in their manifesto. I did not write it. That is a reliable bit of information which is in your manifesto. And today, using the same statistical, analytical method, the inflation rate in Barbados is 4.5 per cent. But he comes in here and tells us now that he could accept 40 per cent, but he cannot accept 4.5 per cent today, that it is unreliable.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Forty per cent to what? Read the rest of it.)

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: That is your business. It does not make any difference to me. The point is that you were telling me that I am a liar when I said that it was 40 per cent. I have just read it out of your own book that it was 40 per cent.

I believe that we have to get serious in here when the time comes to do Government Business. The public of Barbados relies on us to bring them information that is reliable and trustworthy. I am certain that during the time of the Barbados Labour Party, we have always relied upon the statistical information that comes out of the agencies responsible for that function. I should like to suggest that the Government use all of its resources to make certain that the Statistical Department has available to it, and gives it all of the assistance that it needs, so that it can continue in the service of mounting information and be always ready with the numbers in order to guide us and to inform us as to what our policies within Government should be. I believe that if we continue in that direction, we will continue to build a sound economy for Barbados and for Barbadians, so that those of us who are entrusted with the responsibility of guiding the destiny of this nation will be able to have current information upon which to base our decisions, and we will not therefore have to rely on the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who can only misguide us.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS (St. James South): I want to be very brief on this matter. A lot of statistics have been bandied around here, but I am going to use the figures which the Honourable Minister for Transport and Works used just now.

I think he said that during the Democratic Labour Party's regime, the percentage of unemployment was 22 per cent and that the work force was 80 000. That meant that 70 000 people were unemployed. I am not good at Maths, but I averaged that. But today, according to you, with the unemployment figure down to 18 per cent, 21 000 people are unemployed. People in Barbados are not interested in all these percentages and what not – they want to get work. And the fact of the matter is that about 2 000 more people are out of work today, according to your figures, than there were in 1975. That is a fact which we have to put up with.

Asides.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: You cannot go around telling people that, because there are 30 000 more people in the work force, it is all right to have 4 000 more people unemployed.

In any event, I think one would have to look at the method of arriving at the figure. If I remember correctly, some time after the Barbados Labour Party became the Government, all those persons who had a job had to register. I am not sure, if when the Statistical Department made an analysis prior to 1976, these people were categorized as employed or unemployed. I want to know, too, if, in 1975 or 1976, there was a category for the voluntarily idle and how they arrived at this figure. The problem is that the method of arriving at that figure in North America might be the same we use here, but the two do not apply, because there could be a number of jobs going abegging in North America which we have not got here. So if you are using the same method used there, you would find that it is wrong. You must take those off the figures of unemployed and do not mention them at all, because they are the voluntarily idle.

We are only playing around with terms, we are playing around with percentages. If you go in any village and tell people, "You know, in 1975, it was 22 per cent and now it is 18 per cent", they do not want to hear that. What they want to know is what you are doing for them so that they could get a job. It is as simple as that, and that is what is important, in my opinion. We are, to my mind, wasting a lot of time if we just use figures and try to say that.....

(Hon. H. B. St.JOHN: Tell him so!)

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: .....in 1975 it was 22 per cent and today it is 18 per cent. It is a waste of time, as far as I am concerned.

(*Aside*: Keep your speech for the platform.)

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: We are not here at a university or college trying to tell people what the percentage is. I want to know that tomorrow when I go down in Haynesville and I see all the boys there just around a radio – eighteen or nineteen and cannot work, who I expect sometime later might find themselves involved in crime – I would know what to say.

5.05 p.m.

I cannot understand the arguments we are putting forward about statistics, what happened in 1975, 40 per cent inflation then and today 2 per cent inflation, when people are looking for work. The fact of the matter is that when you talk to most people they will tell you that in 1975 they could leave one job and go to another one easily, or leave one hotel and go to another. The honourable Member was not here in 1975, so he would not know these things. But these are the facts, because the tourist industry was doing reasonably well, the building industry was doing reasonably well, fishing and sugar cane were doing reasonably well, and, as you said, they had fewer people to employ anyhow. So let us know what we are going to do for the 5000 or 3000 extra people who are unemployed, according to your statistics.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is precisely when I hear the contribution of the Honourable Minister of Transport that I have to repeat what I said at the beginning of my contribution about the fruitlessness of trying to get an intelligent debate going on statistics in this Chamber. I believe the honourable Member for St. Peter, who made a few valid points when he got up, has become to understand exactly why I took the line that I took when I spoke.

I have heard a charge made that we never believe the statistics in the Central Bank Reports. Only a silly man can make that charge. There are two elements in the Central Bank Reports that we always look at. We have differed from the Central Bank's policy in its monetary and fiscal policy as recommended to the Government and as promulgated by the Central Bank itself. We have differed with those policy options in respect of the stabilization programme for Barbados. That is a fact. The source of the statistics incorporated in the Central Bank Reports are clearly indicated by the Central Bank, and you will see what are the Central Bank's statistics and what are the statistics from other sources. I said that already this afternoon. The Central Bank puts an asterisk and says, "Source – Government Statistical Department". The honourable Member has one in his hand; look and see that whenever they incorporate information from another source, they give the source at the bottom of the statistics. The Central Bank has been careful to do so over the years.

On the floor of this House again and again I have been repeating that the Central Bank, and I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Peter in this regard, has done a lot to improve information and discussion on economic affairs in Barbados. There can be no question about that. It is the Research Department that has done a good service to this country, contributions by DeLisle Worrell on the impact of the fiscal deficit. If you look carefully at that, I think you can find a fundamental difference of opinion from the honourable Member for St. Peter, and I rather would err with Mr. Worrell, let me put it that way. The consequences of a run away fiscal deficit, as stated in one of the internal presentations by Mr. Worrell, is very interesting, and the impact of the deficit on employment and otherwise in Barbados. But there are other occasions when we will deal with those things. Economists differ in their attitudes to these things and we understand that.

The honourable Member for St. Peter brought attention to the efforts of the Caribbean Tourism Research efforts and implied that I might not be familiar with them. That is not so, I am familiar with them. But the problem here, as you well know, is that the information that comes out of that institution is largely retrospective information. The information that I am talking is instant information, what happens to the tourist industry in Barbados in the month of February. As far as I know, there is no publication in Barbados that is available to the general public – I might be able to get a little bit from here and there by looking at things like payments – which contains instant information. The statistics are about three months behind. By June, you will know what is happening in March in relation to most of the statistics to the Central Bank Report. In fact, those statistics probably come from two different sources.

I was not addressing myself to the falsity of information in respect to the Tourist Sector. What I was addressing myself to is the fact that you get information from various sources, at the same time sometimes conflicting information, and that you do not have the kind of immediate information that you need and which should be available. As a matter of fact, perhaps the best source of information on what is happening in the tourist sector globally is to look at the tourist portfolios of the commercial banks in Barbados and of Barbados Development Bank, if you want the most immediate information. That is what I find. People can say this is happening and that is happening in tourism, since the Government is going to conceal how much money is paid into the Treasury, or merely announce that $7 million came in within the past seven days, but at least the commercial banks will tell you what is happening to the overdrafts of the hotel plant in the hotel sector.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I said globally; you get some idea.

This is the challenge for the new Minister of Finance and Planning. If you really believe in the principles of information as enunciated by your colleague, the honourable Member for St. Peter, make the Economic Report for the year 1984–85 available well in advance of the few minutes before you read the Budget this year.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Do you see what I mean? Now they are talking about information. I have repeatedly on the floor of this House said.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not begging. It is no problem. What I am saying is that it is quite wrong, in my view, if you have the Annual Economic Report available to you, to come inside here and shove it in front of us just before you read the Budget Speech, when in fact, three-fourths of the Budget Speech is going to be a politicization of what is in the Economic Report, to start off with. I can tell you what is going to happen, and the reply will be appropriate. You can be sure of that. If you come political, you will get a political reply. If you come and deal with the financial and economic matters, you

will get financial and economic analysis in the reply. Remember that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to remind honourable Members that we are still at Head 21.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes Sir, two final points. The only person that really dealt with the principle of a Statistical Department was the honourable Member for St. Peter, and he can talk on this. He addressed the principles that I raised and I will reply to them.
5.15 p.m.

The main reason why I speak of an independent body for the compilation of statistics and to give access to everybody is because if you take the political context of Barbados.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Do you know how hard it is and how much time you have to spend to get the most irrelevant information? Do you know how much time I have to spend to get information which forms the basis of your position, if you have to take to Parliament information that should readily be available to you? I believe that people should have more confidence in giving correct information to an independent authority rather than to a Government source, because many times Government people in the Statistical Department go to a house and people call and say, "There is a man here asking me questions, Doc, do you think I should answer them?" I say, "Yes, go ahead and tell them what they want, and tell them you are a DLP supporter, too."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please. Order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: There is one area of disappointment that I found in the honourable Member's presentation, when he tried to follow the false positions taken by politicians and tried to downgrade pure research as being esoteric. An academic talking about esoteric research!

I believe that there is a role for pure research and there is a role for applied research, and we should be clear in our minds not to compromise our tertiary institutions by trying to downgrade areas of pure research, esoteric if you like. It is an important contribution, and if the Government wishes to have applied research done, then the Government should put resources behind the tertiary institutions in order to promote that aspect of research.

Some of the most esoteric research that I have seen was done by the honourable Member for St. Peter. Some of the most esoteric contributions floating in the clouds that I have heard in this Honourable House, quite unrelated to the realities of the people in Carrington Village, Belleville, the Pine or Highgate, have been made by the honourable Member for St. Peter. I cannot understand how on this occasion to downgrade the esoterics.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are not debating personalities.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that Rule 36 (1) be introduced.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has wound up. I think he has.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I believe I have responded to the areas. One final point which I think we.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have to do it in one minute.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The honourable Minister of Transport, hanging on to the attitude and not recognizing that there is a new dispensation to the approach of matters in this House, got up and read the manifesto and said there was 40 per cent inflation in 1974 or something like this. What he did not say was that the manifesto also went on to say that it dropped to 12 per cent, then it dropped to 2 per cent in September of 1976, when we went out of office. He did not say that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member's time has ran out. I believe we have time for one more contribution, and I will ask the Government to wind up on this.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, we have to wind up, Mr. Chairman.

Obviously timely information from the Statistical Department with respect to important areas of economic activity in Barbados is a matter of prime concern. This is a subject that has been engaging the attention of the Ministry of Finance for a considerable period of time, and I give the Honourable House the assurance that every effort is being made to speed up the information. As a matter of fact, work is going on on a system whereby we can use the information we get from the Customs records to provide weekly import/export data. Similarly, I know for a fact that a new computer programme is in operation with respect to the tourism sector, this provides information not only in relation to visitor arrivals, but also information with respect to length of stay and some expenditure patterns. So the honourable Member is pushing an open door.

I am very grateful to the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) and the Honourable Minister of Transport for effectively exposing the purpose of the

honourable Member for St. Michael South Central's contribution. His aim, once again, is to discredit everything that is associated with the information provided, not by the Government – I think we should make it clear that none of us on this side provides any information – by the professionals in the Civil Service, who have their reputation to look after. They are subject to the scrutiny not only of the honourable Member, but their professional bodies and international institutions of which Barbados is a Member.

I know that the Caribbean Tourism Research Centre has a special Statistical Unit as part of the European Development Programme Assistance. I negotiated the assistance, so I know, and they have brought into the Caribbean some of the most eminently qualified statisticians, people who have written books in this area of tourism and its impact, people like Michael Peters, and they have hired people like Sobers, who was with us. They are the people who constantly keep the methodologies in operation in Barbados under review. That is what the honourable Member is castigating. Well, let him go on. The more he goes on, the more we become convinced that he is not exposing us – he is only demonstrating what he is.

On the question of unemployment, I agree with the honourable Member for St. James South (Mr. N. K. Simmons). What I really want to hear is what is the other side's programme. I know what our programme is. I know what we have done about unemployment. I know that today, thank God, the Government can be proud of the fact that, unlike any other previous Administration, it has introduced as part of the widening of its Social Security system an Unemployment Benefit system which helps to cushion some of the impact of unemployment in Barbados. We did not have that in 1975 or 1976. You cannot, possibly, therefore, for that reason alone, compare the consequences of unemployment then with the consequences of unemployment now. But let them go ahead. The more they talk, the more we can remind them of the differences which exist between us.

Our programme is also set out in the various Heads of the Estimates to deal with unemployment. I look forward to hearing your programme.

I beg to move that Head 21 stand part.

The question that the sum of $264,703 under Head 21 – Statistics stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

5.25 p.m.

HEAD 23 – LOANS AND ADVANCES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $2 020 587 under Head 23 – Loans and Advances – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 24 – PENSIONS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $14 200 000 under Head 24 – Pensions – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 73 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $43 203 390 under Head 73 – Capital – Ministry of Finance and Planning – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Chairman, under Head 73, Subhead 4, Feasibility Studies, $950 000, I wonder if the Honourable Prime Minister would take this opportunity to give us some indication particularly of those projects as proposed by the National Council for Science and Technology. It is a lot of money, and I would like to get some indication of what is involved here.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): While the information is being sought, I do not mind having this Head recommitted, unless the honourable Member wants to continue to talk on some other point.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I also wanted to say something on Subhead 8.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I will start at the beginning of Head 73, and I look at Subhead 1 – Contributions to Domestic Development and Financing Institutions.

I think it is well known that this country has membership in a number of international organisations, particularly those concerned with the development and the financing, and from time to time, as the per capita income of Barbados increases, the problem arises over what, in technical terms, is known as graduation, that is, the problems of acquiring loan funds on concessionary terms for those countries which are developing countries, Third World countries, and which are certainly not as well off as those countries which are called developed countries. This is a problem which was surfacing for quite

some time. I recall that when I was in Government and talking to some of the officials of some of these international organisations, it was being suggested that Barbados was not among that category of countries which could look forward indefinitely towards loans at highly concessionary rates, so this is a matter that was playing up.

I am wondering if the Minister with responsibility for this particular topic could tell us whether we are currently encountering any major problems in relation to this particular matter, and whether there is much point in trying to get the rules of the game changed, because, as I understand it, it is something which has been worked out, and I believe the whole procedures relating to graduation have already been applied to a number of countries. I must confess that it would strike a country like Barbados, small with limited resources, but which over the years, and particularly in the financial management of the Democratic Labour Party has avoided this, through careful husbanding of resources and no over-reaching of capabilities and abilities of the country by projects which were too grandiose for the slender resource base of the country. But this problem has now surfaced, and I am wondering if the Minister would like to direct his attention to this particular point and say something about it.

Secondly, I would like to take a look at the institution called the Inter American Development Bank, which I believe has been a good friend of Barbados over the years. It has been associated with a number of development projects in this country, and as an institution it has in a number of cases lent a very ready and willing ear not only to the general problems of development in this country, but has also at times listened to the special pleading which may have been put forward in terms of any special situations which may apply in respect of this country.

I think that from the time Barbados gained its independence and entered into a number of these international organisations, including the Inter-American Development Bank, it was not only a wise decision to join them, but also to make use of their resources within the framework of the general policies and principles of our country, and as I have said, we have had a very creative, worthwhile and understanding relationship existing between Barbados and that particular institution. It therefore came as a shock to me to read in the newspapers that there was a big problem developing between Barbados and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Asides.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am getting certain indications, Sir.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Talk what you know.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am getting certain conflicting signals from over there, so I will, talk about what I have seen in the newspapers and I will try to be as understanding as possible in this particular matter.

I have seen in the newspapers what can only appear to me to be a very strange and unique kind of situation, in which you have companies or interests which have put in bids in relation to certain proposed projects, with a publicity campaign going in relation to the particular company or interest which is more deserving of the award of a contract. What I would say, and I make no bones about my own position, is that I believe that the two companies which have been in the publicity campaign are national companies, the two Barbadian companies, and I believe there is enough work in Barbados for both of them. When we try to develop our road policies in areas perhaps which are in need of review and reconsideration, we will fall into these particular problems. I do not want to get too much involved in this particular matter, I am just raising a problem.
5.35 p.m.

I believe that if there was greater consultation between the Government and the Opposition on matters of national interest, it would advance the cause of this country. But when the Government goes out, announces big road plans, puts them in a Development Plan, which was not even debated in this Chamber – that last Development Plan was not introduced in this Chamber for debate – I think that we are running the course of national suicide if we continue in that direction. It is not when you run into trouble then to come and appeal for light.

I believe that there are certain areas on which, in the national interest, we should try to arrive at a consensus. I believe if we have an agreed national development programme and that we have to seek funding from local or foreign sources, on that agreed programme within those parameters we should be able on a national basis to work in terms of what is for the good of this country, and on that basis support can be given. If you go off on your own and then unveil these plans with some other kind of purpose and objective in mind.....

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Come straight).

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Are you going to come straight?

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: All the "t").

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Well, come straight on it then. I will sit down now and let you come straight on it. Are you going to come straight on it?

Hon H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): There is absolutely no problem. We know that the honourable Member and his party have consistently supported the award of the contract to a particular firm, which firm, in our opinion, using the criteria that were set out in the documentation which was available to everybody, is not the best bid. The difference between the two is somewhere in the vicinity of 1.8 or 1.9, and also a further examination demonstrates that that difference could be narrowed further. Even without that examination, we say that it is a relevant matter which was in the terms of the bidding and in the terms and the conditions of the contract that the firm is a local firm, for the very simple reason that we have had eight years of experience of dealing with these international contracts and we know, as a matter of fact, that industrial relations with a difference of one or two per cent is very small, because every one of these contractors, whether they are British, American, Canadian or otherwise, have worse industrial relations problems than the local people. That is all we are saying. It is as simple as that.

This is a point of principle, it is a point of argument, and we will pursue the argument irrespective of whether the honourable Members on the other side support it or not. If you do not support the experience, then it is a matter for you, but we can argue our case. We have absolutely no fear. In the last resort, remember the decision as to whether the contract goes on or off is our decision, not anybody else's. That is the simplicity of the matter.

What is more, our position is reinforced because the decision that we accepted was in accordance with the recommendations of Canadian, third party, international consultants. That is all we will say, and those are the facts.

Also, I think this issue is well known. If you go and look at the bidding documents, the Government could do it in one stage, two stages or three stages. All of those are public matters, so if the honourable Member feels that we are appealing to him for national support, that we are in trouble, I do not see the trouble.

It is a 2 per cent difference and we are standing firm. That is our opinion, unless we can get evidence otherwise that this is a better bid in accordance with the documentation. That is our position.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): I will address the issue of graduation from the World Bank in particular as raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford).

It is a fact that in the last two years a determined effort was made by the World Bank to graduate Barbados and four other countries as a first step from its loan programme. Barbados resisted the attempt principally on two grounds at the outset. One was that, notwithstanding the level of our development with a per capita income in excess of U.S. $4 000, Barbados remained an open, fragile economy, and that overnight, under the impact of adverse external forces, we could fall back, as it were, and find ourselves, as has happened to several countries even within this region in the last ten years, let us say, at U.S. $2 500 per capita rather than in excess of U.S. $4 000 where we stand now. To that extent, we argued that it would be unwise to graduate us, implying that the state of our development was fixed and was bound to go forward, and that we could not slip back. We felt that we were still in need of that sort of concessionary loan funding. That was the first ground on which we resisted the Bank.

We did argue as a second ground that these figures, per capita income statistics, carried some margin of error, and that setting the limit at U.S. $3 900, when we were marginally above that, was not necessarily an accurate statement, because the margin of error had to be built into the calculation.

The advantage of raising these arguments was that we bought time and won a lot of support within the bank against the position, which was really the position principally supported by the United States Government. In the end, however, a very interesting thing took place. The argument was used, and I am not too sure whether the argument originated with Barbados, that the Charter of the World Bank, the Constitution as it were, did not allow the World Bank to graduate members from participating in concessionary terms on their own contributions.
5.45 p.m.

The World Bank itself seemed to have been taken aback by that argument, and they seem, for the moment, to have relaxed their attempt to graduate Barbados and four other countries, as a first step. Right now the matter is in abeyance, but we cannot be certain that other efforts would not be made in the foreseeable future to return to this question of graduation, based on the level of the per capita income.

I think we must recognize and acknowledge the role that was played by our late Prime Minister in waging this war on behalf of Barbados and other small island states. I think that Cyprus was also one of the countries that they had intended to graduate. He argued very vigorously that it was dangerous to apply a policy of graduation to these small, open and vulnerable economies, and that, rather than graduating them, they need a special regime of assistance. I think it must be acknowledged that it was partly as a result of his strenuous efforts that Barbados was successful in resisting this graduation.

As I said, we cannot be sure that the matter will not be raised again, but for now, it seems to off the agenda, as it were.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): It is not often that one can derive such satisfaction by listening to a speech from the other side.

Firstly, he must have raised many eyebrows in speaking to the error in the Gross National Product per capita, in terms of the statistical compilation in Barbados. This has never been a point that I have made, so I would not speak to that. But, for years on this floor, when the Government comes in and says, we have done x, y and z for the country. Look at the per capita income and see how it has risen, this voice has risen in opposition and said, "It does not speak to distribution. It does not speak to transfers. It does not speak to other more important pockets of poverty within the country and, therefore, it cannot be a totally satisfactory index for a propaganda assault on the people of Barbados to tell them how well you are doing." So in Barbados, when you seek to confuse the minds of the electorate with boasts of our per capita income and when we go to the international institutions we say, "Look here, understand this. Do not mind this figure for per capita income, it does not speak to a lot of problems in Barbados that will require, and quite rightly so, the assistance of international agencies on concessional terms."

I can remember the assaults made on me by my comrades in arms on the other side, including the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. If there were two points of clear departure between the two of us within this House, they were, one, the relevance of per capita income over the years and, secondly, if you may recall, the relationship of our debt service to exports and the percentage of exports. Those are the two areas on which we have divided over the years, the two main areas in financial, economic argument. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to know that not only has the thesis that I have advanced over the years been accepted by the Government. The honourable Member for St. Michael West can bear me out on the blasting attacks, not in here, verbal attacks, which have been launched on me in this House on this particular issue. And now they accept the premises of that argument to advance their case before the international institutions of the world, I am rather pleased, for the first time in this House, with a speech from the other side.

On the question of the IDB, there are a few questions which I should like to ask. Firstly, what is the present level of our subscription to the Inter-American Development Bank? What is the present level of our callable capital subscription within the IDB?

As I understand it, the resource base of the IDB for attracting funds for onlending is based on the capital subscriptions of its members, of which we are one, and the contingent liabilities of the callable capital to which all members will, of course, have to contribute, although so far, no members have ever had a call on their callable capital, because of the proper administration of the bank, as far as I am aware. Since the inception of the bank, where you have a contingent liability in respect of callable capital, in the event that something should go wrong, the bank has never had to have recourse to callable capital, but uses that as a resource base, as an asset, in order to get into the market to raise funds for onlending.

That being the case, it seems essential to me that the Government of Barbados, on behalf of the taxpayers of Barbados, must have a vested interest in the lending policies of the bank to ensure that the bank does not engage in ventures which might either erode its capital base or result in resort to the callable capital. It is my understanding that that is where our vested interest in the lending policy of the bank must lie, because whereas we might be over-obsessed with a small loan, we must remember that this is a bank that might well make a $400 million loan somewhere, and a two per cent on a one and a half per cent spread between competing tenders can be quite significant, ultimately in terms of the taxpayers of Barbados. The point I am making is that we have to watch that our immediate interest does not put us in a position where the criteria for lending by the IDB, to which we make a subscription and a commitment for callable subscription.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I agree with that 100 per cent.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: My understanding is that in 1982, our subscription was some $3.2 million, and our callable capital was some $20 million, I think in US dollar terms. I believe that both of those would have increased. I have no reason to doubt the IDB's publication, and in their leaflets, which are available to the public, that was the 1982 position.

So as a member of the bank, it is important to recognize that we must not try to undermine the integrity of the criteria used for assessing tenders. I believe that put into that criteria, and agreed to by the Barbados Government, is the principle, certainly obtaining up to 1982, that any loan of over US$100 000 must be subject to international tender on the one hand, and, secondly, that unless there are major compelling reasons, then the most competitive vendor is the vendor which should be accepted by the bank. We must not be shortsighted in this regard, because, as I understand it, that is the situation.

I am not getting into a position of supporting any one firm or another. I have defended the position of the

taxpayers' of Barbados. I put it to the Government now to look down the road and see what could happen if the IDB starts lending money, not according to the rules, but according to pressures from individual Governments when it involves big loans.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not saying that this Government is putting pressure on the IDB. I said if it were to happen that the IDB should allow their lending policies to be influenced by pressure from even their major subscribers, it could not be in the long term interest of Barbados. I do not think Barbados can put any big pressure on the IDB anyhow.
5.55 p.m.

I said that our guiding interest in this matter must be the taxpayers in Barbados. I have looked very carefully at the ultimate profitability of the loan, which seems to me to be a pre-tax profit of some $9 million. I am talking about the contract for building the road. Whatever company gets it, as I have said it before, the impact on Barbados is the same. If 75 per cent of the work is being done by one local company and 100 per cent by another local company – listen to me carefully – as far as.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order: I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that in the interests of the good taste, while the honourable Member is discussing this Head, he would refrain and keep away as far as possible from mentioning anything in relation to the controversy, or whatever you may term it, over the road. In the interest of all concerned, I feel that it would be fair to Parliament, members of the Opposition, members on this side, and the people of Barbados. Just let them battle it out. You know the Government's position, and I think it would be fair. Talk on the Head, but just keep away from this. I crave your indulgence in respect of that.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Michael South indicated that he got conflicting signals from the other side. Two Members on the other side indicated that they would prefer us not to deal with the matter, but the Honourable Prime Minister said, "Go ahead and talk." Those were the exact words.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Look, let me tell you something. There is no honeymoon in this business.

I issued a statement on this, and I am just repeating the statement which I made, that, ultimately, in the interest of the taxpayers of Barbados, the most competitive tender is what the Government should be supporting. If the Government is supporting the most competitive tender, then I am behind them. Let that be clear. I am not getting into which firm should get it and which firm should not get it. All I am saying is that any arguments put forward in relation to the impact on the economy, whether it is done by one firm or another, seeing that a local firm would do almost 100 per cent of the work, and another firm would do some 75 per cent of the work, is irrelevant. When you get into the area of profits and shared profits, what you really have to trade off is probably about the probability of the loss of about $1.5 million in terms of profit transfers, the difference between the two bids. Also, you have to look into the factor of whether one firm will have to spend more foreign currency in buying equipment than another firm. That factor also comes into the equation.

I do not honestly know what has led the Government to come to the conclusion in respect of the most competitive bid. All I am saying is that the Government should stick to a position where it supports the principle of the award to the most competitive bid, particularly in respect of its responsibilities towards our investments in terms of contributions and terms of liabilities in respect of the callable capital liabilities within the IDB. These are my initial contributions.

One further point I would like to make under this Head is that....

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will not notice you. I do not recognize you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I were exposed in the way you were exposed on the front page of the *Advocate* today, I would be silent for a long time.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On the International Monetary Fund.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: To which Subhead is the honourable Member speaking?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Subhead 1: the same subhead. I want to ask the Honourable Prime Minister what is our position in relation to our repayments of the loan made under the Standby Arrangement. He can answer if he wishes, because I feel that the matter has been mishandled by the Government during the years. I would like to know what are our commitments this year.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: ....I am asking you a simple question. I am not advocating any withdrawal from the International Monetary Fund. All I am advising you to do is not to get into a Standby Arrangement and extended arrangements. That is my position.

I particularly want to know on our economic level of subscriptions of callable capital, whether the Government is committed to the principle of the most competitive tenders, because my support can be under those circumstances, and finally our present repayment schedule in relation to the International Monetary Fund loan.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On the question of repayments, there is a Head for that. Let us deal with that when we come to Debts, Services, Head 22.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I was asked a number of questions, and first I am going to answer the question of the honourable Member for St. Philip North. Out of this sum of $950 000, it is customary every year to ear mark a particular sum for projects which the National Council of Science and Technology want to do. They are made aware of the particular sum of money, but it is left to them, given the knowledge of the sum of money, to pursue the projects in the order of priorities that they wish. They will be informed that they will be able to spend $200 000.

Our contribution to the Inter-American Development Bank this year is $596 465. The contribution to the International Monetary Fund is $250 000; the IRDB, $100 000, and the Caribbean Development Bank, $108 933. I do not have the information to hand in respect of Barbados' position in relation to the IMF in respect of the loan, but I know that Barbados is in excellent standing in relation to those conditions that it had to comply with. I certainly have not heard that we are in any danger of defaulting thereon. I think that sufficiently answers the honourable Member in that respect.

6.05 p.m.

I cannot quite follow the impasse that has developed on the award of the contract with respect to what is known as the Industrial Access Road. The Barbados Government has repeatedly said, and I will repeat it again, that we do not wish anybody to bend anything. We wish simply that the contract documents, the preconditions for bidding and the terms and conditions for the award of the tender, be complied with. Having been advised by reputable, international, third country consultants that a particular bid is the best bid, the Government is saying, "Here are the documents. We have been advised, in accordance with this criteria as set out by you, that this is the best bid." That is our position and that is the end of that. We understand what the rules are, we complied with every procedure, and that is what our position is and that is what it will be.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): I rise specifically to respond to the question raised by the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) about the size and the distribution of the Feasibility Study Vote, but I cannot help but make a few comments on the arguments raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) with regard to the whole issue pertaining to per capita income, the manner in which he believes that we have propagandized the use of that index, and the general question of the pros and cons of our graduation from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

It is only fair to me to say that I do not think anybody in recent times has beat on the chest more than the honourable Member, even more than Tarzan. His discussion was purely in terms of "I said this" and "I said that." He never sought to come to terms with the particular point of issue raised by my colleague, the honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Our argument in relation to graduation has nothing to do with whether our per capita income can or cannot be used as a measurement of our progress. We are proud of the progress we have made in this country, and we recognize that our per capita income places us in the category of a middle income country. But the question as to whether a country should or should not have access to concessional financing, in our estimation, ought not to be based purely on the consideration of its per capita income, and that is the point that my colleague from Christ Church East was trying to make.

Quite obviously, the strength and resilience of a country's domestic capital market, for example, has as much bearing on its long-term developmental needs as, he says, its per capita income, and in small countries such as ourselves, whose economic structure is characterized by the relative under-development of our financial and capital market, quite obviously our need for long-term concessional financing will be far greater than a larger, continental-type economy such as Argentina or Brazil, which might have a low per capita income but might have a stronger capital and financial base. These were the kinds of arguments which pervaded the presentation of our arguments in relation to the graduation or non-graduation from access to World Bank financing.

I think the node of the point that was being put by my colleagues entirely escaped the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, given his anxiety to beat his chest on the point. The point that was being made was that because of the fact of our GDP being an estimate, the mad rush to graduate a country when once a particular barrier had been reached, quite obviously was

bad international policy, because errors of estimation could arise which would not necessarily reflect on the fundamental question at hand.

All things told, I, too, want to argue the case on the floor of this House that international institutions, on arriving at decisions as to graduation or no graduation, have not only to take account of a country's per capita income, but have to take serious account of the structure and organisation of that country's financial and capital market, because the question of graduation or non-graduation is not an income issue, it is a capital availability issue. And our argument to the World Bank simply was that there were other expedients that the World Bank could utilise, such as putting particular countries in a middle income category and shortening the maturity period and increasing the interest rates on loans, rather than pursuing the policy which they wanted to do, which clearly was a policy of throwing out the baby with the bath water. Because that policy would have led to a situation where because of the growth of our per capita income, we were at the point of developing the institutional strength of the country to make the fullest possible use of concessional financing, and our argument simply was to create a half-way house, particularly to middle income countries, which recognized their progress and recognized their increased capacity to use concessional loans more efficiently, but do not, at the same time, entirely cut them off from access to concessional financing.

In relation to the question about the feasibility studies, I want to assure the honourable Member for St. Philip North that he must not be alarmed by the size of the Feasibility Studies Vote, if only because a large part of the amount put in as expenditure will be recovered on the financing side, since most of our feasibility studies are, in fact, financed by way of grants from international institutions. So you are not to be alarmed by the fact that it is $950 000. Indeed, if you understand the relationship between feasibility studies and public investment, you might even more fully appreciate that an investment of $1 million per year in order to bring out public investments, given a capital programme of $180 million a year, is not really a substantial amount in relative terms.

In relation to the composition, a block vote of $200 000 has been earmarked for the National Council of Science and Technology. That council has, in the past, come forward with one or two innovative projects, which have indeed led to private sector investment. One that particularly springs to mind is their exploratory work on the revitalisation of the coral stone industry in Barbados, the results of which were seen by a private investor and translated into an investment decision to the advantage of this country and its construction industry.The vote is a block vote which is to be used at the discretion of the council, of course subject to the discretion of the Ministry, to finance small scale type projects which can have a beneficial impact on improving technological development and absorption in our small scale sectors. 6.15 p.m.

The rest of the vote is variously intended to be used for matters such as our Sugar Rehabilitation Project. A lot of discussion has been generated in this Chamber regarding the immediate fortunes and the future of the Barbados sugar industry, and we believe that the future for the sugar industry, in all its various aspects, is its technological development. The best means of financing the industry as a whole ought to be the subject of a very systematic study before very firm decisions are taken in relation to its long term financing and matters of that character, and provision has been put in this year's budget for a specific study concerning the rehabilitation of the sugar industry.

Provision has also been made under our Feasibility Studies Vote for systematic exploratory work to be done on the Carlisle Bay Redevelopment Project. I am particularly excited by the prospects that the Carlisle Bay Redevelopment Project holds. We are as a small economy trending towards becoming a service economy, and one rather suspects that, in the immediate future and the long term, the Carlisle Bay area should be an area in which services which are attracted to Barbados are clustered. It seems we are beginning even now to see evidence of the very attractive types of developments which have been taking place in the Carlisle area, but we want as a Government to proceed on that entire stretch of development in a very systematic and a very scientific manner, to make whatever development that we indulge ourselves in congruous with our plans for urban development as well as congruous with our plans for the development of that area as a service centre. So specific provisions have been made for a systematic study to be completed of the best use of the Carlisle Bay area as a national resource.

Funds have also been earmarked for a study of the development of roads in the Scotland District, a matter which would obviously interest my colleagues from St. Andrew and St. Joseph, but which will also be recognised as a matter of urgent national priority, having regard to the state of roads in that particular area.

Monies are also earmarked for a project to investigate the feasibility of embarking on a wider project to widen the roads of Barbados as part of the Highway Rehabilitation Project. This is part of a general initiative for us to find the most effective and efficient means of using the taxpayers' funds to bring about innovative solutions in the area of highway construction and development. In many different respects, we may not have to spend very large sums of money in constructing massive new highways, particularly in the urban centres. The solution may be far more simple, such as that which is

now in progress along Beckles Road. The mere widening of the roads gives rise not only to larger roads but better traffic flow, and we have put into this year's feasibility vote an amount to cover investigation in that particular matter.

There is also, finally, a provision for us to continue our feasibility studies in the area of sites and services. Generally speaking, this $950 000 cuts across a fairly wide spectrum of economic and social sectors, and it will, in fact, be largely recoverd from the grant financing which will be secured for the purpose. I trust that these explanations satisfy the honourable Member.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I really find it difficult to understand why it is that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central found the restatement of one of the arguments used by Barbados against graduation, namely that the per capita income as an index of growth and development in a country bears a margin of error which has to be taken into account, a basis for rejoicing, because, in truth and in fact, we were only reciting the obvious. It is well known that statistical measurements in Social Sciences dealing with economies and societies are less precise than statistical measurements, let us say, in Natural Sciences, and that they always wear a margin of error, and that margin of error has got to be taken into account.

We agree that per capita income by itself does not tell you anything about the distribution of wealth in a society, or even about transfers. We concede that, but on the other hand, I do not agree with him that one can attack the Barbados Government for using per capita income as a measurement of increased prosperity in Barbados as a propagandistic statement, because in Barbados, unlike most other countries, the per capita income is a highly reliable index of prosperity, and family and society's development on the whole. I would concede that other indices should be looked at such as the level of literacy, the quality of housing, the distribution of water, health, the amount of radios and T.Vs, enjoyed by the general community, the caloric and protein intake per day and so on, but it happens that in Barbados, all of those other indices such as the ones that I have mentioned would tend to go in harmony with our high per capita income levels.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central gives the impression that he is familiar with the literature in this area, even though we know he has only recently come to it and has a lot of reading to do. I refer him to study on income distribution which was done by Ahiram, and which appeared in one of the early editions of the *Social and Economic Studies Journal,* a journal published by the University of the West Indies. This was an article that appeared way back in the Fifties – I am advised it was 1958 – when Ahiram, using the Lorenz curve, which is a well know statistical tool for measuring income distribution, found that Barbados, among 21 countries in South East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, had the most even distribution of wealth among all those countries. He found, for example, that in Jamaica, 90 per cent of the people owned only 10 per cent of the wealth. The point I am making is that the per capita income in Barbados, given the other indices which we have talked about, happens to be a most reliable tool, and far more reliable than the per capita income as an index of income distribution and prosperity in many other countries where there is a large gap between the haves and the have nots, where there is much illiteracy and so on. So I do not accept the argument that in Barbados, the Government of the Barbados Labour Party, this Government, uses it for propagandistic purposes. It can be argued, on well-known economic grounds, that in Barbados it is a reliable index of growth and development.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): I did not wish to join in the dialogue that has been going on. I think the honourable Member, in quoting the particular publication, was accurate insofar as that publication is concerned. I think, however, that his is a little outdated in relation to the methodology which is being used now to establish the comparisons, especially with the Third and Second World Countries. The fact is that there is now a quality-of-life index which is used concomitant with the per capita index, precisely because immediately after a large number of countries came to independence in the 1960s, and faced the threat of per capita income removing a substantial number of them from within the ambit of possible international multi-lateral assistance, it became necessary that a new method to determine the lot of the people in these Third World Countries would be devised. 6.25 p.m.

I would make bold to say that as early as 1972 Barbados was in danger of being reclassified within the international community for purposes of soft loans. As early as 1972, when the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) and I attended an annual exercise in Washington where a committee of the OAS reviews the economies of the member countries.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I hate to interrupt, but has the honourable Member given way for more than two minutes?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He has finished, Sir.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I was finished, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I was saying that as early as 1972 when we attended this meeting to review the economy of Barbados, we faced this, and the record will

show that I indicated to the review group that Barbados would need to be included in the quality-of-life indices that were currently emerging as proper criteria to determine what exactly is happening in the country. I am reminded by my colleague that during that period, the IDB was already threatening to remove us from the list of countries that would be eligible for loans on concessionary terms.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: What point are you answering?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not expect that from you, I think you should wait. The Prime Minister will understand.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not even listening.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Two days in the job and he is tired already! Go and get fit and come back in!

The point I am making is that the fact that developed countries, strapped as they are for funds to meet a commitment which they made as early as the 1960s to make a contribution equivalent to 7 per cent of their gross national product to the development of Third World countries, strapped as they are today to find resources to meet the commitment which they made ever since then, and which only Canada as a developed country has come near to meeting, strapped as they are to find funds now and beset with a number of difficulties in their own economies, those countries are only reverting to old arguments to put countries like Barbados into an area of what they are now calling graduation, but graduation is new wine in old bottles.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The IDB does not have a graduation policy).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Oh dear! I really understand why we have difficulty with you.

We are not talking about the IDB now, we have moved from the IDB. We are talking about the international lending agencies. The international lending agencies have got concessionary terms, and in order to benefit from concessionary terms, they are the equivalent of graduation points. I am not going to get into an argument on IDB, because I was not even talking of IDB. I am saying that the international lending agencies and some of the donor countries are the ones who are making the argument about graduation. The donor countries are saying that they do not wish to meet their responsibility, which they solemnly undertook with the United Nations back in the 1960s, to make a contribution of a percentage of their gross national product to multi-lateral development through the multi-lateral agencies, and they are trying to find ways to reduce the quantum which they should contribute to resource funds. Therefore, if they seek to put countries like Barbados out of the ambit of those countries that are eligible to receive soft loans or loans on concessionary terms, we should not be surprised.

It is the duty of the Government, whichever Government is in power, to continue to press the argument for concessionary terms. It is the duty of the Government to insist that in trying to determine whether Barbados has reached the graduation point, new and different criteria may have to be considered. It is proper and necessary for us to join with our Third World brethren and seek to have the criteria revised if necessary, because, in fact, the kinds of material which informed the criteria 15 years ago are not necessarily relevant today. The point I am making is that when Barbados goes to the international agencies, it has to go with hard information. When they are talking on political platforms and to the Press in Barbados, they can fudge and hedge, they can lead people to believe that we have made such fantastic progress, but they do not realise that every single utterance from anyone in authority in Barbados is monitored in international agencies in the same way as it is monitored in some of the capitals in the world.

I know that Barbados has had tremendous difficulty with its statistics in one of the international agencies in Washington. I know for a fact that Barbados has had to have literally a 'cussout' in one of the international agencies arising out of different interpretation of statistical information submitted by this Government.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You are going to ask me which one, and then when I go and divulge the information, you will say that we are not playing cricket. I will not divulge the information. You take it from me, Mr. Chairman.

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is not public knowledge. What I am speaking of is not public knowledge and no attempt by you will make me reveal my sources.

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, I do not mean the time when anybody from this side cursed anybody, I am talking about during the time of the Barbados Labour Party. If you are not aware of it, do not get into this.

I am saying of my own knowledge that Barbados, by submitting statistical information, in fact was forced, we have been forced, to review our own statistics in order to let the shoe horn put us within the criteria that were designed for us by the particular international agency.

6.35 p.m.

(*Aside*: Which one?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It arises out of a very wrong-headed practice in this country, during the last few years, of making the statistics behave in the way we want them to behave, instead of interpreting the statistical information in a particular way. I will go no further.

(Hon. H. deB. FORDE: That is a most irresponsible statement!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is not an irresponsible statement, and I stand by it. Do not accuse me of making irresponsible statements. If you wish, I will give you chapter and verse. I am saying that I stand by it. If the Prime Minister would check the record, he would see that what I am saying is correct. Do not tell me that it is irresponsible.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You have this way of throwing the word, "irresponsible" around when it suits you. I am saying it, and I stand by it.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, please do not be provocative. Order, please!

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I believe that it is responsible that I do not reveal the details. I think that the honourable Member for Christ Church West knows that I would not reveal the details and that is why he is sitting down there trying to provoke me. I am not going to do it. I promise him faithfully that, behind the Speaker's Chair, I will give him the details.

Aside.

(*Aside*: Do you trust him?)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order, please!

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No. I feel sorry for him. I do not trust him so much as I feel sorry for him.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You sound bad this evening. Talk tomorrow.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am talking at a certain level and I know that at certain times – you had your sleep and so, you are fresh again.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You sent me to sleep. I do not go to sleep when Viv Richards is batting.)

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, let us get ahead.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: .....What the Member has been trying to say is valid. He has been making the point today, and I am saying that it is valid and that we have a responsibility; more particularly, the Government has a responsibility when it is making certain utterances here in Bridgetown to remember that, "What sweeten goat mout will bun his tail". They have to remember that when they are trying to give the population one set of vibrations, those vibrations, in a new, modern world, go beyond the borders of Barbados, indeed, beyond the borders of the Caribbean.

It is wrong for a Minister, in the hope that he would get some temporary advantage, to go and make broad statements of fact or alleged fact which will turn against him in Washington or Brussels. Let me give an example. When we were negotiating the LOME Pact, one of the dfficulties which we had was that we could not get from the Sugar Producers in this country, the proper cost of production figure. The reason was that they were submitting the cost of production figures for domestic sugar, and when we were going to negotiate a price in Brussels for our export sugar, the cost of production then turned up as another figure. It is only after some hard-nosed pushing people to the wall that we were finally, able, to get a figure of the cost of production of sugar in Barbados which we could go to the international community and defend. The result of that was that in 1974 and 1975, certain decisions were made, based on information submitted by them. These decisions are still having their repercussions in 1985.

The honourable Member over there, the Prime Minister would know that having to go and negotiate in Brussels when you are lined up with forty-five countries that are producing the same product, and when it turns out that Barbados has the highest production cost of any of those countries, certainly any of the developing countries, among those forty-five, you then discover that the price which the people are prepared to accept as a price for their export product is not useful to you in Barbados. But you are outnumbered, because if thirty-six people out of forty-five are prepared to go along with a decision, you have to do the best you can.

My time has run out and I cannot develop the point, but I hope that I am leaning in the direction to satisfy the point that I have been making, that it is very important that the Government, especially in the area of statistical information that can be used by the international community, be meticulously careful of what it says and how it says it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): I listened very intently to the speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), and at the end of his submission, I still believe that he has waffled without saying anything.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: He deserves a medal, then.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not believe that this Committee is any wiser as to whether the Member is supporting the Government's stand to the Inter-American Development Bank and the other international organizations on the question of graduation or whether he is opposing it.

I was absolutely clear in my mind, after the Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes), had sat down, that he was supporting the Government's position on the matter, although in his characteristic style, to make political capital out of anything, he was putting forward a proposition that the Government's statistical data for the estimated GNP was not deniable – that was what I understood him to be saying – we have merely used estimates and the figures may not be reliable. But the international organizations have accepted the Government figure, and it is because they have accepted the Government's figure that they have argued the case for graduation of Barbados. If they had found anything wrong with the figure, they would either have found that they were too low or too high. If they were too low, then we should be graduated out, and if they were too high, and we had to bring them down then, there was a case for graduation. So I cannot accept even this thesis of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central must also know that the Government's statistical data in relation to GNP is compiled using the same methodology used and recognized by the International Monetary Fund, the IDB and all of the major lending and financial agencies. If our figures are wrong, then the figures for the United States are wrong, the figures for Britain are wrong, and the figures for the other countries happen to be wrong.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member would just give way, Sir, just for a minute.....

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I was not the person who introduced the concept of error in the determination of the per capita income. That was the honourable Member for Christ Church East. My argument was simply that the Gross National Product was used in one way politically in Barbados, but the implications and the significance of the GNP were used more realistically when you came to face various international organizations. That is no point.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I have taken the Member's point.

The point is that the GNP has grown suddenly over the past twenty years. If you are using a GNP criteria, we are a middle income country. But the essential point about Barbados, as a small economy, is that the structural transformation of Barbados must be taken into account in looking at our case for concessional aid, and not, "concessionary aid", to quote the honourable Member for St. Michael West. The point must be made that if you are taking an island like Barbados, the per capita cost of administration can be extremely high, particularly where you have not got the scope for economies of scale. We have argued this point consistently since we came into power, and I hope that we are making some progress on the matter.

Contrary to what the honourable Member for St. Michael West thinks, the new problem is a problem occurring not even so much from the donor countries as from the other Third World countries. I do not believe that it is politically feasible for us to join with Third World countries to establish special criteria which would take account of our own particular case. With the entrance of China into the major western financial institutions, China's per capita income is so low that it now qualifies for IDA assistance and, obviously, the pool of funds has not expanded, but there are many more people asking for the funds that are available. Even India, which we would have thought would have been supporting our case in this regard, are hesitant to do so. There must therefore be a banding of similar states, such as Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Singapore, whose economies can progress and yet the task to transformation is difficult. It is with those states that we should join to argue our case on the world scene.

6.45 p.m.

Politically, it is not feasible to ask for a new category of small states, but we can advance arguments, such as those advanced so admirably and so clearly by the honourable Member for St. Peter. The capital market argument is very important. We must ask, for instance, what assistance are they going to give us when they say you cannot come to the Concessional Aid Fund, you must go on to commercial loans, because when you seek a commercial loan for Bds. $20 million, a big figure in our context but small to the international commercial lending agency, they are not interested. A project that may cost us $2 million in foreign exchange financing, may not attract Citibank at all, and therefore we find it difficult in the commercial markets or the capital markets to float loans successfully and on the basis of long term lending. This is the essential point. It has not altered, as

far as I can see, in the last few years. We are arguing it very strongly, and we believe that the Opposition should support the Government wholeheartedly in this, because obviously it is a case that affects all Barbados. We have made the point most forcefully in the debate....

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Michael West wants to know what we want support on. We want the Opposition, as a matter of national consensus, to support our argument that Barbados should not be graduated out of concessional financing.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way: The Opposition will support you on that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am very glad to see that the honourable Member has got the point. It takes a long time to get through to his hard head.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But the honourable Member said that he did not understand what I was saying. What we were trying to explain to you, in painstaking language, is that in 1972 we went down this road. We are saying that you are getting the same problem in a different guise. We had that problem in 1972–73. You are now getting the problem precisely because of the growth which has happened in Barbados.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the Speaker and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 7.30 p.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE took the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move on to Subhead 2, which states in that particular vote, "Contributions to domestic development and financing institutions and provides for the augmentation of resources of the Barbados Development Bank and contributions to the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation."

I did note that the Barbados Development Bank just about made a small profit on its operations last year, largely due to the fact that, having taken over Husbands Wrought Iron, the indebtedness of that company has increased substantially since its operations has been taken over by the Barbados Development Bank. I wonder whether or not the policy of the Government would be to continue to sustain those losses, or what action is going to be taken, because, as I understand it, very little activity is going on there, while substantial fees are paid to people who are hardly ever on the premises.

Secondly, quite clearly the amount of money being provided under this Head would not be enough to meet the requirements of the Barbados Development Bank if it is to successfully carry out its programme of rescheduling of loans across the board in the tourist industry. As I understand it, approaches have been made to the European Investment Bank to try to attract additional funds for on-lending. It would be very interesting to know how successful those initiatives have been in terms of the quantum of funds, in terms of whether the Government has been able to persuade that lending institution that its current lending should be on a much longer term and whether it has been able to persuade institutions who have made loans to the bank in earlier years to permit the bank to reschedule their loans which they have already committed in a manner that is consistent with the goals of Government policy in relation to easing the burden of capital repayments within the tourist sector.

I also want to know whether or not the Minister of Finance is happy with the appalling state of the Barbados National Bank, of which the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation is a subsidiary. Is he aware that the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation is the only section of that bank that has made a profit in 1983? Is he aware that there have been substantial losses within the Agriculture Section of that bank? Is he aware of the appalling state of affairs that exist in relation to the commercial sector of the bank? Is he aware that there is every likelihood that the shareholders capital, that is the people of Barbados, through the Government of Barbados, is seriously at risk, the bank having sustained

substantial losses, I believe in one year, despite a spectacular growth in deposits and an equally spectacular growth in terms of its assets?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member dealing with Subhead 2?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir, the Barbados Finance Corporation. We are making a contribution to a subsidiary of the Barbados National Bank and that equity injection can be compromised if the rest of the bank is not properly organised in the long-term.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Of course, it can be compromised, because if you were to look at the loan losses within the bank, they are always presented in a consolidated state, and if you were to look at the capital structure of the bank, you will see that the capital structure of the bank relates to the consolidation of all the various subsidiary functions performed by the bank. Therefore, it is absolutely essential, because this equity input would certainly relate to the capital structure of the Barbados National Bank.

If you were to look at the loan losses in relation to the original capital input, which I believe was some $13 million, with small additions from year to year – if my memory serves me right, we are talking about another $4 million or so over the years – and if you were to subtract the loan losses and the overall losses in the bank from that, you will see that there has been a substantial erosion of the capital of the bank, which is a very serious matter. This House is being called upon not only to replenish the capital that has been eroded through gross mismanagement over the years, but also, to guarantee millions and millions of dollars of losses, which are permanent losses, in that financial institution.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member indicate what is meant by "millions and millions of dollars of losses?"

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will stick, for the moment, to the audited financial statement of the bank for the purposes of discussion, but for the purpose of reality, we know what we are talking about. And unless something is done to re-establish confidence in the Barbados National Bank, you are really heading for a lot of trouble, and my advice to you is that it must be done now.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order: The honourable Member is not sticking to this particular Head. With respect, although the honourable Member may be able to make some indirect reference to another institution, it is obvious that this Head is not directly referable to that institution, and I submit that the honourable Member is going outside of the ambit of the matter before us.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, with the greatest respect, I beg to disagree fundamentally with the position taken by the honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member may advert to the Barbados National Bank, but certainly the Barbados National Bank is not under debate at this time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I agree, Sir. I will put it this way, that if the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation is not functioning properly, it can eventually lead to even further losses in an institution that is *de facto* bankrupt at the moment and indeed....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I know. You have made me bankrupt with taxes!

(Asides: You are bankrupt, too!)

The point I am making is that this is a matter that cannot be dealt with with leisure. We have the problem of the Board of the Barbados National Bank, which oversees the operation of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation, and I would urge the Minister of Finance to take early steps to deal with the matter at the Barbados National Bank.

7.40 p.m.

I will deal with the financial institutions in the Budget and the National Bank, let me tell you that, because if you look down the road, you will see that improperly-run public financial institutions constitute one of the greatest dangers, ultimately, to the stability of Government financing in this country. If you were to look very carefully at your potential liabilities at the moment, which you have under written by Statute, you will see the amount of money that is involved. So when a gentleman like the honourable Member for Christ Church West gets up and tries to interrupt me on a matter that is very germane at the moment, it is because he does not understand that one of the basic reasons why the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation at this point shows a profit is because of the nature of its lending. It would be much more difficult to assess at such an early stage in the life of the bank whether or not its lending policies are sound, for the fundamental reason that most of its loans are long term loans. So it is very difficult.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You have missed the point altogether. If you look very carefully at the level of default in relation to persons who obtain mortgages from the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation, I will tell you now that that is a matter of concern, and I will say that it is somewhat higher in this institution although it is high also in other long term lending institutions in Barbados. When you see the persons in this country who are actually defaulting in their monthly payments and the number of

persons who are more than three months in arrears at places like BARFINCOR and other trust companies, you will be very surprised to see what is happening in this country at the moment.

Certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central at this point were ordered struck from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I do not propose to say anything more on the National Bank at this time of the evening, I will deal with it in the Budget. I will, however, urge on the Honourable Minister of Finance that one of the most pressing problems that he has on his hands is somehow to try and get that situation at the National Bank regularised. Just take my humble advice. Look very carefully and you will see what is happening there. Remember that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 73.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I am not finished. I have just dealt with a subhead. There are other subheads here.

The purchase of equity by Government in commercial ventures.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, you put the question.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES:.....provides for contributions to a Cement Plant, as well as a Broiler Breeder Project, the West Indies Shipping Corporation, Caribbean Airways, Caribbean Air Cargo, Barbados National Oil Company, Barbados External Telecommunications Limited and Caribbean Food Corporation. This is a particularly large sum of money that has been allocated in this area, and I believe that we are entitled to know something about the status of those industries, and we also would like to know how much of that sum is being allocated to each of these projects. If you cannot give me now, it is all right, we will come back to it some time during debate during the year. Certainly I think it is important that the Minister of Finance should tell the House something about the state of viability of these various operations and what has been compromising their operation.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on that subhead concerning purchase of equity by Government in commercial ventures, I would like some information.

The House recently passed a supplementary Resolution allowing for $3 million to CARICARGO. We did not debate it, because, at the time when it was passed, we had a clear indication that the Government felt that the equity was vital to the survival of the organisation. I would have thought that, in the light of our concession at that time, we would have got some information when these Estimates are brought on the performance of Caribbean Airways, CARICARGO and that area of our civil aviation investment. I think that the Minister owes it to the House to tell us, especially in the light of information which has been published in the media suggesting that Caribbean Airways was, in fact, either getting ready to close down its European operations and/or was being forced off the European routes and that it was in fact going to be making excursions into North America through using some of the routes which we had negotiated in the past, to make the European routes available to BWIA International, and that we would be going towards Texas and other western areas of the United States.

I have a view on that, but clearly it makes no sense to get up and expostulate on that kind of thing if it is not a fact. I believe, therefore, that the Minister should enlighten the House, because I really do not wish to waste any time on matters if it is not necessary. If the Minister will deal with that I will be very happy, and then we can have discussion.

On the Barbados External Telecommunications Limited, I think I understood the Minister to say that he is not in a position to enlighten us on that this evening. I think I will take him on his word.

On the Caribbean Food Corporation, however, I recall that the Minister responsible for Agriculture not less than eighteen months ago delivered a stinging criticism of that organisation, which I understood to be wallowing in a very high or low, depending on your point of view, level of incompetence. I should like very much to hear from the Minister whether, as he had promised, steps would be taken to deal with the Caribbean Food Corporation, which you will recall is a 1975 project which has been wallowing in the Caribbean for some time. A large amount of rhetoric has gone forth about how the Caribbean would feed itself, and the Caribbean Food Corporation was the combined effort of the collective brains of the regions, when in 1975, arising out of the energy and financial crisis of that period, it was felt that the Caribbean had to bend its collective back towards getting the region going again. The Caribbean Food Corporation was one of those areas of hope, and, as I said, the Minister then pronounced, as I understood him, that nothing was happening, that there was some difficulty either, as I recall it, recruiting a Chief Executive or.....

7.50 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of explanation. I think that if the honourable Member checks the documents which have been circulated in respect of explanations, he will see that this subhead has been changed, and the Caribbean Food Corporation is not one

of the corporations that will this year be under this Head. Check it out and you will see.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The point is taken, but it is just a page. It does not belong to this Head, in other words, and therefore it will be a problem to discuss it under this Head. I will not go any farther on the Food Corporation.

I would like some information, however, on the West Indies Shipping Corporation. As I recall it, in 1975, possibly 1976, there was a concerted effort to improve the quality of the West Indies Shipping Corporation. There was a decision then that we would be acquiring some additional vessels, because it was recognised that one of the inherent problems of regional integration was the inability of the Caribbean region to have goods moved from one island to another. The classic example has always been given of limes dropping in Dominica and going to waste while other Caribbean countries were purchasing limes at exorbitant prices, but we know that there are substantially large numbers of produce and other goods which we cannot move, and have not been moving, at the speed and with the alacrity that we should be moving them if the regional integration movement is to be successful.

I wonder if, in the context of the West Indies Shipping Corporation, the Minister could give us some information so we can discuss the matter. Again, I do not wish to discuss matters if some of the information I believe I have is not accurate. I will give way to the Minister.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I think the House is entitled to information with respect to these corporations, as they represent substantial investments by Government.

In respect of the cement plant, the Government is putting in a sum by way of equity to cover the first year operations of the cement plant. The cement plant, like a number of other investments, did not have a full first year in ideal operating conditions. The plant was not totally completed in the time that was originally set out in the feasibility study. We have absolutely no problem with that, because it is known that construction times always have a clause where there can be extensions of time.

Secondly, market conditions in the first year of operation were such that the conditions which were assumed to have been in existence were not there. We are in a market situation in which, within the Caribbean, there has been a contraction of demand for cement in one of the principal potential markets.

Thirdly, we have a situation in which the Caribbean Common Market and the unification of the Common External Tariff in what are known as the LDCs did not take place at the time which was originally envisaged, so that the level of protection that would be given within the Caribbean Common Market context in the LDCs was not in existence.

All of these were challenges to the management of the cement plant, and I am very happy to say that the management of the cement plant has responded remarkably well to these new conditions. The fact that we are very satisfied with the response is indicated by the grant of some $10 million this year in further equity contribution, which would help to capitalise the first year operational deficiencies in the plant.

(Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Losses.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There cannot be losses. If the plant was only in operation for four months, how can there be losses? Deficiencies!

The cement plant is fully operational now and, month by month, its productive capacity is reaching its targeted capacity and, what is equally important, the export capability is improving. We are finding markets to replace the markets that were envisaged in the feasibility study. The markets that we have are in other areas of the Caribbean, and do not press me, because I am not in a position to disclose the other countries at the present moment, because we are making progress in negotiating sales in areas that we do not wish our chief competitors to know about.

There is strong evidence, provable evidence too, that dumping is taking place. Honourable Members will recall that at the time of the defunct Federation a law was passed which was designed to prevent dumping within the Common Market. All of the states do not adhere to these laws, but progress is being made at Nassau. An essential part of the agreement at Nassau was that in those territories where cement had no duty at all, as part of the unification of the Common External Tariff and the OECs or LDCs Tariff which should have been in force by now, but is not in force, they would endeavour to make an accelerated effort in respect of cement. All of the Governments have committed themselves to it, but considerable progress has been made in the northern part of the Caribbean, particularly St. Kitts and those areas. They have honoured to the letter their commitments.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Before the Minister completes on that, I wonder if he is now able to confirm whether it is correct that the cement plant has purchased or leased a vessel to transport the cement. My understanding is that they have now purchased or leased a vessel which will do the work which the North Point was designed to do in the original concept.

8.00 p.m.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The North Point could not handle it.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Let me put it down in the Record that they have bought a boat to transport the cement. I want to know if that is true.

More particularly, I wish the Minister to confirm – I hope he says it is not true – that they have now appointed – this is information which I have received, and I want confirmation; in fact, I hope that it is not true – distributors who are non-nationals, who have come in from outside of Barbados, and that these people have been given some exclusive contract for the distribution, ex-plant. I am not saying this mischievously. I am telling you it is good information, or it is information coming from a reasonably reliable source, and I am raising it, because.....

(Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Branford, do not make another speech.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is important, L.B.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Go ahead. That is for the Press.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: .....there are some persons who have been able to come into Barbados, borrow money from the banks in Barbados to set up a business, and then be given a contract to deliver the cement ex-plant in Barbados, the old technique of selling the total production for domestic use to a company that is formed in Barbados and that company becomes the distributor of the cement in Barbados. That information has come to me, and I should like the Minister to shed some light on those two questions, the question of the purchase and/or lease of a vessel and this question of exclusive rights for local distribution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am happy to be able to answer those questions.

The cement plant has certainly not bought nor leased any boat. What the cement plant did was to indicate, quite clearly, the shipping requirements which the plant would need, and the shipping requirements of the customers from the plant. This had to take place because of the fact that a number of customers had bought cement from the cement plant and the cement plant had shipped the cement on a CIF basis in bottoms, which were traded within the Caribbean from well-known ship brokers, but the experience was that these bottoms only appeared to be bottoms.

Laughter.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: They did not prove reliable. On the other hand, there were other shipping companies which were carrying cement to other countries which was bought on an FOB basis. Scott from Trinidad and a number of other companies were therefore informed of the shipping requirements.

I believe that they have identified two or three or four ships which are very reliable, which are capable of carrying their cargo, but they ship ex-wharf. If a customer asks them to ship CIF, they will use these ships. It is as simple as that. But these ships are ships in the area who can comply with all of the requirements as to safety, capacity and reliability. So they have not bought any boats.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: They had the North Point. They would be on good ground.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not know. The North Point may have gone the way of the other three that went. I am not sure what the speed of the North Point is.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not bothering with that. The North Point is past history, as far as I am concerned.

With respect to the distribution of cement in Barbados, it is not true to say that any company has any monopoly on the distribution. I think it was well set out in a statement by the company. The company will sell anybody, the honourable Member or anybody who wishes to buy a minimum load of 750 bags, and if you are prepared to keep a minimum inventory, you could become a distributor.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: What is the difficulty with that? Anybody can become a distributor.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I would tell you this, that if I were not doing the job that I am doing now or have been doing for the last three years, I would become a distributor for the south of Barbados. There is no doubt about that.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: There is no problem in doing that. There are a lot of people out there.)

Laughter.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is true.

The position is that there is no monopoly. We were watching this situation because we knew the allegations were coming. We specifically asked for the file. It is not true to say that anybody has any monopoly. I am sure

that all of the people who have historically dealt with cement in Barbados, and I know them very well – I do not have to tell you, Mr. Chairman, you are an expert in that area – Leacock, West Indian Suppliers, Manning, Wilkinson and Challenor, Plantations Limited, the Lumber Company; and there is a new one now, there is a gentleman who is in the south of Barbados, a Mr. Rock, who used to work with Mr. Harriman before – once they are willing, they can be distributors.

There are a number of others; the concrete block companies, I understand, buy directly because they have storage. Some people have storage for 50 000 bags of cement, I am sure that Rayside Concrete and these other people have storage for 30 000 bags. But what they wanted to do is to control it by the load. There used to be a tremendous queue with people coming for one load and they could not schedule it, and then you had problems with the forklifts and you had a rush. They wanted to rationalize that.

If you are carrying stock, obviously, you buy it at a cheaper price, because you then become the warehouser, and we are very clear on that. The minimum load was 250 bags and they changed that to 750 bags per truck load, if you want that and you can pay for that, you can get it. But you also have to agree with the inventory, a minimum inventory of two thousand bags. If any person at all is willing to comply with these conditions and are not put on the system, I am positive that will be investigated. This is much less than a boat load, so I think that many more people can be in the distribution business today than in the past.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am glad that I asked the question so that we could have it cleared. Now, everybody knows what the policy is that if you can meet the criteria, you become a distributor. I think that that is fair enough, and I have no more to say on that.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, while the Minister is on his feet, this new system of distribution; has it contributed in any way to the increase in cement to one dollar per bag?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not sure of the new system. All I can tell you is that I see a proposal here for a wage increase in respect to the distribution. I would not say any more on that.
8.10 p.m.

As I understood it, according to the file, and from the Press Release – I saw the original Press Release – an inducement is being given to people who are keeping stock; they are being allowed the purchase price from the factory and a lesser amount so that they will make money from distribution. There will be an increase to this extent. If before you could drive your truck down there and get one truck-load at the original price, you now have to drive to a distributor, and you have to pay more. You have to pay $1.00 more, because that is the allowance they have given to the distributor for keeping the stock. A consumer cannot do what he was able to do before, that is go down to the plant.

New markets are being developed, and we should be proud of the fact that, despite the reduction in demand in the partner country, our people were sufficiently nimble like kimble, far-sighted and courageous to go and get markets in Guyana, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Grenada, St. Vincent, Puerto Rico – and I am not saying where the other market is at the present moment, because the cement plant is faced with intensed competition, some of which is dumb. We are gradually increasing our market share. The cement is of excellent quality and they are trying to sell it on the mainland of the United States, because it has been tested and it satisfies all of the American standards. We have got it into Puerto Rico, and when I was in Puerto Rico recently with a team trying to increase our sales, I understood that it was quite clear that they have got a contract for between 30 000 and 40 000 tonnes.

We can sell more cement. You can sell cement to Guyana because Guyana is a cement-starved country. But I am sure that unless we can get a financial arrangement to ensure that we receive payment for it, in a currency that we wish, then I am sure honourable Members will agree that it is better for us to look for markets in other areas. But we have a contract with Guyana because it is an Inter-American Development Bank project, something to do with barrier scheme, and we are being paid by the contractor, which is a Dutch firm. We are pursuing sales, and we expect, by next year, to get up to about 80 per cent capacity.

In all of these resource industries, there is one thing that has come out very clearly, whether it be bauxite, bricks, or cement, and it is that in small countries like the ones in the Caribbean, you need the total market for the productive capacity, and you need to understand that you will face competition, not necessarily above the level, from South American production.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I wonder if the honourable Member can say in the context of the operational plan, when is it projected that the company will break even or earn a profit? Since we are putting in an equity of $10 million, I think that is not an unreasonable question. There should be within the operational plan that they expect to break even in year 2 or in year 3. I wonder if the Minister can help us with that.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I can tell you that in year 2, it is definitely expected we will have a sufficient percentage of the rated capacity to make it profitable.

I am not telling you about price, that is a problem. There are two things with the cement now, and one is to get the markets up to a certain level of our rated capacity 240 000 tonnes to 273 000 tonnes. We can reach that, but it depends on how they behave in Colombia and Venezuela although the Venezuelan competition has reduced, because I think the Venezuelans have been able to find a market in Florida, and it is better for them to ship there. There are few things in the economics. The economics of fuel and the economics of transportation. There is a part of South America that we are in a more advantageous position from a geographical point of view than any of our two major competitors. I am not telling you who they are as yet.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Let us continue. The cement plant has done well. We are not worried about that.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sorry, I do not want to interrupt you, unless you are moving from cement.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: When you are finished, I will ask you.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Government of Barbados is a joint venture partner, and we have discussed this matter with our joint venture partner, that we should really look, in the light of changed market conditions, of putting in more equity and having less debt. That is all, because if you put in equity, you can wait. If you put it in as debt, you have to have your re-payment schedule.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I think that since we are putting in the equity, the two partners should insist that their comrades and brothers in the Caribbean fulfill their part of the responsibility. As you know, the decision to invest in the joint venture was part of a Heads of Government decision, and it is no point our putting in $10 million and Trinidad putting $10 million and St. Lucia is buying cement from Colombia. It just does not make sense. St. Lucia or Dominica or whoever can argue that our prices are unreasonable and come and discuss it. But St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Dominica all have a commitment to the Caribbean Community Treaty to buy their cement from Barbados so long as we have the capacity to sell them.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not want to specify countries, but I must say that the OECS countries as a whole, the vast majority, are honouring their commitments. They have introduced their system of licensing and there are some that, from the time we started to produce, were most anxious to buy from us.

Asides

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There are two. I do not want to single out names, because this is the subject of quite a fair amount of bitterness. At Nassau we spent a whole night dealing with this, and you will notice that there is an agreement in the Nassau Agreement which is published that cement was one of the sensitive industries about which we agreed to have a common protection. Increasingly, more and more traders are being allowed to import cement in some of the territories, and more and more traders are becoming agents, but there is still too much Colombian cement in some of the islands, and the Government has been making representation at all levels in one or two countries. I am not going to give the names of the countries. It would be wrong at this stage, because in both of those countries we have some of the markets now, but there is still scope for increasement. In respect to Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados is supplying Tobago. It is more convenient to supply to Tobago, so we still sell cement in that area.

I think that answers most of the questions that were asked in respect to cement, and by next year this time, I am sure that we will have a more favourable report.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I would like to ask a question in relation to cement, as I indicated that I would not interrupt until you had finished. You did say that you were discussing with Trinidad and Tobago the question of their injecting capital as well. Are they going to inject capital?

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You said "discussing" – No, no, do not try to put me off. There is a difference between discussing the possibility of further capital injection by the other partner and the other partner coughing up the money. Because what the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite) does not know, and what I would know, is that a big problem arose as to whether these deficiencies in the first year should be covered by further borrowings from the National Bank or whether they should be covered by equity input. I think the decision in terms of equity input is a better decision, but if the other partner is not going to put money in at this point in time, then, of course, our equity input is somewhat compromised, because you may still be left with a significant operating overdraft hanging in there.

8.20 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is six of one and half a dozen of the other, because if we put it in as equity, it is in there, and it either covers the deficiency to the extent of our share or it goes towards capitalisation of the losses of the first year, which is quite standard accounting, as I understand it, and pay that back over a period of time.

One thing I am certain of is that we have never had any experience in regard to the cement plant in which the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has not fulfilled

its share of the amount of money, never. As to whether there has been a formal agreement that it should go in as equity and capitalise the first year losses and you put it over a period of time or not, that is a different matter. My understanding is that view of the Ministry of Finance here in Barbados is that you capitalise the first year loss and put in the equity to cover the first year loss. Your original position remains the same. But there is no dispute, it is only a question of the treatment. We have never had any question – I want to make it clear – of a disgreement in respect of this area.

In respect of the Shipping Corporation, WISCO, that is a classic example of a service that, from the very beginning, West Indian co-operation was found to be necessary. WISCO has been fortunate in that it has attracted concessional money from the Caribbean Development Bank as well as from the LOME Convention, the European Economic Community Regional Fund, and WISCO was doing very well until two years ago when the downturn in trade, particularly bulk trade from Guyana, the rice trade, came to a very, very serious halt. That has had it impact on WISCO.

Once again, the management of WISCO did not fold up their hands. They went out and they aggressively marketed WISCO in other areas of the Caribbean Sea, and WISCO is now in a position where part of the losses that it would make normally on the inter-island run because of the lack of cargo, is compensated for by the fact that they are getting cargo up to Miami. And Belize has come into the link, and a number of other countries in the Caribbean which formerly would not join WISCO are now recognizing the value of WISCO. WISCO does not go to Belize at the moment. WISCO has a pooling agreement, as I understand it, with carriers from Central America, and the containers are either collected in Kingston or they are collected in Miami. I think this is a great thing, but we have to carry WISCO for a period of time. There are one or two ships that we chartered or bought in the conversion from bulk to containerisation that are for sale, but the market for shipping is not very good.

The Government of Barbados has one problem with WISCO, and it is that we are not going to agree to pay past losses until everybody agrees to pay their arrears. The Government of Barbados is not going to pay. We have said repeatedly that we have honoured our commitments to all regional institutions, but there are some people who do not like to honour their commitments, and we know that WISCO needs its money. We will make provision for everything current, but we will not make provision for past losses unless everybody agrees. That is a very important point.

But great progress has been made with WISCO. WISCO is a necessary service. There is no third country carrier that is going to do for the Caribbean what WISCO does. We cannot fool ourselves that anybody is going to provide transportation for you to break into their markets. It has never happened, nor will it ever happen, whether by sea or by air. Anybody who thinks otherwise is living in a fool's paradise.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I wonder if the Minister would give consideration to advising WISCO to look at the considerable amount of cargo by way of motor vehicles that are brought into this country from transhipment points. The Japanese, in particular, are selling many automobiles and motor vehicles in this region. They have established transhipment points in Panama. I believe that if we in the Caribbean are purchasing so many Japanese vehicles, and the Japanese are making almost no contribution to the development of the region. WISCO should explore the probability of insisting that they get a piece of that freight that brings the motor vehicles from Panama and from the Kingston Harbour, or they should even insist that Kingston becomes a transshipment point.

I see no reason why the Caribbean community cannot insist that at the new harbours, which were an archaic development at Kingston with a view to breaking in to the transshipment market, Japanese cargo coming into the region is put down at Kingston, to be moved in Caribbean bottoms. As the honourable Member knows, that is how the shipping companies in the developed countries insist in getting their through-put, and I think that WISCO should become even more aggressive and go out and charter the required bottoms and insist on getting this fair share of cargo with the help and support of the Governments. I wonder if the Minister would consider that?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We certainly will. I have argued very strongly that all the countries in the Caribbean should designate WISCO as their carrier for the purpose of the UNCTAD Liner Conference, and therefore that we should implement the provisions of that when a sufficient number of countries in the world have signed it and it comes into operation. I think that we have got fair agreement on that, but you must remember that in respect of WISCO, we face one or two problems because there are two countries that have their own national shipping lines, and one of the difficulties that we had was to have an agreement in which the Heads of Government mandated an investigation into the possibility whereby there would be no competition between the national shipping lines of those two countries. But more and more progress is being made with WISCO, especially considering the fact that countries that were once against WISCO are members.

We move to the air, in respect of CARICARGO and Caribbean Airways. CARICARGO is the joint venture airline of the Government of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. CARICARGO did very well up until last year.

The last financial year, CARICARGO operational position was in deficit. I understand that it would be in the vicinity of $1.6 – $1.7 million. As far as I am concerned, that is a very small deficit, but the problem with CARICARGO relates not so much as to the question of that deficit, it relates to the fact that there has been a downturn again in the imports from the United States into one of its main market areas, that is, Trinidad and Tobago. But, again I am very pleased to say that the Barbados Government, supported by the Trinidad Government, launched a tremendous diplomatic effort to help CARICARGO in the United States get its 402 – we have not got it yet, but we have the assurance that it will be fully renewed. We also encouraged the management of CARICARGO to look to other markets as part of their terrain, and CARICARGO was able to sew up an agreement with Brazilian airline Varig, with Viasa, with Laska, and they even have done a series of charters for Air Canada to Europe. So we have demonstrated that it is possible in an area like Barbados, provided you run competent airlines, to get business by way of charter from that part of South America which is near to you, and because of our proximity to part of their area, it is more convenient for them to use us than to charter from Miami. That has had a great impact on CARICARGO's position.

8.30 p.m.

At one stage in the middle of last year, at the time of the Trinidad Budget, you would see that the Trinidad Government said that they had anticipated, based on the figures they had available at that time, that there would be a loss of some $7 million, but between July and December all of these things occurred, and I will tell you why they occurred. They occurred because the 707s that CARICARGO had were in good condition, they were able to sign a contract to buy silencers, a number of countries that had small charter or cargo airlines could not sign the contracts and automatically they were ruled out under the noise regulations, and therefore the brokers started to look for air cargo companies that had some kind of substantial backing. Viasa, of course, went into great difficulty, and Varig went into difficulty, and Varig and others took steps to cut back on some of their services, and Air Canada itself found out that it was possible for them to use CARICARGO. So they are in a very happy position.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Just one question. Is it correct to state that one of the problems that affected the profitability of CARICARGO on the Miami/Barbados run has been the fact that the wide-bodied BWIA aircraft has been carrying an increasing amount of cargo on that line in competition with CARICARGO?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have never heard the directors of CARICARGO worry about BWIA putting wide bodies on Miami, because my understanding of the position is that the schedule may show wide bodies, but in fact, very often the plane that is used on the Miami run is the DC–9, and the DC–9 certainly has no cargo capacity. I think what is probably correct is that Flying Tigers have gone into the Trinidad market, and Flying Tigers came into the market at the time when the demand in Trinidad was reducing, but I have never heard it said that the wide bodies there are a cause of concern. In summer, the Trinidad market is good for Miami, because the Trinidadians travel up and down Miami, but in winter, it is the Barbados market that supports BWIA out of Miami. Otherwise, they would have to use a DC–9, and when you use a DC–9, you cannot carry a full load of passengers, 110 or whatever it is, and carry cargo too. Sometimes they have to charter CARICARGO to bring the passenger baggage when the West Indians are travelling because they do not travel with one bag, they travel with many bags.

One of the things that we have learnt from the downturn economic activity in CARICOM is that the CARICOM market itself is too small to support some of the infrastructure that was in existence when things were booming, and what we have to do is to recognise that the Caribbean is larger than CARICOM. In fact, CARICARGO does a tremendous amount of work in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic; so it is genuinely a Caribbean and Latin American Air Cargo facility, and I have no fear in respect of that. I think it is one of the very successful joint venture operations, and it demonstrates that citizens of the two countries can work together and put their brains together and provide a first-class service which can compete with competitors from big countries.

Caribbean Airways. Honourable Members will recall that in 1982, when Laker crashed, the Government took the decision that it had to continue the operations of Caribbean Airways in view of the fact, and I 100 per cent supported it, that the viability of Barbados tourism is dependent on access to Europe, including the U.K. In 1981, we had built up a tremendous reputation in England and in Europe, with 70 000 visitors alone from the U.K. and 30 000 from Europe, so 1981 was the peak. At that stage we had a number of charter operators coming out of Europe. We used to have Bahair, SAS had gone and we used to have Condor, and periodically we had Laker making incursions into Manchester.

When we took over Laker, we were 51 per cent shareholder in the structure of the company. We were not full managers of the company, we had access to some of the management of the company. When the receivers took control, it took a considerable period of time for us to get information from the receivers with respect to the internal financial documents of the company, because there was a relationship between Laker Holidays and Arrowsmith Limited, which were two tour operator companies which were owned by Laker and which appeared to be the primary sellers of the seats of

Caribbean Airways in the United Kingdom and the inter-relationship between these two companies in Caribbean Airways was not always clear. It was always a source of contention and argument between the Barbados Board of Directors and the Laker Board of Directors. The Minutes will show that. The auditors themselves, which is very important, were always unclear in respect of the finalisation of what was known in the trade as 'discount fares.' If you had them at the regular fares, Caribbean Airways would have been doing very, very well, but if you had them at the fares that they say they had contracted with Laker to do, they would have made a loss.
8.40 p.m.

Apparently, in the United Kingdom market discounting is the known thing, but if I discount to my subsidiary that is fine. You will notice that every airline company nowadays tends to have not only one but four different subsidiaries which are in the charter business and even operating at various segments of the charter market. I believe British Airways has probably about five different subsidiaries in addition to what are called well known bucket shots that operate.

We have been operating Caribbean Airways since then, and although there has been a down turn in traffic, the market share of Caribbean Airways has not significantly changed, but I must say that the yields you are getting now from the United Kingdom market is less than we got when we first started in 1982. Although nominally in pounds they are charging more, we are getting in Barbados dollars less yields, and that is one of the reasons why the operational position of Caribbean Airways is not as healthy as we would like it to be.

On the question of policy, honourable Members will recall that we have always said that provided – and this is a very important proviso – the level of services we have we got from the United Kingdom and from Europe could be provided by BWIA, the Barbados Government had no intention when it bought Caribbean Airways of being an aeroplane owner. If you look at the 1979 Memorandum, you will see that we felt that we could perform the role that we would always have an institution, and we would convert Caribbean Airways to perform the role that Arrowsmith and Laker used to do. We were good at that, we knew about tour operating and things of that kind.

We have never been able to get a commitment, and I have tried, and tried, and tried, and my position has always been in writing. We have never been able to get a commitment that there would be a level of service which would cater to our tourist industry. Therefore, we have had to continue to operate in the way in which we operate. I am quite satisfied that if we had not continued there, we would never have received the level of tourists we got.

In 1984, 46 274 people came from the United Kingdom, a drop of 2.9 per cent from 1983, 47 662. You will see the difference between this and 1982. Nineteen eighty one was the best year because it was a cricket year, a fantastic year. From Europe, there were 16 820 as opposed to 17 334 when Europe was at its height with its charters, when you had Condor and the others, and Balair chartering. So we have been able, with this big change in the dollar relationship, to keep our losses in Europe to the 2.9 to 3 per cent level.

That has had a cost, and the cost has been that the airline seats are being sold not only in pounds at a very increased rate, but in Barbados dollars at a lesser rate. You only have to look and see what you have to pay here for a passage to go to England and convert what you pay here into English pounds, and you will see, if we got from England the pound at the rate it is charged here, that you would get much more. This is where a difficulty is now, because there is a tremendous fight going on between the local consumers, and the chief architect of this you will see in *Miles Ahead* every week, particularly when August is coming up, when it is regular for them to go away.

We have a problem here, because on this run there are two carriers and a feeder carrier, and if you are to get the fare in real terms it would be a 40 or 50 per cent increase in freight out of London. You cannot do that because they dropped the fares from London to the U.S. to £289. It is true that Pan Am has lost nearly Bds. $400 million, but that is what is happening in the airline world, so again we are being conditioned.

I also want to draw to honourable Member's attention that this summer, without Caribbean Airways coming out of Frankfurt and Brussels, which has helped, because they do better out of Frankfurt and Brussels, the yield there is better, Barbados' summer tourism would be left to a collection point in London by BA and a service that we think is the best way of doing Europe, that is to bring them over by a small plane in London. I do not believe that if you are a sophisticated tourist destination like Barbados and you have been in this industry for these years, and people are accustomed to a safe plane service at least, you should allow them to do that.

A decision has to be taken about Caribbean Airways. There is no question or doubt about it. The Government of Barbados made it abundantly clear one year ago that this would be the last year for the present situation to continue, because we have managed to settle with a receiver and the Government has now bought all the shares in Caribbean Airways. Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., I think is the name of the company which is in a position to do the audit, and they can start from 1982, 1983 and they can come forward. We are either going to have a satisfactory arrange-

ment as originally envisaged in 1979, or we are going to have a partnership with someone else. It is clear.

The Government of Barbados has said we would be delighted to have Trinidad and Tobago as our partner in this area, just as we have them with CARICARGO. We would have you as a partner; we would do the tour operating business by ourselves if you guarantee us a minimum level of service from the United Kingdom and – this is the catch – you tell us what you are going to do with the routes that we have offered you in North America, because Barbados' tourism is dependent upon getting tourists from non-traditional areas. That is what we have to do. That is what Caribbean Airways did, it pioneered non-traditional areas.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have no worry about Boston, because three years ago when they signed the agreement and Boston was given out, we were only getting Laker in Boston at the height bringing in 4 000 visitors. We now have a 747 coming from Boston every Monday to Barbados on charter by International Retainers that brings 504 people, so we have passed talking about Boston. I am talking about Chicago, Atlanta, Houston and California. From California we are getting 7 500 people. The Caribbean is in vogue now in California, because people can combine with air-sea holiday.

Our proposition is very simple: you can provide the service, you can come with us as a partner. If not, keep what you have. That is your freedom right, but remember that we will pursue our aviation rights in partnership with whomever we can make a reasonable deal.

We have had many offers, and the offers have been concretised. The Barbados Government has not hidden anything. Every time the Barbados Government receives an offer, it informs the Trinidad and Tobago Government that it received an offer, so there is no argument, no row, no fight.

8.50 p.m.

We have said that we agree that they cannot come out with less than the freedom rights which they have.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No "but". There were two deadline dates; one, with respect to what would happen in London and Europe and one with respect to the United States of America. The one with respect to London and Europe has expired, but negotiations are still going along. I believe that I can say that what we have done conforms with what everybody would expect us to do, and that is to bend over backwards, if possible, to try and get an agreement. But at the same time, if it is not amenable, a decision has to be made. That is our position.

In the meantime, the tourist industry in Barbados is estimated to have benefitted by spending some $20 million to $25 million. We regard the amount of money that we have to pay, some $4 million to $5 million per year, as being a small amount. The reason why this year we had to pay more was because, for the first time, we were able, by having all the shares and getting access to all of the information, there were some carry over debts from the Laker time which you had to honour if you are continuing the airline. Unless you had collapsed the company and started Caribbean Airways 1982 or 1983, you could not get out of those debts.

There is no question now of substantial ownership and affective control. The German Government, in Laker's time, gave us a lot of trouble on the ground that it was only a sham organization. Nobody can say that, because from 1982 to 1985 a different situation came up. That is, straight and frank, the position of the Government of Barbados.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: We would like to see the extent to which the Government, and, in particular, the Honourable Prime Minister, is committed to Caribbean Airways, apart from his position in late 1975 and 1976. Are they so committed to Caribbean Airways that they prefer to make heavy subventions to Caribbean Airways, while he found it totally objectional when it was established by the Democratic Labour Party and never cost the Barbados Government a single penny. And the first objective it achieved, of course, was to bring down fares between Europe and the United Kingdom and Barbados, and it also increased the amount of European and British tourists coming to the country. Those objectives were achieved under the Democratic Labour Party, without giving away a single penny.

At the time of the collapse of Laker Airways, the honourable Member may recall that there were options open to the Government, including an offer by the subsidiaries of Laker Airways in relation to continuing the marketing of the airline. That was turned down by the Government. I do recall the Right Honourable Prime Minister coming in here and saying, "We will have nothing to do with them." I put it to you that one of the problems that you have now is the cost of marketing in Europe and in the United Kingdom, the efficiency of marketing, and another problem, which you have to attend to immediately, is to make sure that the airline improves on its reputation for punctuality and adheres to its schedules, because it is my clear understanding, from the vibes that I am getting out of Europe and the UK, that this is beginning to affect the viability of the airline. Once an airline develops a bad reputation, you know what kind of problems you are going to have.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to respond very clearly. The offer that we had from Laker's subsidiary, I believe it was from Arrow-Smith, but the point is that it

was not a valid offer. The company that owned the airline had gone into liquidation first, and the people believed that the subsidiaries would not have been liquidated, but, of course, the next thing that happened was that the subsidiaries were liquidated, too. And, Laker Holidays in particular and Arrow-Smith were sold off very quickly, because they had some assets. Saker Holidays bought Laker Holidays and another company bought Arrow-Smith. So the offer was really a nude offer. The guys thought that they would have been able to continue the airline under another guise. Laker himself thought that he would have been able to continue an airline under another guise, because he formed one with Tiny Rowland, the Board of Trinity and the American people.

I agree with the other point and we are taking steps. I do not want to disclose all the steps that we are taking, but part of the arrangements that we are trying to come to with either Trinidad or another company would be that we would share the cost of the operation of an aeroplane, because we have reason to believe that when you operate an aeroplane and you have to depend on contractual services, they like to push you around, and sometimes your equipment does not always get there when you want the equipment, although you have a contract. It is not that they do not provide the equipment, it is that the equipment is used to serve other contractors who have been longer in the business.

Those are the things we are operating on, but I really think that we have made a great effort in this area to preserve our access to Europe.

The question that the sum of $43 203 390 under Head 73 stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 12.30 p.m. on Thursday, March 21, 1985.

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

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

9.00 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 Mr. J. G. ODLE took the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. It is Head seventy...

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That has been passed.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Head what? Are you sure that Head 75 has been passed?

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes. Head 75 has been passed.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Seventy-five?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Head 75.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, Sir, we are at Capital for the Ministry of Finance and Planning.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: We passed that.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Which one?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Head 75.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 75 do now stand part.....

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Hold it. Hold it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is Head.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is not Head 75 at all, it is Head 73.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Head 73 has been passed.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Head 73 has been passed. Fine. That is all I wanted to know.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Head 28, Ministry of Legal Affairs, as amended.

Head 28, Ministry of Legal Affairs – $2,299,951 – was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 28, Ministry of Legal Affairs – as amended – stand part.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Head 28, Sir, Subhead 4. I wonder if the Minister of Legal Affairs would update us on the position of the section in his Ministry dealing with conveyancing for compulsory acquisition, whether or not it is now fully staffed and what can we look forward to as far as the speeding up of this particular part of the compulsory acquisition procedure in the future.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): The Judicial and Legal Service Commission is responsible for the recommendation of appointment of staff to the Legal Department of Government. It has been brought to my attention that a number of applications have been made to the Legal Service in Barbados, that a number of names have gone before the Judicial and Legal Service Commission and some recommendations have been made. I have no input at all into who is appointed in the Legal Service in Barbados. At the moment, the section of the Chambers that deals with land acquisitions and public trustee work is staffed by one officer, which is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. One hopes that with the few recommendations that have been made recently, the full complement would be brought up to date within a very short period of time.

I must also point out that the people who are dealing with the land acquisitions for the new highway, the Industrial Access Road are now located in the Ministry of Housing and Lands, and they have a full Legal Section dealing with the acquisition of in excess of three hundred properties. So, that responsibility is taken directly out – in the first place – of the Chambers of the Attorney-General, although the Attorney-General retains responsibility for the work which they do.

With the recommendations for appointment of two or three officers that I have seen recently, I believe that the Land Acquisition and Conveyancing Section of the Chambers will be brought up to full strength in a very short period of time.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I wonder if the Minister would help me out of a dilemma, it concerns the office of Public Trustee. One of my constituents has just $300 in the National Bank. The bank refused to release the money. I got in contact with the appropriate authorities and public trustees. Their position is that they do not have any officers to process it, and in the meantime, the $300 is lying down inside the National Bank, and we do not know where to turn. I wonder if the Minister of Legal Affairs could advise me where I can turn next to get the $300 for the lady from the Barbados National Bank.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Usually in relation to small sums of money left on the bank to an estate, there are a number of ways in which these things can be handled. For instance, the undertaker can get his funeral expenses from the bank. Indeed, he can take out Letters of Administration as a creditor, or any relative can. However, with very small sums, the cost of legal services might exceed the amount of money in the bank, but I know that then banks have been paying out money when there is an indemnity, where someone signs to identify himself against any future claims.

The Public Trustee is the Solicitor General and the Solicitor General tries, to the best of his ability, to accommodate people in positions such as have been pointed out by the honourable Member for St. Philip North, give the necessary advice and, indeed, take action when that is warranted.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 28 do now stand part. All those in favour, please say, "Aye", all those against, please say, "No".

I probably should have said, "Head 28, as amended". The motion is that that do now stand part.

Hon. L. R. TULL: That includes the move-ins. because there were – Do you have the items to be moved in?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is there a further amendment?

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The "Ayes" have it. Next Head.

Head 29 – Public Prosecutions – $50 886 – was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 29, as amended, do now stand part.

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

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

Head 30 – Police – $8 505 899 as amended – was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 30, as amended, do now stand part.

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

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

Head 31 – Prisons – $1 591 665 as amended – was called.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to move that Head 31 do now stand part.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): There seems to be a frequency of prisoners who, either on their way to the hospital or on their way to the court, somehow get out of custody. I wonder if the Minister can inform this House whether investigations are in force and what action is usually taken if any persons are found to be negligent in their duties.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): I am very strong on this. It is really unfair to allow prisoners who are deemed dangerous – and I am not prejudging anyone – and most of them are charged for very serious crimes, to walk about in the present manner. I wonder whether the system should not be introduced where they would be handcuffed to each other and leave out this fancy idea which, apparently, sociologists or the psychologists have, about going back to the days of barbarism.

Let a small community such as Barbados feel at least at peace with the world. There is no doubt about the tension which exists now over whatever problems, unfortunately, have arisen with respect to escaped prisoners who, according to Press reports, seem to have been considered to be very dangerous persons in light of the crimes which it has been alleged they have committed.

I hope that a committee is set up to investigate these problems. I consider it unfortunate, however you may see it. They could be on the loose, if I may use that word, and thereby terrorize the community. I support the views of my colleague on that side. Only yesterday I discussed this matter with the Minister and the Commissioner of Police. I would sincerely hope that tighter security be introduced when you are dealing with persons of that nature.

12.40 p.m.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): The police and the prison authorities have for long periods been dealing with all kinds of offenders, and they have it within their power, given by law, to secure prisoners in such a way as not to create any difficulty for the public. If a prisoner is considered by the Superintendent of Prisons to be a dangerous man, or one who is likely to try to escape, he has it within his power to exercise the maximum amount of restraining factors to keeping him from escaping or creating any danger to the public.

I have asked for a report surrounding the escape of the two men a few days ago. I have a preliminary report, but that is only to give a few of the broad facts. I am waiting until the report comes in to go into detail as to exactly what happened and indeed to ascertain whether any individual or group of individuals were at fault. I do not have any powers of disciplining, that is entirely up to the Public Service Commission, but certainly when I get a report, it will enable me to sit down with the Superintendent of Prisons, the Commissioner of Police and my own Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Legal Affairs and look into the question of security of prisoners when they are taken to and from court, while they are in police cells and when they are at the prison, to in the future minimize these possibilities of escapes.

I understand that one of the two is back in custody. I have no update yet on the situation in respect to the other one, but I want to say one thing in connection with an article that appeared in one of the newspapers this week. The report as to the circumstances in which the escape took place is not entirely accurate. One newspaper said that the men escaped in the van. I am told that they escaped on their way from the cells of the court to the van – that is the point at which they escaped. I understand, too, that the men were handcuffed. Well, that is like the love of God; it passeth all human understanding that two handcuffed men could have escaped in the way in which I heard that they escaped. So I am at the moment suspending judgment on that particular matter. I really do not know, but it certainly defies my own commonsense to believe that two men can escape in the way in which I have heard they did, and I say this while pointing out that I have not had a definitive report from either the Police Service or the Prison Service, so I am not seeking to prejudge what they will say to me.

I do share the concern of the honourable Member for St. Philip North, as do all right-thinking Barbadians. We cannot continue to have these constant escapes from custody by prisoners the way that we have been having them, and something will have to be done. If we have to improve training, security, or equipment, we will have to do that, but the public of Barbados should be protected from these constant lapses in security.

The question that the sum of $1 591 665 under Head 31 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 32 – Fire Service – $1 078 324.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to move that Head 32 as amended, stand part.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): In seconding this Head I would like to again pay tribute to the Fire

Service. You hear about the Coast Guard, Defence Force and Police Force, and I feel that it would be remiss of me if I did not once again salute Chief Fire Officer Gittens and his men for, year after year, doing what I would consider a very, very difficult and hard job – and doing it well. I would do whatever is in my power, anytime at all, to see what other conditions can be met to make them a happier fire fighting unit, and would really support any such move.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): I think that that is a sentiment that should be endorsed by all Barbadians, and we on this side certainly wish to join in that tribute to the Fire Service.

I wish merely to ask the Minister, since earlier – I do not know exactly, but a few months ago – he gave the House the assurance that certain equipment was on its way, if he is in a position to update the House as to whether that special equipment for fire fighting in the city, which, I believe, the Chief Fire Officer had indicated in a Press report that he was still without, has arrived. I wonder if the Minister could enlighten us as to what has happened. Has that equipment for fighting fires in the city, in particular high buildings,.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If he answers now it means that we can go straight through. We are not having a debate, I am merely asking a question. I recognize it could come under Capital, so if he does not have the answer now, he can give me under Capital.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Under Subhead 1 (e), the inspection and supervision of, among other things, institutions and other Government buildings, I would like to find out how much importance the appropriate Ministries attach to these reports from the Fire Department, and I refer specifically to the Land Tax Department at Cumberland Street. In my opinion, and I happen to believe that this is the opinion of the Fire Department as well, that this is nothing short of a fire hazard. I think that the time has come when that department should be pulled down completely and rebuilt, and while you are at it, I think it should be built to allow the entire Land Tax Department, which is now amalgamated with the original Valuation Department, to come under one roof to allow for better supervision and comfort to the staff.

I have been to that office on one or two occasions and it really is a fire hazard. I want to see Government employees get out of there completely, and I want to find out what is happening with that department.
12.50 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): On the question of that department, within this financial year I give the honourable Member the assurance that something would be done in respect of that department. We are looking for accommodation for it. I cannot tell you that the accommodation will be at place A or place B. A number of areas are being investigated, and we must also bear in mind that the Central Bank now occupies a large number of Government offices, which, we are told, they will no longer need at the end of this year. Certainly within this financial year, there is no question about it, the department with the first claim on the space, particularly in the Financial Building will be the Income Tax Department, and then we will deal with Land Tax.

We also have a plan for refurbishing that building, and we are constantly keeping it under review, but we would not want to move them and then move them again. That would not make sense.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT (St. Michael North East): I want to know whether the Fire Department is in a position to give any advice on the monitoring of gas lines, or offer any assistance in the event of a problem, especially since natural gas lines are in many of the streets in the City.

The use of gas is always a concern to the Fire Department, and this subhead states "the inspection and supervision of premises where volatile petroleum and light propane gas are sold and stored, institutions and other government buildings." Invariably, when there is a house fire, it is usually traced to the fact that there was a certain leakage in a cylinder of gas. The Fire Department responds very readily to these fires, but in some cases it is a hopeless exercise, because by the time they get there, the house has already been destroyed.

The installation of natural gas in certain areas of the city causes me some concern, because I am not sure how knowledgeable the people are about the use of this service, how they would respond in a case of a fire adjoining somebody's premises, and, of course, most of these buildings are wood. In the case of a gas leak, how should the residents respond? What facilities are there within the Fire Department for advising people or warning people how to respond in such cases.

Only a few weeks ago, I happened to be passing the Black Rock Road at 11 p.m. when there was a massive explosion. When it was investigated, it was found that one of the main gas lines had a leak. Luckily, there was a gentleman on the street who had some knowledge of containing these high pressure lines; he was able to move very quickly to have that line brought under control, and the Natural Gas Corporation was notified.

My fear is that had that taken place in the New Orleans area, or one of the other highly densely populated areas in the city, or anywhere else for that matter, where natural gas lines are run, I am not sure how effective the people would be in resolving a situation as dangerous as that. Someone only has to pass casually with a cigarette near the natural gas lines for you to have a very large explosion in the centre of the city. I would like to know if the Fire Service, in conjunction with the Natural Gas Corporation, has any means of warning or advising the people in the highly built-up areas of the dangers involved in using natural gas, because we want to minimize the dangers of house fires, especially in those large built-up areas.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Since we are on the question of fire and fire prevention, I wonder if the Minister would also like to advert to what I consider to be a necessity now, a building code relating to fire prevention.

As you know, in cities like New York City and Montreal, certainly cities in the United States, there is continuous fire inspection throughout the year, and there are certain rules which form part of the city code relating to the behaviour of people in stores. No cigarette smoking is one that comes easily to mind. I have no doubt that, within our totality of laws, it can be pointed out that we have something similar, but I think that with the change in construction which we have seen in Barbados, where most of the modern buildings are now airconditioned and enclosed, the need for fire escapes and the behaviour which should be followed by the public in the use of these buildings should now form part of a comprehensive examination, and, if necessary, we should improve the laws to take account of that.

We have been singularly fortunate in all of the fires we have had in Barbados so far, but there is no guarantee that that good fortune will hold, and I think it is now necessary, in keeping with Town and Country Planning building codes, that we pay special attention to fire prevention in the construction or reconstruction of our city.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am always very grateful to accept the commendation of others with respect to departments falling under my purview, and therefore I accept graciously the commendation of the Fire Service, a service that does a tremendous job with the limited resources with which it has to operate.

I know that the Fire Service has been almost like an outside child in the whole arrangement or some kind of poor relative, but a change has come about. The Fire Service, not many years ago, about three or four, was working 84 hours. We have managed to bring that number down to 72 hours a week by giving them additional staff. We have just decided to increase the establishment by 30, so that will be further brought down, within a matter of two or three months, to 54 hours a week. Although this is a tremendous change in three or four years, I think it is still less than satisfactory, and, before very long, we will be moving a further stage to give them an even bigger establishment.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North East (Mr. L. L. Sisnett) has raised the point of the dangers of fires in residential areas. I think it is a good and valid point, because the use of gas in houses in Barbados is a relatively new development, and whenever there is a new development, it is necessary that the people in our community be educated about the dangers, the advantages and disadvantages of the development.
1.00 p.m.

I believe that a good analogy would be the building of new highways in Barbados. We have the Spring Garden Highway and the St. Barnabas Highway – we are now at the stage at which we are starting on a new one – and we see the difficulty in getting people to adjust to the usage of these new things. Equally, it is important that we educate our people as to the dangers of gas in their houses and their districts. It is a very different arrangement to the old days where they used kerosene and electricity for cooking. Those days are passed, and therefore there must be a serious educational effort to sensitize and alert people to the dangers of all this gas that we see going down across the country.

The Fire Department, to its credit, has taken the initiative in carrying this educational programme to many parts of the island to alert people as to these dangers, but I think we need a lot more work done in that area. And although the Fire Department will continue to carry out that role, I think it is imperative of other agencies in Barbados, both public sector and private sector, to bring home to the people in our communities the dangers inherent in the extensive use of natural gas for cooking, heating and other requirements.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Tairt) raised a question about the new equipment for the Fire Service. I think he specifically means the turntable ladder. The turntable ladder was ordered several months ago through the Crown Agents in London, and I cannot say with certainty that it is on the island, but I can that if it is not on the island now, it will be on the island within a few weeks. It has been ordered and we were assured of delivery around this time.

There was a question raised about building codes, and it was raised in the *Nation* in relation to the dangers of fire and fire-escapes. I do not know that the Town Planning Act has any specific requirement of fire escapes in new buildings, but the Act does provide for a general suitability, and I think this sort of thing is covered under this umbrella.

Barbados has been a country of low buildings. We have not had many highrise buildings in Barbados in recent times, so the danger is only a danger in a very tiny percentage of the structures in this land. Nonetheless, it is an important point that we have to be careful and with the increase in fires, for whatever reason, and taking the points mentioned by the honourable Member about air-conditioning, enclosed buildings and this sort of thing, I think that more serious and intense attention would have to be paid to that kind of arrangement.

But the responsibilities for these things are often rather diffuse. You have the Labour Department responsible for safety in industrial concerns, you have the Town Planner required to look after certain aspects of building codes, and you have the Fire Department falling under another Ministry that is directly concerned with these things. When you put these together there is provision for these things, but I think that if one can bring them under a particular central agency to carry full responsibility for these matters, then it would not be a wasted thing.

There is one further point with respect to the Fire Service, and this does not arise out of any question raised by honourable Members, but I think I should mention it. The Fire Service has responsibility for domestic and industrial fires and for the security at the airport in cases of plane crashes and related matters, and during the past eight years we have given intensive training. Indeed, we have been sending people overseas for special training to deal with the problems that can arise if there were a crash of an aircraft at Grantley Adams Airport. I mention this because this is often a forgotten aspect of their responsibility, but in view of the fact that in Barbados we have a tourist economy, with increasing numbers of aircraft coming into the airport here, so the dangers of some kind of accident happening at some time exist, we have been giving greater attention to the preparation and training of the Fire Service in dealing with that kind of emergency should it arise.

The question that the sum of $1 079 324 under Head 32 – Fire Service – as amended, stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 33 – Probation Department – $90 519.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $90 519 under Head 33 – Probation Department – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

Head 75 – Ministry of Legal Affairs, as amended, $4 558 039.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $4 558 039 under Head 75 – Ministry of Legal Affairs – as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Under Head 75, Subhead 1 – Police Station, I wonder if the Minister can update us on the proposal for Police Headquarters at Wildey or thereabouts. I want to know whether these plans are still on the drawing board or what other arrangements are being made.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): We have been discussing recently, I mean in Government, our priorities with respect to the construction of new headquarters for a number of our governmental agencies. I have expressed the view that the building of a new Police Headquarters is a matter of the utmost priority, and that the headquarters at Coleridge Street has more against it than for it. These are different times with different problems, and, therefore, we have to turn our attention to the exigencies of this moment.

The Police Headquarters at the moment are located in a fairly congested area with private buildings all around them, and I am of the view that it is not a suitable place for the headquarters of the Police Force in a modern Barbados. We are, therefore, looking at the possibility of doing construction of the new Police Headquarters as soon as possible.

We are going to start the construction of a police station and court in Central St. George. Honourable Members are aware that St. George is perhaps developing at a pace, residentially that is, in fact residentially only, that one would not have contemplated 15 years ago. There are a number of new areas, a number of people are moving into St. George, and it is necessary that services be brought to these people. The whole area around central St. George has seen a phenomenal increase in population in the last few years, and we believe that a police station should be brought in proximity to the people to provide that service, so we will be constructing a police station and a court in central St. George.

The old police station at Boarded Hall perhaps was useful in the last century when police stations were invariably built on hills, where the police could stand and watch people approaching from a great distance. The reason why that was done was because the people who controlled this country in those days were concerned about slave riots. They had to be up on a hill looking down to see when hordes of slaves were moving to assault a police station, and if you look around Barbados, you will see that in St. Peter, St. Thomas, the old one at Bissex

Hill, St. George, all around the island, police stations are on hills with open land round them.
1.10 p.m.

These are different days, and the police station at Boarded Hall really is not well suited for the needs and demands of today. It is probably good for a fire station, because right through the St. George valley is some of the finest agricultural land in this country and vast acreages of sugar cane. At the old police station the fire officers can carry out the role that the police used to carry out in the last century. Just as the police in the last century could look out to see when hordes of slaves were coming to take over, the firemen at Boarded Hall can look out and see a little whiff of smoke in the St. George valley and be able to put it out before hundreds of acres of sugar cane are destroyed in that area.

The answer to the question is that we see a priority in the building of a new police complex, and for the immediate future, we shall do construction of a police station in central St. George.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT (St. Michael North East): I, perhaps, am the only one who has been fighting a battle here for the inclusion among the equipment of the Police Force of dogs. It seems as though I have been fighting a lonesome battle, but I feel that we must in Barbados today consider that effective policing can be enhanced by the utilisation of properly trained dogs.

At present it has been reported that there are two prisoners at large. I do not want to go into this, but I will just reiterate that the work of the police is more effective, it becomes less burdensome, if they are assisted with dogs that have been properly trained. I am not talking about a dog that has gone through four or five hours' training under some situation here in Barbados where the trainers themselves do not know anything about the handling of dogs, the weak points about dogs or the good points about dogs.

All this noise about prisoners escaping and spending many weeks at large could be reduced significantly if the Police Department were to equip itself with dogs at the main outposts, dogs to do routine beat work in the presence of properly trained policemen. Instinctively, if a policeman or two policemen are on the trail of an escaped prisoner and they come to a little hilly district, because they are human they would retreat. A dog that is properly trained would pursue that prisoner. I am sure that the guys who were at large for a number of months, for the better part of last year, would have been captured if the police had properly trained dogs doing a normal routine as a normal day's work. I want to enquire of the Minister if they are seriously considering this.

On the question of drugs, again there is a case for properly trained dogs. We can assist in reducing the volume of drugs coming into this country if in the Police Department there was a department that was capable of handling dogs at that level.

The Barbados Labour Party's manifesto of 1981, under the section "Youth," speaks of the Royal Barbados Police Force and how it would be encouraged to revitalise its clubs which operated successfully in the Fifties and the early Sixties. That is with a view to giving the young people in Barbados some close association with the police, seeing the police probably as neighbourhood friends, and trying to encourage the youth of the country to be involved with the police, to respect the police.

I want to know if there are any plans to revitalise the concept of Police Clubs as was the practice in the early Fifties, as the Barbados Labour Party has so clearly enunciated in its manifesto. What is holding up the police if they have any social programmes for encouraging the youth to be part of the police family, not to see the police as enemies of Barbadians and bring the Barbadian people more aware and up to date about what is really taking place within the Royal Barbados Police Force Clubs?

I would like to see those clubs revitalised, because we have seen some very good, promising youngsters on the streets, and fellows in the past like Sir Garfield Sobers, who was a member of the Police Boys' Club, and I am sure that there are many young men out there who the police can put their hands on, and rather than they ending up in the courts, they could become very valuable citizens of Barbados. I would very much like to see the police more involved in these activities with our youth.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE (St. Lucy): I am very happy to be able to support this particular Head. I definitely believe that we all should be happy with the progress that has been made in the Police Force in recent weeks. I think we all should be proud as a nation.

There is one point on which I do not quite agree with the Minister when he spoke about putting police stations in certain low lying spots, and when he said the old-time spots for police stations were selected so that the policemen could watch the movement of slaves. I believe that when you have a police station on a hill, that demands respect in a certain amount of land around, because when most people stand a mile from the station and can see the station, they always feel that someone in that station is watching them trying to commit a crime, so the building on a hill works as a deterrent to people from committing crimes. Most of the police stations were on hills where policemen could see quite a way out. Even most of those plantation yards were always in a position where they could almost be watchmen.

There is one point I would like to make, although it has actually passed, but I believe that you would bear with me, Sir. It slipped me not long ago, and I know you will allow me to bring it again. This is about the Fire Service, about which we are all happy.

The parish of St. Lucy being so far from St. James and those other parishes, I feel it is time, and I hope the Honourable Minister is contemplating having a fire station nearer to the parish of St. Lucy. At most times when we have house fires, by the time the truck gets there the house has already burned flat. I hope that the Minister is contemplating putting a station a little closer to the parish of St. Lucy.

I am proud to let you all know that I think St. Lucy is the most peaceful parish out of the eleven, because I make a boast that the least people in Glendairy Prison are from St. Lucy. We have a station down there and we only have two policemen, and that proves that it is a very peaceful parish. It is our aim and wish to keep it like that, so we still would like the Honourable Minister to look at that station, because I think years ago that station used to have around 18 officers, but today it only carries two. Maybe, because of the goodness of the people of St. Lucy it is a waste of time to have so many officers there, but I still feel that the Honourable Minister could try to do his part to make us a little more relaxed and happy down here.

1.20 p.m.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): I always like to bend to the wisdom of the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Mr. R. E. Brathwaite). I think he is right when he says that there is perhaps less criminal activity in St. Lucy than in any other parish in Barbados. I well recall that a year or two ago, I went up to the prison one morning to do my usual tour and I invited the honourable Member for St. Lucy to go around with me. To be honest, the amount of hands shaken and the people who reached out to him gave me the distinct impression that there was a pretty high proportion of people from St. Lucy up there. The facts do not bear that out; it was that because he is a good man, he was reaching out to everybody.

Dealing with the question of a fire station for St. Lucy, we are looking at that. St. Lucy is building up an industrial capacity and there is more and more activity in the north, and it is under active consideration in the Ministry to put a small station in St. Lucy. We are looking at that at the moment.

We are committed to the establishment of a new fire station at Six Roads in St. Philip. There is a great deal of activity around the Six Roads area that could give rise to an industrial fire at any time. There is also a fairly substantial build-up of residential districts in St. Philip, so we are in committee with that one.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North East raised the question of the police dogs. We have police dogs, and we use them. I do not think that the question is one now of quantity, rather than a question of quality. There is no point having one dozen police dogs if all you are going to do is spend all day feeding them to get them fat. At the moment, the police dogs are used for tracking at the scenes of crime, and they are very successful in their use.

It is true that they could be trained and they should be trained in the more sophisticated areas of police activity, and the honourable Member for St. Michael North East makes the point repeatedly that police dogs perhaps should be used for sniffing drugs at the airport and the seaport. I am not an expert in these things and I usually listen to the advice of my technical people. The Commissioner of Police and his department advise me from time to time about their needs, both the needs for equipment and training, and I can give the honourable Member and this House the assurance that if the Commissioner makes out a strong case for further training the police dogs for sniffing of drugs at our airport and seaport, he would have a very receptive ear from me.

I know that there are some people in the community, not least among them are certain honourable Members on the other side, who believe that you should not run your own department, you should let public officers run it for you. To put it bluntly, that is just too bad for all of them. I have an administrative responsibility for my department, so I keep that, but I do consult fairly widely on technical matters where the expertise lies with departmental people. Any additional use for which dogs can be put, and if there is need for a few more dogs, I would be willing to accede to that kind of request, if it is put to me in reasonable form.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North East also dealt with the interaction between the police and young people in the community. I think that is imminently desirable. But I think that in putting the case, one should not forget the fact that, already, there is a great deal of interraction between young people and the police, and for the very purpose stated by the honourable Member.

We in Barbados do not believe that the police have a role only in going out there apprehending people who break the law. We believe that the Police Force can be a positive force for good in turning around some of the anti-social activities that are developing in Barbados. It is for this reason that the police have started the Resident Beat Officer Scheme – it has been suspended for a few weeks but, nonetheless, it is there – in which the police can have closer contact with people in communities and can influence them towards acceptable modes of conduct. Indeed, it also affords an opportunity for the police to

have a finer intelligence network, and I mean intelligence in its best sense, they would be able to have a better comprehension and understanding of the community in which they work. So they would not only be able to influence the people in the community in the direction in which all decent-thinking people in this community would like to see them go, but also, when crimes are committed, they would have a better network of information to be able to apprehend people and pick up evidence.

We also have the operation of the Juvenile Liaison Scheme, which is a scheme that allows police to work with other agencies in the community – Welfare Department, Child Care Board, the Probation Office, the Ministry of Education – to deal with young people who get into the problems and to meet with them, to guide them and to give them the kind of care and supervision that would move them away from developing a life of crime. It is almost an opportunity for a second chance.

It is very devastating for young children, ten, eleven, twelve, to be dragged into court for a number of minor offences and given a lasting scar on their characters. We believe that if minor offences are committed by children, we can sit down and talk to them, provide guidance and leadership and do something to improve their self worth so that we would avoid many of the problems that we get from people when they reach the upper part of their teens. The Juvenile Liaison Scheme has been successful, and it has given a number of children the opportunity to clean the slate and start again. I must commend the police for the very leading role that they have been taking in that regard.

This is the 150th anniversary of the Police Force as we know it, and the police have planned a number of programmes, some outreach programmes and festivities during this year. I take this opportunity to encourage all the members of the public to give maximum support to the police on attaining the 150th anniversary of the foundation, and I want to tie this in with the question of the honourable Member for St. Michael North East in relation to youth. The police are seeing it as a useful social role of theirs to embrace youth in their celebrations, and they have decided to carry six, I think, underprivileged children to Disney World in the summer at the expense of the police. I know that it is not a one-shot effort. The police are fully determined to deal with young and underprivileged children in this community and to give them some kind of hope.

This is a very constructive role for the Police Force, and it goes a long way towards removing the image of *bete noir* of the Police Force, Big Bad Johns who grab people and drag them through the streets to the police station, a terrifying image. We want to move away from that kind of image, and that is the direction in which the Police Force is going at the moment. I want to commend them for it and assure them of all of the support I can give them in those commendable efforts.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the Speaker and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended for lunch until 2.15 p.m. today.

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

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

1.35 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE took the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

HEAD 75 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS – $4 558 039

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $45 558 039 under Head 75 as amended, Ministry of Legal Affairs, Capital stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 35 – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS – $9 391 745

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 35 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 77 – FOREIGN AFFAIRS – CAPITAL $455 000

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 77 stand part.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I wonder if the Minister will give us a breakdown of the works which are to be carried out under Subhead 1. It speaks of the purchase and replacement of vehicles, and there are references to the renovations and improvements to the embassies and High Commissions. I am asking the Minister if he can give us some breakdown of the work that is involved.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Under this subhead, the same item, I would like to invite the appropriate Ministers to comment on a point which I am going to be very careful to put, and that is the Government's policy of providing motor cars as part and parcel of the conditions of service.

I want it to be absolutely clear, and let the House be absolutely sure, that I have no difficulties about providing the judges with motor cars. But I want to sound a little warning. I noticed an officer, who is categorized as S1, has come into this category now of being provided with a car as part of service. I am just warning the Administration that it is going to be very difficult to put up an argument against the other holders of S1 posts, including the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, Director of Finance and Permanent Secretaries, and the holders of S2 posts, who after five years, would ultimately move up to S1 posts, that their terms and conditions of service are less attractive than one of a fellow officer who is similarly linked.

I want to warn the Administration that it might be opening Pandora's box. You have to be absolutely careful in this respect and think out completely what is the Government's policy towards it, how it is going to effect the expenditure of the Government in providing and maintaining these items, and what is going to be the Government's response to its very officers in S1 who are now not so privileged as one of their members – the Director of Public Prosecutions – who, in my opinion, would have an improvement in service. How are you going to fight off those other members in S1?

I want to make it absolutely clear that the Government has to be careful, because this procedure has a way of escalating. As you toe-hold one person in, you open a crack, and the crack is going to become a very wide avalanche. I have seen already where some PSs have left and gone to statutory bodies and they are getting cars from statutory bodies. So you have already started the run on expanding expenditure in Government sector in this area. The Government has to watch this policy, and I just want to sound a warning in this respect. Government expenditure is going to be creeping up year after year in this respect.

2.20 p.m.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member raises questions about the Director of Public Prosecutions under Foreign Affairs. I do not know why he did that, but I have accepted the question in good faith.

The Director of Public Prosecutions has always been given the same terms and conditions of service comparable to judges. That has been so from the beginning. Athough the point raised by the honourable Member is one we will take careful note of, because we do not want to set any precedence that is going to land us in a lot of trouble in the future. I think that the reference to the Director of Public Prosecutions in this case is not a good example, because we have always tried to keep him on par with the judges.

In respect of the question raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford), I do not know that I can answer him in any definitive way. He wants a breakdown on expenditures for renovating, improving, repairing and refurbishing residences.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I just wanted a general idea of what was the capital works involved under this particular Head, if there is any major work at any of the embassies to be carried out, and from which provision you were proposing to buy vehicles. I was not asking for the kind of detail that you are indicating.

Hon. L. R. TULL: We have acquired premises in London. We have acquired a new office block at Tottenham Court Road that was formerly owned and occupied by Lloyds Bank, and we are going to put all of the external Government agencies in London in that one building. We are going to have the High Commission, Caribbean Airways, the National Bank and the Tourist Board in one compound. We have to fix the inside of the building. We have to do renovations and general works to facilitate the allocation of offices for this new arrangement, and those works are currently underway, partly out of this vote.

We also have to do some work at the residence of the Permanent Representative to the United Nations. We have a house in Pelham, New York, which is occupied by the Permanent Representative to the UN. It is a lovely, imposing building, it is about three storeys, very well located and everything, but it is the type of building that needs constant maintenance. One of the things about

these old houses is that they require a great deal of expenditure on an ongoing basis, and we are spending some money now on that building to bring it into acceptable shape.

The only other expenditure in respect of the residences overseas is small, like painting the ambassador's residence in Washington, painting the inner walls of the Consulate in New York, one or two small jobs of painting and minor additions here and there.

I believe that we will also be spending some money at the High Commissioner's residence at Iverta in London. I was appalled to find out some time last year when I was in London that although we have had that house for at least almost 20 years, it does not have a washing room, that in as good a house as that, a firstclass house, there is no washroom. The maid has to do the laundry in the kitchen. I think that is undesirable, and I have suggested to my people that they add on a washing room adjacent to the kitchen.

Asides.

Hon. L. R. TULL: That is the trouble. The people who first occupied the house were more British oriented than they were Caribbean oriented, and although the British might not mind washing their clothes in the kitchen sink – to use the words of my friend – that is not a Barbadian tradition.

That is, in sum, the type of work that we will be doing under this section.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Is provision for acquisition or rental of property at Port-of-Spain for any diplomatic posting included under this Head?

Hon. L. R. TULL: No, there is no provision in these Estimates for the acquisition of property for a residence for a High Commissioner in Port-of-Spain. We have a High Commission already established in Port-of-Spain, we have offices and we have residences for two officers, a Counsellor and a First Secretary.

When we do put a High Commissioner in place in Port-of-Spain, we would need to come back to Parliament for supplementary funds for accommodation of a High Commissioner and, consequentially, funds for equipment and furniture. We do not like to project decisions such as we made recently for the exchange of ambassadors when we are preparing Estimates. We like to prepare estimates on things that are firm and known. Although there has been a very large hint, and those of us who are involved knew that at some stage in the not too far future there would have been an agreement on exchange of ambassadors, we do not like to plan estimates on the basis of these hints rather than on certainty, so in the fullness of time, when we have decided when we will put an ambassador in Port-of-Spain, we will have to come back for additional funds to meet that.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): I wonder whether the Minister could let us know what properties were acquired by the Government for overseas Missions over the past year or so. I believe that these matters should be made known. As a matter of fact, the Land Acquisition Act requires that notice be given in the House from time to time on properties acquired.

Hon. L. R. TULL: During the past year we have acquired the office block which I have referred to, in London. We have also acquired two houses in London – one for a Counsellor and one for a First Secretary. We have also acquired property in New York, a residence for the Deputy Permanent Representative to the U.N. So during the past year, we have acquired one office block and three houses.

Asides.

Hon. L. R. TULL: In London we have two Counsellors. There is already a residence at Darlington Road for one Counsellor, so we have acquired a residence for the second Counsellor, and we also acquired a house for a First Secretary. We have also acquired a residence in New York for the Deputy Permanent Resident to the United Nations.

2.30 p.m.

I think it is important that we realise that we have to spend some money on an annual basis acquiring more and more properties overseas. The rents have now become prohibitive. For instance, we were able to buy a house in London for £95 000, I think that was the figure, and if you do a projection of the type of rents we have been paying in London, I would think that the rents that you would pay in a period of ten years, would approximate what you would have paid for the cost of the house. So, increasingly, Government has to be finding resources, even though the larder is pretty bare, to acquire properties because of the prohibitive rate of rent increases in the major cities in which we have Missions.

We have had rent increases for offices in New York, the Consulate, the Permanent Mission to the United Nations and the offices that house the Tourist Board and IDC of something like 300 per cent, so that we have paid pretty close to $1½ million a year rent for our offices in New York, and there is a continuous spiralling. That is why we paid attention in the last year and a half or so to the possibility of buying office space in New York, and the honourable Member for St. Philip North would know a little bit about that. The cost of real estate in a place like New York is high, and the payments would

represent a fairly generous outflow of foreign funds, and so we are constantly reviewing the situation and balancing our need to acquire the property against the rising rents and our ability to find and acquire these properties.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I wonder if the Minister could tell us something about the provisions that are made for the accommodation of the High Commission of Barbados to Grenada. I do not think this House has actually been told what kind of provision is made for the accommodation of the Barbados High Commission in Grenada, and I think we would welcome some information on that, including the cost of rentals or if we have purchased any property in St. George's.

Secondly, I wish to make an observation on a point made by the Minister, and that is that the Government has acquired a property, I think he said which was formerly owned by Lloyds Bank at Midland, and that is at Tottenham Court Road, a highly commercial area.

Asides.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not speaking of the character of commercial activity that takes place. I do not know with what this building is juxtaposed, I am not too certain, but I have heard comments that this would put the Mission into even closer contact with some of the nationals who tend to be in Tottenham Court Road more than around the diplomatic area where the present High Commission is located.

In relation to the bank, I wonder whether the High Commission to the Court of Saint James would have a greater control and be able to bring a greater co-ordination into the external activities of the Barbados Government when all its agencies are brought together under one wing. I am wondering if the Minister could tell us something specifically about the operations of the bank in London. Is it fully commercial? Exactly what is the nature of the operations to date?

Hon. L. R. TULL: If I may take the first question first, in relation to accommodation for the High Commission in Grenada, we are renting a house for the High Commission in Grenada. I am not quite sure what the honourable Member means about the accommodation. We are renting a place, it is a very good house, it is very comfortable and the High Commissioner chose it himself, so he must be happy with it.

I should also say *apropos* that it has always been the intention of the Government of Barbados to remove the High Commission from Grenada when the Government was satisfied that the turmoil of the moment and the involvement of Barbados in the initial stages of reconstruction in Grenada had been completed. It would not cause any embarrassment on any side, because we informed the Government of Grenada from the beginning that this was going to be the situation. The honourable Member for St. Michael South well knows the difficulty in closing a Mission when once you have opened it. It amounts to an offence to the host country to close your Mission and move it out, except in exceptional circumstances, but this would not arise in the case of Grenada, because it was explained to them from the very beginning.

In respect of the new High Commission in London, it is true that the building is away from the traditional diplomatic area, but it is not new for Barbados to blaze new trails, to set precedents and get people to move after. It is a good location. The honourable Member is perfectly right in saying that it is in a commercial area, but equally it is next to Great Russell Street and the University of London Medical School and other fine institutions in the immediate vicinity, and there is also at the moment a major renovation of the whole area surrounding the new building. I think rehabilitation is the word you use when you are making old areas new again. They are doing that in that part of London, and therefore, by getting in early, we are able to benefit from a lower purchase price than would obtain in five to ten years' time.

On the question as to the internal organisation of the offices, the offices will be physically in the same building, but they will retain their autonomy. The High Commission will certainly not be responsible for the work of the Tourist Board or the National Bank. They will all retain their respective autonomies, but I am sure that, by being together, they will be able, in an informal way inside their operations, to co-operate in areas that are rendered difficult when they are scattered in various locations throughout London. The honourable Member will appreciate that there is a commonality of interests in some areas between the Tourist Board and Caribbean Airways, and it would be a good thing to add the two of them together in the same building. Indeed, there is a certain commonality of interests with the National Bank.

It is also true, as the honourable Member may say, that the new location is more accessible to Barbadian nationals than Belgravia, and in some cases – not many, because we have some very self-assured nationals living in the United Kingdom – they feel more comfortable being in Tottenham Court Road than they do in Belgravia. So all things taken into consideration, I am recommending to the House that it is a very progressive move, not only a physical move but a progressive move in trying to (1) acquire our buildings instead of paying all these exorbitant rents, (2) locating our Mission in an area where there is greater accessibility to nationals and (3) to bring all our external agencies under one roof.

The question that the sum of $9 391 745 under Head 77 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs – as amended, stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Hon. L S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $20 442 356 under Head 25 – Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): On Head 25 – Subhead 1 – Initiation and Review of agricultural policy affecting all projects and programmes of the Ministry and its related departments, I would like the appropriate Minister, I think it is a good enough time, to give this House some indication as to what is the present agricultural policy on a number of things:

(1) What is the present agricultural policy towards providing adequate extension services to the small farmers.

(2) What is the policy towards bringing idle lands into cultivation?

(3) What is the policy towards the dairy industry?

(4) What is the policy towards any beef industry that we might have?

(5) What is the progress at the moment with the Back River project?

2.40 p.m.

I find it strange that the extension services of Barbados have been divided in such a way that the part is now taking more than the whole. I will tell you what I mean. They have introduced the Rural Development Project, which will be providing irrigation, back up services and marketing, hopefully, to a series of areas selected in Barbados. From my information, these areas certainly have a smaller percentage (1) of land, and (2) of farmers than the remainder of small farmers in Barbados collectively.

It is also my opinion, backed up by some information, that the original extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture have been seriously affected by this rural programme, and that quite a large number of extension officers opted for movement towards the Rural Development Scheme. I believe it is due to the fact that the conditions of service seemed to be better for them in the Rural Development Scheme than in the central Government, and as a result the thousands of small farmers, I know for a fact, have been having problems in having their extension officers serve them adequately.

A lot of the extension officers have found themselves with a very big workload, and it is my opinion that, because of the workload of the extension officers, they are not able to provide the services that the small farmers in Barbados need. If this is true, I find it difficult to understand how you can provide better services by way of numbers of officers to the smaller rural project and deplete the overall original services to the other farmers out there.

I would like the Minister to update me with the facts if I am operating under bad information.

There is also the policy position of the Government on the numbers of acres – I am told it is about 12 000 – classified as marginal agricultural land still not being cultivated. What is the result of the levy placed on holders of two acres or more? Has it shown any positive result in forcing these people into bringing back their lands into cultivation? Is it not bringing more of a burden due to the fact that there are loud noises about the lack of tractor systems? I am told that people have been waiting up to two years for the rebate of 50 per cent. As a matter of fact, only just now a farmer pushed a little note to me – "Agriculture – 50 per cent rebate. Farmers must pay up front and sometimes wait one to two years to get a rebate." I want to know what is happening, if these problems the farmers are facing are not causing a breakdown of the whole agricultural policy? More particularly, now that sugar has been a problem, and looking down the road it seems that there will be a problem with sugar for some time, what is the long term objective in the projection of the Government and the policy position in this area, about the utilisation of the lands in that area and the new crops they might bring on stream.

I will stop so that I can get some indication of the Minister's position on these things.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): We are going to be spending some time on agriculture, because it has been quite some time that the Minister has had to face this country and explain the workings of his Ministry and failures within that Ministry. I think you will find that while his colleague and friend, the Minister of Foreign Affairs had a relatively easy time.....

(Hon. L. R. TULL: You cannot handle him, that is the difference).

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Are you saying that the Minister of Agriculture cannot handle you? Is that what you mean to say?

(Hon. L. R. TULL: That is a matter for you).

Mr. L E. SANDIFORD: You tell us. I will wait for you. You can handle all of us!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order! Order on both sides of the House.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: He is saying you can handle me)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is a foregone conclusion.

There is no doubt that when we are talking about agriculture we are talking about the heart of this country, because there is no way that a small country such as Barbados can hope to survive with dignity and with a certain amount of satisfaction for the people of this country unless significant attention is paid to agriculture. But what we have been finding from our observations is that in this whole area of agriculture we have been long on talk and short on actual production. What has been happening, as my colleague, the Member for St. Philip North has been indicating, is that in a number of areas where we have had some policies set out, if we can call them policies, in the implementation of those policies there has been a falling down and a falling short.
2.50 p.m.

I want to focus on a few specific areas. I believe that, in a number of its publications, the Government has paid tribute to the performance of the non-sugar agricultural sector of the economy of this country, that while other sectors have been having very difficult times, sugar, tourism, manufacturing and the other productive sectors of the economy, for a number of reasons, due both to the internal nature of those sectors as well as the constraints of international trade, non-sugar agriculture has been a bright spot, generally speaking.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Settle down. Do not get so nervous. I have not even started yet and you are getting nervous!

I wish the Minister of Agriculture to spell out for this Committee the particular policies in relation to the Barbados Marketing Corporation, because there seems to be some confusion at the moment as to exactly .....

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: The BMC then? I am very much alive and well.

As I understand it, the trading activities of this particular institution, apart from certain areas of importation, have been taken away, that other agencies are responsible for the trading activities and that the Barbados Marketing Corporation is supposed to have some kind of developmental functions.

I understand that it operates in the area of importation. It is supposed to be the sole importer – you can correct me if I am wrong – of onions only during the season, and I am sure the Minister will tell us whether there are other importers of onions during the season or out of season. It is supposed to be the sole importer of certain kinds of poultry products, and the Minister will tell us only when there are shortages in the other sectors. I would be glad if the Minister would spell out the policy in relation to the BMC, particularly in relation to those areas of imports. I would like to know whether it is supposed to be the sole importer or whether there is competition, and exactly what is the policy of the Barbados Marketing Corporation in those areas.

We all know that the Barbados Marketing Corporation was one of those statutory corporations which placed a very heavy drain on the public finances of this country, and in order to enable it to carry out its functions, some subsidies.....

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD:.....oh yes, over the years.....had to be given. Now that certain functions performed by the Barbados Marketing Corporation have been transferred to other agencies, such as the Barbados Agricultural Society, areas, in which, admittedly, because of certain developmental functions and the need to establish structures and organizational procedures, there would be need for some contribution and some subsidies, we are asking the question, and I should like the Minister to tell us, what is the policy in terms of the making of grants to the Barbados Agricultural Society? Because as a major non-governmental sector, as my colleague has termed it, we find that there are organizations in the country which get grants from the Government – and there is everything right in giving grants to a whole variety of organizations – and when we examine it and the problems facing agriculture, we would like to advance the view that the grant given to the Barbados Agricultural Society appears to us to be too small in relation to the challenging matters which they have to deal with, and the very significant role that they have been playing. We would be glad if the Minister can tell us something about that.

We have that whole area of the importation of onions, pork for processing also, and I wonder if the Minister could give us some information on that, and the issue of licences for the importation of vegetables. From time to time, we have reason to believe that there is importation when the local farmers have produce on their hand, and there is obviously a problem, maybe one of

poor co-ordination, but whatever it is, there is a problem, and we would like the Minister to address those particular problems.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): I want to start with the very last question, which has got to do with the policy and practice in relation to importation of vegetables. The position is that ever since I went to the Ministry, which is almost four years ago, we have not been importing any fresh, tropical vegetables. We have imported Brussel Sprouts and other temperate vegetables, principally for use in the tourist sector, but we have not been importing tropical vegetables for use domestically. There was a short period when the Flight Kitchen got some import licences because of the fact that there was a heavy demand for tomatoes and one or two other things which they use on outward flights, but they were not for local consumption.

I am sorry to say that, following the very heavy rains that we experienced last October and November, – the floods – we were forced to issue import licences on a large scale for the importation of tomatoes, I believe cabbages and other vegetables. The flood rains destroyed the crops that were on the ground. But, generally speaking, in the last four years or so, import licences were only issued in relation to temperate vegetables in order to add variety to the menus at the tourist plants across the island. We allowed some imports of tomatoes for the Flight Kitchen in the course of that period, and following the floods last November, we had to allow the importation of tropical vegetables due to the fact that there were losses of crops on the ground.
3.00 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): I am not going to join in any discussion with the honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig). We are going to be asking the Minister questions for a long time. All through tomorrow morning the Minister is going to be answering questions, so everybody can relax. The Minister can take fresh ground, because it is going to be a long seige.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is the only thing that can save the Minister.

I do not understand what he means, so will the Minister explain to me what is a"temperate vegetable," because as soon as you start to talk about "temperate vegetables" and "tropical vegetables", you are going to confuse the population. We would like to make a distinction between those vegetables that are grown in Barbados and those vegetables that are not grown in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Is carrot a tropical vegetable or a temperate vegetable? Is beet a temperate vegetable? What is this new classification of vegetables that the Minister is bringing to us now in talking about "temperate vegetables." I think that he must be very careful not to allow himself to be choked by his own rhetoric.

I wish to tell the Minister, categorically, that there are eight brands of canned whole tomatoes on supermarket shelves in Barbados. You see as you start talking about importation and you compare tomatoes that are brought in whole and you do not look at what happens to canned tomatoes, you will mislead yourself. The fact is that a lot of farmers in Barbados have been growing tomatoes and they have been growing them at a high cost. Farmers in this country, as you well know, Mr. Chairman, being a squire in this country.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I just was making a description "country squire."

Some 91.3 acres of land were planted in tomatoes in this country.

The policy of the Ministry of Agriculture cannot reprobate and approbate at the same time. What we want from the Minister is a definitive defence of a policy which he adumbrated about three years ago, in which he said that he was going to be making sure that the farmers of this country benefitted from their endeavors. It is ironic that in Barbados, today one of our economic difficulties is being brought about by the protective agricultural policy of the United States Government. The United States Government, and that is the largest economy in the world, is protecting its sugar and sugar products against little Barbados. The United States Government is cutting, as I understand it, the imports of sugar from Barbados – I am only going to deal with Barbados – from 17 000 tonnes to about 10 500 tonnes. The Minister can correct me if I am wrong.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Check with the Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. and they will give you the information, or ask one of the civil servants. I say categorically that it is 10 500 tonnes that we will get into the U.S., and that is as a direct result of a protective policy by the greatest capital economy in the world and yet this Government continues to make foolish statements about free trade. They are free traders in the face of the United States standing up to them in respect of an agricultural commodity! When 1000 tonnes of sugar sold on the U.S. market is the difference between life and death for

Barbados, we have to battle with them. Yet, we in Barbados are importing from the U.S. and North America products that are being produced here in Barbados.

I understand the Government's attitude to a licensing policy, and I do not wish to debate it at this time, but I wish to draw to their attention that they must distinguish between legitimate protection of input farming industry in this country and a broad philosophical rejection of protectionism as a policy. It is one thing to have a policy, but it is another thing to examine what the policy means in real terms for your actual economy. If you are to manage your economy properly, and if, as all of us continue to say, we wish to become self-sufficient in as many crops as possible, then it is our bounding duty, and in particular it is the duty of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Minister of Agriculture, to ensure that the policy is meticulously applied which gives the farmer an opportunity to live a decent life in this community. It is not possible for that to happen when one can pick up, casually, a shipping report – I have a few of them here, which I do not intend to make a document of the House, unless I am directed to so do.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If I quote from them, but I am not going to.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): On a point of order, Sir: If the honourable Member says that he has a couple of shipping documents here that he does not intend to make documents of the House, he cannot directly or indirectly make use of the contents, nor must he be allowed to appear to be making use of the documents! That is my position, because then he would have been introducing the fact that he has them in his possession, and he will be giving everybody the impression that he is in fact, quoting from them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is taken.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, before he became Prime Minister, he used to be a meticulous understander.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, Sir, you are right to ignore the input of the Prime Minister. I agree with you. Let us get on. Obviously, Mr. Chairman, you know a shipping document is not something you make a document of the House. You know that. He knows that, too.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But it is a document from which I have to get information.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If it is a document from which you are going to quote, you will have to make it a document.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. Relying on my memory, I will indicate that there is, when one sees constantly, "10 cases of frozen vegetables," "239 packages of frozen vegetables."

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do you want to see the documents?

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As a matter of fact, I will make them a document of the House so that the Prime Minister will be able to sleep more peacefully. If I quote from them, Sir, I give my assurance they will be made documents of the House. The point I am making does not require me to quote constantly or extensively. It requires me to continue the point I was making, that here we are allowing all manner of vegetables – imagine, Mr. Chairman, you can go into a supermarket in Barbados now and find lettuce.....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not mind the honourable Member over there saying that he is going to retire persons in the Ministry of Agriculture. He has no authority. He just opens his mouth. It is the Services Commission that deal with the people in the Ministry of Agriculture.

3.10 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order. I never said that I am going to retire anybody from the Ministry of Agriculture. I said two out of his three advisers are soon near retirement. I know what I am saying. They are in their 60s.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I know of no such thing, because I have no advisers in the Ministry of Agriculture. I categorically deny that I have spoken with anybody in the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are dealing with Agriculture.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member for St. James North would go into any supermarket in Barbados he would see Budd of California retailed at $4.60 per kilogramme. That is nothing more than lettuce. If lettuce is a temperate vegetable, then I would withdraw the remark, because the Minister says that his Ministry has only been issuing licences for "temperate vegetables", whatever that is.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The honourable Member who just sat down started on false premises and, not surprising, drew the wrong conclusions, in suggesting that the reason why the United States *may* – because there is no evidence right now that we have lost any of the 17 000 tonnes which is our quota – lose some of that quota is because they are practising a protective policy, and if the United States is practising a protective policy in relation to aspects of their agriculture, there is no reason why we in Barbados should not be doing the same. That analogy is false, because if, indeed, we were to lose any of the 17 000 tonnes, it would be a direct result of the fact that in the United States right now, the soft drink industry – Coca Cola, in particular – has gone from the use of sugar cane to corn sugar. The result is that there has been a fall in the demand, by some 750 000 tonnes, and if indeed, we suffer a further reduction in our quota, it is because the demand in the United States of Amerca for imported sugar has itself fallen very dramatically. But I am not aware – I know that it is a subject of great speculation – that at this point we have actually lost any of the quota of about 17 000 tonnes.

Let us move from that open analogy, which was false in fact, and deal with the actual matter he raised, and that is that we are continuing to import vegetables that my be categorized as tropical vegetables, and as a result, we are laming the prospects of the Barbadian farmers to earn a decent living.

I maintain the distinction between tropical vegetables and temperate vegetables. I insist that Brussel sprouts and asparagus, to give but two examples only, are vegetables that are grown, and can be grown easily, in the temperate zone and not at all, except with the greatest difficulty, in the tropics. There is such a thing as iceberg lettuce which is not produced in the tropics and which is not produced in Barbados, and that that can be classified as a temperate product.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: You do not only have to give way on that – you have to give way on your whole argument, because it is too simplistic. You do not appreciate, apparently, that in the Barbadian economy, where we have a large tourist sector, and where you have to provide variety to the menu and try to maintain the interest of the tourists coming to your country, you cannot give, for example, flying fish and dolphin every day, assuming the visitor is off red meat. He is also interested in snapper, he is also interested in shrimps, and, to that extent, even at the height of the fishing season, you will have to allow other varieties of fish to come in in order to provide other varieties to the menu.

I insist that we have been self-sufficient in what may be described as tropical vegetables that can easily be grown within the Barbadian context. We still have, bearing in mind the requirement of our tourist sector, to allow iceberg lettuce, Brussel sprouts, soft green peas, sweet corn and asparagus to come in. It is in that context that you have to see the imports such as you may or may not be looking at.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me get this very, very clear. The Chairman recognizes that the honourable Member was making another contribution, and, as far as the Chair is concerned, he has ten minutes more. If that honourable Member is finished his speech, the honourable Member here may now make another speech.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I understand. What I wish to say is that.....

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENMAN: On a point of order, which may be helpful to my friend on the other side: We are not going to have a constructive debate, free-flowing, like that. I would much prefer that you ask a few questions and give me the opportunity to answer.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is a matter for the Chairman. We would prefer that, too, but if the Chairman rules in a restrictive way, it means that we may not be able to do it that way.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Chairman will rule as the Chairman sees fit.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is right, and I think the Chairman should do that. I agree with the Chairman. Do not let the Minister of Agriculture fox you into not letting us nail him to the wall here today.

The truth is, I find it a little difficult to understand what the Minister just said. The Minister got up and gave reasons to explain why the U.S. was pursuing a particular policy. Obviously, if the soft drink industry in the U.S. has moved to fructose, then that means that the consumption in the United States has gone down for sugar, and the point is that the United States Government is not allowing Barbados sugar cane to compete with its own sugar, so it is reducing the amount that Barbados should take in, even though Barbados is only sending in 17 000 tonnes and they use, literally, millions and millions of tonnes. So I really do not believe that the Minister was fully seized of what he was saying when he talked about an analogy, because there was no analogy. I was making a statement of fact, which the Minister knows. If he is speculating that he has not lost the 17 000 tonnes, then earlier discussions which we have had would be null and void, *ab initio,* because those discussions were, in fact, based on the very clear signals from the United States, through the OAS – that is

where we get our information – that we are in trouble in terms of the US dollar price, which is the highest price anyone can get for sugar on the market at the moment.

I am going to deal with sugar as a separate issue.

(ASIDE: We had that this year).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: We are going to have it again, because it is important that the people of Barbados understand that the economy is in serious trouble as a result of the very low price which is being fetched on the world market, on our secured market, and now what was our secondary market in the United States. I will deal with that, the people want to know, because when the sugar plantations are saying that they advanced payments may now turn out to be overpayment, anyone who is reaping sugar cane must have massive stress wondering what is going to happen. We will deal with that.

I want to come back to this question of the vegetables. It is not true to say that it is only a few heads of iceberg lettuce that will be imported, and no one needs to tell me of the need for variety in the tourist diet.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Or any diet at all, as I am informed by a practitioner of the art over there.
3.20 p.m.

The point is that there are some 300 farmers in the rural development programme that you have told, either directly or indirectly, that they should get involved in producing certain products. When you do that, you have a moral responsibility to make the channels clear for them. You do not necessarily have to go and market it for them, that is part of their business, but you must remove such obstacles as it is proper and possible for the Government to remove.

I am not talking about institutional importation. If somebody tells me that a major hotel on the west coast has imported a quantity of iceberg lettuce and that the Minister, in his wisdom and exercising his discretion, has granted that licence, I may disagree with him but I will not quarrel with him, because when a man has a discretion, it is his duty to exercise it. On the other hand, when you can walk into any supermarket in Barbados and find Budd of California retailing at $4.60 per kilogram – Budd of California is the brand name of the lettuce – and at the same time there are growers that have been working within a project that is a governmental project and producing lettuce, that has to be a wrong-headed policy, whoever is responsible for it. It may very well be that the Minister does not know, but if you take the benefits, you have to suffer the burdens. And that is not all. The large supermarkets in this country are not purchasing any grapefruit from Barbadians, even though you have helped Barbadians to produce grapefruit as part of an experiment. Again, you cannot go out and sell them, but I think that the ease with which cartons and containers of products can come in from Miami has led to a certain psychological attitude among the persons who ought to be buying from the small producers in this country. I am informed – I cannot speak with authority on it – that beets, whole and dried, are coming in.

Another area in which you have made a tremendous amount of public noise is in the area of the production of peanuts. I know that there is a substantial difficulty in the peanut business. I recall very well that some time ago, when I was the Minister, the people of St. Kitts were able to produce peanuts at a lower cost than the people in Barbados, and I know that importers got very upset when you insisted that they would have to buy Kittitian peanuts as opposed to a cleaner variety from third countries.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He was indicating that you get a rash every time you hear "peanuts," but I told him you are over that a long time.

The point I am making is that I am aware that the whole business of the importation of peanuts is fraught with some difficulty. Notwithstanding that, I think that, here again, the Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, has been an instigator in getting Barbadian farmers to become involved in the peanut business. Again there is a moral responsibility, once you have asked the community to put out their hard earned cash and their hardwork, because let us face it, one of the most difficult jobs in this country is being a farmer, and therefore when a person goes out and farms 100 acres of peanuts, that person has every right to look forward to some profit on the effort, all things being equal. But again, from what has been said by the Agricultural Society, by what has been said by the peanut producers, by what has been said by other farmers, the importation policy concerning peanuts seems to be wrong-headed.

I am giving the Minister an opportunity to put these things right here in the House. Let him give us the facts, let him refute some of the things that are being said. Or if in fact what is being said is true, then let him understand that the Ministry of Agriculture has responsibility to deal with that.

I am not going to spend any more time on the importation policies at this stage, although the Minister seems to indicate that he wishes to have further discussion on sugar. We will do that later. I want to deal more substantially now with the Heads themselves. The Minister is asking me to let him speak, and I will give the Minister a hearing.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member for St. James North has no portfolio to defend in here, so he can afford to sit down there and make all kinds of comments, but I give the Minister a chance.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I think it is important at the very outset that we do not allow the accustomed distortion of Government policy in relation to agriculture to occur on this occasion, and the more the honourable Members on the other side repeat their position, the more it is necessary for us to repeat the position of the Government. The honourable Member again has said that the Government's policy on importation is against the interests of farmers in Barbados and that the Government is not interested in providing protection for agriculture in Barbados. This Government has always said that Barbados, being a small country, a small domestic market, Barbados being part of the Caribbean Economic Community, it is our view that it is folly to have a protectionist policy in relation to the domestic market only, and that what we should be doing should be to try and convince the whole of the Caribbean Economic Community that even five million is a small market, and that we should activate those areas of the treaty which call for a common protection policy.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do not tell me that you are *ad idem* on that. You may say you are *ad idem* on it but you do not want to take the consequences, and I will go through this, because it is untrue to say that in relation to agriculture, strenuous efforts have not been made, in particular by the Barbados Government, to activate that section that deals with the common protection of tariff.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, I have not said that strenuous efforts have not been made. I have said that there is no evidence of that. If you have made them, you will have to tell us that you have made them, because we cannot see the evidence.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The honourable Member does not read. If the honourable Member had read the Nassau Declaration, if the honourable Member had been following all of the conferences that have taken place with a view to modernising the Agricultural Marketing protocol, he would have seen that since the Heads of Governments meeting in Trinidad, the Heads of Government had mandated the Ministers of Agriculture to bring into force a replacement regime for the Agricultural Marketing Protocol, which was the basis of the common protection for agricultural products. This was the Heads of Government Conference, 1983. Between then and now, we have had a real battle trying to get that Heads of Government decision into operation.

3.30 p.m.

These documents were published all around. If you were really interested in your work as a politician.....

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If I was in Opposition and I could not get one, I would have written the Caribbean Secretariat Headquarters in Georgetown. But it is a part time job for you, so do not worry your head over that.

The point is that there is a long list of agricultural products that were specified as being products which should be the subject of a common protective regime. So when you say that Barbados is not interested in providing protection in these areas, then I must get up and contradict you.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I will not allow him to say that I said Barbados was not interested.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation. I will not let him distort while saying that we distort. You cannot let him say that we say you are not interested, we say you are not doing it. There is a difference between your interest and your doing it. Let the Minister of Agriculture say what he has been doing. Stop trying to defend him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: When the honourable Member was Minister responsible for Trade, he was the arch-protectionist, and his policies were a palpable failure. Since we dismantled the protectionist regime that he had, the Barbadian manufacturers and others took full advantage of the Caribbean Economic Community market, and like the West Indian cricket team, they learnt because of the experience that they gained in inter-regional marketing, and they were able to make a start in the extra-regional markets. That is the philosophy, and you must carry it from industrial goods into garments into agriculture.

Specifically at the Heads of Government Conference in Nassau, Ministers of Agriculture were mandated to get on with the job. It was a tremendous break-through to get Guyana, who were the arch state traders, to accept the fact that because of the rigidity of the state trading system, on the assumption of the Agricultural Marketing Protocol, designed and conceived by the previous Government in their period of time and by Guyana, the husksters had found a way around all of the regulations and all the rigidity of the Protocol. What was designed was a system similar to the common agricultural

policy in the European Economic Community without at the same time providing the minimum guaranteed prices, which are the origin of mountains.

The problem is that you have people – I do not like to call names – a lot of small minded, petty minded, uneducated people who are in organisations who do not understand these matters, and they feel that in order to retain their jobs, they must get up every day, appear in the newspaper and call for protection. As a matter of fact, some of them have done more harm to the agricultural industry, because they have sent the wrong signals to the banks.

I believe that it is better for us in Barbados to push, and push, and push to get the reformed Agricultural Marketing Protocol in operation where we would be able to specialise in those areas of agricultural production in which we are better than others. But we must have the free market, we must have the dismantling of the protectionism at the domestic level. How can I, on the one hand, go and argue and quarrel and demand a free market if I am an arch-protectionist at the domestic level?

I believe it is in our interest, and I will tell you why I believe it is in our interest. They cannot produce yams like us. We can have competition with the sweet potatoes, but there are carrots, there are onions and there are a number of other crops in which we are specialists. I used to hear the former Minister of Trade, the late George Fergusson, argue this. He argued it all the time in relation to fish. He used to say, and I always agreed with him, that it is better for us to try and project flying fish, particularly with our ability to bone it, as an exotic product, because the foreign exchange we could earn by exporting them abroad was greater than the foreign exchange we lost by importing certain basic types of fish. These are the things that you have to do. You have to look at your limited resources and look at the possibilities of growing specialised crops and flaunting them to the hilt.

I thought it was necessary for us to debunk this theory. They and their cohorts in the agricultural organisations around here, like they do in the garment industry and in certain areas where they can get hold of the apparatus of propaganda, try to trump up the Democratic Labour Party's picture. I am perfectly prepared at any time to see an examination done of the honourable Member's administration of his protectionist policies as Minister of Trade and our relatively open policy within CARICOM.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): In the area of agricultural policy, the fundamental question that I wish to put to the Minister of Agriculture, is what policy mix has he got in 1985 for the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector? What we are talking about in agriculture at this stage amounts to rehabilitation. The Barbados Labour Party has presided over the disintegration of agriculture as a significant contributor to the economy of Barbados in terms of employment generation, which has declined under the Barbados Labour Party, and in terms of foreign exchange earnings, which have declined under the Barbados Labour Party – it is not a secret – and, indeed, even every child in Barbados might think that I am being a bit repetitive if I were to say that they have presided over the bankruptcy of our sugar industry. Nor is it unknown throughout Barbados what the much touted figures for non-sugar productivity in relation to non-sugar agriculture is largely a consequence of the failures in the sugar industry since everybody, all of a sudden, turned to cash crops in order to earn a few dollars, resulting in serious market distortions and the driving of small farmers like yourself, Sir, and me out of business.

3.40 p.m.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, my farming has collapsed as a result of the policies of the Barbados Labour Party. I could speak with feeling on this matter if I were interested in money. Your have presided over the ruin of almost every small farmer in Barbados. There is no small farmer today who could make a viable living out of sugar, let us face it what used to be the areas in which the small farmer made a living were cash crops and animal husbandry. But highly dependant on that, was a market inventory which allowed the small farmer to have some assurance that at the end of the day, he would not lose money. But now he is losing money on canes, on his cash crops and on every single thing which he attempts to produce. You have effectively destroyed the small farmer class in Barbados. A whole class of people have been wiped out overnight.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not going to deal with the big plantations. You know what their problem is. I will address myself to the small farmers.

There is more, and it need never have happened, because on the floor of this House, for many years this Democratic Labour Party, through its main spokesman, not unsupported by me, have argued the case for the small farmer and the relevance of the small farmer in the economic life of Barbados. We said that we should have addressed the problem of credit to small farmers years ago. We brought it to your attention ever since you closed down the Agricultural Credit Bank and amalgamated it with the Barbados National Bank. We brought it to your attention when you created a situation

in which you held on to the title deeds of the small farmer and would not even release them so that you could get additional credit after you closed down the Agricultural Credit Bank. In fact, you set up a debt collecting agency, and the first half million dollars that you collected from the small farmers, you transferred for onlending to the big plantations in Barbados.

We produced evidence, based on what, I believe, was part of a doctoral study by an eminent Barbadian economist – it may have been – I do not know – which established very clearly the levels of credit available to Barbadian small farmers, which produced the projections for the flow of credit that would be required, and which indicated to the Government that if you are interested in the survival of the small farmers in Barbados, then two things are needed:

> to increase the flow of credit to small farmers, in this country, you need to have a specialised financial institution dealing with small farmers; and you need to have a relevant and realistic basis for credit assessment to small farmers.

None of these things were done.

We brought the irrigation problems to your attention. Instead, you presided over a situation in which every small farmer who used to make a few dollars in his kitchen garden had his profits wiped out by the increased cost of water in Barbados. That is a fact. I know persons, for example, in St. Lucy, who have to face stiff competition from the Minister of Transport and who have brought water bills of $500 and $600 to me. Small agricultural businesses have been closed down because they cannot irrigate their crops and make a profit because of the water rates.

We pointed out the importance of a proper information system in relation to agricultural development in Barbados. I believe that a little progress has been made in this area but nothing has been done.

We have warned you that there would be a need to examine that levy on agricultural land, apart from its intrinsic unfairness, in that you have a situation now, basically, where you are inviting people to work land and make a loss, which they cannot afford, because if they do not work the land, they pay the levy that they cannot afford or, ultimately, they give up the land. I have told you that it is better to have a constructive system, bearing in mind the kind of factors which I brought to the attention of this House before to promote a kind of lease arrangement rather than going down the line of that levy, but you just would not listen.

I have been lucky to get mine leased out. The only problem now is that I was thinking of going into citrus. But what have I discovered? I have discovered that if you were to go into citrus in Barbados, by the time you have finished paying the levy, it would be four or five years before you can get a cent. All of your profits would have been wiped out for years, all you need is a bit of disease or something like that. If you go and put ten acres under citrus, you would be paying that levy over the years, you are in big problems.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am just bringing the major problems to your attention. I can speak of them, because I know.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I thought you told me that you were a Black Belly sheep owner.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: No. I put up the fences for the Black Belly sheep, and the fences were so expensive that we do not have the money yet to get the Black Belly sheep. Having backed away from the citrus, one has decided now that the only thing to do to try to keep going is to get some Black Belly sheep, because all you have to do is to give them water and grass and put up some fences. That seemed to be the only possibility, but the fences have been so expensive that now you have put up the fences, you have no money to buy the sheep. These are the problems that face small farmers in Barbados.

It is absolutely necessary to get the sheep within the financial year, because you are losing tax benefits if you do not have the sheep. Do you see what kinds of problems you are faced with? If you do not have the cash, you cannot get the cash benefits. Now, do you see what you have done to the small farmer? These are problems that must be addressed if you are really talking about agriculture.

I have heard all sort of language used by the Minister of Agriculture. "We are going to rehabilitate." "We are going to start again." "We are going to have a fully integrated agricultural system." High sounding words! Barbados has always had an integrated agricultural system. The Honourable Prime Minister must remember the days of cane holes, when canes used to be planted in cane holes; when we used to have khus khus grass or the other kinds of grass around the fields; when we used to see corn at one stage and then guinea corn in the same fields; when you used to see pea trees, which you cannot shelter under because the leaves turn down when the rain starts to fall and you get wet more, but they used to grow all around the fields in Barbados. You may remember the days when you used to see the yams and the potatoes in alternate rows. Do you remember those days? How beautiful the fields were in Barbados. Do you remember what used to happen in Barbados? Where has it all gone to since the Barbados Labour Party came into power?

3.50 p.m.

Something is wrong. What has happened is that there are various cost factors, marketing factors and factors in relation to information which have militated considerably against a viable agricultural Ministry in Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Why always one minute?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please do not ask that. That is out of order. Take your seat. You must take your seat.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Under which Standing Order must I take my seat?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please, please.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): I would like to make a very small intervention. This is a subject about which I am not particularly *au fait* with, but I want to clarify a few things to the best of my knowledge.

The Member for St. Michael South Central just now made reference to pea trees, yams, eddoes and things of that nature, which I, as a boy, used to see, and which there may be a scarcity of now. I have been reliably informed that one of the problems of not having pea trees and the khus khus grass is because the former Administration had the greed, it was their policy, they supported a recommendation that the burning of sugar cane be permitted in Barbados because they could not get the people to reap the crops. I am told that that weakened the soil – you would know if the language is right, Sir, and it took some years, three years or thereabouts, to get back the soil to what it would be for the purpose of giving us the pea trees, better yams and those crops.

I would like the Minister of Agriculture to examine nut production in Barbados. I believe that in Barbados if we are producing nuts now, a better quality nut should be produced. I believe that some form of research, if it has not been done, should be examined for the purpose of growing a better nut so that we can reduce the foreign exchange and avoid the importation of nuts into the country.

I see nuts sold along the streets by a number of farmers. But when you buy them, they are very, very small and, in some cases, I would say that they are not of the best quality, if compared to the Planters Peanuts. I sincerely hope that the Ministry will look into that, if they have not yet looked into research of improving the nuts.

The other point about the small farmers – I do not know how the Ministry would view this, it is only a suggestion – is that we may have to examine the windmill again.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I would like to draw to the honourable Member's attention that the very valid points which are being made are falling on deaf ears. The Minister is not here and there is no Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture. The honourable Member is making some very valid points and the Minister should be here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister will be informed. You have no problem.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I do not want any credit from you or any compliments, man.

My view is that the Ministry should examine the possibility of going back to the windmill, and I believe that the Government should be in a position to examine the possibilities of assisting the farmers. I am not saying any small farmers, I am not putting a case for the small farmer, I am putting a case for the farmers, because I believe that the small farmer and big farmer should be able to work hand in hand – you have to be small and then you get big. Government should assist them in sinking wells, with the erection of the windmills and invite them to buy generators as standbys in the event of the destruction of the windmills, knowing that we are in the hurricane belt. Those are the suggestions which I would like to throw out to my colleagues in the Ministry of Agriculture for what they are worth.

As far as the policy of the Government on agriculture is concerned, we know there is a great difference between the two parties. We have not been that fortunate or unfortunate to see carrots offloaded on Broad Street as we saw when the former Administration was not in a position to help the farmers to market them. We are fortunate not to be importing sweet potatoes into Barbados at 95¢ or $1.00 a pound as was the case under the former Administration when the Member for St. Michael West was the Minister responsible for importation. So between the policies of the two parties is a very, very wide gap.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): I welcome this debate on agricultural policy, because at this juncture in our country's development, I believe that the articulation of an agricultural policy and the pursuit of that agricultural policy is critical in the long term development of this country, because despite what we might say about the qualitative importance of the agricultural sector, in economics such as ours, small, open economies, agriculture assumes a qualitative importance that goes beyond the mere numbers. It is important from the point of view of a food supply, a matter of which, of course, not only assumes a nutritional aspect but, in many instances, a security aspect. It is also important from the point of view of foreign exchange generation and savings capabilities, and, indeed, in our context, agriculture per unit of imported commodities has very high foreign exchange

savings and earnings capabilities. It is, above all, important from the point of view of the potential linkages that it can generate between the various productive sectors of the economy.

I do not believe that the discussion of agricultural policy or the course of agricultural development in this country would really benefit from the manner in which we have, over the last few hours, sought to debate it, in terms of cabbages and iceberg lettuce. I think it behoves this Chamber to do a more comprehensive review of our recent performance and discuss in a more serious way the critical elements of our agricultural policy as they have evolved with a view .....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please continue.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I was making the point that it behoves this Chamber to undertake a serious review of the performance of the sector, not necessarily considering how much iceberg lettuce we may see in a supermarket occasionally, but a serious review of the sector and to look seriously at the various aspects of the agricultural policy which have evolved over the last few years.

In relation to the performance of this sector, I really must take objection to the position taken by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, that there has, in fact, been a catastrophic decline in agriculture under the Barbados Labour Party.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order. I never used the word "catastrophic".

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The destruction of employment and destruction of exchanged earnings, when viewed in the context of our economy, must obviously mean a catastrophic development.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES. On a point of order, Sir: I said "reduction" not "destruction".

4.00 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want, first of all, to deal with the whole question of the decline in foreign exchange earnings, and perhaps a little insight into the economic history of the agricultural sector may be important for the benefit of this House.

The decline of the Barbados sugar industry stemmed from a deliberate set of decisions which were taken in 1974. Historically, the Barbados sugar industry has always been subsidized, and prior to 1974, the subsidy to the Barbados sugar industry came by way of the high prices that were fetched under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement for the 139 000 tonnes quota that we enjoyed under that particular agreement. Between 1971 and 1974, this country failed to meet its quota under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and, indeed, in 1974, to take advantage of a one-shot dramatic increase in world prices, a substantial part of our sugar output was taken away from the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and sold on the world market. The result was that when quotas had to be fixed under the EEC/ACP LOME Convention, our quota in respect of sugar was fixed in relation to the last amount that we had sold under the CSA, 53 000 tonnes.

Our point is that – there were countries, such as Mauritius and Swaziland, whose quotas under LOME were, in fact, higher than the CSA, and that if we were indeed now in a position to enjoy the kind of quota provisions and prices under the LOME Convention as we enjoyed under the CSA, the Barbados sugar industry would not be faced with the degree of difficulty that it is presently faced with today. Indeed, today, our problem where the sugar industry in Barbados is concerned stems from the fact that we are no longer in a position to contemplate production in excess of just over 80 000 tonnes unless we are prepared to sell the margin of production on the world market at prices which are drastically below the cost of production in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Fifty-three thousand tonnes under LOME, 17 000 tonnes under the U.S and 14 000 tonnes in Barbados.

The point is that if we had had the foresight to maintain the stability of our sales under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, then, in fact, we would be in the position that Fiji, and Swaziland enjoy today, that is the fortunate position of having a sugar industry with high and rising costs and selling the largest proportion of their output in guarantee markets at reasonable prices. But we were greedy in 1974, and we went for a one-shot advantage on the world market, without reference whatsoever to the trends in the world market prices for sugar. So when people tell me about the destruction of our foreign exchange earning sectors in the agricultural system being attributable to this Government, I ask them to go back to the economic history of the sector.

In relation to the destruction of employment, everyone knows that it is customary that during the process of the modernisation of the agricultural sector, structural change in the sector causes the sector to shed labour, if the sector is to operate at a high level of efficiency. Indeed, we could not in Barbados today contemplate the level of employment in the sugar industry as we had when a basket and a hoe and a cane hole technology applied in the sector. It is customary during the process of the development of agriculture, and during the process

of development of a country, for the total labour force in agriculture to decline in aggregate and percentage terms as the first tool of agricultural efficiency, and this is true not only of the Barbados agricultural system but of every agricultural system in the world. Indeed, in the United States of America there are less people now engaged in agriculture than there ever has been in that country's economic history. So what the honourable Member really refers to as a reduction of employment in agriculture, I submit, is merely a natural process which occurs because of the character of the structure in agriculture.

In relation to the macro economic prospects of the small farming sector in Barbados, the facts speak for themselves. In this respect, I would want to make the Annual Statistical Digest of the Central Bank for 1983 a document of the House, because the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central speaks in terms of the destruction of the non-sugar sector in the small farming community under the Barbados Labour Party. But what are the facts? Between 1971-74, real output by the non-sugar agricultural sector in Barbados had declined in each year. It is a matter of fact. By contrast, between 1980-1984, the output of non-sugar agriculture, including fisheries, in Barbados has increased each year. Indeed, I would suggest that our recent economic history firmly establishes that our non-sugar agricultural sector, including fisheries, has been the most stable pool of growth in the Barbados economy. We reached the stage in 1982/83 where the contribution of the non-sugar agricultural sector, including fisheries, to our total output in this country exceeded sugar for the first time in this country's economic history. Yet, we are being regaled with fantasies about the destruction of the non-sugar agricultural sector under the Barbados Labour Party.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order: Mr. Chairman, there is a rule in this House which says that you must not mislead the House. I spoke about the output of small farmers, not to the question of non-sugar agriculture, because there has been an increase in non-sugar agriculture, but largely from small farms. You can have an increase in output of non-sugar agriculture in Barbados with a concomitant destruction of small farmers in this country. That is the point that I made, so you must not mislead the House.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want it to be recorded that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has said on the floor of this House that there has been an increase in non-sugar agricultural output in this country. I want that fact to be recorded solemnly in this House, because it is very much a part of the issue of contention today when we hear about the amount of iceberg lettuce being seen in one or two supermarkets. Isolated cases are being brought to bear to defeat a general argument, that, in recent times in this country, there has been a substantial increase in non-sugar agricultural output in this country, as admitted by the honourable Member, despite one or two abberations.

4.10 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, if the honourable Member would give way: The question of the quantities that have been produced do, in fact, form part of the argument, because my argument has been – and you obviously missed it – that it is precisely because there have been increases in the quantities, and that the marketing of these quantities is being hampered by the policies regarding importation. I would not like my argument to be distorted.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable Member knows that he will have an opportunity to make a speech.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But, Mr. Chairman, with respect.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member was speaking and he gave way. You made the point, so you are continuing to make a speech. You can always come back and make a speech.

Order on both sides of the House!

The honourable Member for St. Peter may continue. I recognise that I have got to give you some extra time for this.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want it to be clear that the most stable pool of growth in the Barbados economy in recent times has been reflected in the performance of the non-sugar agricultural sector in Barbados, including fisheries, which also happens to be that part of the agricultural sector where we find the concentration of small farmers. It is my broad economic review that within recent times we have seen in this country a fairly substantial growth in the non-sugar agricultural sector, although from the point of view of balanced presentation I want to submit that we must not rest on our laurels in this matter, if only because the growth in non-sugar agricultural output in this country has not really kept pace with the increase in the demand for agricultural output. I would make that submission to this House that we still have a long way to go, particularly in the light of the fact that we are facing an import bill for food of $160 million.

Quite obviously, there must also be still scope for import substitution, which this country has obviously not taken advantage of to the fullest. I will concede that point in this Chamber, but it is also true that not only have we induced substantial growth in the non-sugar agricultural sector, but we have over the last few years

sought to bring a degree of stability to the sugar industry, which suffered in the mid-Seventies because of the mistaken policies of 1974, compounded by the policy of sugar cane burning which was pursued by the previous Administration virtually as an active policy. Our initiatives over the last few years have been really directed towards rescuing the sugar industry, both from a national point of view as well as from a corporate point of view, and perhaps the principles embodied in this year's price support for agriculture capsule, in an economic way, Government's broad policies towards agriculture as a whole.

What are those principles embodied in the price support mechanisms for the sugar industry? Previously, we operated a price support system for sugar whereby the consumers of Barbados were called upon to shore up the corporate viability of the private sector in the sugar industry, but we recognise, as a Government, that we cannot indefinitely call upon the consumers in Barbados to shore up the corporate viability of the private enterprises in sugar, neither should we propose as a Government to put a subsidy for sugar on the budget and thereby place the industry on welfare. Our broad policy is one whereby we hope to evolve an agricultural system within which there is a core of sugar production, given its foreign exchange earning capabilities, but more especially so given the agronomic relationship between the sugar industry and other non-sugar commodities. So you must have a core of sugar production carried to some extent by other lines of agricultural output which are geared either to earn or save foreign exchange or to deal with the critical issue of meeting this country's needs for food.

Our price support systems for agriculture have been designed to bring about the erection of that kind of agricultural system, because what does it make provision for? It provides for any commodities which earn foreign exchange, such as cotton, or save on the use of foreign exchange, such as peanuts, to be treated as if such commodities were sugar for the purposes of the conversion of any loans into a grant by the sugar producers. Equally, our present price support systems for sugar make provision for any income earned on non-sugar output in this country to be taken into account for the purposes, again, of converting loans to the sugar industry into grants. So what the Government is hoping to accomplish is an integration of the agricultural sector in such a way that the sector can accomplish the particular development roles that one expects of an agricultural sector, that it must earn foreign exchange for us, that it must produce food, that it must be a source of linkages with other sectors of the economy, and that it must provide a substantial pole of growth, given the fact that the amount of foreign exchange required by way of imports to keep agriculture going tends to be less per unit of output than for any other sector of the economy.

Mr. Chairman, with those broad remarks, and in anticipation of a further debate on the Agricultural Development Corporation, I thank you for your consideration.

Mr. B. M. TAITT rose to speak.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has been asking to hear the Minister for a long time. The Minister may please speak.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That, with respect, is the problem with the debate. They said at the outset that they came to hear the Minister, but they really came to hear themselves, and that is the reason why we cannot get any debate.

I want to begin by applauding the efforts of my friend, the honourable Member for St. Peter, for trying to lift the tone and indeed, the substance of this debate. I fear, however, that he is not going to be successful in the main, because in the end, men can only run with the weight they can carry, and they can only maintain the level of debate that they can sustain, and that is a low level for the Opposition. So even though I applaud his efforts, I am not too hopeful that he is going to be successful. They like to talk about the few pounds of iceberg lettuce that would have come in, they want to talk about what Haynesley Benn said – and anything he has said is false – and use that sort of basis to launch a major debate in the House and waste people's time, so we are not surprised that we are at the point at which we are.

I want to address the charge, not for the first time made in this Chamber, that under the Barbados Labour Party nothing has been done for the small farmer either in sugar or in non-sugar, and that we have presided over the destruction of the small farmer class in this country. I think the Press would be attracted by that hyperbolic, ill-founded allegation, and I think it is important that we set the Record straight. In here, I am only concerned with the Record and not the propaganda effect that such a statement will have, because you cannot go into St. Patrick's or Black Bess and tell the people that, or else I would become very concerned for your own safety. The people out there who have experience do not believe it, they know it is false, and that is why the Barbados Labour Party is as strong today in rural Barbados as it has ever been since adult suffrage because .....

Asides.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Do not put any faith in St. Thomas. You are going to be badly beaten

there. Why do you not start being defensive as early as now and try to rationalise your defeat? It is as good as if it had happened. The Democratic Labour Party cannot go into rural Barbados today and talk about the policies of the Barbados Labour Party either in tenantry roads, in agriculture, or indeed in anything. I can confidently tell you that.
4.20 p.m.

Let us set the Record straight, however, so that the historian of tomorrow will be able to go to Hansard and find the information. I want to put it down in one place, and that is my only concern.

It is a fact, that we have a smaller small farmer class in this country today than we had 25 years ago. That is part of the structural transformation about which my friend, the honourable Member for St. Peter, spoke a minute or two ago. It is almost inevitable that that would happen, given the forces that are at work in the agricultural sector. It is also true, and I declare it without any fear of contradiction, that this Administration has done more for the small farming class, both in sugar and in non-sugar, than any other Administration in the history of this country.

To deal with sugar first, when the levy funds were collapsed a few years ago, we began by taking $3.7 million and purchasing shares in Barbados Sugar Factories Limited on behalf of small growers in this country. The Government now has about a 15 per cent interest in Barbados Sugar Industries Limited, and that is held on behalf of the small farming community in this country. In addition, Barbados Sugar Factories Limited agreed then that they would spend $1 million over five years on providing services to small holders. That is the reason why we have the Grow Liaison Officers appointed and at work, the Trevor Rudders, who have been responsible for the co-ordination between field and factory, and who have guaranteed over the last two years that the sugar operation has been the smoothest that we have seen for many years in this country. We no longer have a situation where a small farmer, with the assistance of friends and neighbours reaps, his cane on Saturday and Sunday, and the next Sunday, a week hence, when you pass the field that cane is still in the ground. There is today excellent co-ordination between field and factory to the point that no more than 48 hours or so pass between the small farmer reaping his canes and that field of canes getting to the factory. That is a direct service which the Government ensured it was providing to the small cane farming community in this country.

We also took $1 million from the said levy funds, and put it into the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation for the purpose of the Pilot Mechanisation Scheme. That has been in existence in the south eastern corner of Barbados, and all the farmers in Gibbons, in St. Martin's and all surrounding areas can attest to the success of that scheme.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Your constituency, Christ Church East).

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: You do not even know the geography of this country. You call St. Martin's Christ Church East? It is a good thing the Member for St. Philip South, your colleague, is not in his place, because he would have been ashamed of your ignorance.

I want now to deal with the price support itself, because in the last two years we have insisted that the element of price support given to small farmers, defined as those who produce under 400 gross tonnes, should be an outright grant and not a loan convertible into a grant. That has been very welcome in the small farmer cane growing community, and it has gone a long way towards ensuring that we still have anything like 10 per cent of the contribution to total cane output in this country being made by the small farmer community.

With respect to non-sugar agriculture, I want to spend a little while dealing with the very constructive, and in many respects far-sighted, policies that have come to be known as the Rural Development Scheme, executed by the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation. I see the Chairman smiling, because he himself well know that only in the last six months or so we have constructed some four miles of feeder and access roads in St. Philip, Christ Church, St. Thomas and in St. George, that there are many communities across rural Barbados where farmers had difficulty, particularly during the rainy season, in getting access to their land, particularly mechanical access, and that that problem is now one of the past. I am referring to feeder roads in Thorpes Cottage, Newbury, Silver Hill, Pegwell, Fair View and Gibbons Boggs in Christ Church; in Union, Marchfield, Kirtons and Headings in St. Philip; in Greens, Ellerton and Sturges in St. George.

(Mr. CHAIRMAN: Newbury in St. George).

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Newbury in St. George; thank you, Mr. Chairman. Greens in St. George.

That is but one dimension of the Rural Development Programme, because at the same time we are laying mains to improve the potable water network in those communities, and in another few months Silver Hill, Sturges, Greens, Thorpes Cottage, Eastlyn, Good Intent, Newbury, St. Helen's, Bridge Cot, all those communities well known to you, will have a completed potable water system installed as part of the Rural Development Programme. That is very important, and must be seen alongside the irrigation works which are going on in Ruby,

Union, Salters, Gibbons Boggs and in Marchfield, St. Philip.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My understanding, Mr. Minister, is that you will soon be going into Cottage Tenantry, too.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: You are very right, Sir.
4.30 p.m.

This raises the question of the extension service, and the fact that there is now, in the Ministry as it were two distinct extension services in operation: one operating out of the Ministry itself, which has been part of the services of the Ministry of Agriculture for many, many years, and, in recent years, the one which has grown up under the Rural Development Scheme.

I think the history of the development of the extension scheme under the Rural Development Programme is that the IADB insisted that, as part of the package of services, there had to be an extension service, even in existence before the programme was fully operational. We have always said that we wanted to provide an extension service as part of the package of services under the Rural Development Programme, but we had to go ahead and appoint nearly a dozen extension officers. We have discussed this matter in here, but there are people who like to repeat themselves all the time and hear the same arguments. I am tired talking about these matters in here.

We insisted.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes more.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Good.

I will conclude by making the point that the Rural Development Programme has an Extension Service and the Ministry of Agriculture has an Extension Service. There is, however, a difference of focus and in service. Under the Rural Integrated Programme, the emphasis is on providing the farmers with assistance in obtaining services such as tractor services, marketing and fertilizers. The service that operates out of the Ministry is concerned with the spreading abroad of the research findings done by the Agronomic Section of the Ministry of Agriculture. So there is a difference in focus and in emphasis, but it is a fact that there are two services in operation. I think that honourable Members will understand the context in which the dichotomy developed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I would give the first round of debate to the Government Benches. We made you look very silly.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that you do now report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that this sitting be suspended for fifteen minutes until 4.55 p.m. this evening.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE took the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 25 stand part.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I deem it necessary in looking at this Head in this intervention to respond briefly to some comments that were made by the honourable Member for St. Peter. He spoke authoritatively, but unfortunately quite mistakenly, about the situation regarding the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and the entry of the LOME Convention in the sugar protocol relating to LOME Convention, and I think that, for the purposes of the Record, it is necessary to establish the regime that existed at that time.

In the first place, the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement applied to all of the Commonwealth sugar producing colonial countries in their relationship with Taitt and Lyle as their main purchaser of cane sugar in the United Kingdom. When Britain decided, without consulting with its colleagues, to enter the Common Market –

its colleagues here meaning the colonial producers – then we had to find a way to preserve the market that had been created in Britain for cane sugar, and this cane sugar was going to be in competition with a large quantity of beet sugar produced not only in Britain itself, but in the rest of the European Community. This presented a tremendous difficulty for the British and presented in fact, one of the obstacles to a smooth transition of Britain entering the Common Market. So the quantity of sugar which the Common Market partners of Britain were prepared to accept as part of what they were bringing into the Common Market with them was more or less established. That quantity was established globally for the entire Commonwealth that produced sugar for the British market.

One of the things, indeed, which presented a problem then was how those countries that had hitherto been the suppliers of sugar to Britain would be able to send their products into the Common Market and the bases on which they would be able to do so. There were three overriding factors that were taken into consideration in those negotiations. The Caribbean in particular was more interested in a guaranteed market over a specific period of time than it was in price, even though it insisted that the remuneration would be reasonable. It was concerned with the stabilization of the sugar industry, and in Barbados particular. I do not think it would be remiss to say that we led in this regard, because – history has borne us out – we had the most difficult decisions to make, because as you know, Guyana has two crops of sugar per annum, Jamaica was just going into the nadir of the production of sugar, and Trinidad and Tobago at least at that time considered sugar a secondary economic activity, and history has confirmed that, indeed, it is almost no economic activity at all, although there is talk of revision. In Barbados, sugar was one of the major planks of its economy, one if its major earners of foreign exchange, and therefore it became very important that we negotiated the right kind of mix for the Barbadian economy.

In seeking to determine what constituted the right kind of mix, there was a tri-partite approach to the negotiations, which included Government, the labour union and the producers of sugar themselves. It was based on very careful and meticulous examination of the production capacity at the time, the prospects for production in the future, and the sanctions which would be imposed on a country, should a country vie for an over-ambitious quota. If a country should vie for an over-ambitious quota and that country was unable to fulfill its obligations, the penalty, as we have lived to see in the Caribbean, would be devastating, because in order to have an ACP – African, Caribbean, Pacific group – it became necessary to temper our respective wishes to suit the majority view and indeed to forge a package that could be acceptable to all, that is the 45 African, Caribbean, Pacific countries, and that could be negotiated with the EEC. So the decision on quota was not based on a domestic decision in Bridgetown alone, but was tempered by the circumstances surrounding the entire negotiations, and was based on the possibility, and indeed the probability, of getting an acceptable agreement, which has become the Sugar Protocol.

As to the specific decision, the Caribbean countries argued with their colleagues in the Pacific and Africa that they wanted to have that sector of the negotiated amount split within the Caribbean, and then it was at Georgetown that the members of the Caribbean Community determined, in the light of the global quota allocated to the Caribbean, how we would divide up that quota. We did not, as the honourable Member seemed to have assumed, make the decision based on the amounts supplied in the previous year. He said 1974, it was, in fact, 1975 that we had made the decision, but that is a detail. The point is that it was not the previous year, but, in fact, it was based on an average over a period of time. I believe it was seven years, I am speaking off the top of my head, but in any event, using the concept of linkage in negotiations, we had to do a *quid pro quo* in our negotiations, within the Caribbean. Bearing in mind St. Kitts, a country which had gone out of sugar, and had at that time indicated that they intended to come back into sugar, we had to find a formula that was acceptable to what were called the "*Part-four countries*" the so-called LDCs, and we had to include them and give them a slice of the pie in allocating the quantity of sugar allocated to the Caribbean in the ACP triangle.

So I am saying for the Record that the decision on 50 000 tonnes was a conscious decision made deliberately in consultation with the sugar producers in this country, and bearing in mind the prognosis as a whole. As a matter of fact, at the time when the decision was made it was assumed that Barbados had somehow scored a coup to be able to get 50 000 tonnes, given its productive capacity – and this was the most important aspect of that decision a guaranteed market for a perceptible quantity of sugar produced.

There was another aspect of that decision. It had to do with the flexibility which the marketers of the sugar, that is to say Barbados, the Government concomitant with the industry, the flexibility which the market conditions at that time led us to anticipate over the foreseeable future, the flexibility that was necessary to allow for determining if sugar would go into the EEC separate and apart from the 50 000 tonnes, whether it would go on the world market or whether we could get an increased quota in the United States. It will be recalled that during that period the world price of sugar shot so fantastically high that the Government and the sugar producers – and the Government can take full credit for the decision – the Government of the day was able, by the most persua-

sive means, to cash in on the fantastic price which was had in 1975. Indeed, one of the reasons, the rationale behind the concept that the Government could successfully take off a portion of the bonanza of the levy was that, in fact, what the producers were prepared to settle for under the old CSA would have brought them considerably less in earnings than they actually got when the Government became involved and negotiated, along with their Jamaica counterparts, certain prices in the world markets.

Since then, and the fall of the attempt to establish an international sugar agreement – and that is really where the crux of the problem lies in the international sugar market, the failure to create an ISA – the difficulties surrounding that failure can be seen in the fact that the world price of sugar has gone considerably lower than anybody could have anticipated, precisely because the new technologies in the production of sugar equivalent have advanced much faster than anybody anticipated and today we are in the situation where the fructose portion of the sweet market – if you will pardon the expression – in the United States is much higher than anyone anticipated.
5.05 p.m.

It seems to me – having now laid the groundwork – I am going to make another point – that it is the responsibility of Caribbean Governments at this critical time to insist that the United States, as a Government, honour the implied commitment in the utterances it has made in the Caribbean Basin Initiative. Those commitments have to be honoured, at the highest level. I would recommend – in fact, I would go so far as to say – that the sugar lobby in the United States for the sugar producing states is not likely to be persuaded by pure logic or by economic factors. They are motivated by a very clear, simple self-interest. The sugar producing states of the United States are totally disinterested in the development of anybody else, except those states, and, more particularly, those regions that actually produce cane sugar.

The demise of cane sugar has been written before, and somehow cane sugar has survived, but given the technological changes that are occurring in the world, it is fair to say that no one can see light at the end of the tunnel. It has become necessary, therefore, for there to be, at the highest diplomatic level, personal intervention if we are to get any succour in the United States market. It is going to be difficult, given the transition which has only just occurred in Barbados, but I would say that in the United States the only person who has any power in regard to these negotiations, to change the pattern that has been established, would be President Reagan himself. President Reagan is the only American with enough clout to be able to turn around the patterns that have been established by the sugar barons in the United States – and they are looking after their own self-interest, so no one can hold it against them. So unless the Caribbean Heads of Government are able and prepared to discuss this matter of re-entry of sugar into the United States at that level, the chances are that we are going to beat our breasts for some considerable time and, in the end, we are going to have to find alternatives for the production of sugar, because we are not going to be able to get into the U.S. market.

What is awful is that, for the foreseeable future, there is hardly any prospect that the world price of sugar would rise. Looking down the road, there is no perceptible indicator to suggest that the world price of sugar would rise.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I mean a significant rise.

I may be the only person willing to take this chance, but I think that the U.S. dollar has got to bottom out some time. I think that a turn towards a weaker dollar is bound to occur at some time. However, since 1979 people have been saying the same thing and it is now 1985, and the U.S. dollar has strengthened by 79 per cent between 1979 and today, so even if the U.S. dollar reaches its height and it starts to turn back up, it is going to be some considerable time before we can feel the effects of it in terms of the prices we get from the European Unit of Account. So we can look forward to a poor yield in terms of finance, in terms of our negotiated prices in the European Economic Community, for at least the next three to four years. We are unable to persuade the Europeans to do anything to bridge the gap. We have so much difficulty getting them when the dollar is normal to increase the price, to recognize that they had draw-back arrangements in the very treaties which we have signed. We have seen them diminishing the high promise of LOME 1, as they have come through LOME 2, and now into LOME 3, and there are some people who believe that by the time we come to LOME 4 the Europeans are going to be trying to find some way to breach the agreement itself.

In all those circumstances, it behoves us in Barbados not to seek – and that is why I have tried my best not to – to find partisan political profit in discussing the issue of sugar, because the issue of sugar in many ways transcends the partisan politics of the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party. We are discussing our very survival, and when we raise questions, and the reason why we have dealt with what might be called the iceberg politics, is precisely because we do not believe that at this time, and in these circumstances, we wish to berate the Minister in his inability to succeed where some people who are perhaps infinitely of greater wisdom than he is in these matters have not been able to succeed. We admit, we know, that the Minister is not as seized of

these matters as perhaps everybody would like him to be, but we are not going to use that in itself to pillory him. We pillory him on the issues which have been raised by the constituents, the issues which are important in the context of the Estimates, what we are budgeting for particular Heads.

I wish to end with a comment on the price support system which has been put in place, and about which, the honourable Member will agree, at the very outset I said to the Government, 'Do not let us give to the people of Barbados any false impressions; let them understand that once we put price supports in place, they will be there for a long time'. What I want to say to the Government, and what I think would be an efficacious policy, certainly to the Democratic Labour Party, would be that instead of having the price supports on an annual basis, instead of saying that we will discuss this year's price support and leave the farmers wondering what would happen next year, price support should be discussed over a medium term, at least, because, as you know, if you are going to plant sugar, there is an 18 months' cycle and, therefore, the farmers who, given the analysis I have just done, cannot look forward to any profit margin from their production, even the farmers in the St. George Valley, even the farmers who are in the high yield areas, cannot look forward to a substantial profit from sugar – but for the very reasons outlined by the honourable Member for St. Peter we are going to have to continue producing and, therefore, they have to continue producing, – they should know what to expect. We have an obligation to plan our price supports over a period of time, three to five to seven years, so that the farmers will know that at least they can look forward to price supports from the community, since, if they are doing the community a service of ensuring its foreign exchange and ensuring its continuing employment in the sector, it is entitled to expect support from the community as a whole.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am winding up. I realize you are being patient, Sir.

5.15 p.m.

That does not mean that they would then be given a free hand to operate without reference to accountability. We think that the accountability factor would still form a part of the requirement, but it will be necessary, if we are to have stability and if we are to have proper planning, that the price supports move from the year-to-year basis to a medium or, more desirably, a long term basis.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I think it is important that I make an intervention at this point, if only to correct one or two impressions, either explicit or implicit, in a lot of what was said by the last honourable Member who spoke.

One point has to do with our position in relation to the U.S. market in relation to our sugar export. Even as I speak at this very minute I can get no confirmation that what was stated quite emphatically and categorically by two honourable Members on the other side is a fact, that is, that we have just suffered a reduction from 17 000 short tonnes to 10 000 short tonnes in the U.S. market. I do not want to make too much of the point, except to say that we have received no intimation from the U.S. Administration of that.

There is speculation abroad that because of the fact that the US has had to reduce its import of world sugar by some 750 000 tonnes in the end every country exporting sugar to the US in the country-by-country arrangement will suffer a reduction. But to date that has not happened, and I wish to give the House the assurance that representation has been made at the highest level in order to see if we can get not only the CARICOM facility which we got a year ago, and which I will explain to the honourable Member in a minute, but to see whether we can get an assurance that, in the spirit of CBI, the Caribbean will not suffer any further reduction in its quota, its collective quota that is, because there is no such thing as a Caribbean quota. We still work on the country-by-country quota, and as recently as last Sunday I made direct representation to my counterpart, Secretary of Agriculture Block, on this very matter. So it is not true that no attention has been paid to the matter of representation in relation to securing our access at a stable level into the US market.

I wish, however, to go further and indicate that there is perhaps no reason for painting a picture of unrelieved gloom in the way that the honourable Member spoke, because resulting from the CARICOM arrangement which the US gave us last year, it is very possible for the countries of the region to suffer a reduction in the country-by-country quota to the US and yet the countries producing surplus sugar, such as Barbados and Guyana, in effect suffer no reduction. Because last year, following very vigorous representations to the US Administration, they decided that they will institute a CARICOM arrangement whereby the sugar producing countries in the region exporting to the US – St. Kitts, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Guyana and Belize – would continue to enjoy their country-by-country quota, but that in the event of short-falls, that is, any one producing country failing to honour its quota commitment, rather than that shortfall being redistributed globally around the world, that shortfall would be redistributed among the CARICOM countries. The significance of that is that the countries in the region that are producing surplus sugar, such as Guyana and Barbados – there are only two – stand to benefit in terms of maintaining the quota levels even if there is a reduction generally of the quota commitments to those countries.

Let me give a practical illustration of what I am talking about. Trinidad has agreed to reduce, quite dramatically and considerably, its production of sugar. Under the Sugar Protocol in LOME they have just lost 25 000 tonnes, and it is very likely that they will not be able to meet their country-by-country commitment to the United States of America. In the circumstances, that quota, which is approximately the same as the Barbados quota, about 17 000 short tonnes, will not be shared in by all the countries around the world exporting sugar to the US, that will be given to the countries in the region that can meet it, and there are only two countries, Barbados and Guyana, so even if we suffer a reduction in our quota, we can still pick up Trinidad's quota. The same argument applies to Jamaica's quota, because Jamaica has also taken a decision that they are going to be reducing quite significantly and dramatically their production of sugar, so if they have a shortfall in their export to the United States, that will be shared by Barbados and Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago's shortfall will also be shared by Barbados and Guyana, since today we are the only two countries in the region that can boast of a surplus production of sugar, and when I say surplus I mean over and above our quota commitment, including our domestic requirement.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member should recall that the agreement for last year's handling of sugar was only for last year. It did not create a precedent, and each year you have to have a substantial negotiation if you fall short of your quota.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am sorry to say that my friend on the other side is so wrong as he so often is and that is not true. This CARICOM facility is of indefinite duration. It may come to an end in three years, five years or ten years, but for now there is no time limit on the facility. So this year we do not have to sit down with the United States and negotiate any export arrangement or any facility for the redistribution of short-falls, such as I have just described.

The other point that I wish to make again springs from something which the honourable Member who last spoke on the other side repeated, and which is a common error by those who speak about sugar in this country. The state of the world market has little relevance to the Barbados situation, because for many years in the recent past we had just enough sugar for our protected markets, that is, the EEC market and the US market. The fact, therefore, that the price on the world market had dropped to 4 cents US per pound was of little relevance to us in this country because we were struggling on under 100 000 tonnes. I am not saying that if our sugar output increases steadily, as we are hoping it will – but again there are a lot of factors outside of our control such as rainfall and pests – we will not have to worry about the low world price of sugar being far lower than the price of production or of processing. But in the recent past, the fact that they had a mountain of sugar hanging over the world market and that the price fell beneath the floor, as it were, to US4 cents per pound at the lowest point, was of little or no relevance to us in this country.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of elucidation: It must be that he misunderstood my comment, because I cannot believe that he would say that the low world price has no influence on what happens in Barbados. The fact that the world price is at such a low level itself influences the price which we get in our so-called protected markets.

5.25 p.m.

The U.S. market, as the honourable Member must know, is a negotiating price market as well, and it is informed by the world price. It is not based on the same considerations of the EEC, which are treaty obligations, and even there the EEC is a negotiated price every time we go up to discuss what is the new price for each marketing year. What is happening in the world market informs the rest of the sugar market, and that is why it is important, not because we sell on that market but because what happens in that market determines what happens in the markets where we sell.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: In a sense everything affects everything else, but that is not the point. We are talking about what are the dominant factors at work. The reason why in the last four years we have dropped from earning some Bds. $900 a tonne in the European market for sugar to some Bds. $600 a tonne – and it changes every day, depending on what is the value of the basket of currencies in which we are paid against the U.S. dollar at the port of entry where our sugar arrives, so we can only talk in approximate terms. It has gone from about $900 four years ago to about $600, and the dominant factor here has been the strength of the U.S. dollar against the European basket of currencies by which we are paid. In any scale, therefore, any weighing of the facts, you would have to put that as the factor that counts for 85 or 90 per cent. That is the point I am making.

Equally, in the United States of America the price is a subsidised price for the American farmer. In recent years, it has been something like U.S. 20 cents per pound and it had little relevance again to the price of sugar on the world market. I am not denying that, to a 3 per cent or 5 per cent degree, that was not one of the influencing factors, but the dominant factor was the cost of production in the U.S. itself, and the fact that, as a matter of policy, the U.S. Administration is concerned to give their sugar farmers a subsidised price which works out at, in recent years, some U.S. 20 cents per pound.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I would like to get back to Barbados, to move off the area of international agricultural economics and come back to the whole business of the production for agricultural purposes in this small country of ours. We are only about 250 000 people on a small area of land. I speak for the older kinds of areas, something like 106 000 acres or thereabouts, and we started out as a country being almost wholly dependent on imports into Barbados, and we were scratching around in those very early years for an export crop to pay for the massive imports which had to come into this country. In terms of visible and invisible imports under the mercantilist system; everything had to be moved in British bottoms.

I have just made a check, and I believe that our food import bill must be in the region of about $118 million for this small country. I am talking about food and beverages, retained imports, and that is a very high bill. Our whole approach has been that for a small country such as ours, striving for self-sufficiency, striving to give our people the kind of standard of living which we aspire to, a major plank has been that those crops which we can produce in this country, we should try and produce as many of them in order that we would not have to import as much, and that those areas in which we have some comparative advantage, we would go into the area of exports. Sugar is one of the major food crops and we will need to produce sugar in this country – we produce it from sugar cane – even if we produce it only for local purposes, and I do not wish to deal with sugar as such because the policy of the Democratic Labour Party in this particular regard, as set out way back in 1981, has been very clear.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I go on the policies set out in our document. When we start with this particular matter of food production, given the bases from which I have started, it becomes very imperative that we try to produce those other crops, in addition to sugar, which will help to reduce our food import bill and also help to give our people those fats, proteins, carbohydrates and other food values which are necessary not only for survival and good health, but also for improving the quality of life in this country. That is where we start from.

It is a very great challenge, because we are up against a tropical climate and all that that involves, in terms of temperatures, evaporation, water or lack of it, and diseases which may be particularly endemic to this area, and this calls, therefore, for a central administration for agriculture that is sensitive to all these areas both in terms of the formulation and development of policies, as well as giving leadership and technical direction to the promotion and development of agriculture in this country. So we start with a very heavy import bill and we start from the premise that we must have a Ministry of Agriculture that is dedicated to the goals of promoting agriculture and having a corps of officials, in the administrative, professional and technical streams, who can provide the necessary inputs – administrative, technical, research and extension – in order to assist the people out there to grow their crops in as healthy an environment as possible, and also to get those crops marketed.

I must express my own very deep concern as to what has been happening with the Central administration, and I refer to the Ministry of Agriculture in particular, because it appears to me – and I can only speak from a distance, those who have responsibility for administering that Ministry can tell me whether I am right or wrong – that the morale in that Ministry, which should be at the key and centre of this productive effort on our part, and problems solving approach to agriculture, is at an extremely low ebb. It appears to me that the professional staff has been leaving that Ministry, and if I can use a comparison, a kind of metaphor, it appears to me that the erosion in the Ministry of Agriculture itself is more deleterious that the erosion taking place in the Scotland area.

5.35 p.m.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: There is rehabilitation there.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We may have to set up a special programme in relation to the Ministry of Agriculture to carry out a conservation policy in there, because we hear of them going all over the place and I am hearing all kinds of things out of Barbados, and in Barbados. I do not understand what is happening! I hope somebody will explain to me this movement, this erosion, this emerging of the professional staff, and why those who remain seem to lack so much motivation that they seem to be unable to really come to grips with the problem.

We have sat and listened to the Member for St. James North. In 1985, with elections due in 1986, from the floor.....

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Is that worrying your?)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD:.....of the House, he is making recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture as to what to do in Agriculture! They sit down in Cabinet every week, you know!

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: If Craig is going to speak to me, I am going to speak to Johnny.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is Louis and Johnny who do not speak.

That is where we have to address ourselves. Something seems to be wrong there, right at the central administrative core of the Ministry itself.

The second problem which I want to address at this stage relates to this matter of marketing, because if there has been one success in a major agricultural product, it has been in relation to sugar, which had established marketing arrangements set up. There is no small farmer or large farmer who produces sugar who failed to get his canes reaped and failed to get them taken by a sugar factory. That was never a problem, and that has been the success of sugar. I can speak with some knowledge of that, it is not only my colleague the Member for St. Michael South Central. I have a lot of acquaintence with these matters as well. I have been one of the smallest, small farmers in this country, so I can speak in that particular vein.

It appears to me that this whole question of marketing has not been solved in relation to non-sugar agriculture and the kinds of crops that we tend to produce. I believe we will have to approach the whole question of agriculture on a sector by sector basis, or crop by crop basis, and treat each particular crop in an integrated way.

When the Barbados Marketing Corporation – note its name – Corporation ceased under this Government to carry out marketing functions, those marketing functions then fell – I think I used the word advisedly – into the lap of the Barbados Agricultural Society, the major organization for farmers in this country. And I want to make it absolutely clear that I do not think that anybody from the front bench should be talking about a major organization in this country, particularly an organization of farmers, as though it is "B" or "D", or whatever it may be.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It says what it is.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think we have to talk about an organization in terms of the interests which that organization represents. And the farmers in this country, against tremendous odds, have been doing a fantastic job in terms of producing crops in this country. Their problem is one.....

(*Aside*: What do you produce?)

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Let him talk. Do not interrupt his flow of thought.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: What is your question? What do they produce?

(*Aside*: What do you produce?)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Oh. What do I produce?

We have the Barbados Marketing Corporation going out of marketing. I asked, "What is its present role?" The Minister got bogged down in the other areas, so he has not answered that yet.

Secondly, there was, I believe it is called ATCO, and then on top of that, we had something else called CATCO. ATCO and CATCO! And now we are hearing about – I do not know if it is the ADC, I do not know if it is the Rural Development Programme, I do not know what it is – some other marketing outlet to be developed somewhere in St. George or in St. Patricks. I am not certain where.

Aside.

Laughter.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Somewhere or another. Some kind of outlets. It is the Glebe or St. Patricks?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I invite the honourable Member to St. George.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Glebe? Whose constituency is that, though?

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Oh sorry, sorry. Not you, Sir.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: He only has one minute left.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We have the situation in which the marketing arrangements appear to me, just from looking on, because I am not producing – I cannot afford to produce sugar cane, or vegetables or chicken not with gluts and shortages, followed by all kinds of problems. I cannot afford to get into that kind of morass – fencing, Black Belly sheep. What about goats? I heard that they are particularly dangerous to the vegetation of a country. So there seems to be all of these problems, and in the midst of it .....

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not know. I wonder.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Who? The experts just do not seem to be there. They seem to be vanishing – and

problems seem to be increasing at this time. I should like the Minister to inform or enlighten this Committee about the whole arrangements for marketing in this country and whether there are any inconsistencies and any problems in this area.

I should also like to make an appeal. This is not a "B" or "D" appeal. We are talking about a major farmer organization in this country.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you winding up?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes. I am winding up this time. We did promise the Minister that he would be staked out here for a little while, so we will come again at it.

I am making a major appeal for a massive increase in the subsidy given to the Barbados Agricultural Society, which is the major farmers' organization in this country. I believe the farmers deserve no less than that.

I will pause for the Minister to address those two major problems which I have raised. There are, of course, a number of other matters in relation to agriculture which we will wish to deal with.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is important that we have a debate on these questions of marketing, the role of the BMC, and the role of the Barbados Agricultural Society.

The Barbados Agricultural Society, as far as the Government is concerned, is in no different position than the Barbados Bar Association, the Barbados Medical Association, the Barbados Workers Union, or any other organization which, in essence, is in existence to protect the interest of its members. Are you saying that we must give a massive subsidy to the BMA? Are you going to give a massive subsidy to the Barbados Bar Association? Are you going to give a massive subsidy to the Barbados Workers Union?

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Fundamental changes have had to occur in the light of experience in the question of marketing in all of the Caribbean territories.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order: Let me declare my interest. I am a member of the Barbados Agricultural Society.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is all right. You are probably a member of the Barbados Association of Secondary Teachers. Do you want a massive subsidy for that as well? If you have a professional association, you must put your money where your mouth is. You want to have a strong and vibrant association – it calls for money.
5.45 p.m.

Fundamental changes have had to occur in respect of marketing in the Caribbean. We are operating in the context of very small economies.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: If the honourable Member will give way on a point of elucidation: I would be glad when the Prime Minister is speaking if he will recognise that the Government itself considers the Barbados Agricultural Society to be in a special position and not just another professional organization. You sent the workers from the Barbados Marketing Corporation over to the B.A.S., so it must be in a different position.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We have to recognise that the economies, the population and markets in the Caribbean is a very small market. The tradition of agricultural marketing, the most successful pattern, has been commodity organizations based upon export crops to metropolitan countries which provide large markets. Whether it be sugar or bananas, you had a commodity organization, with Government help, marketing under a treaty arrangement with protection. When we came to these non-traditional crops, at the time of the formation of CARICOM, the Ministers agreed on a mechanism, the Agricultural Marketing Protocol, which had as its objective machinery to ensure that within the Caribbean, in respect to specific commodities, the whole Caribbean would be the market. But they also established institutional arrangements to carry this plan into effect, and the institutional arrangements were the respective marketing boards in each territory. In short, they tried to translate the marketing boards into sugar producers' organizations or bananas producers' organizations, but whereas the sugar producers' organizations and the banana producers' organizations were single commodity boards, the marketing corporations were to be multi-commodities boards.

That went along for many years, and what came to be recognized about three years ago was that the whole system broke down, and it broke down for a number of reasons. I do not have to go through the reasons now, the point is that it broke down, and the arch-marketing board people, the arch-state traders, Guyana, was the first to recognise and understand that the husksters in the Caribbean had made these marketing boards look very, very bad.

In 1983, substitutional arrangements were put into place, and it was agreed that quantitative restrictions as a mechanism for protecting the markets within the Caribbean were a failure, and that reliance would be placed on an alternative mechanism for introducing a common protective policy, namely, that you will have a list of commodities and you will require a Common External Tariff. You would still have some quantitative restrictions, but at the same time you would not allow those quantitative restrictions to be used for market sharing, because they used to be used for domestic protection of the market

within CARICOM and, therefore, defeat the purpose of the free common market.

This has taken a considerable amount of time to be implemented. This is not our fault. Barbados and Guyana were the leaders, we were the chief propagators of the idea that we should try something else. So when an honourable Member says that the Government of Barbados has collapsed the B.M.C., why does he not say that all the BMCs throughout the Caribbean have failed to fulfil the purpose for which they were originally designed, particularly in relation to intra-regional trade? I well recall the rows we used to have over onions. The present Honourable Minister of Transport and Works had an issue, when he was Chairman of the BMC, over onions with his counterpart, the Chairman of the AMC in Trinidad. When we shipped the onions, they said when they received them that they were of bad quality, and the people here were swearing that when they sent them they were in top quality. In the end you had to put a person on the boat to go down with the onions so that they could be inspected when they reached Trinidad.

In short, what they are trying to do now is to substitute the state agencies with private enterprise, and the market forces are coming into operation. The honourable Members would agree that is a great concession to have gotten Guyana to agree with. So we must look at Barbados' institutional arrangements in the light of the changes that are taking place within CARICOM.

In addition and parallel with all of this, we have to remember that, for a long period of time in the Caribbean, many people were trying to implement what was known as the grand Caribbean Food Plan. I think it was the late Dr. Eric Williams who produced this idea of a Caribbean Food Plan, and they had set up institutional arrangements to carry that out. The Caribbean Food Corporation was one of the principal institutions to carry that out. Again, it was recognized that that plan failed, partially because of capitalization but also because it was conceived, once again, with the idea that the state was to be the regulator, and little scope was being given to the actual people who were doing the producing. It was then decided that CATO, the Caribbean Agricultural Training Organization, would come into operation so you had parallel, this development going along with a reduction in the state training organizations and a rise of the coming into being of these private sector organizations.

One thing we have found out is that the private sector has a lot of mouth but little money. I think that is generally recognized. We have reached the stage now where the private sector wants to take over, but they do not have the money to take over. So we have to work out a hybrid arrangement in which the private sector will get some help from the Government sector, and this year I believe we have now.

This is my own view, from the point of view of being a Minister of Trade and International Trade for a long period of time, and I have always said it, the private sector should learn and understand that there is no way the Government can take up taxpayers' money and hand it to the private sector for the private sector to do as they like with it. It cannot be done. So we are hoping that the public sector organizations will play a role as the guardian of standards, the international marketers and promoters of the particular products abroad. In short, the marketing organizations will do for agriculture what the Export Promotion Corporation and others do for industry and things of that kind, so do not say that thought is not being given to this.

5.55 p.m.

In all of the discussions, even at the Heads of Government level, it has become increasingly recognized that if we are really to move, we must try to select a limited list of crops which we are capable of producing within the Caribbean, within a price and quality range that the consumers will want. Because the experience in the Caribbean is that whatever the goods, whether agricultural or industrial, if they are not available to the public at the prices that they can afford and be of the quality that they want, smuggling will occur. We are now in an intermediate stage.

It has also been our experience that if we wish really to progress, we should also, to prevent gluts and surpluses, given the limited nature of even the CARICOM market, look for external markets in respect of commodities that we ourselves are capable of producing in competition with other tropical producers. CATCO, as I understand it, was formed to help do that, and you have ATCO, which is supposed to be an integrated unit with CATCO. In other words, the private sector organizations are in existence and they are still operating within the context of these evolving new mechanisms.

All of this is contained, and I gave the honourable Member a copy, in the Heads of Government Conference Report. In order to implement this new scheme – and it is vital to Barbados, the OECS countries and to Guyana – a number of amendments to the Treaty of Chaguaramas have to take place, because in the schedules to the Treaty of Chaguaramas, the Agricultural Marketing Protocol is enshrined as the mechanism to govern inter-regional agricultural trade, and we had reached the stage where, despite there being appearances of unanimity in Port-of-Spain, there was, in truth and in fact, some difficulty in understanding what was agreed to in Port-of-Spain. This difficulty may not have been real, it may have been imagined, but in CARICOM you learn that sometimes agreements are taken at one meeting and then although there appears to be unanimity, by the next meeting, I would say that there appears to be a lack of appreciation of what was decided, so you have to go

through this patience procedure. But new mechanisms are being introduced.

In Barbados, the thrust, as I understand it, is to use our institutional arrangement to try to deal with the second area of operation while the CARICOM arrangement is coming into operation, that is, to look for markets overseas. That is why the emphasis is on trying for non-sugar agriculture, to build up export markets in metropolitan countries in the areas of commodities that we can be reasonably competitive. So they are not inconsistent policies, it is not a question of shutting down the BMC and leaving the farmers with nothing, it is the farmers themselves that say they do not want anyone interfering with their marketing. Any Government should be glad; if the private sector says that they want to do their own marketing, let them go ahead. I do not see why the Government should in any way wish to interfere with them. The Government, of course, has to protect the good name of Barbados to see that people do not promise to produce goods, receive money and then do not send them.

You must understand that the original state organizations are performing a regulatory role instead of a primary trading role. You must also understand that what is going on here is that Barbados is, while waiting for the implementation of the new arrangement, trying to proceed with the export arrangements outside of CARICOM and, at the same time, and I will mention it now, we are trying on a bilateral level with countries which have a common interest with us to keep the agricultural trade going. That is where we are. We are part of an economic community and we can only go as fast as the slowest member of the economic community wants to go.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think that it is about time that I try to bring this debate to the problems facing the farming community in Barbados. The honourable Member for St. Michael South did it, and I am looking very carefully at the tactics being used by the other side, and we will continue to try to bring the debate home to Barbados.

If words could solve the problems in Barbados, in the agricultural sector or anywhere else, the Barbados Labour Party would be a very successful party. But there can be no doubt that our present position in agriculture is at its worse, probably in the past 50 years, make no mistake about that. And when I talk about "worse," I will show you what I am talking about.

The honourable Member for St. Peter got up and tried to refute the argument that I had put forward when I pointed out that a large number of farmers in Barbados had either gone out of business, or are operating at a loss, or will soon go out of business under the present pressures on the farming community. He sought to rebut that argument by bringing statistics from the Annual Statistical Digest of the Central Bank to suggest that because, traditionally, the domain of small farming has largely been non-sugar agriculture, and because there has been an increase of output in that area, then it must mean that the small farmers are doing well. That was simply not true, and there is another word that should be used for that kind of argument.

The facts are that between 1976 and about 1981, if you look at the same Annual Statistical Digest, which I do not need to look at again, because I look at it year after year, you will see that when sugar was increasing in output, up to 1980, there was a gradual decline in most cash crops in Barbados. In 1981–82, there was a sudden growth in the production of non-sugar agriculture in Barbados, and we all know what that was due to. It was due to an increased output of non-sugar crops from the plantations in Barbados, and due to that fact, in itself, because they had easier access to the markets because of other overriding advantage situations, they were able, in that situation, to crowd out the small farmers. It was out of necessity, not out of wickedness, not out of punishment, that the large farms went into the large scale production of the traditional things which the small farmers produced. So within the context of an increase output of non-sugar agricultural products, you can still have a virtual collapse of the small farming community, and this is what has happened.

6.05 p.m.

I am shocked that someone who represents an agricultural community, like the honourable Member for St. Peter, cannot empathise and understand what the problems are facing small farmers in this country, and then to make it worse, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, who has presided over the bankruptcy of a major industry and a severe decline of a major sector of the economy, got up and tried to tell the House of the wonderful things they have done for the small farmers in this country, like how they collapsed the sugar levy funds and allocated $3.7 million in shareholdings for small farmers, knowing perfectly well that that was part of the exercise of contributing to the stabilisation within the sugar industry. You know that perfectly well, and that was just a device used to avoid the kind of pressures which would well have been brought on by the Unions, which made an intervention and a claim to a section of the $24 million that became available as a consequence of the collapse of those funds. But the bottom line of what you have done must be whether the small farmer in Barbados today can profitably operate a venture. I would say that there are very few who could do this, and those few who operate a venture successfully, if they were to cost their labour into the exercise, they would find that they are making a loss. It is only a paper profit they are making.

Then we heard a whole lot of nonsense being talked on the floor of the House, this whole business of taking

advantage of the CBI. Only last week, out of Miami came a report from a major conference, highly embarrassing to the United States Administration, indicating that since the announcement of the CBI, at least 200 000 jobs have been lost among the eligible countries, consequential on the withdrawal of six major multinational companies from the region. They include the oil companies in Trinidad, bauxite in Jamaica, and a major banana concern in the Dominican Republic. And they even went further to point out that it is not only 200 000 jobs that have suffered as a result of that, but in many countries there are major capital losses, in some instances a dislocation of telecommunications and the withdrawal of a whole range of supporting services which surrounded the existence of those major US companies in these territories. In other words, since the announcement of CBI there has been a fantastic loss of United States investment and over 200 000 job losses within the CBI – eligible countries. I am not manufacturing that. So if you are going to lean on CBI for a way out in relation to sugar, just be very careful, because the difference between the word spoken and the actualities of the operations and what has happened in terms of American investment within these territories has been shown, so far, to have had a negative impact on those countries. Just remember that.

I was alarmed when I saw that report coming out of Miami, and I am very pleased to see that the Honourable Prime Minister is *au fait* with it, because he readily recognised what I was referring to.

I heard talk by the honourable Member for St. Peter about linkages within the economy on agriculture. You should tell them that. I recall disputes on the floor of this House as to whether non-sugar agriculture has anything to do with tourism. Do you remember the argument?

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Do you not recall that it virtually boiled down to an argument and some calculation as to how much food tourists eat in Barbados and how many meals per week? The suggestion being made here by a person from the other side was that I was talking foolishness and there was no significant linkages between agriculture and tourism. I remember a calculator coming out, and I was being told it was nonsense to talk about linkages between non-sugar agriculture and tourism, because of the very small quantity of food consumed by tourists in Barbados. I remember there was a calculation of the amount of meals which the tourists ate per week. A remarkable figure came up on the floor of this House, and it was reported in the Press, to suggest that I was talking nonsense when I was stressing the importance of linkages between agriculture and tourism. I am glad to see that at this moment the party is recognising that.

One point which I also raised on the floor of this House some time ago was whether or not in order to stimulate the involvement of the private sector in Barbados in commodity marketing, tax inducements could not be used, which would tend to reduce their import orientation in the direction of export orientation, and bring about the further involvement within the private sector. That was a suggestion made on the floor of this House two years ago, it was repeated a year ago, and it is being repeated today, because I believe that there is a lot of expertise and a lot of capital available within the private sector in Barbados who, traditionally, have handled the imports of the commodities and who would have many contacts and traditional relationships in the metropolitan countries.

All of a sudden in here on the floor of the House again, when we should be targeting or aiming for a core of production of 80 000 tonnes and that anything after that ....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I heard that on the floor of the House from the honourable Member for St. Peter. We seem to have forgotten that in 1982, at the time of the first price support, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture on the floor of this House, as can be seen in the Debates of Parliament, had fixed the target level at 135 000 tonnes and was talking about 150 000 tonnes. What I am saying today is that if you were producing between 135 000 to 150 000 tonnes, you would be in more trouble than you are in today rather than less.

We get all this dangerous argumentation about critical mass. The critical mass stops unless you are going to be gambling thereafter within your protected markets. There is no critical mass unless you can manipulate the world price for a commodity such as sugar, and you cannot do that. The point I am trying to make to you is that you might find yourself in a situation where you increase your cost of production by bringing more and more marginal land into sugar in order to produce more sugar and you might end up with greater losses at the end of the day. I believe in making a profit, or, at least, a break-even situation.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am speaking about non-sugar agriculture. I just want to make that little point about sugar, because I am going to talk about sugar all night tonight later on.

6.15 p.m.

I move to the question of production versus real contribution to the economy of Barbados. Because of bad marketing conditions in Barbados, let me tell you what has been happening.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: What do you mean by that?)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The bad and defective marketing arrangements in Barbados for non-sugar agricultural products. If you were to look at the amount of potatoes produced in Barbados, or yams, pick whichever one you like, and you see the amount that is actually produced and then ploughed back into the field year after year in this country, or check the amount of vegetables that are actually grown and thrown out or given to pigs to eat, then you will see what is beginning to happen. Check the number of people who could not sell their stuff on the markets in Barbados last year and the year before. You really have a serious problem now.

All that has happened is that the economic constraints from the fall in income from sugar has demonstrated once again that the farmers in this country have the capacity to produce non-sugar products, as has been done during the war and has been done on many occasions.

The problem is that we have not created an environment in Barbados where we can channel that increased production to the best national interest. That is a fact. There is a whole lot of wastage. What about agro industrial development? My understanding is that there is a major firm in Barbados, with all the capital equipment available to it, that with a little help in financing.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: ..... they might well be able to convert a substantial sector of that particular plant into canning and various other forms of processing of many of the products that are ploughed back into the ground today. Are we going to allow that investment to go under? I will not call a name.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Is my time up?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Okay. I will stop at this point. I want to have no difficulty with my colleague from St. George North.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: There are so many issues and questions before us that it is difficult to know where to begin in attempting to answer. I want to deal, however, in the course in this intervention with the changing domestic setting that has resulted in a very different role for the Barbados Marketing Corporation than the one it enjoyed, let us say, 20 years ago, and I want to deal too at the outset with certain "givens" in the Barbados agricultural setting, which must always be borne in mind in any serious discussion on agriculture in Barbados.

We begin with the fact that there are factors outside of our control, beginning with the rain, the sun, and the mix of rain and sun we get, the quantum of rain and sun; with the fact that, to a large extent, we have limited control over disease, and beginning too with the fact that our population is small, just about a quarter of a million, and our land space small. That has implications for the scale of our operation and the sort of things that we can do in agriculture from the point of view of being large producers and serious exporters.

I want to seize in particular on the size of our population of approximately a quarter of a million people, because, we can talk about marketing until the cows come home, the point is that we start off with a domestic market that is easily saturated, and 25 acres of intensive vegetable production, for example, can easily saturate the domestic market in Barbados. Given the difficulties that sugar was experiencing and continues to experience, it was natural that the large sugar producing plantations would go into non-sugar. Once that happened, that they went into non-sugar and looked to the export market, they were bound to put pressure on the small domestic producers, who, traditionally, had a monopoly in the domestic market. That was inevitable because only about 50 to 60 per cent of your agricultural output qualifies for export, Grade A. The other 40 per cent would rank as Grade B, Grade C, and would normally be disposed of on the domestic market. The small farmers never aspired to the export market, and because the large producers would have sometimes more than 50 per cent of their production available for the domestic market, it meant that there was bound to be pressure on the small farming non-sugar producers, who over the years have had a monopoly in this field. That is the particular setting in which the small farmers in non-sugar agriculture find themselves running up against competition from the plantations, which are more and more getting into the production of non-sugar crops, including vegetables.

The Barbados Marketing Corporation has a different role today from the one that it had 20 years ago or more when the Barbados Marketing Corporation was first established. At that time, there were no other agencies in the system, either public sector or private sector, involved in the process of marketing, and the Government used to undertake to market flying fish domestically and market vegetables across the whole range. It has never been successful, partly because of the attitude that people have in relation to anything that is organised by Government.

Many years ago when I was a boy, I remember coming across a gentleman who used to work at the Transport Board who, among other things, used to take off bus wheels and so on and sell people, take out

batteries, and he rationalised the situation by saying it belonged to the people. He never made any secret of the fact that he used to do that. He used to supplement his income by doing that and always rationalised it by saying "I do not feel guilty about that, these things belong to the people." It is that sort of attitude that was always characteristic of Government-sponsored operations, and that helps to explain why it is that the Barbados Marketing Corporation, which suffered massive haemorrhaging over the years, has not been particularly successful.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: I recall that a former Minister of Transport and Works was to bring a report to the House. Is the honourable Member giving us insights into that report as to who took out batteries and who took off tyres?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

6.25 p.m.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Can I request that it be struck from the Record?

Within recent years, and even before I took the decision to close down the supermarket operation at the BMC, the BMC was not only an irritant to the private sector of this country in the sense that it was involved in an operation which was never part of the aims and objectives of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. I believe that it was one of the misguided policies of the honourable Member for St. Michael West, when he was Minister of Trade, to turn the BMC into a supermarket, where you had four people working a scale. It was an absolute irritant to the commercial sector in Barbados, competing with them and doing a bad job, when we were already well serviced by supermarkets in this country.

Apart from being .....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way: I know you would never irritate the private sector. I know that.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Apart from being a running sore on the Treasury, because they lost money every year, it was an absolute irritant. This Government took the decision that the BMC should get out of supermarket operations, which was the major area of its activity,

The important point in relation to agriculture which I wish to make, however, is that for years now, there were a number of organizations .....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir,.....

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: ..... in the private sector that were concerning themselves with marketing ...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. .

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is on a point of order.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I believe the Minister knows the rules concerning misleading the House. For him to say that they got out of commercial activity and then to say that they closed down the supermarket, when, in fact, the BMC went up to the airport and got involved in setting up of an airport shop is to mislead this House. He knows that the Chairman of the BMC came and said .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order, please!

Mr. B. M. TAITT: ..... that the supermarket and the airport shop were the only things making money. He is misleading this House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Not only is it not a point of order, but it is a bad process of reasoning. That is the problem which the honourable Member and his colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, have. He established two unrelated facts and then attempted to draw some sort of coherent conclusion from them.

It was in the setting of the growth of multiple organizations, concerned with marketing, within the private sector that, as with the Barbados Agricultural Society and particularly, its arm, ATCO, the regional trading organization CATCO and many private organizations as well .....

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Da Costa and Musson.)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: .... DaCosta Musson, King's Agro Foods, well known to the people in Oistins and the surrounding areas, the Government decided that we would give support to the Barbados Agricultural Society and its arm ATCO. Last year, we budgeted for $200 000, and this year we are budgeting by way of support, $400 000. I should make the point however, in order to allay your fears, Mr. Prime Minister, that that money will be converted into shares, the Government will own some of the equity, and we will sit, as Government, on the Board and help to direct some of the operations. So, you need not fear that that money is just going down the drain. I can assure you, Mr. Prime Minister, that the interest of the taxpayers is protected.

We decided that the BMC had a role in helping pioneer markets. When, for example, we went out and got a market in Holland for sweet peppers, we had to master at least seventeen steps from the field, or before reaping to the point of getting the product on the shelf for the consumer. We spent two or three years subsidising the

operation and establishing with certainty the procedure, step by step, to the point that we were able to produce a manual and, to a large extent, hand over the operation to the private sector. We feel, too, that it is necessary for us to go out and look for new markets in areas like flying fish, and the BMC is charged with the responsibility of working along with one or two fish processes in Barbados of finding an export market for flying fish.

In addition to that, it was necessary on the domestic scene that farmers and consumers have timely information with respect to who is planting what, in what acreage and at what time, so as to be able to anticipate likely gluts and shortages and work around avoiding them. And so we have an information service, which is called BASIS, which is a very important market intelligence service which we are providing to the farming community.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is highly successful!)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: In fact, it is regarded as so successful that many other countries within the Caribbean region are copying the model established by the BMC through BASIS.

The BMC continues to perform the role of public abattoir for the livestock industry, and that is very important. The standards there are extremely high. Since I became Minister, and under the administration of Dr. Springer when he was Chairman, we brought in technical assistance from Canada and we went through a thorough training process at the BMC's abattoir, and today standards at the abattoir are extremely high.

There are other secondary roles and functions carried on by the BMC, such as the monopoly imports of chicken wings and chicken backs. This is regarded as necessary to supplement the protein diet of the lower income sections of the community.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am told that the Leader of the Opposition likes his chicken wings very much indeed. He is not alone in liking chicken wings. I do not get them with as much frequency that I would like, but I, too, like them.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Why do you not check on the "Minister of chicken backs?")

Laughter.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The Governor-General has issued no such instrument, "Minister of chicken backs". That is a role which the BMC need not necessarily carry out. It could be shared with the private sector, but, for now, the BMC does carry out that role.

In addition, the BMC operates a liquor shop at the airport. That is one of the centres of profit of the Barbados Marketing Corporation, as I have always said. Rather than have the BMC operating as a running sore on the Treasury, losing money, millions of dollars every year, as used to happen even in the recent past, we have decided that the commercial areas of the BMC should be so organized as to produce enough money to finance the service areas. The BMC has not had to come to the Minister of Finance from year to year and ask for $1½ million or $2 million as was the practice, even in the recent past, because of the new policy of balance which has been instituted at the BMC whereby the commercial sectors pay for the service operations.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I want to get back to a point raised earlier by my colleague from St. Michael South, and it concerns the staff of the Ministry. I notice that the entire technical wing for agricultural planning and production is temporary. I want the Minister to give us some indication as to whether he is satisfied that the wing is producing and if he intends to make it permanent.

Even more important to me, as a representative, I would hope that the Minister, somehow or the other, if there is frustration in his Ministry by his staff, would make sure that this frustration does not interfere with a duty towards the taxpayers out there. I feel very strongly about this, because there was a more recent incident that placed no uncertainty in my mind about the insensitivity of certain senior civil servants to the taxpayers.

One of my constituents from Mount Pleasant had a palm that was diseased and called in the appropriate section of your Ministry. As a result, an officer was sent, and he examined it, figured that the owner of the palm was cutting it too low and, as a result, killed the palm. The lady disagreed, because she said that she had seen the similar disease on other palms. She requested the officer to inspect her citrus, and he recommended to her that they needed spraying and that the cost would be $27.00. The lady wrote a cheque for $27.00, sent it to the appropriate government agency and awaited the services she expected to be rendered for her money.
6.35 p.m.

Some two months after, she got a letter saying to come back for her $27.00. She did not go. She got a second letter from the Ministry of Agriculture saying to her, "Would you please come back for your $27.00, since you have questioned the diagnosis of the Agriculture Department and we are not carrying out the service. You will have to seek the service of a private professional and your cheque is available for you."

Asides.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I did not tell the House this. But I feel strongly about this, because it was a senior officer, who should be sensitized to the services that the Agriculture Department should render to the people. Not only that, as a result of the delay, some of the surrounding neighbors' trees were affected by the blight affecting that lady's palm, and it was only when it got to that stage that she drew it to my attention. The only saving grace for the Ministry was that the PS had the sense of duty to override the appropriate person and request that the services be carried out, and they were carried out. But it has caused considerable wrinkles in the appropriate area, because the lady let it be known very wide the treatment that was meted out to her. This should not happen, because it is giving the Ministry a very bad name, and I want the Minister to be sure .....

Asides.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I believe that I copied it to you, because I felt so strongly that you should not have a cheque sent back to a taxpayer of Barbados by an insensitive civil servant, a cheque for a service that we know should be offered to her. So whatever are the shortcomings or frustrations, I hope that the Ministry does not allow them to be vented on the taxpayers of Barbados.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The honourable Member for St. Philip North did draw that particular incident to my attention by way of a letter, and I indeed was grateful to him. I believe the PS's response reflected the fact that we were grateful to him for drawing that particular matter to our attention.

Ministers are constitutionally responsible for policies in their Ministry and must accept responsibility for successes as well as policy failures. This happens to me as well as all other Ministers, but I do not think it is fair that we should be asked to bear responsibility for the bad manners, lack of professional pride, insensitivity, lack of tack, misunderstanding and innocence of others' duties. There is a lot of that abroad in the Public Service, and I do not think that Ministers can bear responsibility for people answering the telephone badly, cursing people, not responding to calls and showing rudeness and ignorance on the job. All of that is a matter for the Public Service Commission. It is good that we should know when these things happen from time to time, and I was indebted to the honourable Member for drawing it to my attention.

One other Member raised the wider question of morale at the Ministry of Agriculture, and wondered whether the fact that there had been some movement out of the Ministry within recent years was a reflection of loss of morale. Right now there is an Israeli consultant, Dr. Jacobson, I think, who is carrying out a study into the institutional and personnel arrangements within the Ministry, and very shortly, if it is not there already, I expect that his report will be on my desk. He is looking at the whole structure of the Ministry, the relationship between the technical and administrative streams, which have always been characterized by a certain tension, the services given by the parastatels, and he is looking at whether or not there is any duplication and, in general, how the Ministry may improve the service which it is offering to its clients. Whether or not he will offer any comment on the state of morale, I do not know.

All I can tell the House is that several organizations have grown up, both at the regional and domestic level, competing with the Ministry of Agriculture for staff, and many organizations in the area of agriculture find the Ministry's staff particularly attractive, because for the most part they are trained staff. So when they approach them, they approach people who are already trained and they do not have to put out the money to train anyone who joins their staff. I am referring to organizations like CARDI, to whom we have lost people constantly over the years, we have lost people to CARDEX, another research organization that operates in the Eastern Caribbean, and we have even lost people to the cement plant, particularly people from the laboratory – the head of the laboratory, Dr. King, I think has gone to the cement plant – we have lost people to the meat processing operations that has grown up up in our midst, and we have lost people to the Meteorological Institute. So the objective situation is that there are other organizations and corporations that have grown up both at the regional level and at the domestic level, which, because they are offering higher salaries, have been able to attract members of staff away from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not think that anybody else is going to speak, Mr. Chairman, so I will continue. Mr. Chairman, I just wish.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other honourable Member wish to make a speech?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I just wish to clarify. I think we can let the Record rest. The Minister has to be consistent when he is giving us information, and he must not appear to be saying whatever comes to his head. On the question of the role of the Marketing Corporation in the context of the development of our agricultural policy, I think the Minister could at least acknowledge that a number of the things which in 1984-85 that the Government is now proceeding to do, are things which the Government ceased to do in 1977-78. It is remarkable that when the honourable Members came to office ....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If you were not there, that is unfortunate. But the Government came to office in 1976 and immediately ceased a number of activities which were envisaged as developmental activities in the area of agriculture.

The honourable Member talked about a supermarket, and that is a fallacy which has been manifested by persons who have nothing to say from time to time about the Marketing Corporation. But the policy envisaged then had a number of collection units for farm produce throughout the length and breath of rural Barbados. Farmers were able to have a guaranteed pick-up of their produce at specific times, and indeed, arising out of that, the same ATCO, and whomever, has now resumed doing the precise thing that used to be done by the Marketing Corporation in that regard. They have had to bring someone from outside of Barbados to participate in a project to tell us that we should have these outlets in various places.
6.45 p.m.

It must be remembered that notwithstanding the alleged expertise of any of the honourable Members on either side of this House in agriculture, the persons who used to advise on agricultural policies have hardly changed over the years. A number of the views expressed with regard to fundamentals of an agricultural policy have remained constant. I wish to remind the honourable Member that they closed down the outlet in Speightstown, they closed down the outlet in Weston, they closed down the outlet in Lodge Hill, they closed down the outlet in St. Lawrence. These were outlets where farmers could sell their produce to the Barbados Marketing Corporation, and where an attempt was being made to interest the population in these centres as local marketing outlets for those farmers who were producing. It is remarkable to me .....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not know why they closed down the outlets. Your administration closed them down one by one.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The operators were the BMC. The BMC had the outlets, but I am not going to get involved in that. It is a matter that divides us, let it divide us.

I would like some information on the intracacies of the relationship of BASIS, ATCO, CATCO and the others. I would like some detailed information. It might not be efficacious at this point to ask specific questions.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Not the systems. I want the interlocking directorates, but I am not going to get involved in that at this time, unless the honourable Member provokes me to go into more detail.

What I find remarkable is that I have here in my hand a document saying, "December 1984, Second Annual Report, 1984, Barbados Marketing Corporation Public Service". I am going to read just one paragraph to make the point I am making. This comes under the first page which says – "The Strategy". Listen to this:

> "Several processing opportunities exist for root crops, and during the plan period, Government will seek to commercialize some of these opportunities in conjunction with the private sector. Some of the opportunities available include livestock feed from cassava, instant powdered/flakes from yams and dehydrated chips from sweet potato."

Anybody who knows Carmeta Fraser.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Edward Cumberbatch – I am grateful to the honourable Member. Anybody who knows Edward Cumberbatch and/or Carmeta Fraser would remember that it is nearly 15 years ago that we were at this stage, and thanks to the honourable Members on that side, enlightened or deceived by misguided information and/or instruction, and/or advice, they proceeded to close down precisely these kinds of things in 1976, 1977 and 1978. Now, in 1984, they are putting out information saying that they intend to do the same thing! What goes around must come around!

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Remember that you are Prime Minister now. Stop behaving like that. Remember that you do not have to be the instant rebutter of everything. Let the Minister do some work.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: These are facts. They do not need any replying to. I am stating facts. What replying do you need? Do you need to get up and reply to a fact? I hope I have laid that to rest.

I want to ask some questions now concerning the acreage planted, because earlier we had some difficulties understanding what precisely was being said with regard to certain areas. I cannot find the exact material, but, according to what one is seeing from tables put out as authoritative information about agriculture in this country, it seems to me that there is a continuing decrease in the amount of acreage planted in non-sugar agriculture in this

country. To take the years 1983 and 1984 in particular, to give two examples, in 1983, according to the information I have, 790.7 acres of land was planted in non-sugar agricultural crops that ranged from beans, beets and brocolli and others to sweet potato, squash and yam. In 1984, the acreage was reduced to 729.5. I think the Minister would wish, especially in light of the fact that there has been no evidence of increased acreage in sugar cane, if the acreage in sugar cane has not increased and the acreage in non-sugar agriculture has been decreased, to tell us what has happened to that acreage that falls in the centre, as it were. What is happening? Is this being allocated to some other activity? Has it been taken up by playing fields, housing development? What exactly is happening? Why do the plantations, in the light of increased volume of earnings as alleged by the Government for non-sugar agriculture, seem to be reducing the amount of acreage planted. I do not have enough time to go into the details, although we can, but there seems to be a reduction in the acreage of sugar, or it would seem to me that there is a reduction in the level of agricultural activity in the community, and I would like the Minister to address that particular area.

I would also, in the context of that, and in the light of statements he has made earlier, ask him if it is still part of the strategy of the agricultural development plan, as it relates to root crops, "to reduce the competition being experienced by local producers from imported substitutes, for example, white potato." This has been put out as one of the major planks of the strategy which was perceived would be proof.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: This is part of the policy that would have been pursued by the Ministry. This document is no big thing. It is given away free. I want to have the Prime Minister, before he thinks that I have had access to secret documents.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It says here that you can get one of these documents if you go down and ask for it: "Free copies of this report can be obtained by contacting the BASIS office".

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not know who is who.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, you know at my stage if you get a free document with Government policy you would want to grab it, even if it comes off a little early.

I am asking the Minister to confirm, because I have been a little confused about the statements, bearing in mind the statements which the Prime Minister made in relation to protectionism, if this is still part of the policy that will be pursued.

6.55 p.m.

I have quite a number of other questions. I do not know if the Minister wishes to respond to this.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE (St. Lucy): Mr. Chairman, I do not think it would be fair, as a small farmer, to sit here this afternoon and listen to so many untruths as far as small farmers are concerned. I believe that instead of the members of the Opposition getting up and asking the questions they are asking, they should be commending the Minister of Agriculture and his staff for a job well done.

I would like to answer the last speaker. He enquired how much land is being cultivated today. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central answered him. He just told us in here that we have so much food in this island that we have to plough the potatoes back into the field, and I would say that if this Minister and his staff are so competent to plant less land and bear more food, that question is a dumb question.

All of us here remember what used to take place in this country in the early Seventies. We all know that under the Democratic Labour Party regime we had to import potatoes and a lot of vegetables into this country, because there was a shortage of all those things. Since that time, approximately nine years since, the price of potatoes has not reached, and this is 1985, what the price used to be in 1974, so you can understand for yourself the policy of the Barbados Labour Party. It is a very simple comparison.

The honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) spoke about the tractor scheme and how you pay down your money and the folks call you back after four and five years. That was something in the past, that does not really happen nowadays. I would like to let him know that, as far as this Government, agriculture and the small man in this country are concerned, you pay your money today and you get your land ploughed tomorrow. If you are not satisfied with the ploughing system that the Agricultural Department offers, you can go and choose a plough of your choice and they are going to refund you 50 per cent of whatever you pay.

They also spoke about the levy and asked what benefit we are getting from the levy. The benefit we are getting from the levy is one of the benefits that is causing Barbados instead of importing to be exporting, and I would like to appeal to the Honourable Minister to let

it be a high priority where this country will have some kind of canning factory so that when the small farmers have a surplus they will have some place to go with it. But I am sure that up to now, we small farmers are very happy about the agricultural policies of the Barbados Labour Party.

We all know the policy of the Democratic Labour Party as far as land, sugar, non-sugar and everything, is concerned. We all know that it is only now that the land in Barbados will start to bear again, because the honourable Members of that party were the people who introduced burning canes, and most of us in here know that when soil is burnt, it takes about five to ten years before that soil can produce again satisfactorily. I am sure that none of those honourable Members here now were in that regime because they are too alert to recommend to a Government to burn and leave the ground bare. That proves to you what was the policy of the Democratic Labour Party, and it was very good, I think when the Lord moved in and caused the Government to change, so that this island could move forward as far as that was concerned.

One of the honourable Members asked about Back River, St. Andrew. It is their work to go and check for themselves. If they know that the Government is spending a certain amount of money in St. Andrew at Back River, thy should do like me. I am very busy too, but I find time to go to Back River and see what is going on, and I was very proud when I got on top that hill and looked back to the east coast of this country, I am sure in the process of time that we will have houses built up there. We have food up there, we have green heart trees up there being cared, we have all kinds of fruit trees mango, pear and all kinds of things up there, and I feel these men should be commended for a job well done.

The honourable Member talked about the small farmers running from agriculture. We are not running from agriculture, but you all know it was the policy of the Democratic Labour Party, from the way they used to talk about agriculture, that the young people should let the white people cut the canes, let them go in the lands and weed them. That old group of people have gone off the stage of action, and now, through the encouragement from the Honourable Minister that we have here, we have a new group of young agriculturalists coming back to agriculture. So if there is any back drop from agriculture, is is because of the advice that was given by the members of the Democratic Labour Party.

They also criticised Portvale Sugar Factory and they criticised the little money that was given to the small farmers and the farmers as a whole, but this year – I do not know what happened that they agreed to criticise it in the consecutive years 1983 and 1984 – they have commended the fund. I do not know if because certain individuals were in here sitting that that caused them to agree with that point, but you can see how the Democratic Labour Party runs. This party has encouraged me, because they have vehicles in St. Lucy, St. John, St. Philip and all around helping the small farmers to get their canes to the factory, and the kind of problems that we used to suffer in the past we do not suffer now.

The Democratic Labour Party was in power in 1974 and 1975 when we had the biggest sugar price. Today in the newspaper it is stated that in that day sugar was fetching 76 cents per pound and now today it is 4 cents a pound. If we had a Government like this in power in 1975, we would have been able to compete with some of the big states out there, because that year the Democratic Labour Party had cotton when the cotton price was down and the sugar price was up. That looks like people playing cricket when the football season is on. They had an abundance of cotton when cotton did not have any price. Then they started to reap the cotton and started to plant cane after the price had passed, but we are trying to hold on, and I believe that brighter days are coming.

I hope that we all will try to be honest and give Jack his jacket. I believe that the honourable Member for St. Peter and the Honourable Minister have humiliated the honourable Members of the Democratic Labour Party. But they have brought that on themselves, because when this particular Head was called, they should have just sat down and kept their mouths closed; it would have been better for them this afternoon. I am sure from the Gallery – and I am sorry we do not have a big Gallery – that the way they performed here this afternoon they would have got nought as far as their performance was on agriculture. I hope that from now on the Members of the Opposition will do their homework and try to be honest when it comes to dealing with agriculture.
7.05 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 7.45 p.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. J. G. ODLE took the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I think I owe it to the honourable Member for St. Michael West, (Mr. B. M. Taitt) to make a statement in relation to the acreage under different crops, and whether in truth and in fact there has been a decline in the acreage under cultivation within recent years.

The position is, as regards sugar, that we have tended to have about 40 000 acres in sugar cane within recent years. It may go up or down by 2 000 acres in any one year, depending on rainfall conditions. There was a year, for example, when the crop ended in August and it was very difficult to have the field prepared in time for the October plantings, and the following year we suffered a decline in the acreage under sugar. Generally, however, the amount of acreage devoted to sugar has tended to be in the area of 40 000.

With respect to other crops – root crops, onions, peanuts – though generally speaking the graph has been towards increased production, it is true that it has not been a consistent graph, and that, depending again on rainfall conditions and market conditions, we have seen in some years a decline in the acreage, for example, committed to onions. You will recall that about two years ago we had a setback with onion producers when they did not get into the Trinidad market as was expected, and the following year there was a dramatic decline in the acreage devoted to onions. But on the whole the production graph has tended to be up, though it has not been a consistent pattern.

In so far as there have been about two or three thousand acres missing, I would like to assure the honourable Member on the other side who asked the question that much of that has gone into grassland. Foster Hall, Apes Hill, Groves, Golden Grove and Waterhall, have all gone into grassland, and on those estates we have livestock production, dairy and sheep in particular. If forage for livestock is regarded as a crop, then you may say that the crop that is now occupying the two to three thousand missing acres would be forage for livestock.

With respect to the production of yam flakes, it is a fact that about 15 years ago Barbados made a technical breakthrough in that regard, thanks to Edward Cumberbatch. The Caribbean Development Bank did a feasibility study on yam flake production in Barbados and came to the conclusion, confirming what we knew, that it was a technical success but that it needed a certain size market in order to be economically successful; the Barbadian market was not big enough. In 1979, when the bilateral agreement was negotiated with Trinidad, it was very confidently expected that the Trinidad School Meals Service would have taken large quantities of the yam flakes which would have provided the size throughput to ensure the economic viability of the project. That expectation fell short, it was not realised, and as a result the project collapsed, not because it was not a technical success, but because we did not have the size market in order to ensure its economic viability. I was aware of this for many years. That is the real explanation for the collapse, which I believe is temporary only, of the yam flake project.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I am seeking information more than anything else, and this concerns Subhead 7 – Land and Water Use Research. I want to know what is the relationship between the Land and Water Use Research Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Barbados Water Authority and your more recent Rural Development Scheme. I will tell you why I ask that, and why I believe there must be some close working relationship.

The Rural Development Scheme, which as you know I am following fairly closely, is making use of a lot of the old water wells throughout Barbados. There is one at Marchfield in St. Philip on the lands of Mr. McCarthy that they are now working, and they have laid pipes right through that area. I also happen to know that that well pulls from the Hampton basin of the Waterworks Department, and there are two Hampton basins, No. 1 and No. 2.

I want to know what is the relationship and how it is going to be regulated. Will the farmers be allowed to pull off the quantity of water, or would they be rationed with the appropriate amount of water to make sure that the wells do not over pump, to make sure that they do not interfere with the wells, to make sure that they do not bring salt into the system? How is it going to be worked? Is there a particular day that a farmer would be allowed to pull? What is the amount of water to be allocated to these Farmers? What is the rate for the water that the farmers are going to be paying. All of these are questions that farmers in that area have been enquiring of me.

7.50 p.m.

I should like the Minister to answer.....

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I need to get advice.)

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I should like to get some information on the take-off of the wells. Will the farmers be allowed to irrigate at will or will they be restricted to a particular policy? What is going to be the cost of the water to the farmers? What type of monitoring will there be of the irrigation system? What would the maintenance of the system be? What is the position of the water resource section of the Rural Development, Scheme particularly as it applies to those areas where the wells are within existing basins of the Water Authority.

I should be grateful for any information that would be given.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I have two questions to ask. The first one is a serious question, although it provides me with a certain amount of amusement.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Amusement?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: "Amusement." It provides me with amusement.

I wonder if the Minister would give the House a definitive statement, from the point of view of the Ministry of Agriculture, as to whether the dunk tree is seen by his Ministry as a fruit tree, the one that you go and pick dunks from.

I have a piece of land somewhere that had a number of dunk trees on it. The Ministry of Health..... or is it now the Ministry of the Environment? I am not sure. Let me put it this way. An inspector served me with a notice that if I did not have the piece of land debushed within a particular time, I think it was twenty days, I would be prosecuted. Partly because of the role I play in public life, I decided to have the piece of land debushed, because it would not look right for me to be a Member of Parliament who appears not to be upholding the law. But I fundamentally disagree with any policy in Barbados which calls for the elimination of dunk trees. To my mind, a dunk tree is something that is in character with the presentation of Barbados, and it forms part of the fruit production in this country, since anyone passing up and down the streets of Barbados would know that you buy dunks now and they are very expensive. But apart from that, it is a fruit tree. In fact, there are people in Barbados who make wine out of dunks. There are others who make what are the equivalent of currents; the equivalent of dried fruit.

I must confess that my information was to fight them in court. They told me that I have to push down my dunk trees. I had the dunk trees cut down, but I do not believe that aspect of the law which says that a dunk tree should form part of the debushing campaign, and if a piece of land has some dunk trees on it, I do not think that another agency of Government should be threatening people with taking them to court. That is why I said it is a serious question and I find a certain amount of amusement in it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you calling upon the honourable gentlemen to eat dunks?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If they are going to help me de-dunk.

I want to turn to another question now, and this relates to Subhead 12, Animal Nutrition. Some time ago, during the time when the Minister of Agriculture was Mr. DaCosta Edwards – and subsequent to him, I believe a programme was continued – there was a substantial amount of experimentation in the use of bagasse and other products in Barbados, the proper mix of molasses and cane tops and other similar products produced in Barbados to – the name that it is actually given in escaping me. But it was used as.....

(Aside: Confifth.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am grateful to the honourable Member – Confifth. Confifth became a very serious experiment, and from the reports which we used to get, the information suggested that it was very nutritious for.....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Nutritional? I am going to say "nutritious" to be certain. Out of an abundance of caution, I am going to say, "nutritious", but I think "nutritional" sounds good. In fact, "nutritional" is a better word for the point I am making. Anyhow, it used to provide a lot of nutrition for animals, and indeed, I form the impression that this is something which the Minister is carrying forward. Since one has not heard a single word about it, I wonder if the Minister could enlighten us on what has happened to that project or any derivative of that project before we go on.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Put the question, man.)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The position is that dependence on imported concentrates in the nutrition of livestock has been a major constraint in the expansion of the livestock industry in Barbados, and, for years, work has been going on, particularly at the Central Livestock Station in the Pine, in finding a reliable feeding substitute, based on local products, bagasse that is, molasses and pasture grasses. That work has continued, particularly under the direction of Bobby Quintyne, and we have had sufficient success to pass the results of our trials on to the general farming community. Our extension officers are involved in transmitting this information to the farming community.

(Aside: Confifth!)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I think the confifth product was a separate project which came to an end a few years ago.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It was abandoned.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Confifth was not abandoned. It is a CIDA project, and it went from Barbados to Trinidad. I think that the University at St. Augustine, together with CARDI, are carrying on that project, because the Government of Barbados, as part of its ceiling programme, went into the building board section of the utilization of sugar cane. St. Augustine University did the further exploitation of sugar cane.

The other point about agro feed, and this is equally important, is the possibility of using cassava.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Continuing in the same vein, I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether the programme which has been started in Trinidad, in which an attempt was made to crossbreed the buffalo and a Caribbean species of....

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do you mean the cows that licked up everybody in Barbados?)

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: A cross?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I think they call them buffalypsoes.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Buffalypsoes. Yes. The honourable Member confirms "buffalypsoes". These animals were brought into Barbados and I believe.....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Buffalypsoes. I am asking the Minister, because it is clear that his colleagues do not know.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Buffalypsoes have been viewed as total failures, and they are trying to kill the last one on the island. A cow is normally regarded in law as a domestic animal, but as soon as you cross buffalo and you produce buffalypso, I think you change the nature of the animal, because these have been wild animals in a way and have been known to do great violence to people, other animals and to crops. They have not been good for Barbados at all, and we are trying to kill the last one on the island.

8.00 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: They might laugh at the honourable Member, but I can assure you if the buffalypso meat is the same thing as what I have tasted, it is a meat which is produced by the cross-fertilization of a cow with a buffalo and produces "beefalo."

Laughter.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: As a fact, some time ago I was involved in yet another agricultural enterprise that did not get off the ground, and the basis of this was to produce "beefalo". This project was sold to us in 1973 by a gentleman called, I think, Mr. Pantin, who had access to the United States' laboratories where they had exhaustive and excessive storage of buffalo semen. What was required of us was to find 60 acres of land on which a large herd could be reared, and the advantages of this was that once you had access to the semen bank and you had any cow, you could artificially inseminate the cow and produce "beefalo" from the animal, whether it be beefalypso or whatever it is that can produce the meat that was called beefalo. He did bring down some samples of the "beefalo" meat which was very good. The only trouble was that some of us having got involved in investment and having acquired the land, Mr. Pantin went back to the United States and unfortunately had a heart attack. The other investor, who owned a supermarket outlet in Barbados, withdrew from the project and two of us were left hanging with the project. But nevertheless, it seems to me that, theoretically, using that technique of artificial insemination, you can raise a higher density of cows, the beneficiaries of inseminations of the stored semens of buffalo, to the advantage of Barbados. The meat was very good, and I understand the protein quality is very high.

What I really rose to speak on was Subhead 16 dealing with "Public Utilities Board, Grant"....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I believe this should be a fairly serious intervention. The time has come when we have to look very carefully at the functions and composition of the Public Utilities Board and the resources available to the Board. What has happened over the years is that the whole question of public utility pricing has become exceedingly complicated, complicated to the extent that you need to have a large body of specialists who are capable of absorbing a wide range of information in terms of modern utility pricing.

From my experience with the Public Utilities Board, neither the legal profession, generally speaking, nor the accounting profession, generally speaking, nor members of the Public Utilities Board, generally speaking, are really in a position to come to grips with the issues presented at a Public Utility Hearing. What happens at these hearings is

that nowadays, one or two lawyers who are *au fait* with the modern approach to public utility pricing, one or two accountants and one or two economists can develop a Public Utility Hearing to a point where, I think, laymen on the Public Utility Board would be lost in coming to a conclusion. Indeed, if the assessors are not fully *au fait* with what is going on in terms of the accounting principles being applied, they could be at a loss as well.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member give us an agricultural flavour.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: This Head, Public Utilities, comes under the Ministry of Agriculture. It is a very important matter.

I have seen a situation at the Public Utilities Hearing where a very clever lawyer was able to restructure an entire case the night before the hearing and confused every single body who was involved in the proceedings, and then win the case hands down. I tip my hat to him, he confused everybody, there can be no question about this. Because having spent three or four weeks preparing a case, and then, all of a sudden, you find some of the fundamental assumptions being altered, altered on page 1, which means figures right through have to be altered to try and harmonize those things, even if you work to four or five in the morning to go back the following day, there is no way as an individual you can handle that.

I do believe that the time has come when the Government has to take this question of the Public Utilities Board more seriously. I believe that it should probably either now be within a Ministry or be set up certainly.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: When I say a "Ministry", I am talking about having a physical space within a Ministry, and that the Board should have available to it top-class legal advice and top-class accounting advice on a continuing basis. The Board should have an adequate library, which it does not have, and you need people who have expertise in these areas, who remain constantly *au fait* with developments in the area of public utilities pricing. This is absolutely essential; otherwise, the Board can be at the mercy..... If you have any three or four laymen, even if I were one of the laymen, although I had taken an interest in this matter over the years, I would still be confused on the basis of the kind of evidence that has to be produced at a Public Utilities Hearing. What I am saying is that if you get experts representing one side or the other, then by the share weight of the expertise involved in the evidence and the very complications involved in the evidence, those laymen are not competent to sift that evidence in order to arrive at an independent conclusion. This means that when you think in terms of appointing a Public Utilities Board in the future, you have to bear in mind that this thing has now moved from the area where you are looking at the revenue requirements of a Public Utility, analysing the expenditures and arriving at a rate. These are no longer the basic considerations in a rate hearing. In other words, it is no longer a matter for lay people to preside over this sort of Board. The whole ball game has changed.

8.10 p.m.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Public Utility Companies are quite capable of attracting the best advice in order to support their cause and the best professional help, and all of those objectives on behalf of the Government, or maybe on behalf of individual objectors, are left way behind in that ball game at the present moment. I have seen this thing unfolding in front of me in a most remarkable manner, as I said, looking at the manner in which the matter was handled by the solicitor advising the Barbados Light and Power Company, whom I thought did a marvelous job as a solicitor who understands accounting principles, who was prepared to spend six months working on the case, I recognized that there was such a tremendous imbalance between those people representing the Light and Power Company, those representing the Public Utilities Board and those called in at the last minute to represent the objectors that I do not think that there was a balanced presentation and a balanced sifting of all of the evidence.

I think that the method that now exists needs to be looked at very carefully to see whether or not you do not need to really expand the capability of the Public Utilities Board in the areas that I have mentioned, that is, a careful look at the composition of the Board, a careful look at the professional staff available to them and a careful look at the continuity of information available to all those who ultimately would have responsibility to form final decisions in relation to Public Utilities hearings.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I want to say a few words on the Public Utilities regulation, because it is an area in which I have done a fair amount of work.

There is no doubt that, over the last ten years, the whole assumptions under which the public utility regulation used to take place were seriously disturbed because of the unprecendented rate of inflation, and the accounting profession itself failed to come to terms with

new accounting standards as how to deal with information. To this day, reporting of profits on assets employed has not been settled in a number of countries. Luckily, in the last three years, because of the relative stability in the rate of increase in inflation, the fact that it has increased within tolerable numbers has helped to make public utility regulation an exercise now which is going back to its traditional concepts.

It is conceded, however, that a number of the decisions which were given during the time of extraordinary high inflation rates would no longer be relevant today, if one assumes that the average rate of inflation which has prevailed in the last few years was to go forward in the future. That is one problem that appears to be solving itself.

The question of what is known as comparative fairness in the presentation of both sides, which the honourable Member adverted to, is a more serious one, because there is no doubt that the Utility Company has an advantage. It can afford to spend considerable periods of time in the preparation of its case, and in any event, the cost of case presentation is going to be passed on to the public, so they do not have to be parsimonious in the allocation of resources, whether internal resources or by hiring external resources, in the preparation of their case. Many countries in the world have attempted to solve this problem by having a pre-hearing procedure in which independent investigators are hired to carry out a lot of the preliminary in-house work so that when a case comes off for hearing, the issues are narrowed and the points of question and at issue are very clearly identified.

A World Bank Report on our public utility regulation identified this as an area for reform in Barbados. As I understand it, Barbados agreed to a World Bank study of our public utility regulation procedures, and Barbados was part of a region-wide study, because let us not forget that Barbados was the.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think that was acknowledged in the last two rate hearings, the question of a pre-hearing that was implemented, but it was confined to exclusion of those issues which may not be relevant, and it did not go beyond an identification of issues, say Nos. 1 – 10, which had been the subject of the issue.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I agree. That has been done, but it could have gone beyond that. I think it was a little narrowness in the interpretation of the recommendations, but public utilities regulation in Barbados operates against a background of the fact that we have so few public utilities which are subject to the jurisdiction, and it is very hard for Barbados to commit resources to a permanent group of people who would be employed full-time to do this investigative work into the utilities when we only have two or three.

I know that it is true that honourable Members on the other side have made the suggestion periodically that more utilities should be subject to regulations. I remember quite distinctly the Democratic Labour Party making the suggestion that the water rates should be subject to public utility regulation, and there are some people who feel that the natural gas should go back to public utility regulations. My own view on this – and I have discussed it with a lot of people, because I am quite conscious of what is called the imbalance in presentation is that it may be possible for us on a sub-regional basis to have this panel of experts which would do some comparative work. In any event, if you are operating within a Common Market, one should aim to have data in existence as to the comparative cost of factors in the production such as utilities and things of that kind, and I know that other countries in the Eastern Caribbean are very interested in utility regulation. I know the CDB is very interested in public utility regulation, because the CDB does find itself in a position where it has lent money to public utilities, and does look to the Public Utilities Board to ensure that a rate of return is given so that the people can pay back the money that it has lent to the utilities. So you have to balance all of these factors.

8.20 p.m.

Obviously, this is something that has to be kept under constant review, and it is necessary for resources to be committed to it, but we must also remember that in all of these matters there is no certainty. The accounting profession on the question of valuation, on the question of reasonable profit, on the question of rates of return and paying back periods, all of these things are not subject to any degree of certainty. There is a lot of human judgment involved, and more than one person will come to different conclusions, and, indeed, the conclusion that is good and correct today may not be so tomorrow, because you are operating on assumptions where there is no certainty that they will remain the same. The rate of inflation is an important one. There seems to have been an era of double digit; we now seem to be in an era where we are not in double digit, we are in single digit; so these are very material factors. It is a fact of life that what we have now is not perfect, but it is certainly less imperfect than what they have in many other parts of the Caribbean.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I feel very strongly about this question of public utilities. When I first returned from the United States to Barbados, public utilities fell within the ministerial responsibility which I had, and almost the first conscious ministerial act I performed in this area was to seek to get an improvement of the Act as it then existed, and together with the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and in consultation with Mr. Jack Dear, who wanted to speak to the matter on behalf of the utility companies, since at that time he used to be the counsel for them, we agreed, for example, to the

amendment which saw only matters of law going to the Appeal Court after there had been a public hearing. I think I also participated in the de-regulation, as it were, of the Transport Board and of Natural Gas.

When we dealt with natural gas at that time, the Natural Gas Corporation, as it then was called, was operating very efficiently, and the numbers that fell within the ambit of the Natural Gas Corporation were relatively small. I would be interested now in a return to regulation of natural gas, because I think that the expansion in that area, and the number of services which are being provided, would seem to suggest that, given the correlation between natural gas rates and electricity rates now, it may very well be that a hearing before a natural gas increase is granted is in keeping with what is reasonable. But that may be a point on which persons may differ.

A point on which I do not think there should be any difference is that we ought to have within the Public Utilities Board itself a level of expertise that would allow any hearings that are held from time to time to be meaningful exercises. Again during my time, I went to the trouble to bring to Barbados a Barbadian descendant who is now a member of the New York Public Service Commission. The Public Service Commission in New York, I should explain, is equivalent to the Public Utilities Board, and I well recall the frustration of having brought that lady down here to advise the Government and the Public Utilities Board in (a) a rate hearing and (b) to make some recommendations as to how we may improve our public utilities regulations in Barbados. It was during our regime, but I must say that she was given short shrift. I think that in those days there probably was some fear of expertise on the part of certain persons who had masqueraded for many years as being experts in the field.

For what it is worth, she came to Barbados, we paid her passage and she took up the cost of her existence here, so much did she wish to make a contribution. She happens to be a Barbadian of very high renown, who even now should the Government invite her to participate in any exercise to do with public utilities or any other matter, I am sure she would be willing to come. But one of the things on which we were all agreed, that is, she, and it took two other persons in the Public utilities field at the time, and myself and I think the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central as well as who was the counsel to the Public Utilities Board at the time, was that there was need for a high level of expertise within the Public Utilities Board itself.

The other point which is concomitant with that is that the Public Utilities Board has to take the position of an arbiter in Public Utilities Board hearings, but if there is a direction in which the Public Utilities Board should lean, it has to be in the direction of ensuring fair rates while fulfilling the other half of the mandate, a fair return. This question of what constitutes a fair return, in my view, is one which will always be contentious, and therefore does not warrant or merit any long discussion. But there can be no doubt that in a community like Barbados, it is vitally necessary that the information which is extracted from the Light and Power Company, or the Telephone Company, or indeed the Gas Company must be information in which the consumer can feel comfortable that his view and his interests are being represented.

I want to give you an example of the kind of thing which the Telephone Company has reeked on the population, certainly in my area, almost without anybody noticing it. The Telephone Company recently, or not so recently, some time early last year, sent out a letter to the consumers on the 424 Exchange saying to them that if they would fill out a form and send back the form within a specified period, the Telephone Company would come and transfer their service from a rotary dial to a digital dial telephone system, and in the contract they said if you sign the document and send it back they would do this transfer for you free.

What they did not put in that letter is more important than what was in the letter, and there are these two facts. The first is that the telephones all over the world are now digital; no rotary telephones are being produced anymore, so if you have a rotary telephone it is obsolete, and therefore the Telephone Company, by a process of time, will have to change that telephone. The second point they did not put in was that the new digital telephone would cost $2.00 per month more than the service which you had before, and so the Telephone Company, by the simple expedient of writing a letter and asking persons to sign that letter, the persons having signed the letter for the service, the persons have given consent to the new digital telephone, and therefore they are committed to pay the additional $2.00 per month. Well Yours Truly has not paid yet and does not intend to pay and has not signed the form, so I still have a rotary telephone, along with a few other persons in the area.

The Telephone Company should tell the people of Barbados that it has no more rotary telephones. Instead, what we have is the introduction of about seven or eight different new services and a number of unsuspecting people in Barbados, who cannot afford the services, have all taken them, and now you have some people with three-way conference calls, you have the interrupter, you have the diplomat, the small one which is neat for your hands when you are holding it. If you do not own a small telephone you will not be able to hear what is going on!
8.30 p.m.

When you put everything together, you find that there has been an increase in cost of the service, and in a sense no one can blame the Telephone Company for

marketing its services properly. What is missing is that the Public Utilities Board is not, to my mind, sufficiently staffed and sufficiently interesting, and sufficiently charged with the responsibility to follow these kinds of developments, and to have called on the Telephone Company, as is the case in all implied contracts, to make clear to the population beforehand what the nature of the contract was that they would be entering into. I think that a Public Utilities Board in a community of this size ought to have, and should have, this kind of responsibility. I feel that in that sense, therefore, the decision which the Government made in 1977 to de-emphasize the quality of the staff of the Public Utilities Board, whereas it had been recommended and we were in the process of bringing an accountant on stream as part of the staff of the Public Utilities Board – the accountant had in fact been recruited and was in the process of coming into the organisation – that post was rearranged by the then Minister responsible for Public Utilities, so that it was reduced to the level of Clerical Officer.

It is my contention that an accountant could be trained to examine the books, to examine the accounts of the public utility companies in Barbados, and that an accountant, not necessarily a chartered accountant, but a certified general accountant, could be taught, could learn how to examine the accounts of the public utility companies in Barbados either by special attachments in other places or even by a process of examining the accounting systems. Because when we have a hearing in Barbados, that hearing lasts for about a week or two weeks, the Light and Power or the Telephone Company, or whichever public utility staff as engaged by corporate accountants, Head Office, fly down and, literally, by the sheer weight of the presentations they make, the sheer volume of the presentations they make, and the whole length and intricacy of the hearing, bamboozle the rate payers, they bamboozle the system. And even the Public Utilities Board members themselves, not being seized of the matters, because it is not a full time job, they are not themselves always able to grasp fully what has occurred until subsequent events. You will recall that in 1979 the Public Utilities Board itself had to do the equivalent of a double take after it was realised that substantial errors of judgment had been made, and I believe that that could only come about not because of any malfeasance on the part of any Board member or any such thing, but because the sheer volume of information which they are asked to absorb in a relatively short time is too much for them to come to a proper judgment each time they have a rate hearing.

The Telephone Company has not had a rate hearing for a fairly long time and one would be almost certain that some time during 1985, they will be coming up to ask for some increase in the rates. I would not attempt to make a judgment on the Telephone Company, because it would be unfair – they provide a very efficient service and I do not think anyone wishes to complain. Other than the complaint I made earlier, no one would genuinely wish to complain of the Telephone Company, but I still think that since that is one of the companies that earn more by the number of services which are provided, and they are making a substantial profit from ancillary services which do not now fall within the sheer ambit of providing a telephone service, it is desirable that all of their information be made available before consumers are called upon to pay an increased rate.

I am suggesting to the Government that, notwithstanding that they dismantled the modest attempt to increase and improve the quality of the staff working for the Public Utilities Board, they re-examine the possibility of having at least a general accountant on the staff that would be in a position to provide, on an ongoing basis, the kind of information that would make Public Utilities Board hearings that much more digestible not only for the Board members themselves but for the public at large.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Having appeared in rate cases both on the side of the supplier of the particular utility and on the side of the consumer, I think I have a reasonable knowledge concerning the working of the Public Utilities Act.

The Act has never been substantially amended or updated since it has been promulgated in this island in 1952. There have been some cosmetic changes made to a few sections of the Act, but never has there been a systematic and comprehensive overhaul of the legislation. As the Honourable Prime Minister said, a study was done by the World Bank as part of the general Caribbean study relating to rate making, particularly, I believe, because the World Bank was concerned to ensure that public utilities would give a fair rate of return on the capital used and useful in the enterprise. This came in the context where the World Bank and other institutions to whom the bank lends, like the CDB, were lending to the major public utilities, particularly in the OECS countries.

The manner in which the utilities function has never really been subjected to a detailed study. I believe that the Canadians have a tremendous amount of expertise in rate making and in the functioning of utility organisations. In fact, any cursory examination of the law reports in Canada, not even the specialised utilities and rate case reports, will show you that the functioning of utility boards is no mystery in that jurisdiction. If we do not want to look at Canada, although I believe that Canada offers better precedents for us, we can look at the United States, where perhaps the procedure is more complicated, more complex and sometimes more cumbersome. It seems that what we need to do is to have an updated Act with simplified procedures and an

educational campaign to educate consumers about their rights.

8.40 p.m.

Part of the problem of the complaints which emanate from consumers who appear before the Public Utilities Board really starts because rate making and a rate case have become over-politicized. Some people have seen the rate case – and I hope the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central would not rise to the day – purely in terms of politics and getting some running out of the matter. Whether or not the rate is reasonable or justified is secondary in their considerations. We need a much better consumer education campaign to make some of the persons who see the rate case in terms of politics understand that it is a very important function to be performed in circumstances where you are dealing with a monopoly service.

I disagreed very strongly when under the Democratic Labour Party – the honourable Member for St. Michael West has just taken responsibility for the decision, although I believe it was a Cabinet decision and really not his own – the Natural Gas Corporation, and I believe, one other Board were removed from under the ambit of the Public Utilities Board. The reason why I disagree is one of basic principle. You cannot have a monopoly service operating in a situation where it is the sole regulator of the charges that it is making to consumers. If you are buying a yard of cloth, you are free to go to N. E. Wilson or Cave Shepherd, and there is some competition in the market. If, however, you are buying natural gas, there is only one main source, and that is as it was then, the Natural Gas Corporation. Although you may buy bottle gas, bottle gas is not directly in competition with natural gas at the particular time. It seems to me that there was some justification for keeping that within the ambit of utility regulation.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way, on a point of elucidation: I think he just missed the point which I made. It was the Transport Board that came off during my time.

When the Natural Gas Corporation was run by private enterprise, apparently it used to be under the Public Utilities Board. When it became the Natural Gas Corporation, it was taken out, and that was some considerable time ago, I think it was in the early Sixties.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Yes, I am very familiar with when it was taken out, because the debates in this House are replete with my attacks on the then Government for removing it. I am glad to see that a period in Opposition has now convinced the Democratic Labour Party that that decision was erroneous.

I have urged very strongly that monopolies should come within the ambit of the Board, and there is a case for bringing transport as well. Although, one may argue that the Government has to give a subsidy to transport, I believe that you can regulate transport with a reasonable charge, taking into account the direct subsidy which the Government is going to give to transport. I remain very concerned about a mixed transport position where, at the moment, the rate is probably fixed by the Government, not taking into account the indirect subsidy being given by the Government, but the minibus regulators fall immediately within the ambit of whatever is fixed by the Government as such. Therefore, real cost of service is no longer becoming the criteria for the operation of these enterprises, and I must sound a warning.

We must be very careful with our statutory boards so that we do not give the public the mistaken belief that statutory boards should operate in such a way that all they have to do is to run to the Treasury for more money. It is the surest way of crippling the economy of Barbados, unless we say to statutory boards, except a very limited few, which have a social function to perform, and we can argue about transport in that context, that they must at least cover their normal recurrent expenditure, even if they have to look to the Treasury for a subsidy on capital expenditure. This is basic economics. The honourable Member can look to any of the theorists in economics, from Adams Smith to Keynes to Caldor, and he would be satisfied that that is a basic commercial and sensible principle for the country.

In my view, public utility hearings have now become too adversarial. Although there must be a concept of natural justice in such a hearing, when it becomes over legalistic and adversarial, the Board misses its real essential function. And I agree with the honourable Member for St. Michael West in this respect, that a larger amount and volume of information should be available over a longer period of time. It is possible to achieve it even within the defective legislation which we have, but once again, consumer education is lacking.

There are very few consumers who know that throughout the whole year, one can request the Public Utilities Board to supply one with relevant information concerning the functioning of utilities that are subject to regulation. It is possible to examine the regulations of the Telephone Company or the Light and Power Company, to ask for their rate making structure, to look at their tariffs, even before a rate case is pending. Unfortunately, we have not got a vibrant consumer organization, and so, the politician, the quasi-politician and a few mavericks get into the act at the last moment, some of whom see it as a pure publicity stunt and who really are not looking at the essential thing, consumer protection. I hope that the Ministry would try to expand on its consumer protection function in education, and utility regulation is only one aspect of this matter. On many occasions, I believe similar submissions have been

made in here by many other Members but I think that we are very slow to grapple with these problems.

I should like, in defence of the Public Utilities Board, to say that I do not believe that you need on the Public Utilities Board, a host of people who are all experts. I think that if you look at the precedents, whether it be in Minnesota, or in Alberta, you would find that the constitution of those Boards are such that the lay public is very strongly represented, and not everyone on the Board has expertise in either accounting, economics or managerial science.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: What you need is not necessarily a full-time staff in Barbados. You need sufficient money provided to the Board by way of professional services, so that the basic information can be ferretted out and made available otherwise. This should be no problem, because in truth and in fact, the rate payer pays for the cost of this, and at the end of a rate hearing, the Public Utilities Board normally bills the particular utility a percentage of the total cost of the whole exercise. I do not think that in the long run, the Treasury would be burdened with the cost of improving the professional expertise that is available to the Public Utilities Board.

The Barbados body functions as well, if not better, than that of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, and certainly better than what I have seen in the Eastern Caribbean states. I think that the Prime Minister is probably on the right track when he is talking about a regional approach to the question of utility regulation. I would strongly urge the Government to pursue this matter with the Caribbean Development Bank, which has a vested interest in the improvement of public utility regulation. I think, that, in the long run, we can improve the whole system if we join on a regional level in looking at a composite bit of legislation with a professional staff so that we can share the cost of improved utility regulation.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is regrettable that the honourable Member who just sat down made one or two good points, but had to spoil his speech by referring to persons who might be seeking political advantage by appearing at public utility hearings. I want to make it known that all the people that I have known to appear at the Public Utilities Board hearings have all been honourable, hard working men, defending the interests of the consumers.

8.50 p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir: The honourable Member would exclude himself from that category. It is not that he is not hard-working and honourable, but when it came to the political mileage which he sought out of the matter, I think he would at least concede me a little political acumen to recognize a red herring, when I see him.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I cannot understand how representing your constituents' interest can be raised as unwarranted political activity.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the honourable Member will give way; I said there were people who saw the politics of it. The honourable Member has now conceded that my summation is quite right, that his primary purpose was for the politics of it.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I must defend the unwarranted attack on Mr. Miles Rothwell and Mr. Wendell McClean.

I would like to put this to the honourable Member. We have put a case for the need of more professional staffing within the Public Utilities Board itself, the building up of a bank of information and a proper library. Let me give you some idea of what goes on in modern rate hearing; you have not appeared before one in a little while, but I am quite sure you will catch up with the times in due course. One of the considerations that will go into a rate hearing today is the valuation of assets of the Light and Power at replacement costs. When they present that at a rate hearing, there is no one in the PUB, or no one advising them or among the objectors who can really challenge them. When they go into doing an engineering revaluation at replacement costs, you are completely lost; because you are not only talking about a physical revaluation of their assets, where you can get up and make some fun in looking back at the previous right-off of book value and so on, you are dealing with a matter that requires technical information when they hit you with an engineering valuation at replacement cost.

When they come with areas such as accelerated depreciation on the basis of a revaluation at replacement costs, an investment tax credit, deferred taxes, corporation taxes as a cost of service, not as entities – these raise serious, complexed legal problems which hardly have any precedence in Barbados at all. And you find that further expertise is required, that even the lawyers who are presenting the case have to be *au fait* with all sorts of precedents when all of a sudden somebody is going to throw out at you some decision taken by the Tennessee Valley Authority or somebody like this – all of a sudden a decision taken by one state in the United States becomes a relevant precedent for a legal situation in Barbados. It would confuse anybody!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the honourable Member will give way: The simple point is that the honourable Member is an expert doctor, but he is not an expert in the law. The honourable Member for St. Michael West, who is to his right, or the honourable Member for St. Michael North West, will tell him that this is nothing strange to lawyers who are in any type of case. The thing is that if an engineering expert gives a revaluation, you

rely on the expert. If you are looking at the cases decided on, we not only look at the United States and the Tenessee Valley case, we look to Canada or to any other jurisdiction; and the honourable shadow Minister of Legal Affairs will tell you that there are numerous precedents and if you prepare your case properly, you can argue. It is nothing new.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That might be so. The point I am making that there is a lot new here conceptually, and as far as I am aware, a lot of the decisions taken have not even been tested in the courts of Barbados as well as the legal basis on which they were formed are valid.

The point is that all these considerations eventually feed into one thing, that is the rate of return, and only at that point really do you come in contact with the laws of Barbados. It is a strange thing. The laws of Barbados set up the ambit within which the rate hearing takes place, then a whole series of things and a whole series of positions relating to laws outside of Barbados come into play, but they all impinge on the crucial thing that is going to determine the actual rate that you have to pay, that is the rate of return on the assets employed by the public utility in the public service. That can be increased by 30 or 40 per cent by the fact you have used a different method of valuation and have introduced other areas of a cost of service other than that which has been accepted down the years, that is the revenue requirements and probably a modest contribution to the capital structure of the company.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am just saying that they are concepts that really need to be looked at.

The point I am trying to make is that, apart from a few experts – I think there are two qualified accountants in Barbados who could be said to be relatively expert in this area, I think there are one or two lawyers with some experience and other lawyers who could be adequate briefly, of course – available to the PUB, there is nobody they can call in and ask to check a valuation. There is nobody, and they do not have the resources to call on anyone. Who are they going to get to go and look at an engineering valuation? So what evidence do they have to rely on? The evidence supplied by the experts supplied by the Barbados Light and Power! That is it.

Hon. H deB. FORDE: If the Public Utility Board operates under the belief that it has neither the power nor the resources to get that sort of assistance, it is mistaken. The Public Utility Board can hire professional services on all aspects of rate making to advise it, and since eventually the cost of the rate case is borned by the consumer, because it is added eventually back into the rate base, it is possible for it to get the assistance.

Just one other point. The honourable Member should not find it strange that we have to look outside of Barbados for the precedents. Rate making is new to Barbados; despite the fact that the Act was in operation from 1952, the first major case took place in 1956, and there have only been spasmodic cases before the rate authority. In fact, there are only about five cases that have gone before this jurisdiction's courts to rule on. That is why I recommend that we should look at the precedents that are available in Canada and also the Public Utility Reporter of the United States, copies of which are in the Public Utility Board's library. 9.00 p.m.

Dr. R. C HAYNES: One final point in winding up. The Public Utility Board has the authority but has not got the expertise to go into the Light and Power Company and make a serious analysis when they are deficient in the delivery of services to the public of Barbados. When you get the ridiculous statement that half this island was in a blackout because of a tail of a kite, as put out by the Light and Power Company, and when you check with the Public Utilities Board, they tell you they have the power to go in and check it out – and nothing has happened since!

Despite the many complaints about outages, they are not in a position to do anything, because they are constantly bamboozled by the Light and Power Company and although the PUB may have the authority to go in there and say, "Look, we have awarded you X amount as an increase in rate on a given level of performance, you are not performing, we are going to cut back on the rate, " they do not even have the resources to go in and do that. That is the point I am making.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: There is scarcely anything I would wish to add to what has been said on the Public Utilities Board and the many issues which we ought to bear in mind as we consider reforming the Act.

I just want to answer the question which was posed by the honourable Member for St. Michael West as to whether dunk is a fruit. Dunk is a fruit and is one which is particularly well suited to the conditions in Barbados, because it is tough and hardy and it is capable of producing a jam as well as wine.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Before you move on from that, could we get an assurance from the honourable Member that he will draw to the attention of his appropriate colleague, whether it is Environment or Health, that dunk trees are being pushed down under the debushing scheme.

As I said, my query came from my having got a summons that I had to debush the place, and all it had on were dunk tress, and I have checked with a number of other people and they have been similarly treated. I wonder if you would then give an undertaking to pass on

to the appropriate colleague and get this sort of thing to stop, because you cannot go on pushing them down.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Generally, as I drive around, I am concerned with a wider issue. It is not only dunk trees that are being pushed down in debushing, but other trees too. I can give you the assurance that I will discuss with the Minister responsible for Environment whether we may not be doing some permanent damage to the destruction of trees.

I did unwittingly mislead the House earlier tonight since I gave information to the effect that there was one buffalypso still on the island. Apparently there are two. They are in the north of the island, and we have sought the assistance of the Defence Force in trying to shoot them.

A question was asked in relation to the different authorities concerned with water in Barbados, the Barbados Water Authority, the Water Unit in the Rural Development Programme and the Water Unit within the Ministry of Agriculture, what was the relationship between these three units, as it were, and whether there was any overlap in functions.

The Barbados Water Authority is concerned with the domestic water supply for the country as a whole, and they also have, over the years, mapped the water resources quite clearly in Barbados. To that extent, they are able to provide both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Water Unit within the RDP with advice with respect to the location of wells and water resources generally.

The RDP Water Unit is only concerned with irrigation within the RDP. With respect to the MacCarthy well mentioned in relation to St. Philip, that well has been handed over to the Rural Development Programme by the Water Authority. It has a large capacity, believed to be in the vicinity of 11 million gallons a day, and so there is no need to trespass on the supplies regulated by the Hampton reservoirs.

On the question of the maintenance, thus far the Rural Development Programme is looking after the maintenance of its wells. After another two years or so, it is expected that maintenance and upkeep will be the responsibility of the Barbados Water Authority.

The Ministry's Water Unit is concerned with identifying water resources and exploiting them for irrigation purposes, generally for the agricultural community across the island, excluding the Rural Development Programme especially now that is being served by its own water unit.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Has there been any costing as yet of the water to the prospective farmers from the RDP wells?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: While the Minister is getting advice on that, I want to raise a question under Subhead 15 – Markets. I know that we have to do Capital, but if I get the answer, I think it would help us to move on.

As you know, there is a substantial market in my constituency, at Eagle Hall, and in terms of the maintenance of that market, I would like very much to know that Government is going to be looking, finally, at the Eagle Hall Market. It is some time now since I have been raising this question, and in recent times when I have gone to look at the market, it is really an embarrassment, it is an eyesore now. What is worse, because of the congestion and the diffculties surrounding the maintenance of that market, it has become very wholly a health hazard – there are times during the day when the member of flies in the market at Eagle Hall seem to outnumber all the rest of the flies in Barbados – and right next door to it – I think everyone may know the facade that runs on the two main roads at the back of the market is a thriving community. The Hanschell Land community is chuck-a-block on the market and there is only a very small road separating the market from the houses.

I hope that the Minister is able to say that this year plans for improving the market at Eagle Hall are finally coming on stream. I have talked about it now for a number of years and I would like to hear from him about that market. That is the only one on which I can speak with a semblance of authority, although what I am saying for that market applies more or less in one measure to some of the other markets.

9.10 p.m.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The public markets have tended to fall into disrepair, many of them are in excess of 25 years old. The Cheapside Market has not been attracting the sort of traffic we would like, and side by side with the New Post Office, the contrast, the standard and the quality of the building have been very much highlighted.

Before he died, the late Prime Minister discussed with me the urgency for us to carry out a repair and rehabilitation programme almost in relation to the markets at Eagle Hall, Cheapside and Fairchild Street, and there is a sum of $800 000 provided, I believe, under Capital Subhead 15, page 47, which will address the question of maintenance, upkeep and repair. But we feel that much more needs to be done. Right now engineering studies are being undertaken and also some design work is being done, and if we decide that we can start in the course of the next financial year, we may very well have to come back to this Honourable Chamber and seek a supplementary, but for sure the matter is being looked at.

Oistins is being identified as an area for a public market and we have a proposal before the Arab Gulf Fund, which is partly administered by the FAO. They have a large input and we were persuaded to make the application, and I think it is useful that we should test whether Barbados will ever get any money out of the Arab Gulf Fund. I think it is very important because apart from the fact that we have a lot of Muslims here, I think that we really have to define quite clearly, in my view, who are our friends in the world.

When the honourable Member for St. John was Prime Minister, he did give expression to the statement that we should seek to be enemies of none and friends of all. That is all right in a way, but the man who goes through life believing that he has no enemies and all friends fools himself. Equally, I believe that no country can structure its foreign policy on the assumption that you have all friends in the world and no enemies. I think you have got to make a judgment and a decision as to where your best interests lie in the area of the world in which you fall and the reality of the geo-political situation in which you find yourself. I think it is very useful, bearing in mind all the efforts that we have made in recent years to join the Non-Aligned Movement and to move away from a rigid pro-Israeli policy, to see whether all of that is paying off or whether they are going to close the door on us and reject the application.

We have an application before the Arab Gulf Fund for assistance in market expansion, and if we do succeed much of that will be used for the erection of a market in Oistins, which will be vegetable and meat facility, and for repair and rehabilitation work in other markets.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Subhead 18(g) Fisheries Department – "Provides for research work to be undertaken by the Marine Biologist and includes inshore fisheries research". Can the Minister update us on what work is being carried out in this section? We would be very grateful to him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What page are you on?

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: It is the page opposite page 40, Subhead 18, Fisheries. What work is the marine Biologist presently doing on inshore fishing?

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The head of the Biology Department at the U.W.I., Cave Hill Campus, Dr. Una Moore, I think is the name, has been supervising the aquaculture project in the Scotland District. There has been in recent years quite major developments in aquaculture, particularly in Jamaica and in Guyana. Recently when I was in Guyana, I actually saw one aquaculture farm stretching over 72 acres, and I am told that Jamaica has made enormous strides in this regard. Indeed, FAO has been giving the region some assistance in aquaculture and the headquarters is located in Jamaica, and a lot of training that we will be receiving hereafter will come out of Jamaica.

In Barbados, the effort is mostly in relation to Tilapia. I think it is useful that we should try to establish whether it is a viable operation in Barbados. We need to get the processes right and we need to test consumer acceptance. Barbados being a small island state, our people have been accustomed for centuries to fresh fish and I do not know at this point, and this would be part of the experimental work which is going on, whether Barbadians will easily accept fish grown in ponds as opposed to fresh fish. So, in the end, one of the things that we need to establish is whether in Barbados there will be a problem with consumer acceptance or otherwise.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sometimes you get the feeling that some of these notes in the Estimates have been put in the time before the time before the last, and therefore they continue to be put in. I see here that provision is made for the training of fishermen in navigation, net handling, maintenance of boats and engines. I wonder if the Minister can give us some indication of the number of persons who have been trained in navigation, the number in net handling and so on. There must be some record of that.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Over what time period?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I would settle for last year.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: While the Minister is seeking that information, I wanted to get the Minister's feeling on a wider fishing policy. It is my understanding that one of the Government agencies has stopped lending for big ice boats. I wonder if it is the Government's policy that we have now reached a stage that you feel that the size of the fishing fleet is big enough and you are trying to restrict it, or if it is due to shortage of funds by that particular institution, or what is the position, because this has been causing some problems. A lot of people who wanted to move up to what they call the ice boats and were seeking funding from the usual source are being told that they are not lending any further for these particular big boats.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The BDB is the lending agency and it is important for us to remember that if we are to escape the criticism of honourable Members on the other side and others in relation to the lending policies of that bank, one has to ensure that in the areas in which they lend money, there is strong evidence that the possibility of repayment is very good. We know that we are undergoing a revolution, so to speak, in the catching of fish and the processing of fish in Barbados, and we are aware of the persistant complaint that at certain periods

of time the amount of fish on the market is greater than the market, so in order to ensure that our fishing fleet is not upgraded at a faster rate than our marketing outlets, both in Barbados and abroad, come into existence, you will find that there is a periodic slow-down in the rate of lending. That is all.

We are not ceasing lending, all we are saying is that we have probably reached the stage now where – and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries would be more specific on this – as I understand it, we thought that we would have about 30 ice boats by about 1987 or 1988 and we are near there if you include the day boats that have been converted already. Remember we had the three harbours, the cold storage, the ice making and a building up of the markets abroad, but as usual in Barbados, sometimes people run off in these areas before the public infrastructure or before even the consumer acceptance and our marketing efforts.
9.20 p.m.

It is not a question of prohibiting it, it is just a question of slowing down. It is wide banking policy. What we should be doing now is encouraging people to buy ice boats that are in existence and for sale so as to retain the value of the existing ones you have. It is like the hotel industry. You reach a certain stage where it pays you better to encourage people to buy existing hotels at a lower rate because of production rather than encourage people to build new hotels, and that is where we are right now.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I can support the Honourable Prime Minister that there has been no policy to discontinue lending for the construction and/or purchase of ice boats, but the pace at which we have gone into the ice boats has been much more rapid than was anticipated two or three years ago.

It is fair to say that when Evelyn Roach was not producing ice and we did not have the second ice making plant at Oistins, we had more demand for ice in Barbados resulting from the ice boats than we actually had capacity. Now, however, we have five ice plants, but up to a year or so ago we had more demand than we had capacity to supply, so that ice boats had run ahead in terms of numbers and the capacity of the country to service them. In any event, last year we had such a successful season in flying fish in particular, but we had some marketing difficulties, and it was in that context that the Barbados Development Bank actually slowed down its policy on lending, but I wish to assure the House that there has been no discontinuation of that policy.

With respect to the question asked in relation to the water rates which we are intending to set for farmers under the Rural Development Project, we expect that the cost per thousand gallons to farmers will not be lower than $2.00 and not exceeding $2.50. That would be a very good price, because it compares with $6.14 per thousand gallons which is really the regular domestic water rate, and $4.76 per thousand gallons which is the rate to farmers in the Spring Hall Land Lease Scheme. So if we could realise that, we would feel that we have made a significant contribution.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We think the Minister has been under a great ordeal so far and I do not think we will press him any more. I would like to thank him for the ready and willing way which he and his officials have been supplying information to the Committee. I think we can pass on. The Prime Minister has been very forthcoming on this as well, so we thank them on this particular topic.

The question that the sum of $13 503 569 under Head 25 – Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs – as amended stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 26 – CO-OPERATIVES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $80 070 under Head 26 – Co-operatives – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 27 – METEOROLOGY

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $1 202 426 under Head 27 – Meteorology – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

CAPITAL – HEAD 74 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS – $20 442 356

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Capital Head 74 – Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs – as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. L. A. WEEKES (St. Michael North West): I believe Subhead 19 would be the most appropriate subhead for the question I want to raise.

I believe that the Minister would be willing to tell me whether he has abandoned the idea of assisting smaller existing fishing ports other than the ones mentioned in this Head. I say this because it originates out of a question, and I think I can refresh the Minister's memory on this question, because it is very important.

He has said that, in pursuance of his stated programme to extend and modernise facilities for fishermen in Barbados, the Government is undertaking the policy of upgrading and improving facilities at fish marketing centres around the island. Pile Bay is one of the centres where such modernisation will take place, and this was promised to be done in the 1982–83 Estimates. I have given the Minister enough time to decide whether he would implement this particular decision, but I notice in this particular Head this year no mention was made of it. I would just like to suggest that even though you are going to have bigger fishing centres there will still be a need for maintaining some of the smaller fishing villages around, which in my view play a very important part in the communities around as well. I do not think you will expect the villagers to travel to Speightstown or Bridgetown whenever they need fish.

I am of the opinion that the neglect of this particular fishing village ought not to be delayed very much longer, since it also provides a measure of employment for a number of people. I also want him to bear in mind that this is also a developmental area, since the Spring Garden Highway passes through this particular area, and it may add to additional self-employment in terms of fish sellers and others offering services to the passing public.

I would like the Minister to assure me that he has not forgotten this particular site and is still quite willing to make sure that this particular area is developed as soon as possible.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): Our programme for modernising, upgrading and providing facilities for fish landing sites around the island is continuing. Work has been done at Consett Bay, some work was done in St. Lucy last year, work has started at Tent Bay, work will be started on the new fishing harbour at Speightstown later this year, and also here in Bridgetown. The dominant view in the Ministry is that Pile Bay is really too close to Bridgetown and that a lot of the few fishermen currently using Pile Bay will, as soon as the Bridgetown fishing harbour is completed, be attracted to the Bridgetown fishing harbour, in the same way that Oistins really attracted all the boats from Silver Sands, in the south east and the St. Philip people down to those near Bay Street. All those boats were attracted to Oistins. We believe that when the Bridgetown Fishing Harbour is completed, that the fishermen and fish boat owners currently using Pile Bay will be attracted to Bridgetown. At that point, we will look at Pile Bay again. But for now, the dominant view, and I believe the wise view, is that we should await the construction of the Bridgetown Fishing Harbour to see what will happen to Pile Bay.
9.30 p.m.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Weekes will agree with that.)

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The honourable Member knows that the access to Pile Bay has improved greatly. There is clearing now, landscaping around there has started and there will be further improvements. There are no problems down there now. I believe that they have water and a few other things, but if they do not have water, it is quite easy to get water for them in the interim.

It would not be good use of the public purse to spend a lot of money on Pile Bay when you are spending US$12 million, Bds.$24 million, on the whole area around the fishing harbour in Bridgetown. That is well on its way: the loan has been approved, the design contract has been executed and we expect that it will be out later this year, and it will be fully constructed and well on its way, if not fully constructed some time this year.

I am sure that all honourable Members would agree that it would be a pride and joy of Bridgetown, with a high visibility and greatly improved amenities down there.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I hope you get fish.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: You hope we get fish? You should hope we get markets!

The question that the sum of $20 442 356 under Head 74, as amended, stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 42 – MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Head 42, Sir.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: You called it because you do not like him.)

Laughter.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Do you think that I do not like Johnny either? Anyhow, the Ayatollah will take care of you just now. Head 42, Sir, Transport and Works.

Head 42 – Ministry of Transport and Works – $38 968 012 – was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 42 stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): I should first like to deal with the question of subsidies under Subhead 8. I note that provision is made for financial assistance to the Transport Board, by way of subsidy, up to $6 million, which is an increase of $200 000 over the previous year.

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. M. A. KING: I should like the Minister to address the question of whether the amount which is appropriated for subsidies is a realistic figure, bearing in mind that during the course of the last financial year, he had to come again to this Honourable House for supplementary provision for subsidies to the Transport Board.

Aside

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. M. A. KING: The Estimates should reflect a certain degree of realism. There is no point quoting a figure in the Estimates which does not reflect the true position, full well knowing that during the course of the year, he would have to come back for a further supplementary provision.

The other point which I should like the Minister to deal with is the question of the real position in relation to the subsidies.

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. M. A. KING: It seems to me as if we have to look at the Estimates in a variety of areas to discover what subsidies are effectively being required for transport services. We have seen the figure of $6 million under Head 42, and one would be inclined to believe that that is the only provision for a subsidy in relation to the Ministry of Transport and Works. Yet, one discovers when one looks, for instance, under Head 34, Ministry of Education, you find that there is a provision for transport of pupils of $2.5 million. So the essential point which I am making here is that we on this side would want to know what is the total amount of money which is being appropriated as subsidies for the Ministry of Transport and Works, because clearly the provision for the transport of pupils is a substantial provision of the subsidy of the transport services.

Again when one looks under Head 39, Subhead 11, one finds further provision being made for subsidies in relation to old age pensioners.

Aside.

Mr. M. A. KING: Yes, they are being located in all parts of the Estimates. There is a provision under Subhead 11 of Head 38 – Subsidies. The amount is $1.2 million under this Head. The Explanatory Note talks about provision for the payment of welfare grants, assistance in kind, educational assistance for the care of discharged persons and provision to provide travel for old age pensioners. What we would like to know is whether the total amount for subsidizing travel for old age pensioners under Head 39 is reflected in the $1.2 million as shown in Head 39, Subhead 11.

During the course of the debate on the provision of supplementary subsidies during the course of the last financial year, I believe the Minister did state as well that provision had to be made for payments to the Transport Board in relation to travel by police officers in the course of duty. I do not see any specific provision for subsidies under the Head of Estimates relating to the Police, and we on this side would like to know if any specific provision is included for police travel.

We would also like to know as well if there are any areas under which provision is made for subsidizing the Transport Board, because, in essence, what we think is necessary is that the true picture in relation to the Transport Board is stated and is known to us all.
9.40 p.m.

The next issue which I would like to address is the question of the Transport Levy. Clearly the Estimates of Expenditure, as they are, are not going to show the full picture of expenditure in relation to the Ministry of Transport and Works, because a substantial sum of money is going to be appropriated from the Transport Levy Fund for the provision of services. Our understanding of the

position in relation to the Transport Levy is that it was designed to cover items of capital expenditure in relation to roads and the acquisition of equipment for the Transport Board; buses, capital for the Transport Board. It seems to me that the funds of the Transport Levy Board are being applied in areas other than capital works, and I want the Minister to address this issue and let us know if the Transport Levy Funds are being used for works other than capital works.

In relation to that issue, I would also like the Minister to address the statement of the report of the Transport Board Levy Fund, which has been laid in this House and, in fact, is a supplement to the *Official Gazette,* May 31, 1984. In that report, it appears to me that there are items of expenditure which are of a non-capital nature in relation to the Transport Board. To identify one or two of the items to which I refer, in the first Annual Report of the Board, at page 3, there is an item of vehicular maintenance which is 1(c), which is a small amount of $2 733; "sum made available to the Ministry of Transport and Works to purchase a quantity of spare parts for trucks and minor repairs". That is in the Ministry of Transport and Works itself. Then, under the head, Transport Board, there is under Vehicular Maintenance, an amount of $1 718 640 to purchase heavy duty tools and other equipment for the Board's workshops and spare parts for the old and new buses. It would seem to me that the provision of spare parts for old and new buses is not a capital item. I want the Minister to address the question of whether the Transport Levy Funds are, in fact, being used for items of recurrent expenditure.

In view of the fact that the Estimates of Expenditure, as they stand, are not going to reflect the true position as far as the full position in relation to expenditure by the Ministry of Transport and Works, I wish the Minister would seek to ensure that the reports of the Transport Levy Fund get before this Honourable House as the law prescribes. Because here we are in March 1985, and the only report, as far as I know, which is yet published is the report showing the position up to March 31, 1983. So we have from March 1983-84, another year in which a whole lot of funds have clearly been collected under the Transport Levy Act, and there is 1984-85 – two years which have gone and about which none of us in this House is in a position to tell with any degree of certainty what is the position in respect of monies appropriated for the use of the Ministry of Transport and Works. And, clearly, when public funds are being collected for this specific purpose, and when they are being used by the Ministry and they are not subject to investigation by virtue of analysis in the Estimates of Expenditure, it is important that we know and have some clear position on what the financial position is in relation to the funds collected under the Transport Levy Fund.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): As I understand it, we are on Head 42, and I see that there is provision for Drainage under C – Sub-Head 7: I wonder whether the Minister is in a position to make a statement concerning the Government's specific proposals for improving the drainage throughout Barbados and in particular the drainage in the area of Pleasant Hall Land . . . .

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Michael South wants me to raise Kings Village. There is also Harts Gap, particularly First Avenue, and School Gap.

I think the honourable Member would know that a considerable amount of water cascades down Brittons Hill, Dalkeith Hill, Collymore Rock and also from the Garrison trying to find a natural outlet to the sea in the Hastings area, and although this matter has been adverted to before on the floor of the House, particularly at the time of the Speightstown flood, I have seen no signs of work being carried out in the particular area, and I would be interested to know from the Minister whether there are any plans in his department for improving drainage; and, if so, would effect be given to those plans.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES (St. Michael North West): I would like to raise another question here, in view of the fact that the area in which I am going to mention has something to do with flooding. This is an area in which quite a lot of water flows and, to my best knowledge, the water tends to come from St. Thomas.
9.50 p.m.

At present, there is some drainage work going on in the constituency of St. Michael West Central. I realize that the upper drainage is being attended to but it appears to me that it must be an oversight on the part of those who have been doing that drainage not to realize that to complete a section of the drainage and not to carry it right through to the seaside might very well defeat the very purpose for which the drainage was meant.

I am sure the Minister would be aware of the fact that we have had flooding problems in that area, and since the water may be in some way diverted if the drainage is not continued right down to the Spring Garden Highway, that the road itself may suffer some damage, because a lot of that water flows right into the sea; in the past, it used to go into the river and flow into the Brandon River. I think you should take very serious notice of this particular aspect of that drainage because one would hate to think that you spend money in one area and then cause much more damage, which would involve much more expenditure in the end by not completing the whole drainage.

I wonder if the Minister would consider continuing that drainage right through, even though it may not have been considered at the time when he was making the plan.

Hon. H deB. FORDE: I believe the Minister intends to reply tomorrow, having regard to the time, so I will ask a few more questions so that I could possibly have the replies tomorrow.

I notice that provision is made in the Estimates under General Services, Subhead 5, for the maintenance of public buildings, and included in those is the Naval Memorial at St. Matthias Church Yard. I wish the Minister would let me know how often the maintenance is carried out to the Naval Memorial at St. Matthias Church Yard, when is the last time such maintenance was done and whether he is aware that there is a necessity for a regular programme of maintenance on what is an historical monument in this island, and which, of course, is of great significance to the people of Barbados, in general, and those in Christ Church West in particular.

Under Subhead 6 there is a provision for the expansion of street lighting to all the parishes. Perhaps the Minister could let me know how many street lights have been put up in the Christ Church area, particularly Christ Church West. I wish to know whether there have been any requests in his department for the installation of further street lights in Christ Church West, what plans are being made to affect street lighting in this area and whether he intends soon to give approval for the establishment of these street lights in Christ Church West.

I notice also that there is provision for the maintenance of roads. I want to congratulate the Minister on carrying out a programme for the maintenance of roads in the constituency adjoining mine, Christ Church West Central, particularly in Sheraton Park and at Applegrove, but I wish to ask the Minister, is he aware that there is a need for the maintenance of the road in Rendezvous Gardens, in particular, in Amity Lodge, where the road in that area has been totally overgrown by bush and it is difficult to see any road now whatsoever, and that the roads in Pleasant Hall.....

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I wish Members would stop diverting the Minister from some of the most important questions being asked in this House throughout the whole of the Estimates. I wish the Minister to pay more attention to them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to know what provision the Minister has for the maintenance of the road in Medford Land, which is in a state of disrepair, and for maintaining the road in the area of Hart's Gap, maintaining the roads in the Worthing View area, particularly Rendezvous Gardens and Rendezvous Ridge, and also maintaining the old Navy Road, which is fast falling into a state of disrepair.

I would want to know how often the Minister visits – I must ask this question, Sir – the various roads in Barbados in particular those that are in need of repair. I wish to know whether the Minister has, during his tenure of a year and a half, had the opportunity yet to inspect, in conjunction with the people in his department or otherwise, those roads in Christ Church West that are in dreadful need of repair, and if so, if the Minister has not had the opportunity, how soon he expects that he will pay his personal attention to this problem.

I am aware that the Minister has a programme for the overall rehabilitation of the roads, particularly under the World Bank Scheme, and I am aware that included in that programme is the maintenance of Highway 7. I want to congratulate the Minister on having started a sidewalk programme on busy parts of Highway 7, particularly in the area of Maxwell Road, and having done the repairs in the Maxwell Coast/St. Lawrence area, which was in a very bad state of repair. Since however, the area of Rockley is one that is obviously traversed by several pedestrians and the whole of the stretch of Highway 7 from the junction of St. Lawrence Road going down pass the Stream and culminating in the Garrison is sadly lacking in sidewalks, would the Minister say what proposals he has in that area for the establishment of sidewalks and also, at the same time, for removing the blind corners at the avenues in Marine Gardens and further up in Worthing View, which is called Garden Gap No. 1 and Garden Gap No. 2?

I would also want to know how soon the Minister expects that that part of the World Bank Scheme for road maintenance would include the rehabilitation of the Dayrell's Road artery roads leading from the Garrison Road right through Dayrell's Road coming through into Golf Club and also branching off at Silver Beach. Perhaps the Minister will give us the priority area which he has for this road rehabilitation and maintenance scheme and let me know how soon we can expect that in the very, very busy traversed areas of Christ Church West attention will be given to the roads there.

10.00 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, even if I did not want to suspend the sitting at this point though I had promised to suspend it, I realise that the Opposition has been so boring with their arguments all day that you would have fallen asleep.

Sir, I beg to move that you do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: 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. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 10 o'clock tomorrow, Friday, March 22, 1985.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is 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 resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

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

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, just before the House was adjourned last evening, I was attempting to catch your eye in order to make some contribution on this Head. Under Head 42, I am looking at that section subhead that deals with roads. Sometime ago, I asked a question in this Honourable Chamber in respect of repair and maintenance of roads, and I got a reply, to the effect that consideration is being given to the repair of roads in Whitehall, Grazettes and Clermont and that some repair work had already commenced on the worst roads in Rock Dundo Park.

All the roads in Rock Dundo Park are "worst roads." There is no such thing as good roads in Rock Dundo Park. Rock Dundo Park was a development by CDC fifteen and more years ago; and roads were out in and since then nothing has been done to those roads. The roads are in a deplorable condition and made even worse by the recent tunneling for the purpose of installing natural gas in the area. The installation of natural gas is very good and very laudable,.....

Asides

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I wrote to the Ministry since 1982 on the question of installing natural gas in the area, so there is no question about my criticising that at all. I welcome it, having written about it.

One of the problems that we find in the Ministry – I assume it is the Ministry – is that when the public utilities go in and carry out works and do some digging up of the roads, not enough consideration is being given to rehabilitating the roads, at least in sufficient time. Quite a span elapses before the repair work is carried out.

I notice that in Rock Dundo Park some little marl fill is being put into those areas which have subsided since the tunneling has been refilled. I hope that the Ministry of Transport and Works is intending to do a proper job in that area of Rock Dundo Park, which is a large development with a large number of taxpayers living in the area, including the Commissioner of Police. I mentioned that as a fact, not that he should be given priority over any other taxpayer or over any other citizen of this country. But the roads are really in very bad shape.

There are also some roads in the Whitehall area. Unfortunately, I cannot give the names of those roads, because those roads are unnamed, and that brings me to another problem. There are several roads off Whitehall.....

Asides

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: They were never named!

Asides

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: You tell me. You tell me whose fault that was, or whose fault it is.

There are several roads in the Whitehall area, and unless one is really very familiar with the area and the people living in the area, it is difficult to explain to someone how to find someone else in the area. Many roads are without names, and I am appealing to the Minister – I believe that is his responsibility – to give names to the several roads in Whitehall, and what used to be the old Lodge Hill Landing Scheme.

Asides.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: No! I do not need anything named after me. I do not want it at all. I want a proper name, probably the name of people in the area or people who owned the land previously. I do not know how you are going to go about it.

Asides.

Mr. P M. GREAVES: I have no intention of doing that. I want the Minister to give consideration to naming some of those many roads up there in Whitehall and the old Lodge Hill Landing Scheme. They are at the moment without names.

I come back to the Whitehall area and the roads. There is one road which people in the area call Medford Road; some people call it Whitehall No. 1 and some people call it White Hall No. 3, but it connects 1 and 3. That road has been in a deplorable state for quite a long time. There is another road running parallel to that one, off which the road that leads into the Eden Lodge Primary School runs. That is another road that needs considerable amount of repairs.

I turn now to the flooding in the area. There is not much flooding in the St. Michael North area, because the St. Michael North area is not really flat. There is a little flooding on the Whitehall main road, but I consider that as tolerable. If anything can be done about that, I would be grateful to the Minister. But there are other areas that are worse. For example, water collects in the area of BIM, and then it runs down along the road into Tudor Bridge, and it is at that point it creates a problem, because as one comes from Eagle Hall up Tudor Bridge into Spooners Hill, the water reaches a very high level when there is a downpour of rain. I believe something can be done to correct that problem.

I want to turn to some tenantry roads in the area, in particular the roads leading into Johnson Land, which I know the Honourable Minister is familiar with, because I know he has visited that area. There are two roads leading into Johnson Land off Whitehall Tenantry Road, and those roads are in a terrible state. They have never been oiled, and when it rains, the residents in that area find it absolutely difficult to get out from where they are to the main road. It is a large tenantry, and I am appealing to the Minister, who has visited the area, to do something about those roads in Johnson Land.

Aside.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: He is not doing it for me – it is for the people in the area. So it is one thing to advise the Minister not to do the roads, but it is not for me, it is for the people in the area. The people want the roads, they are taxpayers, too. They pay Transport Levy as well, and they are entitled to as good roads as any other persons in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I appreciate that. The Ministry will have to determine its priorities, and I am pointing out to the Minister what is a very bad road, which I think should be high on his priority list. I appreciate that all the roads cannot be done at one time. I am not that unreasonable; after all, I was a Minister at one time and I am well aware of all of these facts.

I turn to street lighting. Some three or four years ago, the people in Green Hill expressed themselves very strongly. Some wrote to the newspapers about the absence of adequate lighting in that area, or virtually any lighting at all. Since then the Ministry has installed some street lights in the Green Hill area, for which the people are thankful, but it was not a complete job. There are still long gaps in the Green Hill area that are without street lights, and the people are still complaining, although not as vociferously as they were complaining three or four years ago, or more. I am appealing to the Minister to complete the work that was started so that the people of the area and the people who use Green Hill can feel comfortable using that road, which is a very busy highway.

I think that takes care of those matters that I wanted to raise under this Head for the attention of the Minister as regards to work to be done in the St. Michael North area, and I look forward to some early repair work being carried out in order to make the place a better place for the people of St. Michael North.

10.10 a.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): The annual ritual so far as this House is concerned about the roads and lights and other similar amenities to various constituencies has begun. Naturally, even if the constituency of St. Michael West had had some indication over the last eight years that a road or two might be fixed, I would still wish to participate in pointing out areas which need help and assistance. But I believe I am in the unique position as a representative in this House as having to make the same appeal continuously from the time I have been in this House for the people in the area approximately one mile from the city of Bridgetown, embracing what is described as the constituency of St. Michael West.

Subhead 6 says this Head provides for the maintenance of all roads, cane tracks and guard walls. Well, this year I think I am going to invite the Minister to fix a few cane tracks in St. Michael West. Do not worry to fix the roads, because we do not have any more roads now. Those roads that I have been asking about to be fixed can now be put in the category of cane tracks. Maybe if the Minister can see them in those terms we might get a little assistance in the St. Michael West area.

You are aware that since 1981, the then Minister responsible for Transport and Works visited with me throughout the constituency. He described them in 1981, roads in Passage Garden, a road called Jubilee Gap, the roads that run from Peterkin out to Bank Hall, those roads that are from 1 – 6th Avenue Peterkin Road, a cart track that used to be a road in Goodland that runs

through what used to be called Lewis Gap – I think it will still appear on the map as Lewis Gap but you would need a surveyor to find it now – those roads, in particular, to say nothing of the Hanschell Land roads, which fall within private tenantries and which could be discussed in the context of repairing private tenantry roads while the other roads which I have described are those within an area that could be described as an urban area.

I feel that when it reaches the stage where the situation is so bad that the representative, in the interest of peace and out of a sense of concern, has to go to one of the construction firms or one of the people that own a marl-hole and purchase, as I have had to do for Jubilee Gap, not less than five loads of marl fill to put in a road off Eagle Hall going into Peterkin.....

(*ASIDE:* That is an election expense?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It can be an election expense. You can make it an election expense if you wish. What I know is that I had to have five loads of marl fill put in a road going from Eagle Hall to Peterkin in 1985. I am satisfied that that is an abomination. That is so wrong that it really ought not to be discussed in Barbados at this stage of our development. It cannot be that the Ministry can say that it is unaware of the situation. It cannot be. The Ministry has been aware of the situation from time immemorial, and more particularly, I have been in touch with the Ministry continuously and I have spoken to the Minister so often that whenever he sees me, even coming up Broad Street, he believes I am going to raise a question on the roads in my constituency.

I think it has gone beyond an issue of the Ministry not getting its priorities right. The people that live in this area have come to the conclusion, which is not unreasonable in the circumstances, that they are being discriminated against.

I am very happy for all of those people in Barbados who get their roads fixed. I am particularly happy for the people who live in St. Michael West Central, having myself lived in St. Michael West Central for many, many years. I am very happy that all of the little cane tracks, the nooks and crannies in that constituency, have managed to catch the eye of the Minister and the Ministry so far as road repairs and other amenities are concerned. I do not begrudge them that, I do not begrudge any other constituency any of the roads that have been fixed. I am going to ask the Minister on the floor of the House as nicely, as gently, as honourably as I can – fix one, just one. Just give them some hope that there is a road that is fixed by the Ministry out of the public purse. Let the people of St. Michael West come to feel that they are not discriminated against.

If I list all the roads that are in the same state that they were forty years ago, – in fact a worse state, because forty years ago there were plantation tenantries and people must have recognized them as such – it cannot be right for anybody who lives within a radius of two miles of Bridgetown must take off their shoes to walk out.....

(Hon. L. R. TULL: Why you do not talk about St. George?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You will have your chance to talk about St. George. You want me to talk about St. George? The Attorney General says there is nothing special about Bridgetown. I agree with him. There is something special about the people in St. Michael West to me. I hope the Attorney General would not begrudge me that feeling, that I feel comfortably close to the people of St. Michael West.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You are not going to get me discuss a single thing concerning you or your business.

I feel that it is wrong that people anywhere in Barbados, in particular, the people I know about – I can only speak about the people I know about – have to take off their shoes when the rain falls to walk out of their gaps in 1985.

I call on the Government during my time to have a total plan for the development of roads in the country and to make it known to the entire population, with the discretionary flexibility for the Minister to make changes as necessary, but have a general road plan so that every single person in this country who is interested can look and see that his or her road will be fixed in 1987 or 1989, or whenever. If we can get a programme so that everybody has a general idea when he is going to get his road fixed, it would relieve the pressure on the representative, it would relieve the pressure on the Ministry, and it would give the whole community a sense of fair play. I do not understand why it is so difficult, if we are planning for a community of 250 000, to set up a total master plan for road repairs and make it public. I believe that any Government can do it, the Democratic Labour Party Government would have to do it and I have called on the Barbados Labour Party Government to do it in the past.

I am not even going to single out the Minister. I do not expect the Minister to fix more roads in my constituency than he has fixed in his. Indeed, I do not expect him to fix more roads from any of the constituents from the Opposition than he does for his colleagues in the Government, because he sees his colleagues more often, his colleagues are more likely to prevail on him more often and that is the political system we have in any event. But I think the whole community has every

right to expect some of the decisions to go in their favour.
10.25 a.m.

I speak for the constituency I represent. I say that it is not fair. I am not going to belabour the point any more. I have said it so often that I do not think I have to go on repeating myself. I stand here as a representative like anybody else. One road, just one!

The honourable Member told me that last year he fixed the road for me. Do you know what the road was? The Spring Garden Highway! I am grateful to you. He told me he fixed another one. Do you know what the road is? Barbarees Hill!

(A VOICE: Prescod Bottom.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Prescod Bottom was fixed, because the honourable Member who sits next to you..... Do you really want me to tell the truth? Do you really wish to do that?

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I really want to hear.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is believed that the time when Prescod Bottom was fixed, Prescod Bottom was put in as part of the constituency of St. Michael Central. I was told by a person who would know. I will go no further.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I was told by an authority and I will tell the honourable Member the authority behind the Speaker's Chair.

I wish to turn now to the Ministry's tree-trimming equipment.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: All I will ask is not to make fun at it. Do not make fun at the lack of roads in my constituency. I would ask the Minister not to be jocular about the seriousness with which I bring my concerns to this House. I do not wish the honourable Member to be jocular; I wish him to take me seriously.

The Ministry has tree-trimming equipment. It seems to me that the extent to which the tree-trimming equipment is available and the methodology for getting its use is not well known to the population.

In my constituency, from time to time I have had a number of requests to assist in getting the tree-trimming equipment to come and trim and, if necessary, remove a number of trees that are considered dangerous, and when one looks at these trees, one can see that they are dangerous. One has had the run around. I myself have had the run around while trying to get the tree-trimming equipment in the Garden Land, I have had the run around again while trying to get a very dangerous tree trimmed in Westbury Road, I have had the run around while trying to get a tree trimmed in Passage Road, and I believe that these run arounds are not out of malice. I think it has to do with administrative inefficiency, not necessarily administrative neglect.

I think that the whole question of the tree-trimming system, who has to pay for what, is something which the Ministry should make known to the public because if an old pensioner calls to have a tree trimmed, the impression I get, from looking at this vote, is that the funds are provided for the operation expenses of the Ministry's tree-trimming equipment, and I assume that tree-trimming forms part of the environmental maintenance in the community. I should like to ask the Minister if he would make a statement indicating how this tree-trimming system within his Ministry works, and what one has to do in order to get a tree trimmed. I draw to his attention that there are a number of dangerous trees, both coconut and other trees, in the vicinity within the constituency which I represent which need attention.

I will be back.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): If we were to come to Parliament every week in the year to discuss Estimates and every day in the year to discuss the Ministry of Transport and Works, roads, light and water would always be part of a parliamentary discussion. We are fortunate to have probably almost every house in Barbados now with water in it, which Barbados can be justly proud of in a very small economy. As far as lights are concerned, I think a panoramic view of Barbados would demonstrate that it looks like little New York from the air.

Roads in Barbados are something dear to every sitting Member or every aspiring politician in the country, for the simple reason that it is something which Barbadians, and the politicians in particular, would always try to push. It is a vote-catching type of thought. I am quite sure that we have something like approximately 2 000 kilometres of roads in Barbados, and I would go as far as to say that we have the largest and finest network of roads per kilometre in the entire Caribbean.

My colleagues, both in Government and on the back bench, suffer the same problem with road repairs as members of the Opposition, but I believe that it is unfair for any Member on either side of the House to set out to accuse the Minister of discriminating against others. I argue with my colleague both in Cabinet and privately to fix a road, because when you fix one road here today, there is another one in the very constituency to be fixed,

and I would like it to go on record that all Ministers of Works on this side have done, as far as they can and as well as they can, a relatively fair share of road repairs over the past eight years. I was about to mention Prescod Bottom myself, because I have passed through there on several occasions, and it is not fair to say because it was assumed that it was going to be in the constituency of the Honourable Minister for Tourism and the Environment that the road was done. I believe, Sir, that you yourself suffer. My colleague here, the Attorney General and Minister of Foreign Affairs, I have heard actually on bended knees putting a case for the people in Drax Hall, which apparently is so dear to his heart.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West lay boast to how he bought five loads of marl to put into Jubilee Gap or some place like that. I can also tell him that I felt so ashamed early in 1976 when I had reason to go by Sawh's Shop in Barbarees Hill and decided to drive through Hanschell Land and come out on Black Rock. I never imagined that a road in that constituency could be that bad. There was a hole in the road almost about two feet deep stretching right across the road, and that Member was in Government on that occasion. That Member for St. Michael West was a Minister, and if he did not look after himself on that occasion, or if he could not get his colleagues to look after him then, I believe he should really say, 'Thanks, very much," to the present Minister of Transport and Works for what he has done for him.
10.35 a.m.

I took it upon myself to call the depot in Black Rock a Friday evening and actually demanded – and I was not a member of the Government – a Mr. Streat to go up there by Sawh's shop, and I showed him what the condition of Hanschell Land was at that time. I asked Mr. Streat to bring two loads of marl and put in there, and the member for St. Michael West was representing the constituency then, and it never dawned on him to have done a good turn for the people of that area. It appears sometimes that when you treat some people badly, they love you more. Just like some women, give them some bad treatment and they love you more! If you are kind and nice to them, they want another side of life, they want to see what it is like.

The Government is in no position to be able to fix every single road in this country at the same time; no way. In the Democratic Labour Party Government it could not have been done, it was not done, and in this Government.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The honourable Member says that I was representing the constituency of St. Michael West. As you know, Sir, while I was a Minister I was a member of the Upper House and did not represent any constituency.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: All right. I also heard him when he was Minister of Trade referring to the dear, loving people of St. Michael South West in a radio broadcast at that time when they had a programme called "Meet the Ministers".

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is misleading the House. I never appeared on any programme called "Meet the Ministers", and I never referred to any dear, loving people of St. Michael South West in any broadcast.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: You are only wasting time!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You are not wasting time! Do you want me to let him put lies in the Record?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I heard the Member for St. Michael West – and I will not pursue this argument – referring to people in that area where he had his eyes on that occasion as the dear, loving people, and I referred to him as the Sidney Poitier of politics at the time, an actor. Now, this morning he is in here putting a case for Hanschell Land! You should be ashamed!

Let me tell you this on the floor of the House. Hanschell Land is going to be done, whether it is privately owned or owned by Government, in the interest of the people of Hanschell Land and not in your own interest. I give you that assurance. Only a couple of days ago, I asked the Minister of Transport and Works if he ever looked at Hanschell Land, and you have been representing it for eight years and only today now you are in here talking about Hanschell Land.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: The honourable Member is misleading the House. He cannot say only today.

Aside

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have heard the honourable Member. Now I will take your point of order.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, first of all I draw to your attention the Standing Order which says that if an honourable Member stands on a point of order he has to be heard in silence.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When an honourable Member stands on his feet on any point, he has to be seen and recognised by the Chair. All I am asking you for is just to let me get some order in the House, let me ask the honourable Member, who may not have heard me, to take his seat.

I will entertain the point of order.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: When the honourable Member for St. Andrew shouts at me to sit down, Sir, it is offensive. No honourable Member in here can tell me to sit down; only you, Sir.

The Record will show, Sir, that every single year that I have represented St. Michael West I have come in here, and Your Honour in the Chair would know that, and I think it is wrong for any honourable Member to get up in here and say that I now come in here for the first time talking about Hanschell Land. I think it is wrong.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: It means we have discriminated against Members on the other side. I am sure that with all of his stupid, bad traits.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We cannot have that.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You do not know who I am referring to, Sir. I am referring to somebody outside, and I will not call the name.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You were obviously addressing the Chair. Are you?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: No, Sir. I will never say you are stupid.

With all of his bad traits and his political stupidity, the Member for St. Michael South Central cannot say, and cannot get up in here this morning and say, that the Government has ever discriminated against Members on the other side, because he can boldly stand up and boast about the roads in Delamere Land, Halls Road, Ellis Village, Brittons Hill – I drive through there every morning, that is why you do not see me on mornings; I know you are looking for me – Eversley Road, Taitts, Brydens Avenue, all of those roads. You have Members here, like my colleague, the Member for St. Michael North East, on his bended knees asking for some help, but if you drive through St. Michael South Central, you can play road tennis on it and the ball would not bounce too high. But you hear the Member for St. Michael West getting up putting a case and accusing the Minister of discrimination.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, and I think you will agree, that we have done well with over 2 000 kilometers of road, in a small economy, with heavy vehicles on the roads today, because the roads in Barbados were never built to carry that sort of traffic, and the last Government barber greened the roads, and they used to refer to them as nylon roads at the time, as a temporary measure, because they really do not stand up. There were horse drawn carts, and I am told about the tram car. I do not know much about those days, but today , ou have some 12-wheeled vehicles, tractors, pay loaders, coaches carrying passengers, thousands of motor cars using the very roads that were built originally to carry very light traffic, and the Government is repeatedly under pressure, not from that side only, from this side too, to keep a good road maintenance programme going.

I have no doubt in my mind that we are doing very well under the circumstances, and in particular in the time of recession, the worst since 1929 throughout the entire world. Barbados can still hold its head aloft with a good road system and proper roads, as compared with places like oil-rich Trinidad – and the Members on that side know it too, they travel – Guyana with all the bauxite, and Jamaica. In Columbia and places like Haiti, you do not talk about roads period. In New York City, on 34th Street, if you have a Chinese lunch and get to the top of the road, you are empty. The same thing goes for 6th Avenue and the Avenue of the Americas. All through Brooklyn, too – you know this, too, you have travelled – the roads are uneven, bumpy. It is only the highways that are smooth and even.
10.45 a.m.

I think that it is fairly unfair to be attacking the Government and in particular accusing us of discriminating against Members on the other side. We can lay claim to that as well, that we are discriminated against. But your money can only go that far; you have to buy food, you have to bring in drugs in the country, you have to maintain the institutions. And rather than attacking and hounding the Government unnecessarily about its road building programme, and quarrelling about a road that is bad here and a road that is bad there, we should be thankful. We all suffer that. You, Mr. Chairman, I believe, suffer greatly. If they do ten roads in your constituency today, tomorrow you will hear "Well, you know I live up in here. There are eight or ten houses and they want a road up there."

I had to tell the people in Springhead, which as far as I am concerned is the dearest project to my heart – a place which had no sign post, no lights, no water and no roads – I told them in 1966, "Some day I will have the opportunity to bring a road, lights and water to you." But I discovered, when I came into Government, that the cost of it would have been astronomical to reach them with all of those facilities, so I brought the people to the services. It is my greatest accomplishment in my constituency. My colleague here, the representative for St. Andrew could tell you what it is like. That is the area in which the Leader of the Opposition went up there one evening to campaign for a man called George Moe, and he discovered that at 4.00 o'clock in the evening, he asked if it were 8.00 o'clock at the night. It was that dark at 4.00 o'clock in the evening.

We cannot get all of the roads done at the same time. I believe that they are dear to you and they are

dear to us. I believe that the Minister of Transport, with what little money he has at his disposal, is doing as good a job as possible. I want to commend him for that, and sincerely hope that in the meantime, he will pay some attention to certain other areas.

As far as St. Michael South is concerned, I am sorry that the.....

Aside

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: As far as the Member for St. Michael South is concerned, I am sorry that he is not in here, because..... As a matter of fact, I will say this to him. I am going to alert him now. If you go to St. Michael South and ask where you can find the Member's office in order for the people there to be given representation, they will tell you, "I have never seen an office." And we pay a Secretary! Look, I am going to chew him up, hear!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: My field campaign is just the time. That is how I feel about it.

I have seen the roads in St. Michael South. They need looking at. But I would say that there is plenty of time.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: .....to finish our game.

I should like to commend the Minister of Transport and Works for the outstanding work which he has done in the past.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES and Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW rose.

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

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Social services have become the political football of all politicians from time of old, and this debate is not going to see the end of that game. However, there are some things which need to be said or restated as the debate on this particular Ministry takes place during this last day of Estimates.

The honourable Members from that side, especially the honourable Member for St. Michael West, in his contribution conveyed to this honourable Chamber and to his listeners that there is some element of discrimination in the Government's approach to its road programme. We should not forget that it does not matter who is the Minister responsible for Transport and Works. He is going to be under a barrage of attack, not only from the Opposition but from his colleagues. I think that my distinguished colleague, the Minister of Transport and Works, is aware of that. It is not a very comfortable bed to lie on.

The Opposition must not forget that during their regime, between 1961 and 1976, there were Ministers Boxill, "Sleepy" Smith and even Dr. Caddle, no longer Members of this Honourable Chamber. During those fifteen years, honourable Members from that side, whether they now represent the same constituencies or not, were members of that party, especially the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who was regarded as the second most powerful man in the land. He should not complain at all. I do not think that he is going to get up and complain, because he had access to the powers that be, and his requests, I am sure, would have been heeded by the then Administration, for who dared to ignore his requests.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West was a Minister then, and he knew that he was a potential candidate for the constituency which he now represents. I am sure that, as a potential candidate, he would have been able to convince his colleagues sitting in Cabinet then to assist the people of St. Michael West. How could he have sat down with the honourable Member who was then representing St. Michael South Central, "Sleepy" Smith, and allow him to do Halls Road, Martindales Road and every nook and cranny, even the doorsteps of his constituency, and neglect the people of St. Michael West. Something has really got to be wrong.

Let us face it. The present Minister of Transport must understand one elementary thing about representation – he has to look after his own as well. No matter who he looks after, he owes it to himself and to his constituents to look after them. They must have a share of the cake. I am not saying to him, neither is anyone else suggesting, that he must be monopolistic and feel that he should have all and ignore the wishes of other people. But he has got to understand that if he cannot do it while he has the wherewithal, then when he has none, he cannot expect to get it. The people will judge you by that. I have learnt that as a politician, so I am not going to disagree with you. All I am saying is that there are other constituencies, and I am sure that the Honourable Minister is aware that there are other constituencies that need attention, and I am satisfied that he is doing his best to assist them and remedy the situation.

Do not let us get in here and feel or imply that the Minister is monopolizing the show and that he is not paying attention to other people. He is doing just what any sensible, reasonable Minister would do. If he is going to be doing otherwise, I would not think that he is worth

to be sitting on the front bench or even to be representing people. He must show his initiative and his ability to lead, and that is the way in which he is going.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West talked about people taking off their shoes. There is nothing wrong with that. There are lots of people in the country, in other parts of Barbados, who do not have proper accesses to their houses. All the roads cannot be done at the same time. If the Government would come in and ask for a billion dollars to do roads, the Opposition would get up and say that the Government has no right spending so much money – the external debt, balance of payments! The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central would get up and do all of that grand-standing, play and play to the gallery, accuse the Government of running the country into debt.

Let us understand that we have to operate on a budget. And it does not matter, even if all the money was available to the Ministry of Transport and Works, they would not be able to do all the roads at one time, and we have got to allow for roads going into disrepair from time to time. You have to surface and re-surface; some roads are going to be done well, and some are going to be done badly too. We have to allow for a certain element of bad work, and have provision for some of the areas that are proned to slippage and drainage problems; we have to understand that we have to go back to them more than once. There are some things we have to look at,..... heavy rainfalls and floods, which will cause the Ministry to go back and restructure its programme, so do not let us be too critical of the Ministry of Transport and Works. 10.55 a.m.

I want to make a suggestion to that Ministry. I want to suggest that the supervisors in the zones to be more vigilant and go around to the districts that fall within their zone on a more regular basis, and report findings to the central authority, so that the roads will not remain in disrepair for so long. I am sure that this is one of the problems, and that has caused the Ministry of Transport and Works from time to time to incur a heavy road maintenance bill. If at the very early stage these things were not only detected but reported, then we would not have such a heavy recurring bill in terms of repair to the roads. So I am calling on the Ministry to look at its supervisory staff with a view to getting them out there and having them report at an early stage on road damage so that the maintenance programme can be effected without delay.

Even the cleaning out of the wells has caused a problem, because I am satisfied that the supervision is not tight enough. I do not have to withdraw those remarks at all, I have seen it. But you cannot blame the Minister, you cannot blame his executive staff in the Ministry, because they can only act on reports that are made to them from time to time.

The sidewalk programme, I must say, needs to be complimented. Some of us have not really addressed ourselves to that, but people have been going in the roads and getting knocked down, and thanks to the Minister taking the initiative, we now have sidewalks built around the St. Michael and Christ Church areas. Those are things you need to compliment the Minister on.

You are talking about a road and people walking out without shoes. Some people only talk about that, but they never had the experience of walking out a gap with one pair of shoes and putting on another pair, when they get to the front road. I am accustomed to that, man! I can talk about it. You cannot talk about it. You just want to get in here and talk politics.

I would also like to see proper supervision as far as the wells are concerned. Not only are they not cleaned on a systematic basis – although I know that some effort is being made in this respect – but there are lots of wells that are left uncapped, not properly secured, and this will pose a danger to the general public. We must address ourselves to this particular concern. Only this morning a gentleman called me and asked who he could call to get a well covered. I have several in my constituency, too, Mr. Minister, but I cannot bore you with this, I do not think it is fair to ask you to do it. But it is your staff, as I said: if your area supervisors would get out there and monitor very closely the wells and the whole programme, I am sure that many of these problems will never reach this Chamber. But we understand that every effort is being made in the Ministry to correct this and put the proper machinery in place.

The St. Barnabas/Wildey Highway falls within my constituency, and I do not want to raise it just because it is a constituency matter, I do not think I should be that parochial in my contribution, but I am appealing, since I have seen the lights going on the Spring Garden Road – and I want to fully congratulate the Ministry for that – to consider erecting street lights on the St. Barnabas/ Wildey Highway. It is too dark, and something has got to be done.

I am also calling on the Ministry to address almost immediately the question of having street crossings opposite CBC and the Development Bank, especially as the children who attend Parkinson School experience difficulty in crossing the road in the morning and afternoon. The school is too near the headquarters of the Ministry for the Ministry not to see the situation and observe that the road poses a very serious threat and endangers the lives of people, children in particular. I am not going to hold on that, because I think that the Minister understands, and it is my duty to draw it to his attention. Now that senior officers are in this Honourable

Chamber, I am asking them to look at it, and I will not be letting up on my plea on this occasion. It should be done as of tomorrow. While I am going to be reasonable, and we have got to be reasonable, I am just drawing that particular matter to the Ministry's attention because it is serious. I am sure that the Ministry and its officers understand.

I want to compliment the Ministry for the Pine East-West Boulevard. It is there for anyone who wants to see the works of the Ministry of Transport and Works. It is quite all right for us to get up and criticise the Ministry of Transport and Works, but we have to give Jack his jacket. If you were to drive from the Pine East-West Road, coming from St. Michael South Central or Pine Gardens, going to MTW or to the Pine Hill Dairy, you will see the work of the Minster.

A new sort of initiative has been brought in the thinking of the Ministry of Transport and Works. If you go up on Government Hill opposite Government House, you will see a footpath, and I am sure when it is completed a lot of people are going to admire the Ministry for that kind of work. That is a new dimension in road transportation, in looking at roads and the road programme. So there is no sense talking about a cart road. They are going to be with us, and I do not care what you do.

We have to approach this matter with a little bit of common sense because developments go time and time again and new developments are created, and those bring new road requirements. You just cannot answer all of the road needs at any one time in any given year. Sometimes, even your plans have got to be amended accordingly because of the very fact that new settlements and new communities have been created and you have got to make way for them. For instance, what causes the Ministry to vary from its programme is that sometimes the complaints that come in after a new settlement, complaints about burglaries and lawlessness in the community, prompts people to appeal to the Ministry for street lights, which we now know is a deterrent against criminal conduct.

Let us understand that these are complex matters, and we should not seek to score any political mileage, because there is not going to be any. If this Government were to win because of the amount of road works they do, we would not be in here, because the most people who support us come from constituencies in which they are country districts, and a lot of cart roads and mud tracks for the people. We should give thm good roads and show them that we reward them for being loyal.

11.05 a.m.

We need to do that, because we cannot forget that particular aspect, but at the same time, people would support the Government in its national interest, so do not seek to score any cheap political points for your constituency. The constituents are aware that you had the regime and they know you never had your voice heard. Even if it was heard, they never heard you articulate it in the way you want to articulate it now, and they are going to condemn you for that. That is what the people say. You do not know what they said, but that is what they say.

I am certainly appealing to the Minister to have you included in the whole thing. I cannot get all done. I have told my constituents that already. There are other things that I am going to ask them to consider and which I will subsidise. But let us not bring the debate down to the district. I want to hear some greater contributions. Praise the Minister when he should be praised and criticize him when he should be criticized, constructively. Lend your suggestions, because I think that is what Government is all about. You have a duty to yourself to tell the public what you will do and what your programme is like, rather than seeking to criticize the Minister or seeking to bring down the Government because of something it had not done by a sin of omission.

I hope that honourable Members will now understand that we on this side are prepared to rebut the arguments, and we are as good in this particular matter.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to hear the Honourable Minister of Transport. I believe there might be something in the bag for St. George.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have listened fairly attentively to all that has been said with respect to the Ministry of Transport and Works. I am not a bit surprised that there are some Members who feel aggrieved that they have been neglected in some respects, but, as all of us clearly understand, we are dealing with limited resources, and we have to seek to allocate those resources according to a programme of priorities, which may not always appear to be objectively arrived at but, nevertheless, we try as much as possible, at least I do, to subordinate my subjectivity and seek to allocate the funds under the Ministry's vote in a way that would answer the needs of the various constituents that we have to serve. And when I say "constituents", I am not speaking necessarily in terms of partisan matters, I am speaking generally of seeking to meet the needs of Barbadians.

I do not think there is any man in here who would be so short-sighted as to suggest that this Ministry,

particularly over the last two years, has not embarked upon one of the most sophisticated, forward-looking and progressive developmental programmes ever undertaken in the Ministry of Transport and Works. I say this because this is not just my subjective view, it is a fact, because when you look at the accomplishments of the Ministry, there is tangible evidence of what the Ministry has been doing over the past two years, I am speaking particularly with respect to that period, because that is the period that falls under my responsibility, I have only been Minister responsible for two years, but I am sure that every Minister under this Government, starting with the honourable Member for St. Andrew and including the honourable Member for St. Joseph, has been conscientious to the extent that they had funds in order.....

Asides

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member for St. Andrew and the honourable Member for St. Joseph have been conscientious in the discharge of their responsibilities with respect to the programme of the Ministry.

Asides

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I am speaking to some questions raised by the Shadow Minister for Transport and Works and he has been careful to point to some matters and raise some questions about some concerns that he had. He mentioned, first of all, the Transport Levy and he raised questions about the levy and how it is being used.

The Transport Levy came into effect in October, 1981. Funds began to become available in 1982. He mentioned the fact that the first financial statement was late. It was late because of the fact that the fund having started in October 1981, did not accumulate funds until well down into 1982, and therefore there was nothing to report. We started disbursements later than that and the first financial statement has been laid. This is the second financial statement which has passed through the hands of the auditors and will be laid in Parliament perhaps in another week or so. So in so far as keeping up with our responsibility to report to Parliament what is happening in the levy, that is happening and it is very much on schedule.

I should also say that the auditors have expressed themselves as being satisfied with the way the funds are being administered. In other words, there have been no qualifications on the use of the Transport Levy funds. The auditors who are independent auditors based in Bridgetown, are satisfied that the funds are being used in the way that they were intended, and the funds were intended for the purpose of road rehabilitation and the general improvement of transportation, which is a fairly broad intention. It is designed to give flexibility to the Minister responsible to use the funds for that purpose, and that is for the improvement of transportation generally, so the purchasing of spare parts that he mentioned is clearly within the intentions of the Act.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central also asked questions about the subsidy of the Transport Board. The philosophy of this Government in respect to mass transport is that it is a significant component in the developmental strategy of this island. Without an efficient and sophisticated mass transport service, we cannot have a fully developed industrialized sector, because persons have to move from various points in the island to the various points of work, and the only efficient and reliable system to get them to and from work is a mass transport system. I have mentioned this in this House before, and that when major companies seek to come to Barbados, one of the first questions they will ask is about the quality of your mass transport service. This was true in the case of Intel and was true in the case of many of the other companies now functioning in the island.

Our philosophy, therefore, is that if we are to be so regarded, there has to be a subsidy attaching to that function. We cannot expect that the transport service can be operated on a for-profit basis when it forms an integral part of the Government's development strategy. It is possible to run a mass transport service on a profit basis, but the Government would not want to contemplate the things that would have to be taken into consideration if they were to become a reality. So what we have attempted to do, and what we are attempting to do, is to make certain that the subsidies that we call for are realistic given the quality of service that we offer.
11.15 a.m.

It looks as if I have left them behind, but I had intended to bring along for the benefit of the House some schedules which were recently published, and which were intended to bring a measure of reliability into our service in a way that would make it much more efficient than it has been in the past. These are all strategies that will assist the Government in its quest to cut down on expenses and to make the Transport Board more responsive to the managerial inputs that are essential to make it what it should be.

The Transport Board has been purchasing new buses and is doing so on a regular and on-going basis so as to keep the stock of buses available for service at an efficient level at all times. In the past, for whatever reasons the fleet went down and we were not able to keep it as current as it should have been kept. We now have a conscientious programme of fleet replacement so that we will always have on it what we would regard as an optimum level.

Under the Transport Board developmental programme we have started, and evidence is there for everybody to see, not only a comprehensive re-design of the urban landscape in Bridgetown, but the provision of proper facilities for passengers so that they can board the buses efficiently without the shoving, pushing and dangers inherent in that kind of rush. We have a modern terminal under construction. The first phase will be completed next month, and we expect to put that component of the project into operation shortly thereafter. Phase 2 will commence almost immediately after Phase 1 has been completed, and that will be the central administrative block and the resettlement booth for the commercial activities that used to go on in that area.

Almost simultaneously with that project, which is going to come in at $3.6 million, is a project in Speightstown, and preliminary earth works are already in progress – the test hold boring – and that project will start hopefully in April as well, or slightly thereafter, on a fullfledged basis, doing the inlet roads and the upbuilding of the site bringing it up to road level. That will commence within a matter of weeks. That project is going to run in the neighbourhood of $5 million. That will be another testimony to the fact that we are not only talking but we are delivering. The Transport Board will never be the same again when those two components of this programme are in place.

There will be proper despatch terminals not only in Speightstown and in Fairchild Street, but we are also in the process of a redesign of the Cheapside area, the kiosk which is to form the control point, the despatch point, and the office accommodation for the Transport Board in stand 24 has been completed. Boarding will be controlled in the Fairchild Street and in the Speightstown area. We have boarding bays that will make it mandatory for passengers to queue in an orderly fashion. This is not to suggest that enterprising persons may not find ways of breaching the system, but if we assume that reasonable people who are intent on conforming with the established norms are going to be using the service, then we can say, in effect, that the queueing system will solve many of the major problems that we have had to contend with in the bus stands up to now. The kiosk, as I said, is open or will be opened shortly. It is completed.

The bathroom facilities which have replaced the very, very unsanitary conditions that used to prevail, have been built; and two will be officially open when the kiosk is ready. When that is completed, then we will start the lower Broad Street traffic recirculation design that will be going into effect in the lower Broad Street area. This is a re-design of the Jubilee Gardens area where traffic will go around. There will be a roundabout and there will be no through traffic past the Gardner Austin building and towards the western part of the St. Mary's wall. It will have to go round by Courts building. That is the new traffic pattern that will emerge, and then Jubilee Gardens will become what it was originally intended to be, an urban garden. So these are programmes that are actually in progress, and we should point out that when all of these things are in place, the mass transport service will of necessity be a very sophisticated service indeed.

I have had the opportunity to check most of the major North American transport services and some outside of North America. I am talking about the current systems – London Transport also – and Barbados has all of the ingredients for a decent transport service. It is just that we have to put the management components into place in order to miximise the benefits that are lying latent in the system. As everybody knows by now, we have instituted the coin boxes in our service, and the electronic money-handling devices are in place so money is now very little handled by human hands. It is going into the fare boxes, from the fare boxes into the counting centre and is being counted and packed electronically and sent off to the bank. All of these things are going to have a significant bearing on the quality of the service.

Before I move off mass transport, I should say as well that we have identified the land and are in the process now of doing preliminary designs for the new Transport Board Headquarters scheduled to go into construction at Haggatt Hall. All of this has been happening in a relatively short space of time and I would like to commend the staff of the Ministry of Transport and Works who are responsible for the execution of all of these projects which I have thus far identified. The Fairchild Street terminal has been designed by the architect within the Ministry of Transport and Works. The complete design is by our own architect. The construction work is being done on a contract basis. The design for Speightstown is also done by an in-house architect and the design for the Jubilee Gardens is also done by an in-house architect, so the Ministry of Transport and Works' staff deserve great praise for the proficiency and the professionalism that they have brought to bear upon these projects so that they can make them fall so neatly into place in a relatively short space of time.

Turning to roads, the honourable Member for St. Philip South stood in his place in this House a short while ago and thanked the Minister of Transport and Works for responding to a need that he expressed to have some major road works in his constituency carried out. It therefore does not suit for Members to come in here and say that there is discrimination. I have always said that the honourable Member for St. Michael North West (Mr. L. A. Weekes) – he has not yet stood up and thanked the Minister – has been the beneficiary of the funds to which all of us should have access, but as I said, we have to do

it on a programme basis, everybody cannot be serviced at the same time. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) has also been a beneficiary, except that he was ungracious enough to say that he came in here and ordered me to do it. I do not mind if he uses that language. The fact is that he knows that in his constituency substantial road works have been carried out. The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Mr. M. A. King), he too sits quietly at this point, but he knows that he has been a substantial beneficiary of road works carried out in his constituency.
11.25 a.m.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please wind up.

Hon. V. L JOHNSON: Yes, Sir. The honourable Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves), if he knew his constituency, would be able to stand up and say thanks to the Minister responsible for Transport and Works for the paving work that was done in Grazettes Gardens, for the repair work that was done in Grazettes Court, for the work that was done at Phillips Road, St. Stephens, for the work that was done in Rock Dundo Park.

Aside.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I am going to instruct you about your constituency. You do not know it. I am going to teach you about it.

The Ministry of Energy did preliminary work on the laying of gas mains, and the reason why we have not done any further work in that area is because we are trying to co-ordinate our activities in a way that will allow the services to go first so that we do not fix the road surface and then have it dug up by other services.

Mr. M. A. KING: The Minister said that I did not thank him for the road works which had been done in Christ Church West Central. I have not spoken on roads yet, but I am sure he will appreciate that I thank him for the work which has been done for the constituents of Christ Church West Central, although I look forward to a whole lot more work being done on so many more roads in Christ Church West Central which need to be done.

I do not want at this point to address the question of roads, but I want to go back to the issue of subsidies, which I did raise certain questions on during the course of the last evening. I had asked the Minister specifically if he could give the exact position in relation to the total number of subsidies which the Transport Board would require for the financial year 1985–86, and drew to his attention that as we went through the Estimates, we saw subsidies appearing under various Heads of Estimates, as in Education and as in the provision of old age pensioners' travel. From time to time, the Minister in his statements on transport makes the point that every effort is being made to reduce subsidies and that the subsidies are in fact being reduced. We on this side have always made it our position that we do not quarrel with the point about subsidies being provided for the transport services, but what we insist on is that there be a clear statement on what the position in relation to subsidies is so that we will all know.

Let us take the actual figures as they appear. In the 1984–85 Estimates, for instance, the original provision which had been made for transport was $5.8 million. That was the figure which appeared under the heading Subsidies in relation to the Transport Board, but in those same Estimates, for educational subsidies there was an appropriation of $2.8 million for travel of school children, and in relation to old age pensioners under Head 39 there was provision for $1.2 million. So for the year 1984–85, you had appropriations of $5.8 million plus $1.2 million plus $2.8 million, and then later in that financial year you had a supplementary appropriation of $5 million for subsidies. On my reckoning, that made a total appropriation for subsidies for the year 1984–85 of some $14.8 million. That was an increase over the previous year, which I believe was something like $12.9 million. The point I am making is that, contrary to the statements being made by the Minister that the subsidies were being reduced certainly in the years 1983–84 and 1984–85, the position is that the provision for subsidies has increased over those years.

The fact is that subsidies are now appearing in different parts of the Estimates so that you do not see the total position under any one Head as it used to be before. We want to have the actual position in relation to subsidies clear before us. When we look at the 1985–86 position, as I drew to the Minister's attention last evening, again you have the provision for subsidies – this is a new technique which I see they adopted – appearing under different Heads of the Estimates, and you have in relation to Transport an appropriation of $6 million, in relation to transport of pupils there is a reduction in the previous year's of $2.5 million, and in relation to travel for old age pensioners there is an appropriation of $1.2 million under Head 39. Again, you have on the face of it, a reduction in the amount appropriated for the previous year, but what I am seeking to find out from the Minister is whether the appropriation which is being made for subsidies in 1985–86 is sufficient. Can you tell us, for instance, in what areas it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in the subsidies required for 1985–86, bearing in mind that the amount which was needed in just the previous year was some $14.8 million.

In the course of seeking a supplementary appropriation for this financial year, which is just about

to leave us, the Minister gave the House the information that police travel and payment by the Police Force to the Transport Board was an item which had to be taken into account. Nowhere in the Estimates, either these or last year's, do I see any provision where an amount for travel by the police is taken into account. I did ask the question last evening as to what is the position in relation to the amount required for police travel, under what Head of the Estimates does that appear, and if the Minister could perhaps state what is the amount which is required to be appropriated to meet the amount required by the police for payment to the Transport Board. I know he said that that comes under the Police Vote just as in relation to old age pensioners that appears under Head 39, but the point I am making is that the provision.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I just would like the Committee to be aware that Standing Order 66(7) says:

> ".....the debate shall be confined to the policy of the service for which the money is to be provided and not deal with the details of expenditure, but may refer to the details of revenue or funds for which that service is responsible."

11.35 a.m.

Laughter.

Mr. M. A KING: To make a long story short on subsidies, because I do not need to dwell on this, what we want to be sure of is the total amount of money which is being appropriated from all sources for subsidies to the Transport Board and how much we can expect from every source.

In dealing with the Estimates, we have to be realistic. There is no point talking about you are going to reduce subsidies and then discover that during the course of the year you have to come back for supplementary appropriations to meet the very thing which you have cut in the annual Estimates. Seeing that there is this, what I call fairly substantial reduction in subsidies, I wonder if the Minister is being realistic, or if he is just putting the reduced appropriations as a cosmetic arrangement to give us the impression that they are reducing the subsidy.

Hon. V. L JOHNSON: The honourable Member has given way on this question of subsidies. I neglected to respond to it when I was first on my feet.

The Transport Board subsidies are now reflected in four places. They are reflected in the Transport Board's Vote itself, the Welfare Vote, the Ministry of Education's Vote and in the Police Vote. The police service which we provide has a value attached to it. Old age pensioners, as you know, ride freely, and that also has a value attached to it. Instead of putting it all in the Ministry of Transport's Vote, it is reflected in the area where the service is provided. It is provided through the Welfare Department, so it has gone into the Welfare Vote. The money from the Ministry of Education is a payment for a service which we provide, it is not a subsidy. So we are trying to put a monetary value on these services, and the value of that package is $10 million.

You ask me if I think that it is realistic. Frankly, in view of the fact that we are now going through wage negotiations, it may well turn out to be that we will have to come back for a further subsidy to supplement whatever monetary increase is given in that direction.

We are seeking to put pressure on the management of the Transport Board not to expect an upward allocation of a subsidy which will sort of encourage them, perhaps, in their inefficiencies. We will give them a sum up front and force them to work within the confines of that subsidy. If we have to come back then, we have to come back, but that is how we are attempting to do it.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): I wonder if the honourable Member would allow me ninety seconds. There are only two points which I want to make in relation to the Police Force. One always sees the travel of the police on the bus as something that is given to the police. I do not think they quantify the amount of rides, a lump sum is paid.

I should like one to put into the equation the fact that most buses running in Barbados on any one given day have at least one policeman on it, and that is additional security on the buses. The Transport Board has not in the past counted that cost, that the police, by travelling on the bus, manage to be more security to the people riding the buses, and indeed they protect the Transport Board buses. I want everyone to remember that.

The other point is in relation to Education. Although the school children travel on a bus fare that is lower than the normal adult fare, I think that if figures remain what they used to be when I had the Ministry of Education, even though the fare is lower, the revenue is as high as that from adults, if not higher. Every bus with school children going to and from school is jam-packed. I do not know if they go beyond what is prescribed by law, but the buses with school children are always full and over full. I know that revenue from school children was higher per capita than it was for the rest of the population over a year.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to the Honourable Minister for the intervention.

Let it be clear that we on this side have no quarrel with the provision for subsidizing school children's fares,

nor police travel nor even travel in relation to old age pensioners. The only burden of my contention is that we think that we are entitled to know what is the accurate position in relation to subsidies required for all these services.

I should like to, in dealing with the.....

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The vote for the Police is reflected in Subhead 2 of the Police Vote. It is $120 000.

Mr. M. A KING: I am grateful to the Minister.

I understand that a number of buses were recently sold by the Transport Board. There are a couple of questions which I should like to ask on this. How many of those buses were sold? What were the conditions of the buses which were sold? What sort of revenue did the Transport Board derive from the sale of those buses? Was the sale of the buses in accordance with the usual financial requirements as far as the integrity of the system is concerned? Perhaps, the Minister could, in the course of his response, deal with those issues.

Going back to the .....

Dr. R C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the situation.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please. The honourable Member has completed his speech.

Dr. R. C HAYNES: Yes, and.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member over here indicated that he would like to make a contribution.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT (St. Michael North East): The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central need not worry, because the Press will be here for a little while yet. He does not like to talk when the Press has left. The Press will catch his eye, or he has a way of catching the press's ears.

There are a few matters which I want to bring to the Minister's attention in relation to roads, wells, street lighting and weeding, particularly in the low-lying areas of St. Michael, and in particular St. Michael North East. I am a little concerned about the long time it takes the Minister of Transport and Works to get on to a serious on-going well cleaning programme within this area. There are a number of wells in the central Bush Hall area which never seem to get any attention. Most of them are choked with weed and debris and all kinds of refuse and garbage which the people indiscriminately throw on the roadside, and when it rains, these invariably get into the water courses and clog the water courses.

The experience of the flooding in St. Peter should bring home to the attention of all Barbadians the ability of indiscriminate dumping of garbage, because we have seen what that has done to areas like the Whim. After the waters had subsided, we saw things as large as mattresses in the Whim Gully, and other forms of packaged debris.
11.45 a.m.

What is important to keeping the systems going in Barbados is a continuous, on-going well-cleaning programme. I believe more attention should be paid to the wells in the low-lying areas. The Ministry of Transport and Works should see it fit to have these wells cleaned, and that the refuse be not left at the mouths of the wells for a number of weeks, so that when it rains again, all that filth goes into the well. It would seem that there is no concentrated effort within the Ministry to have the persons involved in cleaning the wells immediately remove all this refuse and have it dumped at an appropriate place.

Weeding is another serious matter within most areas in St. Michael. There was a programme in which the Ministry had undertaken to remove derelict cars maybe three or four years ago, and persons had placed some of these vehicles along side of the roads with the view of having the Ministry remove them. But since the programme has stopped, it means that a lot of bush has overgrown these vehicles, sometimes making what would be the gutters impassable also causing another problem of flooding. There are two roads in particular, Civilian Road and Pioneer Road in Bush Hall, where there are a number of cars left strewn about. I would like to know if the Ministry would consider re-opening that programme to have these vehicles removed.

Another problem which I want to bring immediately to the Minister's attention is the precarious state of the Codrington Plantation wall along Bow Road in St. Michael. That wall is posing a threat to pedestrians and motorists alike, and sometime last year, to my surprise, a portion of that wall fell right into the road. It could have been that someone might have been passing at that time and the wall could have fallen on them. I noticed here in Subhead 1 that the vote talks about the maintenance of all roads, cane tracks and guard walls. That wall is indeed an immediate threat to people passing, especially since there is a very large palm tree on the perimeter of the wall which has lost a lot of its soil. That, too, could be dangerous. I would like to know that something is done immediately to preserve that wall and have it put back into some order, or have the entire wall knocked down.

I am very concerned about the amount of garbage which is thrown from cars along certain highways in Barbados, and the classic example is Waterford Bottom. No one lives there, but if you were to take a walk through Waterford Bottom, you would be surprised to see the volume of garbage that is packaged and dumped

by motorists, not necessarily from the St. Michael North East area but from perhaps all over Barbados. They just package their garbage at home with a view of dumping it there. When it rains, and this is the problem, immediately there is flooding, because this amount of packaged garbage causes the water to build up.

There is also the problem of the indiscriminate dumping of animals. They just take dead animals and dump them by the wayside. I believe the people of Barbados are particularly responsible for some of these problems, because if you are going to take an animal which died somewhere in St. George and bring it just outside of the city to dispose of it, that indeed is the responsibility of the citizen which he has bypassed and is placing it on to someone else. The people are responsible for a lot of these problems through the indiscriminate dumping of this refuse.

After much harping and pleading, I am very happy and I must congratulate the Minister for his efforts in bringing some of the services from his Ministry to the people of St. Michael North East. I have been asking various Ministers of Transport and Works over the years for road works, and road repairs, at Jackson in particular and at Skeetes Road, Jackmans, and I am glad to say that the Ministry has responded to my request to assist these people who over the years have been asking for improvement in their road conditions.

I am also happy to say that some action will be taken in the central Bush Hall area, in particular Clarkes Land, Paradise Road, Reece Land and Bedford Land. These people have virtually been living on mud, and I want to commend the Minister for his listening to the cries of these people. I would hope, however, that his Ministry would pursue the road building programme in this area with the same seriousness and intent as they went about doing other parts of the Spooners Hill area, for which the people are very happy. I think that the present conditions within Bush Hall demand that immediate attention be paid to not only flooding, the amount of weeding that is needed and the wells that need cleaning, but the whole area needs a facelift, and if the Ministry can proceed with vigour, the people would indeed be very glad.

Another problem which I as a Barbadian want to bring to the Ministry's attention, and I hope that very shortly that they would do something about it, is the lack of street lighting in the St. Peter area on that by-pass road. I think that the marks on the road have become worn, and there is a need to do something immediately in that area to allow motorists to have better vision of the road at night. I know it is not beyond the will and power of the Government to get this done, as they ought to be commended for the effort which is being currently made on the Spring Garden Highway. I hope that very shortly the Ministry will see it fit to turn on the lights there.

I am happy that the road works programme in Barbados for the tenantries is now coming on stream. The beautification of Barbados in certain areas, such as the Pine-Wildey Road and the Spring Garden Road, and the By-Pass Road, are indications that the Government has an overall development plan for the island. I would hope that the new Administration will keep its vision in getting these things done with as much haste as it possibly can for the improvement of the country.

11.55 a.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

I am prepared to labour at all times to get improvements done in St. Michael South Central. We have had the appropriate environment in which pressure could have been brought on the Government to get certain roads done, I must say that the former Prime Minister recognized that one way of seeking to capture the St. Michael South Central seat was to try to remove the representative by doing certain things in the area, and I congratulate him for his political perspicacity in that area. But, quite clearly, that has not been successful, and now that the Barbados Labour Party has conceded this seat to me, on the one hand, and, secondly, looking at the attitude taken by the Minister of Transport and Works, who seems to be constantly obsessed by a feeling that he is being ordered by me to do something in St. Michael South Central, and being fully aware of the full dimensions of the short-man syndrome, I believe that there is another way that I could meet the legitimate needs of my constituents. Without any sense of public humiliation and in pursuit of my duties, I am begging the Honourable Minister of Transport to get certain things done in St. Michael South Central. I am not ashamed to beg for my constituents. I would not beg for myself, but I will beg for my constituents.

I would ask him that now that the Collymore Rock Road is being widened, to take this opportunity, when he has the equipment in the area, to do the roads that lead to Collymore Rock, particularly what is known as Williams Land. The people in Williams Land have serious problems there in terms of entrance and exit and they have assured me that they would willingly give to the Government such lands that are necessary to widen the entrance and put a road inside there.

I beg you on behalf of the people of Highgate.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Humbly).

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I humbly beg you – the Minister has directed me to say "humbly" and I will say "humbly" – I humbly beg you on behalf of the people

in Highgate, the people who pay very high property taxes, where the roads are very appalling.

I beg also on behalf of the people of South Bend in the Pine Gardens area, where there is a major problem down there with the road.

I beg you on behalf of the people of Carrington's Village once again, as I asked you before but did not use the word "beg". When the Bridge Road was being done, you had all the equipment there and you easily could have run the thing through and paved the roads from Jones Gap and all the roads off Bridge Road. You could have done it, but it was not done. I would not even like to say you refused to do it.

I beg you, Mr. Minister, on behalf of the people of Halls Road not to allow the roads to go into further disrepair. I further beg you to send someone down into Halls Road and there is a well just above, a humble facility which the people of Halls Road and St. Michael South Central have put together for themselves, from which a stench emanates and creates a problem for people trying to enjoy their humble facility.

I beg you on behalf of the people of Delamere Land to look at the roads, but in particular a well. I must say for the staff of the Ministry of Transport and Works that I have had to call them on several occasions in relation to that well, and they have responded reasonably expeditiously, once you get at a certain level within the Ministry. But there is a problem. At one stage the well was cleaned and the top was left off, in an area where a lot of little children play around. The well is a simple matter, it calls for just running a strip of pipe and draining the thing into the sewage system that runs along Martindales Road.

I also beg you to look into the little things you can do in Brittons Hill. We are not going to ask you to repave Villa Road. We may ask you to look into the possibility of getting a bus service going through.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: What I am saying is that there are a lot of little roads that lead off the main roads that were very well done in the past by Mr. 'Sleepy' Smith, when he was Minister of Transport and Works. I believe that with the infrastructure in St. Michael South Central and the fact that we have got the roundabout at Halls Road and Bridge Road – we have a roundabout at Belmont Road, and we are getting some work done now in Collymore Rock – the opportunity should be taken, in the taxpayers' interest, when you have equipment in the area to do some of the smaller roads that really mean a lot to the people.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, at Martindales Road, something needs to be done about the lights. On several occasions something went wrong with the electrical system with the lights at Martindales Road and also with the lights at the junction of Pine Road and Collymore Rock. I happen to travel in that area four or five times a day, and very often you can see three, four and five accidents before anything is done about the lights. As a matter of fact, after I had seen the fourth accident at the junction of Martindales Road and Collymore Rock, I had to go and call the police and tell that I witnessed four accidents because the green light remained on and people just drove through the green light on both sides and ran into each other.

A few weeks ago, at the junction of Pine Road and Collymore Rock, the same thing happened. Going home at about 10 o'clock there was an accident between two motor cars. Coming back down at about 9 o'clock the following morning, there was an accident with a motor-cycle. Again, I went to Party Headquarters and I called the police.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: No, they were two within a matter of hours!

The point I am making is that if something goes wrong with the traffic lights anywhere in Barbados, what should be done immediately is that the lights should be turned off. There must be some way the lights can be turned off immediately, because when people approach the area and there are no lights, then there would be less tendency for accidents. The accident arises if a light is showing green when it should be red, and someone comes through the green light and then crashes into someone who is actually following the correct signal according to the lights.

12.05 p.m.

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not blaming the Government for the mechanical failure. What I am saying is that when it happens there should be an immediate and appropriate response to it, because you are talking about human life. It is not a political point I am trying to make, and if I am prepared to take this part of these fifteen minutes which I have worked so hard for this morning to mention that point, you can be quite sure that it would not be a political point. It is in the interest of saving lives in Barbados, and I feel there should be a more immediate response to it.

On the question of the Transport Levy, there are a few questions I should like to ask the Minister. Firstly,

how much money has been collected under that levy between September 1981 and now? Secondly, I want to know whether there are any liabilities that have been incurred against the transport levy fund, whether by way of suppliers' credits or otherwise. By "whether" I mean we have seen a lot of new buses in Barbados, and what I would like to ask is, are we paying for those buses cash or are we negotiating the sale with the suppliers of the buses and building up future liabilities against the fund? If that is being done, then the question arises as to whether Parliament should not be the appropriate authority to approve of such borrowing, and whether under the Act which established the transport levy there is any authorization to commit this country to any debts against the possibility of future earnings from those funds.

This is very important. You see, you can have maybe $10 million or $12 million a year coming in, you can be doing a lot of things, but these things can be done on the basis of borrowing money against the future earnings from these funds, and substantial liabilities can be built up against them. I would very much like to know whether there are any liabilities against those funds, how much are the current liabilities and whether or not those responsible for administering the Transport Levy Fund have any authority to do so, because we have had the very remarkable situation in here not so long ago where the Minister of Finance actually confessed to the House that he did not know about a debt that was contracted by a department of Government.

These are very pertinent questions, because when one looks at the overall use of the Transport Levy and the potential for use of that levy for political purposes, one has to be sure that we are in a situation in which we are really paying our way and not in a situation in which we are building up serious liabilities against the fund which a future Administration may wish to discontinue.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I want to step off for one brief moment from the general line of the debate and to enquire from the Minister of Transport and Works who is responsible for the garish painting of the Public Buildings clock. I think it is an offence against aesthetics. Somebody tells me it is the colours of the National Flag. So what? Colours that may be attractive in the National Flag are not necessarily colours that are attractive on the Public Buildings clock against a set of ancient buildings with grey background, and I hope that the Minister will do something very shortly to bring back a little more taste in the work that I have seen there. I see there is provision in the Estimates for maintenance of public buildings, and I am sure that he would not take long to deal with it.

Since everybody considers this debate as a perfect parish pump type of activity, since Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Attorneys General do not often get a chance to agitate for services in their constituencies the way other people do, and since everybody has had his talk, I think it is necessary for me to bring to the attention of the Minister of Transport and Works a list of roads that are in an extremely bad state of repair, and among these places are areas where there are no roads at all. I have said on occasion that it is nice to live in the country, to represent a rural constituency and to enjoy the air and the atmosphere of rural districts, but it is not easy when one is canvassing or indeed visiting one's constituency to have to walk through grass pieces and through dunk trees and get the thorns and dunk trees raking your eyes out, especially if you are going at certain times in the evening.

I believe, contrary to the views expressed by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) that Barbados does not begin and end within the two mile perimeter of Bridgetown, that there has been too much skewered development in this country. For a long time rural constituencies, the rural parishes, have been the backbone of development in this country through agriculture and sugar, and these people worked hard, in many cases for a long time almost like beasts of burden to keep this country moving forward, and I am talking for all 300 years of its existence, and it really annoys me to see that for the whole period of this country's development the vast majority of the development of this country has been put in the areas around St. Michael, Christ Church and St. James, and the agricultural belt has been left undeveloped.

When I began to represent the constituency of St. George South, I had a district like Drax Hall. Drax Hall is the biggest plantation tenantry in Barbados, with thousands of residents, and when I started to represent that constituency there were very few houses that had running water. There was no electricity service. I remember when I held public meetings in Drax Hall with gas lamps. You lit the gas lamp outside a shop to hold meetings. You know the area as well as I do. There was not a single telephone in the whole of Drax Hall, a massive area of over 300 acres of people, and not a telephone, except at the plantation house!

I hear honourable Members talking about gas. Those were luxuries. You do not get gas service in places like that. Indeed, you do not get that in St. George. What they do is run all the natural gas pipes through St. George and the people of St. George have to clean the land and the bush away from around the pipes, but have to watch the pipes come down in St. Michael and Christ Church so that the lordly types in those areas can benefit from them!

I do not much like doing these things, but since everybody considers the debate as a suitable opportunity to do their parish pump politics, I am going to do the same. I am not asking for roads in three districts, like the

honourable Member for St. Michael West. I am asking for roads and in each case each district I call I do not mean one road, I want several roads in each of these districts: Prerogative, Macaroni Village, Drax Hall Hope, Harmony Cottage, Woodland, Drax Hall Woods, Brighton, Buttals, Malverton, Waverley Cot, Farm Road, Jordans, Workmans, South District, Campion Castle, Windsor, Hannays Valley, Daniels Land, Middleton, Watts Village, Todds, Cherrygrove, Greens, Bulkeley Tenantry, Dash Valley, Munroe Road and Munroe Village. That is the whole of St. George. I do not mean a road in each one of these. In a place like Drax Hall, I am talking about seven roads. In a place like Brighton, I am talking about four roads, and I could go on and on.

You will notice, Sir, that I have not mentioned Cottage.

(Mr. CHAIRMAN: Which is so dear).

12.15 p.m.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I think I should put it in, Mr. Chairman, because Cottage falls in your constituency. I live in Cottage and I believe that you have to make out a case to the Minister of Transport and Works to provide road services in Cottage. I am sure that next year, or whenever there is an election, you will be coming around and asking me for my vote, and when you come to ask me for my vote I will put exactly the same question to you that is put to all of us when we go to our constituents – I will be asking you about the state of the road in which I live.

There is a certain element of facetiousness in reading this list out. I do not expect the Government under any circumstances to be able to do all the roads that need to be done in my constituency. I would not tell my constituents that. I would not be so dishonest as to tell them they could reasonably expect to get all these roads done during the life of one Parliament, or even two. I believe that the vote for Transport and Works for this year could not even begin to make a dent in building these roads. If you spent all the money in Transport and Works in St. George South doing essential roads, and I am not talking about the luxury of the people in St. Michael and Christ Church, I am talking in some cases of making it possible for people who have motor cars to drive home – there are two or three parts of my constituency where people have to get out of their cars a half mile from home and walk home because they cannot drive beyond that point, there is no way in which they can do it – it would be scratching the surface.

To give an example, take Windsor Tenantry. When I go to Windsor Tenantry, I have to park way down at the bottom of the hill and walk a mile in order to see my constituents, because the road is in such a terrible state. I am asking the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works not to give me the Barber Green machine and all the nice services honourable Members are asking for. I am asking, with great humility, that you send a few truck loads of stone, just roll it, and we would be eternally grateful. I am not unreasonable.

I mention this more to answer the Member for St. Michael West, because we in Government are constantly – daily, weekly, monthly – on the back of the Minister of Transport and Works quarrelling with him. Honourable Members on the other side must understand that there is no let up when it comes to putting pressure on the Minister of Works to deliver these services in our constituencies. How he manages to survive the daily verbal onslaught of his colleagues over the state of the roads in constituencies, I do not know.

I will give the honourable Member for St. Michael West the assurance that the Cabinet has decided to give a list every quarter or so to get the technical people in the Ministry of Transport and Works to familiarise themselves with the state of the roads in Barbados generally, and to set up a priority list. The priority list does not relate in every case to how bad the road is, but how many people traverse that road, whether it is a main road, whether it is a cul-de-sac, and a number of other criteria. When we do this we would be in a better position as a team – and indeed I would actually embrace Members on the other side – to explain to the people of Barbados that it is not possible to have every road in Barbados done at the same time, or in the same year, or in the same five years.

We have other problems. I represent a constituency that has a very high proportion of people who work in the Ministry of Transport and Works – labourers, truck drivers, masons and what not – and I believe that if we doubled the allocation of money in these Estimates for the maintenance of roads in Barbados, a large amount of it would not be spent by the end of the financial year. It is not only a question of provision of funds to fix roads, it is the incapability of the staff of MTW to get the work done.

I saw a few months ago some MTW people trying to do the road between St. George's Church and the turnpike. I believe they spent about a year or more.

(Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: About two years).

Hon. L. R. TULL: About two years. By the time they moved the men and the equipment away, I could not understand what they had been doing. Nothing worthwhile had been done.

I have a Supervisor at MTW who lives in my constituency, and I drove past him for seven months through Belle Gully – maybe you would know who the man is –

where they were putting a curb alongside the road for a distance of 60 yards. Let us extend it and say 100 yards, although I am pretty sure it was not that long. They took at least seven months to do a four inch curb.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: A culvert).

Hon. L. R. TULL: Not a culvert. The Honourable Minister wants to duck out by saying a culvert. It is not a culvert, it is a little piece of outside road, the curb, and every morning I drove past he would give me a great greeting and I never saw anybody working. I am curious to know how much money they spent on that.

I think a lot of unnecessary pressure is brought on the Government over the whole question of roads and their maintenance and so on. We are caught between Charybdis and Scylla. We cannot continue to allow the MTW workers to do the roads, the productivity is so low that we hardly get anything worthwhile done for our money. That would not bring any favour for me among a large section of my constituents, because they work in the roads, but frankly I do not care. That is the situation: Very low productivity, hardly anything being done, if you keep the present MTW workers doing that line of work. If you get rid of them and give the work out to private contract, then you are going to hear that there is an insensitive Government, a Government that does not care about the situation of people in the low income groups, and how we can take these people and send them home, even though they know that they are getting all the benefits that a sensible Government put in place to alleviate the shock. You are going to have another set of people saying that you are taking advantage of these people, and how you expect them to go off like that. So, you are caught between getting practically nothing done for the hundreds of millions that this Government has spent in works, or giving things out to big contractors where the workers either work or go home.
12.25 p.m.

I do not think it is fair for honourable Members to behave as if somebody is spiting them. We hear even the people who seem to be living off the fat of MTW land complaining, even those who seem to have everything are complaining, so much so, Mr. Chairman, that you and I are beating our cymbals loud, because we seem to be the neglected ones. But not for much longer.

Laughter

Hon. L. R. TULL: You take it from me, Sir. Not for much longer. I have no more to say. A word to the wise is enough.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: A great deal has been said. I am grateful to the honourable Member for St. George South (Hon. L. R. Tull) for putting the case in the way in which he has done, to point to the practical problems which we face in the Ministry of Transport and Works in getting certain things done. But, regardless of how inefficient MTW may be regarded as, a great deal of credit should still go to it for the work it is achieving with those faulty resources. We have done a lot of work, and we have a very ambitious programme still to be accomplished.

The World Bank has started, and is evidenced by the fact that we have begun the Government Hill foot path inside of the Government House wall, and we are in the process of getting other programmes in place. I mention this because people are talking about pedestrian safety. Obviously, the Ministry has given a great deal of thought to pedestrian safety, and has undertaken a programme of sidewalk implementation that would have a very substantial bearing on that.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North East (Mr. L. L. Sisnett) mentioned the question of drainage in his constituency. I should point out that St. Michael North East has the highest percentage of wells of any of the constituencies in Barbados. Bush Hall is a low-lying area and is very prone to water, but most of the wells, particularly in the urban environment, suffer from abuse. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central pointed to one in his constituency. The fact about the matter is that that particular well and many others in St. Michael which fall in the residential areas are very badly abused because people continue to put domestic waste in the wells that choke the fissures, and the wells no longer suck. The consequence of that, of course, is flooding. We try to pump the water off, and all we succeed in doing is to take the water off, but within a matter of weeks again the well is full because it does not perform that drain or function.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: It needs sinking a little deeper.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: No, no! Sinking deeper would not solve the problem. The problem is that the fissures in the rock are sealed because of the domestic grease.

What we need to do is to look, and our Ministry is going to take a very critical look at it. It is not only in the Ministry of Health's portfolio to deal with this matter of domestic waste coming on to the road system, but we are going to have to take a critical look at this whole exercise to see what we could do under our own jurisdiction in order to eliminate this incidence of putting domestic waste on to the roads and consequently destroying the well system. That is why we continue to hear so many complaints in Bush Hall, in Bank Hall, in the Brandon's area, in my own constituency, and in areas in St. Michael West about wells that were functioning quite

efficiently at one time but are now virtually dead, and are nothing more than big holes in the ground.

The matter of well covers being left off is of great concern to me. As a matter of fact, wherever we identify a well and it is no longer in use or serving any practical purpose, we are sealing it up altogether. But the contractors who perform the well digging service are responsible, as part of their contract, for covering the wells, and in many cases, they leave these wells uncovered and pose a problem to the residents in the area. I would urge honourable Members who see problems like these in their constituency to get in touch with the Ministry. We have an individual there who would respond to potholes. If you see a pothole in your constituency that is posing a danger, we have a Mrs. Chadderton in place who will respond to that call and get in touch with the superintendent in charge of that district so that that problem can be solved.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: Do not tell everybody.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: They are telling me not to tell everybody, but this is a part of the Ministry's programme that is not under such .....

Aside.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Yes. The only problem with the tree-trimming that the honourable Member for St. Michael is asking me about is that we have only two tree trimmers in the island. One is owned by MTW and the other one is owned by CERO.

The Ministry's tree trimmer is in very, very heavy demand, as you will appreciate, and has to perform tree trimming services throughout the island. However, again if there are tree-trimming exercises to be carried out within constituencies and they are channelled into the Ministry, we would seek to allocate the trimmer, and on a basis that would hopefully come close to satisfying the needs of everybody.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: We have a particular difficulty. Unfortunately, this Parliament has passed legislation which says that no one can now cut down a tree without seeking permission. Having educated people to that, they now understand that in order to discover if the tree can be cut down, they have to get information from the Government. Only the Government can determine if the tree can be cut down or not.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The law is clear on that. Why do you not learn the law?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Precisely. I am very serious. People who are not being advised on a daily basis have a problem. They hear that, in order to cut down a tree, they have to get permission. We in here may know the technical details of that, but they feel that the Ministry responsible is the one they might call. Very often, they do not know what to do. They call the tree-trimming department and the tree-trimming department, as I now discover, has only one tree trimmer. But we have a problem, and I am saying it so that the Minister can address the problem.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Call the Chief Town Planner.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: One cannot just indiscriminately cut down trees. As a matter of fact, people have a very callous disregard for trees in Barbados. It seems to me that people do not recognize that it takes a very long time for a tree to grow, and they are all too willing to cut it down. What we are advocating, is not cutting down trees but trimming them when they pose problems because of overhanging to people who use the roads.

Lighting has been brought up fairly frequently, particularly, in respect to the Spring Garden Highway and the St. Barnabas Highway. The Spring Garden Highway, as everybody knows, is being lighted. The standards are up and the lights will be turned on within a very short period of time. They have almost completed the installation, and it is just now to pull the cord and light "Taitt's Highway."

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: I want to be there.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I am sure that he will appreciate that, and that would go a long way towards eliminating some of the problems that are experienced on that highway.

St. Barnabas is also on the lighting programme. The lights should be here for St. Barnabas by next month. As soon as we have completed the exercise on the Spring Garden Highway, we will be turning to St. Barnabas and doing the same exercise there as well.

12.35 p.m.

The matter of pedestrian crossings is something that is exercising our minds a great deal. Honourable Members will recall that we had pedestrian crossings around the round-about at Belmont Road and Halls Road. Our practical experience was that it was a significant danger to people, not only to pedestrians crossing but to motorists who use the round-about, because when you come out of the round-about pattern, the first thing that confronts you is pedestrians crossing, and motorists frequently had to come to abrupt stops in order to avoid the possibility of knocking over pedestrians who were exercising their legitimate right to cross at a crossing. We

have erased those crossings and allowed people to select the opportunity for crossing on a volitional basis. It may sound crazy, but the fact is that our experience has been that people will identify with an area that is safe to cross and they do not run the same risk of being knocked over as when you have a pedestrian crossing at the neck of the round-about.

Mr. B M. TAITT: I just want to say something on the Spring Garden in this regard that might be of assistance to the Minister. First of all, I think that everybody will be happy that the lights are in place. I think that the crossing at the St. Michael School has been successful. That crossing, I think, is the kind of which the Minister is speaking, and I think that on Spring Garden, if indeed at three points along the way – as you are coming into Spring Garden off Lands End, at the corner of Brighton, and by Paradise – there were volitional crossings where the light is on permanent green, but as the person wishes to cross, he hits the light and it activates the mechanism and soon thereafter there will be a red light and a green for crossing, that would work because the number of people who actually have to cross is relatively small, and the times of the day they cross can be identified. It is usually relatively early in the morning, at lunch time, and then in the afternoon as people go down, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

I would recommend three light crossings at those points where people will identify the areas where they have to cross. They also coincide with the population densities, and I think that would make whatever safety is possible on the Spring Garden Highway, given its construction, complete.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I would like to point out, as I mentioned earlier, that we are studying this matter of pedestrian safety; it is engaging a lot of our attention, the engineers are looking at it and those of us who have political considerations in mind and humanitarian considerations in mind are examining this matter of pedestrian safety. That is why we have gone ahead with this very ambitious programme of sidewalk implementation, and that is why we are going ahead with other such programmes throughout the island.

I know that the tendency is to believe that mechanisms like lights and crossings will solve the problem. In fact, in many cases on high-speed highways, they increase the danger, and that is why we are very deliberate in our approach to the matter, to make certain that whatever solution we identify is indeed a solution that goes towards the intended purpose of saving lives on our highways.

Spring Garden has had its misfortunes as far as accidents are concerned, but almost in every case where a fatal accident on that highway, it has to go down to driver error. It is not a fault of the road, it is people who continue to do things. The last fatal accident that we had down there, based upon what I heard from persons who witnessed what happened, again was a situation where it was not that the road did not provide enough opportunities for safety, but that persons who use the highway do for, some reason or another, run into problems of judgment.

We have sorted out, I believe, the majority of the Spring Garden problems, because the pedestrians I am sure, based upon my observation, because I use it every day twice a day, have come to an accommodation with the traffic on the Spring Garden. Even at the highest traffic density times, when Brandons Beach is active, people manage to cross, and there has not been any difficulty that I am aware of in so far as the pedestrians are concerned. Most of the accidents that have been occurring in recent times have been occurring because of vehicular problems – vehicles involved with vehicles and not vehicles involved with pedestrians.

In so far as my colleague's request for St. Barnabas is concerned, we propose to take a look at St. Barnabas in all of its aspects to make sure that St. Barnabas is as safe as it needs to be, bearing in mind that we have a fairly substantial population density up there, and that Parkinson School, CBC and the Polytechnic are in the area. His pleas are not falling on deaf ears; we are sympathetic to them and we will do as much as we can to make sure that the questions are answered and the problems solved to the satisfaction of all those who are concerned.

The honourable Member raised a question about the Transport Levy and how much it has collected to date. The collection for the Transport Levy from its inception until February of this year was almost $33 million, and the outstandings against the levy are for the purchase of Transport Board buses. We do not have any other areas of supplier credit, the Transport Board buses are the only thing, and that is over a five year period – $21 million, I believe. So the levy is in good shape. We will have some funds available for discretionary spending during the course of this financial year and that will be going towards satisfying some of the needs that I have heard expressed in here, because we are now in the process of preparing the Tenantry Programme for this year, and that will go towards solving some of those problems during this current financial year that is under discussion.

The road programme is very comprehensive. We have done a number of road programmes already. I heard the honourable Member for St. George South refer to the Chairman of Committees as being neglected, but the fact is that we have spent a substantial amount of money in the Bel-Air area of St. George, doing the Bel-Air Tenantry. What used to be a decrepit and dismal area has

now been transformed into a well-serviced area in terms of roads, and the Transport Levy funds have been used in that area. We have under consideration a programme which I am not yet ready to announce, but which will be done this financial year from the Transport Levy Fund. Over the last financial year, however, maintenance out of the levy included: Sheraton Park, Regency Park, Elizabeth Park – I believe Members know where that is – Ealing Park, Newton Terrace, Grazettes Gardens, Wavell Gardens, Welches Terrace, Maynards, Gall Hill, Haynesville, Ellerton, and Bagatelle, and if Members are sensitive to these matters, they will realize that those areas are not in the constituencies all represented by Members over here. Sheraton Park, Regency Park, Elizabeth Park, Ealing Park, Newton Terrace, Grazettes Gardens, Piedmont Park, Welches, Maynards, Haynesville, and Bagatelle – Members can identify the constituencies in which these places fall.

Highway improvements have been substantial. Halls Road, Cheapside, St. Matthias, Dover, Highway 7; Pine East-West Road, which we propose to call East-West Boulevard, shortly; Heywoods to Speightstown and the various bus lay-bys in the area; Springvale in St. Andrew, Boscobel, Turners Hall, White Hill, St. Silvans Village in St. Joseph, Orange Hill, the Whim, Clincketts, and Carmichael Road in St. George. Members who travel the Carmichael Road will realize that that is now, for the most part, a very smooth road between Turnpike and Boarded Hall that makes travel to the airport much easier. 12.45 p.m.

The World Bank Programme that I mentioned earlier falls under Capital, and we are going to talk about that in detail so that Members will know what is planned and what is proposed.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central wanted to know about buses at the Transport Board. The information is that 65 buses, which were surveyed by the Government's survey team and were described as unfit for continuance in the service, were sold and the price varied. I do not have the precise figures, but I believe that the price, in most cases, was in the area of $1 200, and in some cases a bit more than that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: May I ask a question on that? When these buses are to be sold, is it by tender? Is information put in the public arena prior to the sale of buses?

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Yes, Sir. In every case, and this is not only within the last two years. In every case there has been a situation where tenders were called for for the disposal of these units and a bidding process was involved. In prior cases, they used to be sold by an auctioneer. The auctioneer would put the sale in the newspapers and people would come and bid on the buses. In many other cases, they were sold through sealed tenders, and in other cases the Board fixed a price for the buses so that people could come and purchase, and this was based upon a rational programme of looking at the relative age of the bus and the amount of service which the Transport Board had gotten out of it. In most cases, you must bear in mind that a bus is scheduled out of service after it has served ten years, so there is no question of buses in good condition and fit for the road being sold. Buses that are sold are buses that have done ten years, or were so extensively damaged in accidents or things of that nature that they had to be disposed of earlier than the usual life of ten years.

The roundabout at Culloden Road will start during the month of April. This is a very interesting sophisticated programme again, because we have discovered that roundabouts are more efficient than traffic lights for Barbados, and a roundabout will be going at the Culloden Road junction together with a multi-lane highway at the section of road between Jemmotts Lane, River Road and Constitution Road up to the Collymore Rock junction. So there will be a four lane highway serving that part of Lower Collymore Rock and then there will be general highway improvement right on up Collymore Rock, road widening and sidewalk installation, so as to make Highway 6, which is the busiest highway in Barbados safer. This will go up to the Cable and Wireless Junction where it will meet the Industrial Access Road. The Industrial Access Road is the road we expect to start later this year involving $90 million of expenditure.

Asides

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The Airport to Harbour West Coast Highway, I believe, is what it is now referred to, but it is still in my mind the Industrial Access Road. That will involve $90 million expenditure between ourselves and the Inter-American Development Bank. The World Bank Programme, as I indicated earlier had started, will involve major upgrading of the highway system in Barbados, Highway 7, Highway 2, Highway 1, 5 and 6. I keep hearing them mentioned, and I draw them to the attention of Members so that they will know that these matters are ready to roll.

I have here the alignments, if Members are interested in knowing the alignments, for example, of this programme.....

Asides

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: If Members want copy of circulated, I would not have any difficulty with that. Smith Corner, Highway 6, St. Davids, Highway 6, Highway 5, Haggatts Hall and Six Roads, Highway 2 – Warrens and Sturges, this is the resurfacing section. The reconstruction section is Canewood to Belle Gully

junction, where a major road reconstruction programme will go on, Lodge Hill to Cave Hill, the honourable Member for St. Michael North would be interested in that. Salters Junction to Turnpike, Parris Land to Belle, Highway 2A Warrens to Mile-and-a-Quarter, and it will involve major rehabilitation or by-pass of existing roads and culverts. Resealing – Cave Hill to Holders Hill; that is across the road by the Meteorological Station which was identified as a road in need of attention. It is going to get attention under the highway programme. The realignment programme is the one that I have just mentioned – Warrens to Mile-and-a-Quarter.

The highway safety package of the World Bank component is embodied in the highway programme that I mentioned earlier, but Garden Gap, Highway 7 to Worthing and Bridge Gap, Highway 1 – the honourable Member for St. Michael West would be interested in knowing this – which is very dangerous at the moment is going to be redone under the highway programme, and that access into Highway 1 from Bridge Gap will be made easier and infinitely safer. Yearwood Road, at the junction with Highway 1, will involve the setting back of the Carlton wall and the putting in of sidewalks to make the traversing of that section down towards Carlton Supermarket safer. Johnson Road and Highway 1, that is right around that corner by the sandbox tree, will also be sorted out, and that is near where the new Jordan's Supermarket is now. Henry's Lane, Garrison Road to Hastings Road, President Kennedy Drive to Westbury Road are also on that programme.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: He was interrupting me a lot, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We have done.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. L. R. TULL: 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. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today for lunch.

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

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

12.55 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. L S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, there are three Resolutions which I would like to deal with. One is for a $14 million guarantee, and I would be grateful if we could do them at this point in time. They have all been circulated.

GUARANTEE OF LOAN OF $14 500 000 BY THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA

Order No. 9 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the guarantee by Government of a loan of $14 500 000 by the Bank of Nova Scotia to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of financing a redevelopment programme.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this is just a guarantee for $14.5 million by the Government and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

LAND DEVELOPMENT DUTY (RATE OF DUTY) ORDER, 1985

Order No. 7 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Land Development Duty (Rate of Duty) Order, 1985.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple matter, and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT INDIAN GROUND, ST. PETER

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 8 stands in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Indian Ground, St. Peter.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: This, Sir, is a regular acquisition which is also simple and we are familiar with.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Hon. L. S CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House resume Committee of Supply.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

HEAD 42 – MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $38 968 312 under Head 42 – Ministry of Transport and Works – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 84 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS – $43 839 085

Hon. L. S CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 84 – Capital – Ministry of Transport and Works - as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS (St. James South): I want to take this opportunity, as has so many Members, to refer to road building in various areas, but first of all I want to make reference to the fact that, generally speaking, I notice that the markings on the roads throughout this country seem to have gone haywire. I say this because very often the new markings seem not to coincide with the old markings. If you were to go on the Spring Garden Road, for example, as one drives from north to south going towards the lights, as one approaches the Brighton junction there are two sets of markings; one set has not been obliterated, and in cases of accident I am quite sure that it would be very difficult to decide who is right or wrong. What I am saying is that as one comes over the Brighton junction there is an old marking, then to the right of that there is a new marking making that intersection there smaller. I am asking that something be done to make sure that if the workers at Transport and Works want to remark the road, then they make sure that if they are not going to go over the old markings, they get rid of them altogether.

As one goes up the Harbour Road near Pirelli Brothers, I think it is a place that sells cars, again there is a marking there on the left side of the road. I cannot see how it is possible to have made that into four lanes, one for parking, one for going to town and two as it were going out of town. The one going into town is about four feet wide, if so much, and obviously they are not measuring the roads as they mark them, because I would have thought they would have been as equal as possible, but in many cases the roads are very narrow.

Possibly, in this respect the most ridiculous is the road which leads from District "F" Court going towards the East Coast Road. I believe there could be slippage there, but there are cats' eyes, which I believe at one time were in the middle of the road. Now they are nearly in the gutter on the opposite side of the road. These things are important from the point of view of accidents, because very often a man might think that he is within his mark, but when you give evidence you see that the mark was possibly a third of the width of the road. This is important, and I believe that ever so often the inspectors should really go around and make sure that these things are correct.

We were speaking some time ago about lighting, and although I am happy to see that the Spring Garden road will soon be given its lighting, I wonder why it has taken that long to have the lighting introduced. I sincerely hope that in future when we build these new roads that the lighting comes with everything else. When the road is open, the lights should be able to be switched on as well, because at night it does present a very severe problem. I am not quite sure if it is the trees on either side of the road or what it is, but that creates a severe problem.

I would like to go to lighting in some of the areas in St. James South, especially the new area of West Terrace. West Terrace is a Government development and although they put lighting there after a year, it is very good in the day time in the sense that they have put them on every other pole, but these things should really be checked at night, because one does not really turn on the lights in the day, and when you go in the night and you see the same lighting, you can see it could have been more effective if they had done it differently. Although they put the lighting on every other pole, at the end of the development where there is more bush and shrub and where we need it most, there is no lighting, and I had written MTW and the Light and Power Company to ask them if possible to visit the area at night. On the road leading off the main Husbands Road going into West Terrace, there is no lighting, and this is indeed terrifying, because it is a rather long stretch – I would think it is nearly about 400 yards – of road downhill in a very desolate area. I want the Minister if possible to look into that as well.

In the area, there are also private developments, such as Pleasant View, Thorpes Terrace, Paradise Heights and Weekes Land, and so far, although we have written asking for lighting in these areas, we have not been able to get it as yet. In making enquiries of the Ministry, we have been told that if a petition were to be submitted then consideration would be given to it. These petitions have been submitted and, so far as my recollection serves me, we have had no replies at all. Therefore, one would want to know what the policy is regarding lighting for private developments. If it is the responsibility of the developers, then the Government agencies should make sure that the developers carry out the law. If it is not the responsibility of the developers, then I believe, like all other taxpayers, they should be entitled to their lighting, and I would enquire what steps these residents would have to take to ensure that they get proper lighting.

The same thing applies to road works. In most of these private developments, for example in Paradise Heights and Thorpes Terrace – Paradise Heights is much older than Thorpes Terrace and Pleasant View – people are wondering when will Government take over these roads and under what conditions, or what conditions have to be fulfilled before Government takes over these roads.

Asides.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Thorpes Terrace is as one travels from St. John the Baptist corner going towards the Met station, that new development on the left before one gets to Halls Village. As I was saying, the people in these areas are wondering where they have to go to get these services, especially in Pleasant View, which I guess is probably 20 years old now, and Paradise Heights. The roads in these areas are in a very serious state of disrepair, but because of the fact that there are private developments, the residents seem to think that Government will not do them because they have not been taken over by Government, and as I said before, letters have been written but the answers that you get coming back just do not make sense.

As regards Paradise Heights, to tell the truth we got a reply after two years. A letter was sent in in January 1983 and a reply came back in 1985 to say that it had been passed on to another department. These things just do not make sense, and it is inexplicable to the residents of the areas. Of course, when it comes now to the Government developments, I do not understand what is the problem there. Husbands and Oxnards are areas which we have again written about to no avail and nothing has been done.

With regard to Husbands, during the floods of November last year we had another problem. The water went into some of the residents' homes and letters were written, and so far no action has been taken – Gladioli Drive, I think it is – and we want to know what steps have been taken.

I have, quite frankly, written so many letters about St. James North that last year we got an officer from the Ministry, I believe a Mr. Allman, to come down and go throughout the length and breadth of St. James South looking at the roads. He did a very good job on the tour, but I have not seen the results of his good efforts, and like all other areas, if I were to name a few, on Crusher Site Road, which, incidentally, happens to be next door to the depot, one has got to be very careful how one takes one's car over that road. Again, I do not know the problem. It is next door to the depot and yet we cannot get it surfaced. We are not asking for barber green, we are just asking to make the road passable so that the residents can get in and get out without having to change two and three pairs of shoes, or having to leave one pair of shoes at someone lower down the road and collect them when they come back at night.

2.15 p.m.

Risk Road. Something has been done, but the problem with most of these roads which run off a hill is that they should really have drains at the side. I am only speaking as a layman, but it seems to me that the road should be so constructed that the water is pushed into the drains where it would run off rather than the water running through the middle of the road, which takes up the material, and then after a heavy downpour you have to repair the road again. That is my own observation, but I think it is true.

In many instances, we are asking that where the water runs off the road there be proper drainage. On this, I had better warn the Minister that, from my observation, the new school at West Terrace, the natural drainage leading from up in the hill, that is Husbands, and higher up leading to the sea coast, has been blocked and you could very well find that, with the next heavy downpour, the whole of Husbands and Oxnards will be flooded out, for the reason that the water cannot get through. All the top soil has been pushed, as it were, to the south and the natural drainage or gully, as it was previously, has now been blocked, and it is going to create a severe problem.

You have said that the road leading from the Met Station to Holders Hill will be repaired or reconstructed, and I sincerely hope that it does not take too long before we get it done. Again, Thorpes Terrace Development is relatively new, and as in all new developments, although they improve in one area they cause problems in other areas. We have found that whereas when the rain fell the natural evaporation took place, now that the buildings have come there the water is being pushed off and the people who are living below the road, and have lived there for a number of years, have found that their houses are flooded, or the water is remaining

on the road, and as the pedestrians pass the road, especially the children when they were going to school at the St. John the Baptist Infants School, they get splattered with water.

There is a district in that area called Waterman's Land or Ricks Land, which is also a new development, and for some unknown reason there is no road leading into that district. I am told it is private land. I am not quite sure how a man could have been allowed to develop an area and there is no access into the area which has been developed, but this is something which I would like you to look into so that we can have a proper access to that district. The road is so bad that the residents in Ricks Land have bought their own marl fill and repaired the road. As you well know, marl fill only lasts as long as the rain does not fall, as soon as the rains come, then the marl fill goes. It might mean that the Government would have to acquire the land there. At the present moment it is being used as a road anyhow, so there should not be any difficulty. The road there is so bad, and I know I have mentioned it already, that two women there have had miscarriages already in that little area, so the need for a road there is most urgent.

The other area which needs special attention, and I have not heard it mentioned in the Minister's reply, is the road which leads from Redman's Village down through Hoyte's Village, which divides St. James North and St. James South down to Holders Hill to the St. John the Baptist Church. That must be one of the worst roads in Barbados. It is difficult to know how to manoeuvre on that road as one comes down there, and it is best to avoid it rather than to travel over it. Again, although we are not asking for the barber green, we are still asking that something be done with it.

The thing that worries me about most of these roads, however, is how do we decide which roads must be barber greened as opposed to those which must not be. I would have thought that the roads which were most used would have the better surface, but I am not sure if that is so. When we come to Highway 1, a road which is used by so many pedestrians, it will not be long before a number of us are knocked over. It is sometimes laughable to see how the people who walk those roads try to avoid traffic. Sometimes they just rush into the bushes and come out some time after. It is an exceedingly busy highway. I think I saw the Minister travelling there last night, so he must know of what I am talking. This is a road which many visitors to our island use, it is an exceedingly dangerous road, with long stretches, and the speeds are not the normal speeds, put it that way, and people just weave in and out.

On Sandy Lane Road, it has always worried me that there is no lighting between the exchange and V..xhall. There is no street lighting by the Sandy Lane Hotel at all. As one leaves the exchange there by Weither's Drive and travels a mile, as far as Irrigation Road, there is no lighting at all, which is very dangerous, because there are a number of workers who have to stand beside the road, and as you know, most Barbadians seem to wear the wrong clothing at night. They do not wear light or bright clothing. they always seem to wear dark clothing, and that presents some very serious problems in that area.

We are asking that some attention is paid to that area. I believe that people are asking those questions more so now than before, because they are paying something called a Transport Levy. Whereas before they felt they were at the mercies of the Government, they feel they are paying for this service now, and therefore they are demanding the services; and I agree with them, because if you are paying for something you expect to get it. It is pointless telling a man who has paid for the last three or four years for his road to be repaired that you are up in Silver Sands coming down and you do not know when you are going to get down to Holetown, because he has been paying for so long that he feels that the time is ripe, especially when, in his opinion, the road is being used more so than another road which is being repaired.

It is true you said you have started a sidewalk programme, but I would have thought that along Highway 1 would have been one of the first areas in which you would have put a sidewalk. As I said, it is the main road into Bridgetown and it is used by more visitors and Barbadians than most other roads that I have seen. Therefore, I would have thought that that would have been an area.

2.25 p.m.

One of the most dangerous roads in the constituency is Holder's Hill Road. It is very narrow and, more often than not, when two vehicles are passing, the pedestrian has to try and climb up on the hill. It will not be too long before somebody slides down into the way of a passing vehicle.

So, like the others, I am appealing for the constituency of St. James South. I hope it would not be too long before some special attention is paid to the lighting in the private developments, the road repairs in private developments and the drainage in Husbands and in Wanstead Gardens where we are having a lot of trouble.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): I thought that this Head the Head before, Ministry of Transport and Works, would have had, to some extent, a pretty clear sailing and that there would have been no trouble. I never expected to hear the litany of woes with respect to the lack of services in the respective constituencies throughout the country as I heard today, and from this side as well. When I heard the learned Attorney General, I was

wondering where he would find the resources in order to satisfy his needs.

The speaker before me, the Member for St. James South (Mr. N. K. Simmons), did not fail to let his constituents know that he is aware that they exist. But I am not going to fail into that trap. I am no parish pump politician. I do not speak that way in here. There is no need to do it that way. Even the people with large majorities do not act like me. But you see, I have the courage of my conviction, and in politics it calls for a lot of political will.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Louis, what did you do him?)

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: No, no. I am just putting it as it is.

Aside.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: That is what I have done. The whole point is that you have to have some political will when you are in this game of politics. People have to be aware that, no matter how much money you have, there is the question of the allocation of resources. In the oil-rich states of the world, they are now getting to understand that there are limitations on wealth, even oil wealth. There was a time when the Gulf States and Trinidad and Tobago were able to spend a lot of money doing a lot of things, things which we could not imagine doing. Today, it is not so. Those monies have virtually evaporated overnight. We in Barbados, despite the fact that we had very limited resources, were able to inch along, but inch along in a rather safe way, as against the other people who, because the money was flowing in, thought that they could utilize it at will and do what they like.

We have heard a lot about the roads; where they are put and where they are not put. I heard an argument put earlier in the day by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) with respect to Hanschell Land. I can recall very well that when I was at the Ministry of Communications and Works that something arose, but before I deal with Hanschell Land, I must say that there are a number of areas that Government cannot rush into.

The last honourable Member who sat down talked about a number of private developments in the Husbands area. There are a number of old developments that Government had nothing to do with or had some involvement, but those were the bad old days when we did not have Town Planning Regulations, and even when you had the Town Planning Regulations, they were not as exacting as they are today. So you find that a number of private developers were able to put in roads of no particular standard. They never thought in terms of any sidewalks. Sidewalks in Barbados were virtually unheard of until the Barbados Labour Party came into office and set out in a very serious and constructive manner, to put sidewalks throughout the length and breadth of the country. As a matter of fact, we have started with Highway 7, I think, and Highway 5, and I believe that in the fullness of time, bearing in mind how important Highway 1 and 2 are, we will do those. We recognize that we have to build sidewalks on those highways.

When you are coming down Hastings, you recognize that people are virtually walking in the street, and there is a problem which we face in Barbados. I think we have to educate the public to face the traffic. People are inclined to back traffic that is coming on to them. This is an extremely dangerous thing, and our roads were never designed for the type of traffic situation which we now have. But building sidewalks along Hastings, for instance, would mean that you would have to have billions of dollars to spend on the acquisition of properties along the Hastings Road, and if you are talking at all in terms of Highway 1, especially as you enter St. James, unless you have some mechanism – and the Constitution does not permit you to appropriate people's land – you have to be thinking in terms of billions of dollars in order to carry out the type of programme which the last honourable Member was talking about.

During my time in the Ministry of Communications and Works, I looked at Hanschell Land. I think there was also an area in the same constituency known as Taylor's Land; Taylor's Road or something like that. It runs from Barbarees Hill to I think, Peterkin's Land. That was a very bad and depressed area. The Ministry had written to the owner of that land, a very wealthy man – I do not know him except to describe him as a man who has St. Vitus Dance or something.

(Aside: Yes.)

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I do not remember his name, I suppose the honourable Member for St. Michael West might know his name, but he was the landlord of the property and he was not particularly amenable. At that time, we did not have the power which is now vested in the Ministry of Housing and Lands whereby you could designate the area and have the necessary infrastructural facilities put in. This also applies to Hanschell Land. I hope that the honourable Member would realize that even if the Government sets about to bring about improvement in the Hanschell Land area, by no new methodology, by no sociological standard, could you hope to compact Hanschell Land and expect reasonable human living conditions in relation to the ratio of population to the land which is there. You have to think in terms of some dislocation of the people who might be there. The density, in straightforward arithmetic, is too high.

Aside

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Yes. There is also the matter of adjustments to the road. In order to have the proper road facilities and to put in the necessary infrastructure, you must, of necessity, move back some of the houses. These are some of the imponderables that you would have in that area.

Another thing which you have to bear in mind is that while the owners of Hanschell Land wanted to sell the land, they could not sell unless the tenants had agreed in the first place.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation: In actual fact, that section of Hanschell Land on the side embracing the road which you have identified has been settled between the owner and the Town and Country Planning Department and the people. It has, in fact, been sold out. So there are now a number of individual owners. All that the honourable Member is discussing has, in fact, been completed.

In Taylor's Gap, all of the owners have agreed to donate whatever land is necessary for the road adjustment.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I am not at the moment living with it, since I have left that Ministry for nearly seven years. I was trying to relive the situation as I knew it then. It was not a question of trying to exclude Taylor's Land and Hanschell Land from any development. That was not and is not the Government's policy. I assure honourable Members of this.

2.35 p.m.

There is one thing that I want to point out, and this is not to try to throw dust into your eyes. I recall that, when I came into the Ministry, I had a problem with a number of people, including people who live in Christ Church and areas that the honourable Member and Minister for Transport and Works has been talking about where he has carried out some road works, Sheraton Park and Regency Park. There were a number of people in those areas who had come to me expressing their unease over the fact that they were not treated well for a number of years, because, for some reason or another, it was felt that they were not of the same political persuasion of the party of the day, and the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central will be able probably to attest to what the position is, although of course his results will prove otherwise. We took the view that notwithstanding how they voted, because we are not concerned with that – we believe that even if they did not vote for us, in the fullness of time, so long as we serve you and serve you well, they would come to the realization that they should support us – and we went into all of those areas, those areas that were neglected over the years, and we put in the necessary infrastructural facilities that were denied to those people over the years.

I will tell you something more, and it is not nice to involve the high office of Speaker in a debate such as this, but I recall that before he was Speaker of the House, he drew to my attention an area in Foul Bay, just behind Rice's House, where there was a man who was building a house and a road was being constructed near to it. I hope that the honourable Member for St. Philip North, although it is not in his constituency, would go and look at it. I will get the name of the man, I have already mentioned it sometime or another in the past, and because that man was to some extent hostile to Mr. Reynold Weekes, for some reason or another, that road was deliberately stopped.

I would have no respect for my colleagues, none whatsoever, if I could ever dream that they would stop a road project, or any project for that matter, if they thought they were constructing a road, or putting in water or street lights, to benefit a supporter of the other side living there. We have never adopted that attitude.

Do you know what surprises me? That the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works could have said and recited the amount of things that he did in St. Michael North and a number of other places. I salute him. I think it is a great thing to do. I think it is statesmanlike, but I want you to look at your friends as well. I want you to handle all people. If I was not a statesman who takes a broad view of things, I would not be here quarrelling.....

Asides.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: If I do not say it for myself, you are not going to say it for me.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is a statesman.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: While I have some confidence in the honourable Member, I am still very unwilling to take any compliment which he offers me; and when I do take it, I take it with a pinch of salt.

I always feel that, as long as you do right, your constituents would recognize this. Suppose you do not get a road, but you keep the fight on. They would know that you are a true representative, that you are honest in your commitment, and in the final analysis you will come through, after the count, as the winner. That is what happens.

I want to deal with Subhead 1 – Vehicles. I do not feel that in a small country like Barbados we need to duplicate our resources in terms of equipment. When

there is a building boom in this country, all the equipment which you might have might not be considered as sufficient, but booms do not last forever, and I hope that the Ministry of Finance and Prime Minister will be hearing me. This is not to deny the Ministry of Transport and Works the equipment, but I think that we need to look at the total equipment that is coming into this country, because it represents foreign exchange, and to me it is short-sighted to over-spend in the purchase of equipment year after year, money that will lay down after five years of activity for another five or ten years of inaction. At the end of that time the equipment becomes obsolete, because technology is developing so rapidly that what appears to be new today, by tomorrow is old and outdated. I hope that we would not only look at the Ministry of Transport and Works in this regard, but that we will look at all the big contracting firms to ensure that we do not allow more plant to come into this country that is totally necessary. For example, if the Ministry of Transport and Works has a piece of equipment at the cost of $1 million that can satisfy the total work in this country, there is no point allowing somebody else to bring in that equipment. The equipment can be rented to them at a reasonable rate of return. Equally, Transport and Works do the same thing.

The learned Attorney General referred to work practices within the Ministry of Transport and Works. The Minister defended the Ministry and, I believe, quite rightly so, although I do not think he set about to defend the bad habits within the Ministry. While I was there I gave consideration to putting the work out and having a maintenance element within the Ministry. That is not to say that Transport and Works does not do good work. Any piece of work that is done by Transport and Works you can always rely on it to stay up. I give them that credit and I pay that tribute to them, but I must confess that, in many respects, they seem to be allergic to work. There was a time when a former Minister of Communications and Works used to say, "you can "cool out" but you do not have to do it so early. Do not do it under a tree where other people can see you, go in the back somewhere and hide." I do not want to call the name of the person, but that is not the type of behaviour that you get now.

Asides.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: No, it does not happen under this regime. Do not press me to say who said it but it did not happen under this regime.

That is not the thing that we should accept. It is not, in my view, the proper thing to allow people who are working in the public sector to feel that they are free to do nothing, but people who work in the private sector have got to produce, and produce well to be compensated, because, in the final analysis, the people in the private sector have got to provide the wherewithal to pay those people who are in the public sector. It is for that reason that we, as a team in this Government, have dedicated and committed ourselves to endless hard work, and we are hoping that by our example, people not only in Government but throughout the country will emulate what we stand for in terms of hard work.

2.45 p.m.

A part of the vote in here is for Marine House. It seems like a contradiction to me that Marine House, being owned by the Ministry of Housing and Lands, which is the landlord of the country, should have to rely on another Ministry to do the work at Marine House. The Attorney General is one of the tenants of that building, I occupy a part, the most humble part, and it also houses the Minister of Labour. The Minister of Labour and I do not complain about the frequent visits the Minister of Foreign Affairs has, because he has to meet a number of people from abroad, but I feel that it does not present the right image for a building of such historical worth, plus the fact that it has so many Ministries in it. I would like to see a determined effort made during the financial year to give that building a facelift so that we would feel proud and not want to run away from it.

Marine House has approximately fourteen acres of land, badly and poorly utilized; very precious land. The building itself is probably not ideally located on the land. I have set up a Committee to look at that.

Asides.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: That is still under the Crown, and the Minister responsible for Lands is responsible for that.

Asides.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Largely, with very limited resources, the Ministry has been able to do a lot of things throughout the country, and we are transforming the landscape in terms of road building, road widening and everything connected with Transport and Works. The problems which were encountered in the past in terms of the bus service have been tackled from the time this Government came into office, and they were, and are, very well dealt with, and I want to commend the Ministry and the staff for the manner in which they have pursued their task.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I feel that given understanding by all people, and tolerance of the Ministry of Transport and Works, in a very short time, if not totally satisfied, all representatives of the people will realize that an effort is made in order to improve the living conditions of all Barbadians.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Concerning roads, the representatives of the people now have a bit more difficulty than they had before, and I would like to suggest to the Minister an approach that I think would solve a lot of the problems as far as the roads are concerned.

With the payment and the introduction of the Transport Levy, we are more or less back in the days of the Vestry and the District Council for that particular portion of the money spent by the Ministry on roads – I am dealing specifically with the section dealing with the levies – for the simple reason that all the workers of this country are paying this levy, and, I believe, quite rightly, all the workers of this country expect their fair share of the work of the levy. I would like to suggest that the Ministry consider the possibility of putting the 27 constituencies on a rotating basis, taking nine constituencies one year and nine the next year, and that they be allocated that portion of the money from the levy going towards roads. I also believe some priority system should be worked out concerning the roads to be affected by those funds. I think that the appropriate representatives could pretty well help in this, and if a system like this was introduced, I think it would take a lot of pressure off the Ministry of Transport and Works as well as the representatives.

I am not looking at the funds voted under the other section at all. The Minister has the right to allocate that however he wants to allocate it, but I am particularly referring to the section of the Transport Levy going towards the repair of the roads, and my contention is that all 27 constituencies have a deeper call on that, either on a three-year road rota or on a yearly rota. I took a very quick look through that and I have not seen anything for St. Philip North on the Transport Levy, but I am going to appeal to you, and I have already given the priority, to have a look, if nothing else, at a place called Vineyard in St. Philip. It is an area which is so bad that the road is three feet below the level of the agricultural land on both sides. It is completely unmade, it holds water quite a lot and, to add insult to injury, there are no street lights.

I have heard the honourable Member for St. George North talk about people cannot get a "drive in", but I am saying it is an area that you cannot even walk in! At nights when people come in and you have a shower of rain, it is pitch dark – and no streets lights, no roads. I can tell you it is one of the most distressing things that you could ever hear when the people talk about it. If I cannot get the roads, I am just going to beg for a few lights.

Asides

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: There are about twenty-five to thirty houses down there. I have spoken to the appropriate section of your Ministry. They have inspected it, but drew to my attention that the road would have to be completely rebuilt. I was asking for a few loads of marl, at least, but they said there is no point putting marl in it, they would have to rebuild the road completely. My plea is that even if I cannot get the road, let them have a couple of lights so that they can see at nights when they come home and there is water on the road.

2.55 p.m.

That is Vineyard, and if I ask for nothing else, I must make a special pleading for Vineyard in St. Philip. There are other areas that, naturally, will need some attention, but I will put them in order of priority. If we are going to get any, you can think of this order: Mount Pleasant, where the people are having a lot of problems; Bayfield section leading down to Mrs. Deane; East Court No. 1, Coles Road, Blades Hill No. 2 and Chapel. There are many others, but I like to be fair. I give you the order of priority and if there is nothing else you can do, give me a couple of lights in Vineyard in St. Philip; that would certainly go a long way towards assisting the people at Vineyard.

I would like to turn more particularly to transport. There is quite a lot of money going in transport and I would like to be assured by the appropriate Minister that the management and the studies to facilitate proper management of the system is also in place. I would like to enquire from the Minister, if he could help, what is the present cost per passenger mile of the transport system. I would like some indication of the bus mix at the moment, how many Benz, how many Leylands and the rest. Having given me a percentage of the bus mix, I would like him to give me a comparative cost of the performance of the individual units per passenger mile so that we can get an indication of the efficiency of these units. I would also like to know if the Ministry has done any studies on the relationship between accidents and drivers by sex, women as against men, as well as any studies in relation to age grouping, particularly under 30, between 30 and 45 and over 45 years of age.

I should like to know if it is a fact that the breaking systems in the new Mercedes Benz are very troublesome and are causing you to renew quite a lot of brake drums. We expect linings will go, but not the systems, but I should like to know whether the small Mercedes Benz have been giving trouble with the chasses, whether you have had an unusual number of breakings of chasses in the small Mercedes Benz.

I would like to know whether or not the introduction of the fare boxes has shown any appreciation in collection of revenue. If so, what is the percentage increase or decrease, as the case may be, as a result of the fare boxes?

What are the plans for the Mangrove depot and what are the plans for repairs at the Mangrove depot? Is he going to do anything or is he going to centralise the repairs in Bridgetown? More importantly, how soon will the number of buses allocated to Mangrove be built up to 90, which is acknowledged to be the amount that would service those areas adequately from the programmes? How soon will we on these routes be given a schedule? I know you said the schedules have been drawn up for one or two areas, and I wonder how soon we will have schedules for the routes serviced from the Mangrove depot.

I also wish to know if the Minister has any projections of the time when the introduction of more economical units would reduce the subsidy to the order of around $8 million a year, or if it is ever likely that the subsidy would be reduced to this particular level.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I rise to address one of the financial problems which has emerged in this debate. It is quite clear that natural justice would suggest that any reasonable Minister of Finance would want to put the debate of this Committee in its proper perspective, accede to the request of the honourable Member for St. Philip North, namely, to the effect that there should be some rationalisation in the distribution of the road repair work that is done throughout the 27 constituencies, and that some principle should be evolved which recognises that all constituencies are entitled to a proportionate share of the cake. That Honourable Minister of Transport has over the years spent a disproportionate amount of money in his constituency, and one of his colleagues, the honourable Member for St. Michael East (Dr. D. G. Blackman) actually got on the floor of this House and endorsed the principle that because he is Minister of Transport, then we must accept that he has the right to look after himself first of all, and then the others afterwards. I do not agree with that principle, and there is another principle that I would like to address my mind to.

The Honourable Minister has been very generous in giving us the total proceeds from the Transport Levy since its inception in September 1981, when it was collected unlawfully for the first four months. That is a fact, because you told me to go to the High Court after the 120 days had expired – and you were laughing about it, too! I cannot go now because it is too late. The point I am making is that he said they had collected $32 million, but have accumulated liabilities against the Transport Levy to the tune of $21 million. I wonder whether he has any authority to commit this country to any financial liabilities of any kind. I have checked the Transport Board Levy Act and there is certainly no authority there. There is authority to collect the money and spend the money that you have collected.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is not there. It is not reflected as a debt on the Consolidated Fund, and I would like to urge the Minister of Finance that we are getting into a very dangerous situation here where every Tom, Dick and Harry, every statutory thing, some corporate, some not corporate, can find themselves in a situation in which they can incur liabilities which the taxpayers of this country ultimately have to meet. These liabilities have got to be approved by this Parliament. Who gave the Minister the authority to proceed along those lines?

It is also my understanding that the law in relation to the Transport Levy is even different in character from the law in relation to the Health Levy, for while the designated Minister under the Health Levy is the Minister responsible for Finance, the designated Minister in respect of the Transport Levy is the Minister responsible for Transport and Works. I believe that all honourable Members should immediately be able to see the serious possibilities of major financial indiscipline and the inability of the Minister of Finance to be able to control the financial management of this country within that kind of structure if this is allowed to continue, and I am calling on the Minister of Finance to get up and state by what authority this can be done. I know what the views of his predecessor were, but we are waiting for you to answer, because another very serious thing is that the circulated audited statements of account of the Transport Levy do not reflect liabilities which I knew existed at that time. I will go no further on this one because there will be a lot more fire coming from this side unless there is a satisfactory answer, and we want an answer.

3.05 p.m.

This is a serious matter, and I will tell you why. I believe almost about 30 per cent of the public financial activity in this country at the moment takes place off-budget, which means that when we are discussing Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure now we are probably discussing only about 66 per cent. It may be a little less or a little more, but anyhow approximately two-thirds.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You do now know and I do not know that for sure either, but approximately, so there is no point getting into whether it is 60 per cent, 66 per cent or 72 per cent. A substantial and growing amount is off-budget, which means that the relevance of the Estimates debate, and indeed even the Budget, that would seek largely to address imbalances in these Estimates and so on can have limited implications for the long term financial stability of this country. I am asking the Minister of Finance as a matter of serious import, as a matter of urgency, not to allow himself to be deflected by the ignorance emanating from around him at the *moment*,

but to address his mind to what I am saying, because he might find himself trapped by certain things here, as his predecessor was on one occasion on the floor of the House.

I see the word "rehabilitation" cropping up from time to time in these Estimates under this Head. Five or six years ago, I warned the Government that the roads in Barbados were deteriorating at a state so that, ultimately, they would have to undertake a major programme of rehabilitation which is far more expensive than a properly organised programme of maintenance. We actually presented to the Government a formula; we advised them to have a full revaluation at replacement cost of the existing road stock of Barbados, and we further advised them that an allocation of approximately two and a half per cent of the fully revalued assets of the road stock would represent the amount that is required for maintenance. If those steps were taken five or six years ago, we would today have a far less costly programme to face.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is your opinion).

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is the opinion of the experts in the World Bank and the experts all around the world, but we are making the same kind of errors which have been made in bankrupt Third World countries around the world, that is, you allow your existing road stock to fall into a serious state of disrepair. You go to international agencies and you borrow huge sums of money in order to build roads of a high visibility content and then you end up in a situation where you have to service the loans on the new roads, and you try and maintain the new roads whilst your existing roads fall into a state that requires a major rehabilitation effort.

I have listened to the arguments put forward by the other side as to why they should have new roads. There is some truth in the arguments they put forward, I am not going to deny that, but what I am saying is that there are also very compelling arguments why the Government must get involved now in a programme of maintenance of those roads that have not yet reached the stage where they need rehabilitation, while they continue with the rehabilitative efforts on those roads that need rehabilitation now. In other words, it should be a three-pronged programme. The new roads, if you need them, a maintenance programme, based on the concept which I have just put before Parliament, and now a rehabilitation programme, which should not have been necessary.

This is a problem. This is the result of years and years of neglect, and years and years in which you would not listen to people who understood a little more than you and had a little more experience than you in relation to road maintenance programmes in this country. If there is one thing that the other side must concede, it is that the Democratic Labour Party always managed to have a more successful programme of road maintenance.

Loud Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Who in Barbados ever saw potholes under the Democratic Labour Party? Potholes was not in the vocabulary even of Parliament.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If the honourable Member will give way for one minute: We did not see potholes but we saw skinning barber green! I remember the barber green that was put down opposite Rockley Surf Hotel. On at least four occasions they had to put it down, they did not know how to put it down, and as soon as they put it down it used to separate. My Lord's Hill is another example.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I gather that those problems did arise, but it was due to the material that was available at the time. It had absolutely nothing to do with the Democratic Labour Party. That is what I have been told.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, on a point of order: That is a classic example of impressions and not facts. Bad material to fool the public.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Is that a point of order?

To continue, another point I would like to advert to as a matter of principle is the whole question of private tenantry and subsidiary roads. I believe that we have to be very careful. I wish to say I am speaking as a matter of principle, I am not addressing myself to any particular tenantry or anything like that.

I think the Government has to look very carefully at this whole business of spending large sums of money to put a mile or a mile and a half of road for three or four houses. You have to look at the capital cost, the future recurrent cost of maintenance in relation to the service you are providing. I rather suspect that in many parts of Barbados the appropriate programme should be to get larger clusters of houses together when you are going to go into that heavy capital investment. That is my own view, because with a mile of road you can probably serve two or three hundred houses, or with the same mile of road you can serve six houses.

This Democratic Labour Party, to my certain knowledge, has done a survey of all the tenantries in Barbados. I believe that you need to look at all the areas to see what is the least dislocation that you would cause and make sure that you get proper roads in order to serve the largest number of people; that your capital investment serves a large number of people. In other words, we want to see everybody in Barbados having access to good roads to walk on, but we want it done in the most economic manner.

3.15 p.m.

There are certain instances in which there can be some justification in relation to ribbon development. I know that the Town Planning Department may object to ribbon development, but already in Barbados, there exist long stretches of road where vehicles pass very seldom, where you have water and electricity in place, and it would seem to me that the utilization of some of that infrastructure that we have here already, in order to help meet the housing needs of the country may well be a way of getting people to roads without any major capital investment. There are many areas in Barbados where I cannot see how the whole concept of ribbon development should form a major obstruction to the development of housing in those areas.

I believe that if we look at the infrastructure that we already have in roads and then match that against the concept of getting as many people as possible to have access to good roads, water and electricity, I think that we may well be able to revise our capital expenditure if we take some bold and imaginative decisions, looking at existing infrastructure.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I have not spoken in this debate as yet, but I have been in this House long enough to know that whenever the subject of roads comes before this House, it is an opportunity for all honourable Members to seek to catch the eye of the Press, with a view to demonstrating quite clearly to their constituents their interest in a matter that intimately touches their lives. At one stage in politics in Barbados, it used to be the hospital that captured the same amount of interest, it used to be street lights and electricity, it used to be housing. Now, road seems to be the thing.

I want to make it quite clear that this Government can demonstrate, whether you count it in miles, kilometers or whatever measurement, that it has done more in its life in terms of building new roads and repairing roads, particularly in the tenantry areas, than during the whole of the fifteen years of the Democratic Labour Party. We are going to get the figures for it. We have built more tenantry roads .....

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Who told you so?)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ..... in our period of time than the Democratic Labour Party has built in the fifteen years that they were in power. That can be demonstrated.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The facts and figures are there. I remember the debate when the present Speaker was the Minister of Communications and Works. When we brought out the figures, honourable Members on the other side had to remain silent. A time will come again when the figures are going to be published, but the time is not ripe yet.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way: How come the honourable Member comes to the House of Assembly in the Estimates and says that the time is not ripe to put out the figures? We challenge the honourable Member to put out the figures now. Bring the figures here to this House!

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is self-evident.

Secondly, in respect of the resurfacing and the taking over of roads from private developments, this Government has a far better record than the Democratic Labour Party. We are touching the areas where people never had a road at all, tenantry roads, we are touching the areas where people have bought developments from private enterprise and after a period of time they need to be resurfaced.

Let us come now to major highways. Everyone knows that, as a result of the change in the pattern of traffic in Barbados, major decisions had to be taken because the type of vehicles and the number of vehicles using our roads have changed drastically over the last eight years. We have repeatedly pointed out that containerization, the discovery of oil and the introduction of larger trucks so as to service the building industry on the economies of scale in transportation has had a devastating impact upon the road surfaces of Barbados. I remember when I was first the Minister of Energy in Barbados that there was a row going for about two years as to whether the cause of the deterioration of the road surface in Barbados was the bad bitumen, asphalt or what. Experts were brought down. This argument started when Mr. Smith, the former Member for St. Michael South Central, was the Minister of Communications and Works. He used to get up in the House of Assembly and say that it was bad asphalt.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: True!)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: But it took some time to investigate this. Obviously, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, when he is reasonable and sane, would recall that it would be necessary, first of all, before you make major decisions of this nature, to carry out an investigation into the causative effects. A large investigation took place, and it was discovered that there was a combination of circumstances and factors.

We also know that there is a problem in road maintenance arising from the fact that, for some reason or the other, it is almost impossible to co-ordinate the activities of the various utility companies so as to prevent the situation from arising that as soon as you surface a road, another utility comes in the next week and breaks

up the road for their purposes. It was the present speaker who instituted a system, in his capacity as Minister of Communications and Works at that time, in which efforts were made to try and discover the long term plans of utility companies so that one would synchronize the rehabilitation of the roads and the surfacing of the roads with the projections in the particular area. That was another attempt to promote efficiency and to reduce the problems arising.

We know – whether some people like it or not, I am going to say it – that there are very few quarries in Barbados which have fit and suitable material for road surfacing that would last long. But as I understand it, you have to trade off. It is said that what you gain in a surface, you would lose in the cost of tyres. So the softer the stone you use on the surface, the longer your car tyres will last. So you have to deal with this trade-off. 3.25 p.m.

All the time these investigations were going along work was being done, but then something else was happening, and this is what the honourable Member on the other side does not like to hear – as a result of the great growth in the economy in Barbados the number of vehicles increased. So we reached a stage where under the then Minister, Member for St. Michael East (Dr. D. G. Blackman), it was decided that the most sensible thing to do was to assume that there were no roads in Barbados at all and start and design as though you wish to have the best type of roads and you want to do them in areas where most of your heavy traffic, your new vehicles and your fast movement would occur. That is one of the reasons why we place great emphasis on the major highways. We will argue with you anywhere, anytime and any place that it is most sensible economically to have the new highways. So if it is your position, maintain that it is your position that Barbados needs no new highways. That is the Democratic Labour Party position and this is our position; we can articulate our position and we will demolish your position.

This is where we are now. What we have now is a comprehensive programme for tenantry roads. The Honourable Minister of Transport is in a position to announce that Cabinet has specifically said that we must have a Tenantry Road Programme of a minimum of at least $5.5 million this year.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Home drums beat first but everybody will get a piece.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That will be a non-sensible way of doing it, and the honourable Member would never do it so, because then all of the constituencies that are in good condition would still get. But that is where we are starting.

Secondly, we have with the World Bank a rehabilitation programme of certain highways. We must do something between Mile-and-a Quarter and Warrens. Anyone who drives that road will know that there are a number of bends in that road which need to be looked at. We also have that area by Husbands coming from St. James, I believe between Holders Hill and the university, that has to be done. We have two other areas inland, some of which have already been done, and it would take a mad man to do Highways 1 and 7 where the sewerage schemes are being done. We are not going to do those roads when we know that the sewerage schemes are going to be done within a short period of time. We prefer to spend the money building the by-pass road, and by that time we hope that the sewerage schemes will be in.

That is the plan and programme. It is based on logic. It is based on economic good sense and it is based on fairness and equity. So however much honourable Members on the other side criticise us in relation to this, we feel that we are on good solid ground. We have taken all of the matters under consideration, and parallel with all of this, we are trying to build up our knowledge about the proper road construction techniques in Barbados, the quality of the bitumen and the quality of the quarries. We have good additional investigative results, because of a few matters, like having to rehabilitate the runway at the airport, we now know that we have other road building material that would be necessary in case you need a surface to take certain pounding into effect.

We also have to understand that it is impossible, and we have been advised that it is impossible, for us to do all the roads plus the airport rehabilitation without importing bitumen and aggregate on a large scale. So you have to phase and you have to use your aggregate in accordance with the service you want to produce, and this is the major exercise that we are going through. This is why we must stand up and fight with everybody, including the international institutions, who think we are all fools. We are not fools. We know what we are doing, and the position has been arrived at after a very careful and patient investigation. Those are the matters that we are going to deal with, and that is why you are going to see the vote in the Estimates, and that we are now working on the phasing of it so as to get maximum value for money.

I am glad that all of our Members have spoken. No one has spoken in the House of Assembly more about the need for value for money in the MTW than I have. I have been outspoken from the very beginning on it, but great progress must be conceded in that direction, and we expect to do better and better.

There are a couple of things that we must answer about this question about the levy funds. Everybody knows that Parliament passed the law authorising the collection of the levy for the purpose of easing the burden on the Treasury in paying the cost of the transport system. The machinery for accounting for this money was set up. We set up a Board. The Government has nothing to hide in this respect. On that Board we insisted that it was not to be a party Board, that it must have maximum representation of the vital interests, particularly the interests of the people who had to pay. So we had trade unions representatives on the Board, we have engineering representatives on the board, the names of the members of the Board are there. We also insisted that it must be subject to audit by a reputable firm of chartered accountants. Those accounts are coming here, and the Minister was able to set this out. If honourable Members feel that they are not getting a fair deal, why not pick up your pens and write to the Chairman of the Transport Levy Fund and say that they feel that they are entitled to part of the allocation.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am sure the people who are there are not paper men. The machinery is there. It has been established in such a way as to allow for maximum public scrutiny. That is why I do not understand the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central when he comes in here repeatedly and tries to give the impression that the Government has spent the money and does not want to account for it.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I take the most fundamental objection to what the honourable Member has just said. I have never said that. All I asked about was the liabilities and the authority for incurring the liabilities. That is all that I asked about, the legal authority for incurring the liabilities.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There is a big difference between 'unconstitutional" and "accounting" because Coopers and Lybrand have a reputation to maintain, and the Transport Levy Board, including Mr. Gaskin and Mr. Bobby Morris, are not yard fowls of the Barbados Labour Party.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Captain Hill and the others. I am sure that Captain Hill's name rings a bell in the ears of the honourable Members on the other side. We do not have anything to hide. Whatever legal machinery that is necessary to ensure that the funds are expended within the framework of the constitution of Barbados will be brought to bear.

3.35 p.m.

My understanding is that in order to [redacted]ure that you had a good credit, for you got advances for suppliers credit for buses at the beginning, it was agreed that you would buy a number of buses and a certain amount of the funds as they came in in the future would be committed to paying off this credit. You had a pressing need, suppliers credit was granted, and it is agreed that every year a part of the money would be used for that amount of money for the Transport Board buses. They are not buying any new buses at the present moment except twenty or so a year, so that is not the liabilities you are talking about, those are the contingent liabilities. You talk about suppliers credit was granted, but that was for buses which had to be brought into Barbados to improve the bus service.

I do not mind what any honourable Member on the other side says. I am convinced in my own mind, and I know that many of the commentators on the infrastructure in Barbados are saying now that, for a small country, Barbados has one of the best bus services that they have seen.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: But you were saying otherwise.

Laughter.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, I think the honourable Member needs his glasses changed.

I am told that $34 million has been collected by the levy, and it comes in somewhere in the vicinity of $10 million a year. That is all the explanation we have to give.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation: I want the honourable Member to be very clear that all this business of questioning the suitability of the accountants and all that was done by the way. That was not pertinent to the questions I asked. The core of the question was the nature of the liabilities, suppliers credit. The second part is, if, from what he has said, the legal framework will be in place, then one can only assume that it is a gentleman's agreement at the moment, unsecured credit by the suppliers, if that is what you are saying. It boils down to that, unsecured credit by the suppliers, and therefore a future Administration might not necessarily be legally bound in any way.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is always a chance a creditor gives without a full investigation into the succession arrangements. Check that out. Barclay's Bank and Joy Edwards will tell you. Remember the famous case? Go and check it.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Every time the Prime Minister speaks, it is a joy to hear him, if for no other reason than to discover how to take a very little and make a lot out of it. He is very good at that. We all acknowledge that.

I just want to say to him and to this Honourable House, there is a phrase which he knows very well, "the thing speaks for itself." We do not have to engage in continuous argument. All we have to do is to ask those persons who use the roads in Barbados. They like the new highway, yes, but they hate the potholes and the bad old roads and what we are saying is that if you are spending $90 million to build a highway to take us from the seaport to the airport in nine minutes, people have every reason to expect you to spend $10 million to make sure that having got to the airport in nine minutes, when you go home you do not have to break your car springs because there is a pothole two feet deep.

You have said you are spending money. That is fine. We are here in the Opposition to draw it to your attention, and we are going to draw it to your attention – and this year now you say that you are going to be spending money – that you have not maintained the roads, and I want to draw something else to your attention. The new highways themselves are deteriorating rapidly. Anyone who uses the Spring Garden Highway on a regular basis would be in a position to report that whereas when it was first opened the surface had what could be called a fairly smooth and level appearance, already there are valleys in the Spring Garden Highway. The Spring Garden Highway has started to sink, and it is not surprising when you consider the same Spring Garden. You have built a highway on springs, and do not be surprised if one of these mornings you get up and...

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order! I know that these are some very interesting things. You have made a statement that the Spring Garden Highway is sinking. Am I to understand this is information from an expert, an engineer? An engineer told you this?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Even if an engineer had not told me, I drive on it all the time and I can feel that it is sinking.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Prime Minister himself agrees with me. I do not know why the "Deputy Prime Minister" wants to disagree.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The Prime Minister agrees with that?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, but the Deputy now says....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: He said that on the floor of the House?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes. He just said it there for me to hear. And now the Deputy comes to disagree with it! Why is the Deputy Prime Minister so concerned about these matters, though?

The point I am making is that, and this is a valid point, especially since we are getting ready to build a $90 million highway, we need to be extremely careful with both the engineering and the quality product that we use in the construction of these highways. There is no doubt; if you use the Spring Garden Highway, you have to know that already in that part of the highway, especially where the Brandon River used to exit into the sea and the roundabout that joins up with President Kennedy Drive, has already started to show a sinking and to show what can only be described as "valleys." I am not qualified as an engineer, but I happen to drive on the Spring Garden Highway regularly, and one can feel the changes.

I think that what people are concerned about is the kind of arrogance which does not acknowledge error. We do not have great expertise in highway building and if we find that we have made an error, we should say so. In fact, I think the Prime Minister was alluding to it when he said it has been discovered that the material they used was too soft.

The honourable Member must know that in a recent study, recent information with regard to the kind of material which should be used for the rehabilitation of the airport runway, it has been reported and recommended to the Government that there is only one area in Barbados from which material could come with the requisite qualities. That is no secret. It may be a secret to the Cabinet, but it is no secret out here.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: This is no partisan matter. We have an interest in the highway. You are not building a highway for the Democratic Labour Party. You are building a highway for a long time to come, and you are spending $90 million.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The point I want to make is this. The Minister sought to suggest that one of the reasons why there had to be the creation of highways had to do with the large increase in the number of vehicles. The truth is that there has been a change of the kinds of vehicles, but there has not been any systematic increase in numbers. The only place where the numbers have increased to speak of would be in the number of Government vehicles there are.

3.45 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If the honourable Member would give way; is the honourable Member really saying that there are no more private vehicles today than there were eight years ago?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Obviously every year there is an increase of a few, but the point is that the honourable Member tried to give the impression that the increase was so dramatic that it became necessary to built new roads for the private vehicles. There are a few heavy duty trucks.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do not let him tell you how to run your Ministry. Until he is named, he cannot instruct you. He is the same Minister as you.

The point is that it is true there are some heavy duty trucks that have come into Barbados in recent times, and that it is necessary for those heavy duty trucks to travel on certain highways, but that does not gainsay the argument that in the areas where we have had these highways that have been there from time immemorial, it is very necessary to have a proper programme of road maintenance. We have charged you, and that is where we have the divide, with not having paid enough attention to road maintenance while you were going off on a frolic of your own. You have been interested in esoteric development. Your esoteric development extends to such things as highways. You wish to transform Barbados into another Puerto Rico. You have these kinds of grandiose concepts which do not always take into account either your circumstances or the people for whom you are having the development. We are contending that Barbados is not a place where the whim and fancy of any individual or small group of individuals ought to determine the priorities and the decisions that affect the rest of the community.

The honourable Member talked about the levy and left an impression. He said that the levy – I have to deal with him; he is good when he puts this kind of rebuttal on the Record – is administered by people spread across the community, and therefore we should write to the Chairman and tell him that we are not getting a fair break. The honourable member knows that there are decisions regarding where roads will go; how much money is going to be used from the levy is manifested and directed by the Minister. That is what the law says, so writing to the Board and telling the Board that we have not had a fair break is going to be of no import when the Minister has determined what the priorities will be for the spending of money, because the reasons for spending the money have been clearly set out in the Act – the money must be spent for roads, for improvement of the transportation in the country and concomitant areas.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member has never responded to a query which we raised here with regard to the use of the levy money. We have raised that query in here about the cash fund commitments and the strange arrangements which have been made. We are going to leave that because it is obvious that it is a waste of time to discuss it, and I am going to leave the honourable Member for St. James North as he talks about potholes not being of interest. They may not be of interest to him, because the quality car that he is able to drive and has always been driving.....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But you concede that I had a motor cycle, and that I could drive your car and you could not ride the motor cycle. Why do you not tell the whole truth?

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I taught you to drive in Harts Gap.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member has always driven expensive cars and therefore would not know about potholes, but potholes are of interest to the ordinary masses in this country who may only have got their first motor car. And the honourable Member will not stop me from talking about potholes, because we have an inordinate number of potholes in this country. If he wishes to go back 25 years or 40 years and talk about the fact that he had a car and we used to be friends and we used to go in his house, he is free to do so; that is a fact.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members must please contain themselves. Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am discussing transport. Can there be anything about transport more than a car? That is what we are discussing, transport. The honourable Member is quarrelling because he had an Austin.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are addressing the Chair. When you are quarrelling or any other honourable Member quarrels with another he is not addressing the Chair. Let us get ahead.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If he sits at the back and says that we are talking about potholes and it is dry talk, he is interrupting me and I will take him on.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am protecting the honourable Member. Order! I cannot have a debate with two honourable Members talking across the floor. It is very much out of order.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I see here that we have money for parking meters. I wonder if the Honourable Minister would indicate whether it is his intention to introduce parking meters as part of the control of traffic in Bridgetown.

I see in this subhead that money is being voted now for parking meters, Subhead 16 – Improvement of Traffic Management – and it says "pedestrian crossing, the purchase of road signs, parking meters....." I recall sometime ago that it was clearly established that there would be no parking meters in Bridgetown, and I am asking the Minister to confirm whether the policy has now been changed and whether we are going to be in a situation where we will have parking meters. I have no immediate reaction to it, I do not see it necessarily as a negative thing, but I think the Minister owes it to the community, if he is going to be introducing parking meters, to let the community know in due course and in good time that parking meters will be introduced.

There has been talk for some time about having multi-storeyed parking in Bridgetown. I believe that I could speak for a number of people who can confirm that it is now extremely difficult to find parking space in the Bridgetown area in terms of a radius of one mile from the centre of the city. I think that there are enough buildings in Bridgetown, enough space in Bridgetown owned by the Government, that we could have multi-storeyed public parking.

3.55 p.m.

You will recall, Mr. Chairman, that in some of the cities you have been to there has been municipal multi-storeyed parking which has taken large quantities of cars off the road, and I believe that it has been demonstrated that even at a modest price such multi-storeyed parking facilities have been able to amortise the cost over a relatively short period of time. I would like to recommend to the Minister that the Ministry gives very serious thought to municipal multi-storeyed parking in Bridgetown so as to relieve the pressures which have been brought about by an obvious need for good parking in Bridgetown. The idea of using relatively small areas of land for flat parking of a few vehicles seems to me to be an economic waste.

There are one or two other areas I would like to ask questions on, but when I got up I had indicated to the Minister I would not take the full 15 minutes, because he wanted to respond, so I will give way now and allow him to reply.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is obvious to me that the honourable Member for St. Michael West is not really following what is happening in the country. He raises the issue of multi-storeyed parking. He must know that next door to the Central Bank building a multi-storeyed car park is already in the process of being constructed. The design is finished. Members should know things like that.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It does not concern the Central Bank, but it is part of the multi-storeyed development.

The Town Planning Office has identified six areas in Bridgetown for multi-storeyed parking. One of the areas is next to the Central Bank, another of the areas will be in the development and expansion of the Carlisle Harbour, and there are three other areas which I will not name for obvious reasons. Private enterprise is very interested in developing a multi-storeyed parking facility. If the honourable Member was following what is happening in public affairs he would know that, and he really would not have to be calling for these things.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way: How can he get up and talk about private enterprise and private things which only he knows about, which he would not name, and then talk about if the honourable Member was following what is going on? You either know about them or you do not know about them. I do not have access to information which the honourable Member would have. I was addressing the Minister about municipal public parking. That has nothing to do with what the private sector would speculate on.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member should go up to Government Headquarters or read the notices in the Press, and he would see that the second Development Plan was advertised and he would easily have had information that is readily available to the public and is not the private preserve of myself or anyone else. The honourable Member is not doing his homework. He is only grandstanding here and getting some good publicity. He is not very serious about these matters. I have to tease him a little bit on these things. The honourable Member must read these things.

Let the Press know that already steps have been taken by the Government, on its own and in conjunction with private enterprise, about multi-storeyed parking, and that the Government has a transportation study for Bridgetown that has been well publicised, and which includes this. The honourable Member should know that if he was following things. I read the Press, read the public journals and I am able to know that these things are there. He can ask the Minister how soon all the plans

would be implemented, but he must not give the impression that the Government has not got things on the drawing board and in the process of giving effect to some of them.

I am more interested in the roads in Christ Church West, and I always like to take the benefit of the Minister's officials being here to underscore that there is still a pressing need in parts of Christ Church West for the construction of new tenantry roads, as well as the proper maintenance of some of the existing roads. I believe that the Technical Division of the Ministry should have made available to the Minister information on the regular complaints emanating from that part of the parish concerning the bad state of some of the roads.

I am going to stress Amity Lodge where the road has virtually disappeared because it was overgrown by weeds. A little bit of maintenance has been done, but it is totally unsatisfactory. It seems to me that we need the construction of a new road. In the area of Brathwaite's Gap – the Minister is familiar with this one from other quarters, I can see it is coming out of the top of his shining head knowledge about this one – there are nothing but mud tracks where a substantial number of people live, and the same goes for Old Navy Road. I know that when one hears that Old Navy Road is in Navy Gardens one would not imagine that in Navy Gardens we do not have a proper road for a substantial number of people who live in that area. I need not mention next to the Rockley Resort Hotel in the Worthing View area where you have to walk through grass and mud and change shoes twice or three times if you want to get to and from the main road and from church.

There is the area of Forde's Road, Sir, Simmons' Land and above the hill at Rendezvous Ridge in three or four avenues. I can list them. I notice it is evoking some attention. There is a misconception that Christ Church West includes only Highway 7, Navy Gardens, Blue Waters Terrace and that area.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member will give way on a point of elucidation: As my representative in Parliament I notice that he by-passed the drainage problems that affect Golf View Terrace and the bus stop at Golf Club Road that is constantly overgrown with bush.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member must know that he was so well represented last night that although he left the sitting early I directed about 70 questions to the Honourable Minister about drainage in Christ Church West, including the area near to the honourable Member. Despite his political views, I would like to preserve him for posterity. The honourable Member must know that. I do not want him swept away at all, and therefore I will emphasise again for his benefit, as a good representative – and I hope he gives me similar representation in the constituency which he represents – that we do have a serious problem in Golf Club Road.

I have spoken about that before. It has come about principally because, in my view, permission should never have been granted for the development of what is called Golf Meadows. It has been a flood area from time immemorial, it has now thrown the water on to the residents, including the honourable Member's residence and other people like the Leaches, and it seems as though when I go from one department to another it is like 'Send the fool further and further.' Town Planning disclaims any responsibility for the matter and the Ministry of Transport and Works has merely politely thanked me for drawing the problem to their attention, but there has been no relief granted. The honourable Member is quite right on this. No relief has been granted in that area at all, and people who have bought spots find now that they cannot develop them.

I believe that we should update the report which was done prior to 1976 on drainage problems and consider the fact that those coastal areas, whether they are the coastal areas on the south as in Christ Church West, or coastal areas on the west as in Speightstown, which are subjected to heavy deluges coming from the hills, need some protection through drainage. I am sure the Minister in his reply will advert to this very serious problem, but I would like to hear if there is any immediate relief coming before the heavy rains of July or August or September come.

In relation to roads, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is quite right. Golf Club Road is probably one of the most densely populated areas. It is an area that is heavily used by vehicular traffic, and one that is heavily used by pedestrians, both Barbadians and foreigners, but we have no sidewalks. I hope it is possible to extend the sidewalk scheme to this area.
4.05 p.m.

I sometimes wonder whether proper population studies are done before road and other public works are undertaken. I agree that Government Hill is an equally precarious area, and I want to congratulate the Government for the work being done there, and being swiftly done, but it does seem to me that Christ Church, for various reasons, particularly the area of Christ Church which I represent, is being severely ignored in the planning in the Ministry of Transport and Works. I hope that it has nothing to do with my majority. I hope that it is not felt that I am so safe that it is not necessary to do road works in this area. To me, that is an irrelevant consideration. The relevant consideration is that the place is in great need. That is the first point. The second relevant consideration is that we pay a great deal of taxes from that area, since it is so densely populated. The third rele-

vant consideration is that an improvement in that area is not only for the benefit of Barbadians, but for the many visitors who happen to reside temporarily there as part of the tourist trade.

I would not like to sit down without drawing to the attention of the Minister two serious requests that I have had from constituents in the Hastings area. Highway 7 is a very busy transit lane and we need, very badly, particularly, in the area of Hastings Rocks, pedestrian crossings. There are several old persons, as well as several school children, who really need protecting from the traffic when they are crossing the road. I should like to see the Ministry set up some highway crossings early, particularly in that area.

The second problem which I should like to draw to the Minister's attention is that I think there is a case for more one way traffic in some of these avenues off Highway 7. I can think of a one-way routing of traffic right around St. Matthias Church and coming out on Balmoral or vice versa, rather than allowing two lane traffic coming from Dayrell's Road on to Hastings Road and from Hastings Road on to Dayrell's Road. St. Matthias Church is the site for several funerals and church meetings, and very frequently we have a tremendous bottleneck in this area because we have not re-routed the traffic in the area. I have written to the Ministry on this matter and I hope that early attention is being given to it.

I am also very concerned about blind corners in the area. I want again to thank the Ministry for having done changes to the St. Matthias, Hastings Road, Highway 7 Road corner. That has seen a tremendous improvement and it has already minimized the number of traffic accidents occurring at that junction. But there are two very terrible junctions further up, Garden Gap No. 1 and Garden Gap No. 2, which also adjoin Highway 7. In fact, with Garden Gap No. 1, its danger is increased by the fact that if you come up Skeete's Hill there is no sidewalk and a long piece of high wall almost completely obscuring the vision of people coming onto the way. I should like to know whether in the Minister's plan for the next financial year provision has been made for improving this junction.

The other area that is very serious indeed is Dalkeith Hill, which leads right into Dayrell's Road, and on the other side it goes on to upper Dalkeith going into Britton's Hill, near to the constituency of the Member for St. Michael South Central and adjoining the constituency of the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the honourable Member for St. Michael South. There are several children traversing that area on mornings; some go to the St. Paul's School, others to the Seventh Day Adventist Secondary School, others to the Garrison Secondary School, and some are traversing to go over to Bay Primary School. In addition, a lot of traffic coming from Highway 7, from Christ Church, comes across Dayrell's Road, goes up Dalkeith Hill and turns left to go through Collymore Rock, or it turns right to get away back across the country. I think that if a traffic study is done of that area, the Minister would see the urgent necessity for either urgent compulsory acquisition of land or asking some of the owners of the land to donate the land for road widening and sidewalks in that area. I have known at least one land owner who has told me that he would be prepared to give the land to the Government which would have to be taken for road widening. I am very concerned that we may get a serious accident on that hill before dealing with the problem of road widening.

I wish the Minister could tell us, in relation to the money available and the projects with the World Bank, the order in which it is proposed to do road maintenance for the several roads which have been included in that scheme.

I want, not only to ask the Minister questions and have replies, but in the area of transport the Minister would be pleased to hear that I have heard nothing but praise for the improvement that has taken place in the bus service. Certainly the constituents in Fordes Road and those areas who are very heavily dependant on the transport services are pleased with that improvement and the frequency of the service, the standard of the service being rendered by the people at the Transport Board and the standard that is maintained in the buses themselves. I think that the Minister should take some congratulations for this.

The Minister would find that we in Christ Church West put our case strongly and we give praise when praise is due, but we would not like the thought to go abroad that since we are not an area that does have a significant proportion of middle-income people that there are no problems existing in this area. Some of the problems are much more serious than I have seen in other areas to which attention has been paid. For instance, I cannot understand why in the 20th century, we should still have areas like Worthing View where a road has never seen water mains, and electricity has only been placed there since the area came within my constituency in the beginning of 1981. I do not believe that people in the planning department have taken cognisance of this problem at all. That is really what bothers me, because if you are in the main Rendezvous Road, you may tend to believe that you only have terraces and that you do not have the other tenantry areas that are hidden from view. I would not like the people who are the technical advisers to the Minister to ignore, at all, the pressing needs of this part of the island.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, just one.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will in a minute. I just want to inform the Committee that it appears to me that we have just about three hours more debating time for this Bill before I bring down what is known as the guillotine.

The honourable Member may continue.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Before he gets up, Sir, I am glad that you made the comment. You must bear with me on this occasion. I am in no position to tell members on the Opposition benches what to say, or how long to say it and when they should say it, but I believe that I can draw from my experience of being on the Opposition benches for ten years. It really hurts me deep inside to see that I have made an offer to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to tell me the Heads that they would like us to call – and I am prepared to call them, so that they can have a good debate on them – and we can have this situation. We have had debate from Monday to today, Friday and with only three hours to go there are important Ministries to deal with.
4.15 p.m.

All Ministries are important, but I mean Ministries that would have a high visibility in debate: Education, Health – let us forget Housing, because we had a long debate on that – Information and Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation. I am offering these to you. The Government is not running away from a debate. It is really hard to sit down here all day and hear Members on the other side – well, I will overlook Transport and Works, because that is parish talk that you will get all the time; people would like to hear their constituency when they ask for roads, water, and lights, I accept that – dealing all the time with a Subhead 1 or Subhead 2, when they can look at the capital programme and make an overall speech on it. I believe this will help both sides. We are not running away from it. I cannot tell you how to debate, but I am appealing to Members on the other side. I extended this courtesy to the Deputy Leader. You tell me the Heads that you would like to debate, prepare yourself and come in. It is really boring, silly, and stupid that from Monday until today, we have three hours to go and important Ministries have not been touched. And you call yourselves a responsible Opposition!

I beg to move, Sir .....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I cannot allow the honourable Member .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not entertaining the honourable Member. The honourable Member will have a chance to speak, but not at this time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am responding to remarks the honourable Member made, because that is a clever way to be reflecting adversely on the Opposition.

Mr, CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

Dr. Haynes sat and rose again.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To debate the matter before the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. The Chair has not caught your eyes. Please take your seat. Please be seated!

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: I took the point from the Minister in respect of reviewing the problems of the Spring Garden Highway as regards crossings and that sort of thing. I also take the point of the massive lighting on the highway. But how is it that other housing development areas such as Fernihurst, Rosemont, and Rockford Developments for nearly over four years have not seen a street lighting system up there. I am asking the Minister what could really be responsible for neglecting a housing development after nearly four years?

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I am grateful for the contributions that Members have made on this Head, Ministry of Transport and Works, and I should like now to offer answers to the many questions that they posed. Sometimes I get the impression that Members do not really want answers, they just want to pose questions, but I would like to make a few points.

First of all, Barbados is among developing countries, and when I am talking about developing countries I am speaking about in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, a country with the highest percentage of paved road surface. We attended a conference in Africa last year and international agencies were astounded when they discovered the number of paved roads we have in Barbados. They said that that is far outside of the norm. As a matter of fact, the United States was even included, and Barbados is up there in terms of density, the number of paved miles per capital. Barbados is way ahead of the United States.

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member for St. Michael West concedes that point. It therefore has to be borne in mind whenever we think of these matters that we just cannot go ahead and create new roads willingly. There has got to be some developmental process, a plan by which we increase the road stock in the tenantry areas or maintain what we have already. As a matter of fact, major lending agencies are already telling us that we ought to abandon some of the roads in Barbados because of the fact they do not serve any real economic purpose. We do not take that point, however, because we believe

that since we have come to expect that high level of service, we have a duty to maintain them within our capabilities, and that we are attempting to do.

In this respect, when the Barbados Labour Party introduced the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, it set out not only to make lands available to residents of these areas at ten cents a square foot, but it also stipulated that proper road facilities should be provided for the people in these areas – water where there was none and roads where there were none. So we have a view of the total concept of the improvement of the quality of life of the people in these tenantries, and we have done a massive amount of work in this Tenantry Programme, particularly because, as honourable Members will know, not too many of them were serviced by the smallest thing in so far as roads were concerned. There were tracks across rocks and valleys.

We have done excessive re-development work in Bel-Air in St. George, Black Bess in St. Peter, Bowmans, Trents and Husbands in St. Lucy and Drax Hall in St. George; there are no plantation tenantries in Christ Church that are sufficiently advanced in so far as the title deed of transfer is concerned. These tenantries that I am referring to are those tenantries that were sufficiently advanced in the transfer process, and the lands have been surveyed by the Ministry of Housing and turned over to us, the Ministry of Transport and Works, for improvement. We have improved all those areas that I have mentioned and also in Canefield, St. Thomas. These areas were desolate and dismal, scandalous places for people to live. But today, under the Barbados Labour Party programme, they are comfortable residential communities in which people can have pride.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I have no quorum.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the bell be rung.

The bell was rung and a quorum formed.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The flight that used to go on from these rural districts has stopped effectively, and, far from the flight, people are now seeking to come back into these areas that were once regarded as no place at all for anybody to live.

In terms of our future development strategy for road works in Barbados, I would like to further point out that not only do we deal with what is happening at the moment, we are forward planners, and already we know what our programme is going to be down the road five years from now and all of the major programmes we will undertake in the Ministry of Transport and Works. One of the things that we will be doing this financial year is the introduction of a pilot programme of concrete roads. We will be introducing concrete roads to Barbados for the first time on an experimental basis to see how it wears as compared with the conventional surfaces, and to see if we can amass some data with respect to utility and cost *vis-a-vis* the traditional road surfaces. We do know that the marl we use in Barbados is a smooth and soft material and it does not wear as well as harder surfaces. The Prime Minister has already alluded to the fact that there is a trade-off between long wearing road surfaces and long wearing vehicles tyres, and one would have to check the relative advantages between tyres and roads to see where the best economics will lay.

4.25 p.m.

A number of questions were posed by the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin). He asked about the buses and the mix of buses that we have. At the moment, we have a fleet of 156 Leylands and 132 Mercedes Benzs. We still have 13 Seddons operating, but these are due to go out of service shortly, and we have some other Seddons which have not yet been condemned.

The Seddon, as everyone will know, has been one of the most disastrous bus chassis purchased for Barbados. The engineering specifications were faulty and the buses wore tyres on a very accelerated basis. Front tyres on Seddons used to last weeks, and therefore the running and the maintenance costs of Seddons in the fleet were extremely high indeed, and they also broke chassis, and we had to take a conscious decision to retire those buses. We have gone past that decision now and we are retiring all of the Seddons in the fleet and we are replacing them with Mercedes Benz and Leylands. The Leyland component of the fleet is considerably higher than the Mercedes component.

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Yes, the original batch of Mercedes that were purchased and had difficulty negotiating the hills in Barbados were purchased with the wrong gear ratios. That was a technical error on the part of the persons who were specifying, they specified the wrong gearing with the result that the buses had difficulty negotiating the hills, but there is no difficulty now. All of that has been settled.

The honourable Member raised a question about the Mercedes units in so far as the brakes are concerned. We have had some problem with the brakes of the Mercedes. The first batch of buses that we had had a special device. The engine was used as a braking device together with the brake drums, but drivers were not actuating the engine breaks, with the result that whenever they wanted to stop, they just went for the drums and they wore at an accelerated rate. We have since changed that specification, and the last batch of buses that we bought have now

been equipped with self-actuating engine brakes. Whenever the brake pedal is touched, the engine brakes cut on automatically, but some drivers who have not yet been sufficiently trained in the use of this braking device, have been hitting the brake pedals so hard, after driving so fast, that they go right past that point where the engine brake is supposed to cut in. In other words, they by-pass that braking device altogether and go straight to the shoes, and the result of that is that we have had an inordinately high level of wear.

Part of the reason why we have introduced schedules is not only to improve the reliability of our service so far as passenger time is concerned, but it is a device to slow down drivers, to force them to operate those units at the specified speed, so that there will not be the need for that constant braking that happens. There are some drivers in the fleet who drive Mercedes Benz who can get 75 000 kilometres out of one set of brakes, other drivers driving the same unit get 35 000. So you can see immediately that one driver who operates the unit as it is intended to operate gets infinitely more utility out of it than another driver who is to learn how the brakes ought to be employed.

We have not had any problems with the chasses on the small Mercedes buses. I should also mention that that braking system, as I said, has been upgraded. Mercedes have accepted that they will improve the brake drums at no cost to the Transport Board. This has been put on to the warranty for the Board.

The honourable member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) has drawn my attention to a number of areas in his constituency that need attention. Under the World Bank Programme, as I indicated earlier when he was not present, Garden Gap in Worthing is scheduled to be done in 1985. Brathwaite Road is on the tenantry programme already, and that is going to be done. The other areas, including Rendezvous I promise him faithfully that I would look seriously into those and within the resources that we have in this financial year, I will try to do as much of it as possible.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) will recall that when he got up in this House some time ago and sought to lay blame on the Barbados Labour Party for failing to do tenantries in his constituency, his leader, the Right Honourable Member for St. John, was careful to point out that it was not fair for the honourable Member to blame either the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party for the problems in Hanschell Land, that the problems in those tenantries derived from the fact that the owners of those tenantries expected Government to go in and improve the roads. But all of that has been amended, and it will be possible for us to go in and give some attention to some of these areas, and I promise him that we will also be doing a part of it in this financial year, so he does not need to despair. We will do the roads and still defeat him anyhow, but that is under consideration.

Another matter that I would like to point out to Members who are anxious about these matters is that we are starting a new programme for bus shelters in the island. We have two prototypes which we have set up, and they are set up on the East-West Boulevard by MTW, and we are going to put them into service. If they look like they are serviceable and people accept that design, then we will be doing several others along points in the island identified by the Transport Board and others as being heavy waiting areas. That will also be happening in this new financial year. Oistins will be done shortly.

The Member for St. James South (Mr. N. K. Simmons) talked about some of the problems that he has in his constituency. He is not here, but we will be doing some of the lighting that he has referred to. There is no lighting along Sandy Lane. I have written to the Managing Director of the Light and Power Company, Mr. McConney, and I have pointed out to him that this area is a difficult area. He has indicated that it is going to be an expensive proposition because there are underground cables running through this part of Sandy Lane. So there are no poles, and we will have to put standards in like the Spring Garden and seek to illuminate this area. But it is an area that is taking our attention, and I believe that it is reasonable to expect, that not too long from now, we will be able to do something to improve that particular area of roadway.

4.35 p.m.

Under the World Bank programme we are going to be spending $38 million, but not one time. The programme is phased over four years, and it will be taking care of most of the major problem areas along our major highways – Highway 7, Highway 1, Highway 2, Highway 5. Most of these areas are going to fall into that programme, so one needs not concern oneself too much about that.

The other major problem area is the north access road, which is a $30 million project financed by the Caribbean Development Bank, and we are going to be starting that later this year. That will improve the access between the cement plant and the clinker area down in Belleplaine, St. Andrew, and also eliminate some of the problem areas like Benn Hill, for example, which is very dangerous, particularly to school children. It will bypass that and improve the area generally. So we are involved in a very ambitious programme that seeks to rectify most of the major problems that I have heard alluded to in here today.

I should like to reassure honourable Members that the Ministry of Transport and Works is a planning Ministry. We do not just do things willynilly. There is no

programme in the world that I can devise, there is no system that can be devised that will altogether eliminate the fears of honourable Members that they are not being overlooked. The honourable Member for St. Philip North has alluded to a road system where one constituency will get now and the other will get the next time. What happens in that system is that while one is getting now the other one is asking why it is not getting now too, so problems still emerge. We are going to sort all of these out to the extent that it is humanly possible to make sure that the resources we have to spend are spent in the interest of the taxpayers of Barbados. I believe we have said enough on that matter and I will rest my case.

The question that the sum of $43 839 085 under Head 84 – Capital – Ministry of Transport and Works, stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I can tell honourable Members on the other side that my offer for them to call the Heads at this point in time still stands. I propose to call Tourism as we have already instructed officials to come down. If you want Health called after, I am prepared to do it, and I am going to call Capital.

I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: 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. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.00 p.m. today.

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

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

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 resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, just before the suspension of the sitting the Leader of the House did make a statement which I believe may have been misunderstood and which may have given the impression, or Members may have got the impression that there was a discussion between the Leader of the House and myself about calling the Heads during these Estimates or that we had a discussion during these Estimates about that particular matter. I was not in the House at that particular time, but the matter has been drawn to my attention.

I have since spoken to the Leader of the House and we are agreed that there was no discussion relating to the calling of the Heads during these Estimates or specifically in relation to these Estimates. I do recall that some years ago there was an offer from the Government side – in 1977, many years ago – about that, but there was no specific discussion about that for these Estimates.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, that is quite true. From 1977 and since I became Leader of the House the offer still remains, and that is the point which I am making. We have offered it to them and they have never accepted it. If they have misunderstood it and want to chastise their leader, it is a matter entirely for them, but we have made the offer to the Opposition, I have taken over the leadership of Parliament and therefore that offer is still there, and I would hope that they would adhere to my request.

Head 85 – Capital – Ministry of Tourism and the Environment – was called.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I do not really quite understand what the Leader of the House just said, in spite of the explanation given by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that there was no discussion on the calling of Heads for these Estimates, and I am saying that as far as I know there was no discussion on the calling of Heads in 1978 or any year thereafter. If he is saying now at this late stage that the offer he made in 1977 is open, I recall them saying that our having not accepted the offer in 1977, in 1978 they said all bets were off. So to say that it has been open is to mislead everybody.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am really sick. I must confess I am a little sick of you. I do not deal with you period. I am really angry with you, too!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You have a way of saying things and then asking me outside to make peace. I am not making any peace with you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I shall not entertain this matter anymore. May we have the Heads?

HEAD 85 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND THE ENVIRONMENT – $7 095 544

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 85 – Capital – Ministry of Tourism and the Environment – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Subhead 2 – National Conservation Commission – says "development of Fosters Funland and improvement to Foster Hill for recreational purposes and tourist attraction." I wonder if the Minister can indicate under this subhead what progress has been made with the plans for using the ridge right up to Skeetes Bay area and the designation of that area as a recreational district. How soon after leaving Fosters Funland and Foster Hill is he likely to be going in that area towards the Bath-Skeetes Bay district? Are there any plans for any work in that particular area?
5.15 p.m.

Under Beach Protection, are there any plans for work to be done at Crane and Foul Bay in St. Philip, which have been very badly eroded, and in my opinion are in much worse condition than Rockley Beach? I see Rockley Beach is designated for beach protection work. The Crane Bay and Foul Bay have got to the stage that you cannot even get down there using the road you used to use before. There has been a lot of erosion at both those beaches, and I want to know if any work will be done on those areas shortly.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): On Subhead 4 – Sanitation Service Authority, I see that included in the description is "to repair roads at Westbury and other cemeteries." The honourable Member for St. Andrew, when he was Minister responsible for this Head, visited with me and we made a tour of the Westbury Cemetery and we examined the church, and indeed he had come because I had raised questions concerning the wall at Westbury Cemetery and Westbury Road itself, which had fallen away and which at that time was constituting a danger to the public. Soon thereafter, that part of the wall which was in fact dangerous was removed, and my recollection from our discussion then, and his subsequent statement, was that it was the intention to realign the few graves that would come on to the wall itself, and to make a sidewalk on Westbury Road which we all agreed was dangerous to the public.

Since then that honourable Member moved to another Ministry, and since then there has been absolutely nothing done either about the renovations to the church in Westbury which at the time, some considerable time ago, were very urgent. We were agreed that in terms of the roof, in terms of the organ and in terms, generally speaking, of the dilapidated state of the little chapel in Westbury, something would be done.

I do not know if it is because Ministers who succeeded him had no personal interest in the matter, but I think that it is unacceptable that that chapel, which serves all the denominational persons who pass this earth, and that means we are talking about two to four funerals on average per evening, should be in such a state. I think that money spent on that chapel is money well spent.

More particularly, since the removal of the wall there has been a gaping open wall, an open hole, if you like, an open area where anyone who walks along Westbury Road is choc-a-bloc with the graves, literally. If it is the decision not to repair the wall and not to do the realignment, I think we should hear, in which case I wish to disagree with any such decision, but in any event I believe the time has long passed since that work should have been in progress.

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): If the honourable Member will give way I am not quite following his point. I would like to be able to answer his question. I am not trying to be funny, I do not understand what he is saying.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Okay, I will go over it again. We are talking about Westbury Cemetery. The wall along Westbury Road, what would in fact be the last 200 yards of the wall going north on Westbury Road, was dangerous and in a state where it would, if a piece of it had fallen off, crush any pedestrian passing near that wall. Arising out of a Question in this House and representation which I made to the then Minister, the Minister made a tour of the cemetery and we examined the wall, together along with the technical officers from the Ministry of Health at that time.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am reminded by him, technical officers from the Ministry of Communications and Works.

It was agreed, and he subsequently made a statement to the effect, that the decision had been taken that we would realign a few graves – there were about three or four graves which had gone right up to the wall and which would need some re-alignment as had been done at St. Mary's – and that the wall would be brought in from the road, since in its condition that it had been built

many years before, it was considered to be dangerous for pedestrians walking along that stretch of road. That was some three or four years ago.

At the same time, I had drawn to his attention on that same tour that the chapel in the cemetery itself was in a dilapidated condition. Some of the woodwork in the ceiling had been eaten by termites and the organ itself had been suffering as a result of the termite attack. It was not a matter of contention, it was agreed that that was an area of priority which, in relation to maintenance to the cemetery, would be tackled. I have not raised any questions about it since then, but now I think enough time has elapsed because the wall has been removed and nothing has been done since. Nothing has been done to the chapel at all. There has been no renovation, no refurbishment of the chapel, and I am drawing it to the attention of the Minister now and to the House that this is an area where I think that certainly there should be some effort made, especially with regard to the wall.

It is not proper, in my view, that the danger which existed then has remained unsolved, that is, persons walking along Westbury Road are still in danger so far as the traffic is concerned, because there is no sidewalk. And the wall has not been rebuilt, so that for about 100 to 200 yards going due north on the Westbury Road the cemetery is exposed for those persons who are walking and/or moving on Westbury Road. I am drawing it to the attention of the Minister.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): I do not know if it is very fair, brilliant as the Minister responsible is, if we should press him unduly, since he has not very long taken up office.
5.20 p.m.

I can tell you that during my time, while environmental and coastal matters were under the Ministry of Housing and Lands – this is in answer to the questions asked by the honourable Member for St. Philip North – studies were carried out on the west and south coasts. Those studies revealed quite a lot of things. I have had a pre-feasibility report from the consultants who came in to do it, and not only did they present it in the written form, but they made a slide presentation as to what is happening all around in Barbados. They carried out a very careful study.

From time to time we have had discussions about the coral reef of Barbados and the amount of damage that is done by sewage going into the sea to coral and other sea life. We have had discussion to do with the amount of detergent that is now going into the sea and the problem of fertilizers in run-off.

From what is recognized on the south coast tremendous damage has been done and it will take several years to rehabilitate the life that is there. That is why the sea urchin known as sea egg to us has virtually disappeared from our shores, and a lot of other sea life as well has gone. With respect to the west coast, it is felt that a little life is there and unless you take immediate steps that that sea life would go. Because of this report which came to us, Government has taken the decision to sewer the south and west coasts as a matter of urgency, and the south coast, in my view, should be given priority by technical people in Barbados. A lot was said about technical advice during the debate on the Estimates. I want the Opposition to know that I feel like them. A lot of people who come to give technical advice are pure jokers and just come to see what they can get and carry away. A lot of them come in and certainly must pick the brains of local people in order to be able to construct anything. They work in six months, sometimes less, for what it would take the local person to get in ten years. It is time that we develop our indigenous expertise and tell the people from abroad, "We do not want to hear much from you," because they know very little about what is going on.

We agreed with the presentation which had inputs from people who have had much experience over the years, particularly Mr. Archer, who has had immense knowledge in this field, sanitary engineering, and who has developed an expertise which is recognized throughout the Caribbean area, and who is called upon, from time to time, to advise the countries within the Caribbean. He has come to the conclusion, with others locally, that it might be a sensible thing to do the south coast first.

We have been having serious problems at Sam Lord's Castle, and the management of Sam Lord's Castle – they would have been acting on the advice of the owners – have sought the advice of some American marine experts who have offerred to come here and do a study of the area off Sam Lord's Castle. They asked for the advice of the Government and we told them that they could bring in somebody if they wished, but they would have to submit the findings to us and let us know what they are doing, and that they would not be entitled to interfere with anything unless they come back to us. We have a person on staff, albeit temporarily, Dr. Chambers, who looks after coastal conservation. She is an expert in this field.

We have seen developed on the west coast situations where people go and put up groynes and other things only to find that within a short period, valuable properties next door fall into jeopardy. That is to say that they have interfered with the whole cycle of movements on the sea shore and have created a ripple effect. It is my considered judgement, and I have put this forward at a meeting I had with these people, that what is happening in Barbados is part of a world phenomenon. In Florida, you are having coastal problems because of serious beach erosion. It has happened in Trinidad, in actually all the territories in the Caribbean area. It has happened in

Africa, where you are having serious destruction of the coast around the Horn of Africa and the Sahara coast. You will see the serious problems that are there and the type of dust which you are getting in the Sahara. Barbados is not separated from what is happening in the world. We are seeing strange weather conditions, especially related to cold fronts. In countries where it used to be warm at certain periods it is today becoming very cold. This is a situation that we do not know about, so we have to watch what is happening.

Before that aspect went over to the Environment, we were looking at the thing known as seascape. Someone who lived in Florida and carried out an experiment utilising plastic and setting up barriers at certain points. Those barriers would be buffers to the sand and the sand accumulates around these barriers. With respect to Barbados, certain types of remedial work has been done. But we find that there is a problem, for instance, at the Crane. A decision was taken to purchase a piece of land at the Crane from the Crane Hotel with a view to putting boulders there to see if we would be able to get the beach built up again, so that the people from the Crane catchment area would be able to go there and park their vehicles, because you cannot park again at the Crane; all have been removed. The same thing, I gather, has been happening at Foul Bay. But you cannot do work in isolation, because you would create problems. I do not know if that answers you, but that is what I know about.

With respect to the position at the Westbury Cemetery, the honourable Member for St. Michael West did raise this question on the floor of the House, and we went to see the conditions there, which were, in fact, deplorable. The wall fell, through no fault of anybody. The wall was not put up in the best of condition, it was not buttressed at all, the soil came heavily against the wall and there was no wall protection, and the wall fell down.

We met with our technical people, and MTW at the time sent the engineers and an estimate was made for the removal of the graves, and arrangements were made to remove the graves, after consulting with the owners of the graves. If need be, we would have compulsorily acquired the land and remove the graves, as was done in the case of St. Mary's Church.
5.30 p.m.

I was most appalled very recently on attending a funeral at the Westbury Cemetery when I looked up and discovered that the same infected ceiling was still there, the same one I saw a few years ago. I believe officers could have been so busy minding other things, probably less important than that, to give consideration to it, but I will appeal to my colleague and my successor to give attention to that problem. The cemetery, as the honourable Member for St. Michael West correctly says, is an area where congregations of all denominations meet, where all people meet. If you do not have a church of your own, you can still go there and be serviced, and I think it is an area that should be looked at and given the best facilities that are possible. The Government has control over it, and it is the Government's duty to ensure that the facilities are put right. It is no credit to us if a person comes from abroad and finds that our main cemetery-church is in the condition that it is in. It is not going to cost much, because the roof is a good roof; all you need is just to effect minor repairs. It would not, in my view, cost $2000 to do, and a matter like that should not have an honourable Member rising to his feet for two years to ask about it.

The wall was dangerously perched. The remaining part represents a hazard to walkers and to the traffic, and Government might well find itself not having to pay for the putting up and removal of the wall, which was estimated at some $14 000 or $20 000 at the time – it might be about $30 000 now by MTW standards – but might find itself probably paying away $100 000 for the destruction of the property.

Hon. A. TRUSS: The Ministry of Tourism and the Environment, as we all know – I am not winding up; I just would like to add to what the last honourable Member just said – is a newly created Ministry, and it is a monumental task for the Government. But at the same time it is a very exciting aspect of the Government, because on the one hand we are asked in the Ministry of Tourism to develop tourism, that is to bring as many tourists as possible because it is the No. 1 industry, but by the same token to preserve the environment, because the very nature of more people coming to Barbados has an effect on the ecology and the environment of Barbados. In a way it is ironic, but we have to do a very careful balancing act between trying to develop the tourism industry, on the one hand, and get as many tourists to come to Barbados, and at the same time to reduce the impact that these tourists will have on the environment while they are in Barbados. The Government will have to at the same time create developmental projects that will attract tourism to Barbados, and on the other hand preserve certain of Barbados' historical buildings, historical sites and certain parts of Barbados that is considered to be virgin territory in order to ensure that the environment of Barbados is maintained.

To answer the question by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), in the Estimates there is a specific amount for the Sanitation Service Authority – Capital Estimates – for $110 000 for replacement of a section of the Westbury guardwall, so during the course of this year the wall will be replaced. We recognize that the wall was in imminent danger of falling and it has been removed and will be replaced in this current financial year.

Asides.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I believe so. It is not specifically stated. The $110 000, as is my understanding, will go as far as it possibly can, and we are mindful of the fact that the previous Minister had made a commitment not only to fix the wall but to address the chapel. We will try to do both things.

Points were raised by the Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) in relation to Skeetes Bay, Fosters Funland and Bath. Government has looked at these and deemed them suitable for a national park. This is one instance when the Ministry of Environment will control the Ministry of Tourism. Barbados is fortunate in so far in that it is so stratified that on the west coast we have very exclusive hotels and restaurants that charge a lot of money, and on the south coast we have the less expensive hotels and restaurants. On the east coast we have the natural beauty of Barbados, basically virgin territory and untouched for several hundred years. Bearing that in mind, the Ministry of Environment would like to cultivate that aspect of Barbados and sell it as part of Barbados tourist industry, because in the various tourist markets around the world, you will find that people, come down here looking for different things. When Americans and Canadians come to Barbados, they like to stay in good hotels and participate in drinking, the sun and sea and going out to night-clubs, and things of this nature. The European tourists, United Kingdom to a lesser extent but Continental Europe, are a different type of tourist animal. When they come to Barbados, they look for virgin territory, they participate more in what is happening in Barbados, they become more involved in the cultural expression of the Barbadian people, they want to go on hikes on the north eastern part of the island. So by the preservation of this national park on the eastern part of the island, and by the development of the south and west coasts, we are able to attack as many markets as possible, North and South America on the one hand and the U.K. and Continental Europe on the other hand, because even though the U.S. dollar is very strong at the moment – and bearing in mind the fact that we are tied to the U.S. dollar, the European visitor obviously will show a decline – I still think that over the last year we have held our own. We have had over 67 000 visitors from Europe this year, about three per cent down from the figures of last year. But Barbados is still indeed the largest tourist destination in the Caribbean, so we have to create a situation in which we would be able to cater to the interests of tourists who come to our shores from all over the world.

In relation to the Coastal Conservation Project which the honourable Member for St. Philip North asked about – and I am sure there will be other questions and I will be happy to answer them, let me say that the Government is very mindful of the fact of what is happening in his part of the parish, Crane Bay and Foul Bay to be precise. We have addressed our minds to these areas as well. More particularly, on the south-west coast of the island there appears to be a lot more serious problems that face us at the moment, and there is a question of resources and priorities.

5.40 p.m.

Most of the coastal erosion that is taking place on the south coast is as a result of the fact that on the south coast there are many hotels, and as a result of the pollution, sewage and runoff, 95 per cent of the coral reefs on the south coast are totally destroyed. On the west coast 50 per cent of them have been destroyed, so there is still a chance of saving the other 50 per cent. The extension of the Bridgetown Sewage Plant, which will be the South Coast Sewage Plant and the West Coast Sewage Plant, will start this year, and it has been decided that we will work first on the south coast side in order to stop further deterioration of the south coast, and immediately thereafter start on the west coast. In the meantime, studies are being carried out by the Coastal Conservation Project Unit within the Ministry of Tourism and the Environment on beaches all around the island but the main emphasis at the moment is on the south and west coast.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On the question of the National Park, the honourable Member has said that they have detailed the national park. Every year, my constituency holds a recreational activity for the constituents, an excursion, and this year we have been able to secure Archer's Bay after some considerable time, because the owner of Archer's Bay has not allowed persons to come there, and he has given me permission to say publicly that he has had tremendous difficulty because the area, having been announced as part of a national park, nothing has happened since then, so he is in a peculiar position where he is unable to utilise his property in terms of people who have been after him, for example, to purchase some part of his property to assist him in the development, because his taxes are high. He has to pay taxes on a continuing basis and yet he has not received any formal notice from the Government that it intends to acquire the land, or that it proposes to acquire part of the land.

So ever since 1977, I believe, there has been a deviation from a decision that had been taken by the Democratic Labour Party. There was an agreement to purchase large tracts of land at Archer's Bay for recreational purposes and sporting facilities. This is 1985, and the poor owner of that property has not been able to get any indication from the Government as to what to do. I really think that that is a little bit unreasonable in all of the circumstances. If the Government is going to utilise the property, then the Government should take steps, even if they are not able to pay – I mean, I am not going to speak for the Government; it may very well

be they might wish to pay in bonds; that is another story – but the point is that the uncertainty which now exists is definitely not fair to the individual concerned, and I think in that respect that he is not the only one. The owner of Archer's Bay is not the only one on that stretch running from the north all the way up to the east coast to the southern tip of the island.

I recall very well it was during the Estimates that the then Prime Minister spoke of the plan which the Government had for making that stretch of land into one national park. Quite frankly, one could understand that the Government could not purchase all of the east coast in one fell swoop, but I think that what the Government ought to be able to do is to identify the designated areas in a more specific way so as to allow the owners on the east coast to take whatever steps they can to recover some kind of remuneration to assist them in defraying their considerable costs. Unfortunately, while the Government may have designated these areas as a national park, nobody has told the tax collectors that there is going to be any reprieve from the valuations which have been described as "prime hotel land."

Again, the honourable Member will recall that the Prime Minister, in his capacity as Minister of Tourism, has announced that in the context of the Government's own thinking and his own thinking on development for hotel purposes, he had declared what I choose to call zones. The east coast was designated, as far as I recall, as an area where hotel development would be welcomed, so there you have owners of these properties somewhere between two stools. They would like to be able to go out and offer their properties as potential areas for development of hotels, they have had no designated areas, although the Government has pronounced on a National Park, and they are all left in the most unfortunate position of a citizen when he is neither fish nor fowl so far as the Government is concerned as he perceives it. I would wish the Minister to address that matter, if more definitively, in regard to the national park.

I wish also, very inferentially, to suggest to the Minister that since he indicated that under Subhead 4 $100 000 has been allocated to the repair of the wall at Westbury, the note on Subhead 4 says "to repair roads at Westbury and other cemeteries" and I think that an amendment of this note would be in order. If this note is not amended, any use of the monies allocated here for the repair of the Westbury Road would, in my opinion, be virement.

Hon. A. TRUSS: On a point of elucidation: The honourable Member is quite correct but, hidden in the Estimates, but identified as I said, there is $15 000 specifically for the chapel. I understand that the chapel, as it presently stands, has already been upgraded. New pews have been added and it has been enlarged, but the roof has to be fixed entirely, if that is the point you are making and $15 000 has been specifically allocated for the renovations of the chapel.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I recognize that the Minister is new to the Ministry and would not be seized of it and I will not take this opportunity to embarrass him because that is not the object of the exercise today. I think, however, that if anybody indicates to him...

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: There is $110 000 in the Estimates for repairs to roads and cemeteries.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No. It says "to repair roads at Westbury and other cemeteries."

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I think the important thing is that the money has been voted for the road and other cemeteries.

Aside.

5.50 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: It says 'to repair roads at Westbury and other cemeteries". You have been a Government Minister yourself, and the Minister himself can determine all the cemeteries which would include Westbury Cemetery; or if extra money is left over, to use it at other cemeteries. I think you know that the Minister would have the discretion when he is drawing down to determine if he is going to do all at Westbury Cemetery or if he is going to use it at other cemeteries, along with the road. I have no doubt that when the road is being done – I think the work will be carried out by MTW – that the wall is going to be fixed. What is important is that the wall is going to be repaired and I think that is the point which we are dealing with.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not questioning that. What I was suggesting is, since money is being voted through Parliament – if you look at the MTW vote itself you will see that that note included guard walls – all I was suggesting is that this note needs to be amended.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If the honourable Member would give way. The honourable Member is correct. The note would have to be amended if it is going to be dealt with under that to include the words "repair of the walls." You will have to do that, otherwise we would have to come back here for a supplementary. It is not under Operating Expenses. The $11 million which you have on the other side will have to be amended here. We will get the amended Note and circulate it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am sorry I was not here when the Minister began his speech. I think that this is his first Estimates as Minister and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on holding such a

portfolio. I have no doubt that he will bring his usual hard work, precision, vision and power to the post successfully, as he has done so often in any assignment that has been given to him. I think that his performance at party level more than demonstrates his capabilities. I know he has a fighting spirit and I am sure that you will see him in here on many other Estimates in time to come.

I want to deal with a few of the Heads which are of interest to the island as a whole, but which specifically concern me in the context of my own constituency. I am glad to see that there is provision under Head 85, Subhead 3 for a coastal conservation project and protecting our beaches. There is a specific reference to Rockley Beach. I had in this Committee almost two years ago drawn urgent attention to the serious problem which exists at Rockley. I have been on the beach myself on several occasions, and specifically at the request of some of the users of Rockley Beach, and particularly the residents of the area. I am asking for urgent action. We are concerned that the erosion extends now down to Hastings; it is not Rockley *per se*, but Rockley extending to the Hastings Rocks, in which we have had in the last 18 months or so continuing and serious erosion. Not that it stops at Hastings because the honourable Member would be aware that there is erosion going as far down as the Carlisle Bay area, and that some extends from Rockley right up to the St. Lawrence area.

The Minister's analysis of the reasons for the erosion is well founded. The barrier reef on the south coast has been virtually destroyed and obviously it is necessary for us to stop the effluent from going into the sea and causing further destruction of the barrier reef, exposing the coastline to erosion from time to time. I consider that, of all of the areas threatened, Rockley is the one in need of the most urgent attention, and I hope that the project has now moved from the stage of conception to the stage of execution. I look forward during this financial year to seeing protective measures taken at Rockley to stop any further slippage and at the same time of course to ensure that we provide against future long term erosion.

I think a bit more must be done at Rockley than merely protecting the slippage that has occurred. I think that Rockley is perhaps one of the most used beaches, if not the most used beach in this island. It caters not only to a very high percentage of visitors to our shores, but it caters to a very high percentage of local persons, and I am not merely speaking of residents of the areas adjoining Rockley, I am talking about the whole of Barbados. On any Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday, you will find cars bearing registration marks from all over the island on that beach. It seems that we must improve the beach facilities. I am aware that the Government has acquired the open areas of land which did not belong to the Government, starting from Accra and going up to Skeetes Hill. I am concerned that one or two of the owners of land told me that they have still not been paid for the lands, although the lands have been acquired for some three or four years now. I should be pleased if the Minister would give urgent consideration to settling this aspect of the matter.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Compensation for the persons whose land has been acquired for the purpose of protecting and expanding the facilities at Rockley. The people have not been paid. I do not want to mention particular names, but I will give the names to the Minister if necessary.

What worried me when I enquired is that I understood from the Ministry of Housing that some consideration was still being given with the client Ministry as to whether they wanted to keep the land or whether they were going to give it back and abandon the acquisition. Let me say right away that that will be a serious mistake. I think that that part of the beach ought to be publicly owned, as it is now, and I believe that Government should have a long term project for the beautification of the area, for having proper changing facilities – they have still not been established there although they have been promised for some time – and that we will regulate the areas where people ply their wares on the beach. There has been an improvement in the environment in that area so far, but it is still not up to the high standard which we should expect of a major beach in Barbados, and I am appealing, in the interest of the island in general, but in particular in the interest of my constituency, for the maximum effort being made on that beach.

Likewise, a little along the coastline at the St. Lawrence area, by the Stream, Government has done a good job in opening a window to the sea and providing an area for people to enjoy themselves and providing some parking area, but I think that we also need to protect that area. There is some slippage around the St. Lawrence Bay near to Pisces and extending right back down to Sandy Beach, and it seems that the Minister must give urgent consideration to prevent slippage there and improve the facilities at this beach, including road widening in that corner, although it affects another Government Ministry, in order to improve the visibility for those persons who are using the area.

A lot of the problems of that area of the south coast are probably due to the bad effluent, and this brings me on to the question of the Graeme Hall Swamp. I think the Graeme Hall Swamp is one of the treasures of Barbados. There are not many persons in our island who take the time to walk through the swamp and enjoy the natural vegetation and ecology of this area. I do

not believe that we have placed maximum emphasis on the protection of this asset, and I am appalled to see in the daily Press that once again large numbers of the tilapia fish are being killed by effluent and we do not seem to have researched the reason for this. I believe that there has been some blasting going on in that area, and I think that there is a case for strong warden protection of the Graeme Hall Swamp area. I also know that the question of sewage and the effluent that comes from other places is a worrying one for Graeme Hall, and in this context I really wish the Minister would publish the technical data which is available to his Ministry so that the placing of the south coast sewage effluent in that area will not add further to the problem of killing the natural ecology of the Graeme Hall Swamp area.
6.00 p.m.

There are only two areas of swamp in Barbados of any particular significance for ecology and for beauty. Graeme Hall merits as high a preservation as does the Harrison Cave. I believe it is a natural attraction for tourism, it offers tremendous possibilities for expansion or for providing ancillary services, and I believe that the Government ought to seriously look at the possibility of getting developmental funds from institutions for the long term development of the swamp. I am aware that a limited study has been done on the swamp, but there has been no follow up, and with all respects to the National Conservation Commission they do not seem to have the money available to them, and as a result I do not think one has seen the urgency on this project as one should see otherwise.

I am aware that the Ministry has available to it perhaps one of the best experts in the Caribbean, if not the best expert, on sewage, and whilst I respect his views on some aspects of the matter, I still have grave reservations about an open sewage area, and I am still to be convinced that in the long term, given the down trend of the wind, and given the normal human error that one must look for in maintaining these institutions, we are not creating in a very densely populated area problems for the future. I wish the Government not to stint on spending an extra $2 million by going for an open sewage scheme when they can spend that extra $2 million and prevent problems in the future. It must be remembered that when those open sewage depots are built we are going to be in problems if they do not work efficiently in our major tourist area, because several hotels will be affected, as well as densely populated areas. I have to caution this, and I have to be sure when it gets through that the maximum protection possible has been built in.

I wish the Minister would let us know what proposals his Ministry has for the expansion of the Harrison's Cave. I am told, and I can see from the photographs I have seen some time ago, the area in which we can expand is even more beautiful than the existing cave area, and I wonder whether the cost is not realistic. I do not believe that the expansion will cost us more than two or three million dollars, and it is again the sort of expansion that we can encompass within our developmental plan, because I think it is the sort of thing we could at least get foreign exchange for by a loan either from IDB or one of the other major institutional lenders.

The last point I should like to draw to the Minister's attention is one on which one really has to appeal to the public. If you look through Bridgetown, every building is painted in a different colour and sometimes there is no control on the colours, and they are clashing colours, and one misses the aesthetic flavour that you see in a capital city such as Nassau. I believe that the Government can encourage both those people who reside in larger and inner Bridgetown and the commercial community to have a standardised colour that would add beauty to our capital city.

One can really look at the beauty of Nassau in the type of mushroom pink which they use and recognise that by various incentives built into their rates, because they have no direct taxes, they are encouraged to beautify their buildings on an annual basis. The same applies to Bermuda. These things improve the environment and improve the ecology. I think it is a project in which the Government cannot act alone. I hope that the Bridgetown Beautification Committee and the Chamber of Commerce and some of the service clubs would consider this is a worthwhile venture in which, on the basis of preserving our community for the future, we can join together and improve our environment in the city.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I want to say a few things in connection with a few points raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael West. The designation of the area on the east coast as a national park did not imply that the Government was going to acquire all of the land. It did imply, however, that the owners of the land would have to utilise the land in accordance with a use which was compatible with its designation as a national park. Those areas of the land which were to be acquired by Government would be acquired in the normal way, by compulsory acquisition. In short, the town planning machinery would be used to harmonise the use by the public and by the private sector in a way that it would be consistent with the national park.

Foster's Funland is an area that the Government had designated as being necessary for public acquisition, and only recently we have been discussing with the honourable Member for St. Andrew, the Minister of Housing and Lands, and preliminarily with the Minister of the Environment and Tourism, the urgent need for the acquisition of further areas of land in order to provide some kind of rest or temporary requirement for the area around Barclays Park. Obviously over use has taken place and is having a great effect.

We also have been looking at an area of land which was restricted under the Soil Conservation Act or under the Public Health Act, notwithstanding the fact that developments have reached quite a way between Springfield and Joes River Plantation. You will see an area which was designated for chattel houses; some roads and everything are in there. It is a large area. We have been offered that land. Urgent decisions have to be taken. There is actually money in here for improving the roadway to Foster's Funland so that people would be able to use that.

6.10 p.m.

We are also looking at an area in Joe's River, which would be on the East Coast Road, on the land side. I know quite a bit about what happens in that area of the east coast. Since it has been designated as a national park, there seems to be a feeling that everybody could use it as they like, irrespective of what is the existing use of the owners. Anybody who knows the house at the bottom of Cleaver's Hill, which my family had some connection with and in which I am probably about a twentieth share owner, would know that since surfing has become popular, it has become totally impossible to do anything with it. The surfers have come and taken it over, and there is nothing that you can do about it, unless you want to have a confrontation every time you attempt to ask them to just allow you to observe the surfing yourself. That is what has happened on that coast.

It is fairly obvious that, like the owners of Archer's Bay, Foster Funland and other areas, the people are telling us very clearly the areas which they wish for recognition. So we have to revise our ideas about acquisition and about whether it is possible to allow private ownership and have it compatible with the public's view, because I have not heard anybody yet say that if you want to put up a little gate and charge twenty-five cents or fifty cents, the expressions that would emanate from the people would be repeatable in the House. But this is what we are having, it is a big problem.

I sympathize greatly with the owner of Archer's Bay. I have enjoyed excursions there. I think that the honourable Member for St. Lucy, (Mr. R. E. Brathwaite) is campaigning very strongly about the erection of toilet facilities there. I know that at River Bay we have erected toilet facilities, and we will just have to come to terms with the fact that Government may just have to acquire some land there. Otherwise, the poor owner would be in great difficulty. Even the National Sports Council has difficulty in enforcing entrance at the stadium, and I do not believe that it would be possible. So, obviously, a lot of thought has to go into it.

The other area that I wish to talk about is beach erosion, because I have been on the Planning and Priorities Committee, and I think that we are really very concerned about this matter. But we are facing a difficulty, in that, like economics and a few other matters, there does not seem to be any certainty among the scientists in this area, but politicians have to make decisions. We had a presentation that lasted a whole morning, and then we had a review of the presentation. The engineering consultants and the other consultants argued strenuously as to what was the cause of the erosion and things of that kind. But we have to make a decision. In the meantime, while these consultants were arguing, we noticed that there was a perceptible difference every day in beach erosion, so the Government has made up its mind. I am not telling you that we are going to tell the House that we give you a guarantee that the works that would be started will be the best work. But what can we do? The consultants themselves have conflicting views.

They say that a combination from the runoff from the land and the pollution arising from the sewage – I am not talking only of human sewage – is the cause of the killing of the reef. We have, therefore, scheduled the south coast because there is a much greater concentration of buildings, and we feel that that would be part of the remedial measures. But we had also decided that some sea works have to be done in respect of Rockley and between Sandhurst, where the last groyne for the Oistins scheme was done, and the Hilton Hotel. As long ago as nearly fifteen years, the same people who did the Hilton groyne the Hilton beach works, that is, the works going from the Hilton towards the South, the Zigal Report, had envisaged that something would have to be done. The whole of that sweep will have to be done, and some will be done this year. It is urgent.

With respect to Rockley and the land acquisition, again this is a matter that the Minister may not be familiar with. But a battle took place there because we all had a very nice design for beach facilities, but then the Ministry of Health said that you cannot put sewerage there. So we had to decide on a compromise, we had to delay the erection of the changing facilities until the sewerage scheme was put in. At one time we thought that we could acquire a bit of land, a derelict-looking building between Worrell's Hotel and Chefette and put the toilet facilities there for the users of the beach. But then we found that both that hotel and Chefette have problems and have to pump regularly. So we have to wait until the sewerage scheme goes in, and it is as a matter of urgency that we are pursuing the sewerage scheme. All these are the problems which we have to deal with.

The land that we have and we have acquired, we would love to be able to pay the owners for it, but the owners' conception of what the land is worth and ours are two different things. That is going to be a very delicate negotiation. The reason for that is that the owners were refused Town Planning permission for

building on that area of the land, and our argument is that the land is to be valued at its existing use in accordance with.....

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: A compromise would have to be effected on that. There is no doubt about it.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That would have to go to the Privy Council.

Along Rockley, I trust that honourable Members appreciate that part of the sidewalk scheme is going to involve the knocking down of the Abbeville wall in Skeete's Hill.

(Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Long overdue!)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, again part of the Town Planning permission of a development at Abbeville years ago was that they had to cut down the wall. They never did it.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I remember that very well.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: All of these are problems which we have when the citizens stand up and defy you. And, of course, as soon as you bring the arm of the law into play, you are then accused of being dictatorial, and you become the subject matter of a special column in some of the newspapers. Nevertheless, we have to proceed in this respect.

We are working on Rockley, and we are working on the beach erosion at the Crane and Foul Bay, but we have conflicting advice. We are pretty clear in our minds as to where we are going to go. We are going to go very tentatively. We are going to go and we are going to put in minor groyne work and see how it works. We are going to proceed cautiously to try and reconcile some of this conflicting opinion between the oceanographers and the engineers, because it is a very difficult path. One thing that we know, and everybody is agreed on it, is that you need to put in the sewerage, but others say you need further studies. We do get the impression that sometimes some of these studies are recommended and that we are seeing the same people popping up doing the same studies all the time, but we are proceeding. Those are the areas which we have, and I am very glad to see that honourable Members are agreeing that there is going to have to be some public acquisition.

The Graeme Hall swamp is one that I should deal with, because we also dealt with this at the Planning and Priorities Committee. We want to have a very comprehensive development at Graeme Hall. There are certain consultants in Barbados with a very excellent university connection and they have done a lot of work in Barbados. We would like to see a study placed in their hands because they can pull the resources for the multi-disciplinary approach that is needed. To draw the terms of reference for the study is quite a delicate job. You need a whole ecological study, and that involves a number of disciplines. I cannot disclose the names of the people. It is one of those projects that we would have to give without complying with the rules of asking for a tender, because, as far as we know, the team would be that of the only person in Barbados who has this kind of multi-disciplinary approach.
6.20 p.m.

The consultants are quite firm, and I am directing my remarks to the Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) now, in their advice to the Government that we need have no fear of siting the park. Only part, as I understand it, of the sewage outfall will be in an area not near to Graeme Hall. It is quite a distance inland from Graeme Hall. Perhaps when there is a more definitive description and placing of the marks as to where it is, then honourable Members will not be as fearful about it. We are taking the representations that were made by both the honourable Members for Christ Church West and Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King).

We still have one outstanding problem, and it is a difficult thing we have to face. The land in what was known as the Stream is Government-owned land. There were a lot of people occupying it. We expected it, and they were told that they would have an equivalent of a life occupancy. But some of the people have died and the younger people have now moved in and do not wish to move. And they are renting at a ridiculous rate and we have to stop it. It has to come to an end. We even found buses there, they used to park buses there.

We are very firm on this, so you will hear that the Ministry of Housing and Lands are trying to persuade these people to move. It is like the Community Club on Bay Street – you tell them that this land is to be developed for public use and they keep insisting that they want to stay there. But you have to be firm, and we started with the Community Club. We have got some movement around Graeme Hall. We managed to get a house moved so that we could open the window. We are not going to trouble the old people who have been living there, but when they go, I think it is unreasonable for their successors to expect to be the people with the life interest. We would never get the scheme done.

We have two buses to move from the Stream. It is really ridiculous. We have some old derelict houses, and we have to move on these things. But those are the difficulties that we have; this question of trying to

reconçile private interest with public interest is a difficult one, and sometimes we have to argue it out on the floor of this House and argue with the people, otherwise some of the people in Barbados who write about these matters, who have no experience, of course, in a Ministry or anything of any consequence, misunderstand us and things of that kind.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES (St. Michael North West): The question which I am about to raise, the honourable Member who just sat down could very well assist me with, because I am referring to the beach facilities at Brandons. I think the honourable Member said that the facilities at Rockley were abandoned because of a sewerage problem. If the abandonment of the one at Brandons is due to a sewerage problem, then I will not pursue the problem, but I raised this question primarily because under the last Estimates this matter was dealt with under the National Housing Corporation and this year it has been transferred to the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. The interesting thing about it is that the Ministry of Housing had made provision for certain facilities along that beach. The Ministry which now handles this area apparently has omitted it, and I thought that the omission may very well be due to the problem that the honourable Member just spoke of, that is sewerage problems on the beach. I do not know if this is the same problem that would have arisen on Brandons Beach or, for that matter, along the west coast.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Brandons Beach is scheduled to have a beautiful beach facility, but we have a new dimension that just came into operation. You will recall in the Mini-Budget some $200 000 was made available for the erection for facilities for people to sell on the beaches so as to ensure that we had a specific area where people could go to instead of having people around them. There were six facilities to be erected. Brandons was one of them, and the first photostat went to the Town Planner and the Town Planner was very happy with it, but the Ministry of Health said that since people would be there, you would have to put in toilets. We are still arguing out that.

If in each of these facilities you have to put in toilet facilities where the people are going to sell, you will understand that you are going to be back with the same problems that you have at Rockley. Everything will have to be postponed until all of the sewerage schemes are in. We think that we are going to ride this one out. Brandons, I believe, has a sufficient area of land that a septic tank could possibly operate, but Brandons is an area which will be developed with a proper beach facility.

I say that Barbados is a very lucky place, because nature has given us two of the loveliest beach areas within the city of Bridgetown and we should exploit them to the fullest, Bay Street and Brandons, and we really intend to do that. We may have to depart a little bit from the existing norms, but that is the only way that we will be able to get these facilities established.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I can well understand the Members from Christ Church apprehension about the sewerage project that they are planning, since it is within my knowledge that there are still problems with the sewers in Bridgetown. The last time I spoke to the authorities, I understand that they still seem to be having a problem with the mix between the sewers and the septic tanks, and this has been creating a problem for a very long time. Recently they took sewer from a ship and that threw the balance of the whole thing off, and there was quite a bit of odour coming out from the sewerage treatment plant down there at Lakes Folly. I am trying to find out what is happening, and when will they be able to get the correct balance. I understand the laboratories are in position now, they are doing studies, but there is still this disposal of this waste from the septic tank in Connell Street. This came up last year and the year before. What is so difficult about the balance? I want to know, is the system working? We want to have a definitive answer about what is happening with the Bridgetown Sewerage System. Is it working or is it not working?

Hon. A. TRUSS: I have been trying to keep track of whatever has been happening and trying to answer all the questions that have been raised. Let me start with the last question first. The Bridgetown Sewage Plant, as I understand it, has not been designed for certain types of oily materials, so you will have a problem when there is a construction site or if oil is disposed of from Mobil, or if there is a spill of gasoline, and that is mixed in the sewage. It is not supposed to handle that. What we are trying to do is set up a system which does not presently exist.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I am not thinking about a spill from Mobil. I am talking about sewer coming through the system directly, those already linked up, and sewer coming into the system by way of septic tanks, connecting it to septic tanks allowing it to go into the system.

6.30 p.m.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I am coming to that.

When the cesspool operators go to houses or hotels, they cannot always determine the type of sewage that they extract, because it is mixed as a result of the rain which may bring oily chemicals or things of this nature that cannot be handled by the Sewage Plant. The problem some weeks ago was that the Sewage Plant broke down because certain types of sewage was fed into it and the Sewage Plant could not deal with it.

What has to be done, and what my Ministry is looking into, is the establishment of a manifest. All cesspool operators at present just collect sewage and go to the Bridgetown Sewage Plant. If they are asked by the person in charge where they got their sewage from, and if, in the estimation of the person in charge, the sewage cannot be handled by the Sewage Plant, they are told they cannot dump their sewage at the Plant. The person then goes to Cowell Street, and the reason they have to go to Cowell Street is because there is no other alternative in Barbados, and I will get to that in a moment. The whole point here is that we are running in real danger, because the cesspool operators would sooner or later discover that when they tell the Sewage Plant operator they have come from a certain place they will not be admitted to dump their sewage, they will lie. This is why you will need to introduce a manifest, so that when the cesspool operator arrives at the Bridgetown Sewage Plant, the manifest will indicate on it where the sewage has come from, and, hopefully, we will introduce legislation to avoid persons having to tell lies.

You cannot stop people from dumping sewage in a particular place unless you are able to give them an alternative site to dump. The Ministry is presently looking at the possibility of renting a barge which will go out to sea two or three times a month, depending on the volume of sewage that has to be dumped at Cowell Street, that cannot be handled by the Bridgetown Sewage Plant. We will put it in container drums, 50 or 55 gallons, loaded with cement to ensure that they will sink. They will be sealed, put on a barge, and, on the advice of a marine biologist, they will be dumped three or four miles outside the shores of Barbados. This is a temporary solution and, of course, these things may come back to haunt us ten or twenty years from now, but the alternative is unacceptable, that is, dumping your sewage at Cowell Street. If you put a guard at Cowell Street, they will just dump it somewhere else. Illegal dumping in Barbados takes place at night. It is virtually impossible to police it.

Asides.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I am not making any excuses. Honourable Members on that side will understand at some stage, probably in the next century, that the problems that we are faced with are real problems. We are trying to seek solutions to these problems.

We have a situation in this country where there are people who are not conscious of the environment, and to make a buck, they will dirty it. In 1976, we found alternative means, and one of the major alternative means is to construct a plant that can burn off anything that the Bridgetown Sewage Plant cannot burn off, and the Ministry of Energy is working on such a proposal through the IADB. I think the initial projection cost will be US$21 million. It will generate a sufficient amount of electricity which can be sold back to the Barbados Light and Power, and in five to seven years can become self-sufficient by selling electricity which it will sell to the Light and Power.

The study is presently being undertaken, and we will accomplish two things. We will get rid of the serious major environmental problems which presently exist and we will not be putting a burden on the taxpayers of this country. That is in the long term. In the short term, the best solution we can come up with is the barge which can carry all the sewage, the oil or whatever cannot be handled by the Bridgetown Sewage Plant out to sea and dump it temporarily, hopefully with the view that in the fullness of time we will be able to bring it back and do away with it.

We have the problem of the hazardous chemicals as well. Recently, you may have read in the newspapers that we had to use the St. Lucy Base, formerly the American Base, to burn off chemicals as a result of the fire which happen at the Trading Post in Roebuck Street. We had a serious problem. You had a problem that perhaps could have exploded into a situation like that in Bhopal, India, and there is no real control in Barbados of the importation, manufacturing and control of pesticides or weedicides mixing. It is like nitro-glycerine: separated, the components are, of course, harmless; when mixed, they are extremely dangerous. We have had to be very careful and take these chemicals away from the Trading Post, because we were not quite sure of the danger. They might explode on the population, particularly in the area of Bridgetown, and we had to take them up to St. Lucy, soak them in saw dust and burn them off in a two-phase burner, because the best way of handling any type of chemical or hazardous material or material that cannot be handled by the Bridgetown Sewage Plant is to burn it. That is what we are talking about, but it has to be done with very elaborate skill, and it costs a lot of money.

I hope that will set to rest the minds of the Opposition, particularly the honourable Member for St. Philip North, in relation to Cowell Street.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I find I am a little confused about this oil sewage. I do not quite understand it. As I understand it, the Sewage Plant.....

Hon. A. TRUSS: Let me explain it. Most of the middle-class houses built in a grease trap. Not every householder has a grease trap, so when they wash up their pots and pans, the grease goes straight into the sewage. This goes also for many hotels that are on the street. This is what I mean by the oil substance.

Asides.

Hon. A. TRUSS: It is true whether you believe it or not. It is not a matter of opinion.

Fifteen per cent of the 1 800 people that are supposed to be connected to the Bridgetown Sewerage System are connected. This is a major problem. It is handled by the Barbados Water Authority under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transport and Works. What we are trying to do in the Ministry of Tourism and the Environment is either to take over the Sewage Plant or leave it to them and enforce certain restrictions. The law states that the Water Authority can give a business or private enterprise 90 days in which time they must connect. After that, they can prosecute them, but there is a real problem in the City of Bridgetown. Many people cannot afford to make the connection at this point, and there are several reasons. Sometimes the land is owned by one person and the house is owned by the person living in it and he does not want to go to the expense of making the connection, so only 15 per cent of the 1 800 people that are supposed to be connected to the Bridgetown Sewage Plant are connected.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I wish to get a word in on this whole question of sewage as it relates to the environment. If only 15 per cent of what is anticipated to be connected up to the plant has been connected and the plant is under stress, what will happen when the 85 per cent is connected? I have some difficulty with some of the things which the Minister has said.
6.40 p.m.

There has to be a difference between sewage disposal *per se* and waste disposal. We have industrial waste disposal, we have sewage from the people, the 15 per cent, who have connected under specifications that form part of the total project, and those specifications would have taken into account all the kinds of disposal in the households or buildings which would be disposing the sewage. So I am having a tremendous amount of difficulty, along with my colleague, in understanding the problems as outlined by the Minister.

It seems to me that when we were getting the plant, which is not a cheap plant, we spent a considerable amount of money on putting the plant together, and we on this side are familiar with the projections. We are familiar with the total plans for the Bridgetown Sewage Project, and I recall very well when we sat in the Cabinet and the people who were the consultants for the location of the plant.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You were on a point of elucidation. The honourable Member gave way.

Hon. A. TRUSS: Your point is well taken. The honourable Member for St. Michael West is correct, but I think he misunderstood the point I made when I talked earlier about the oil waste. What is supposed to happen and what actually happens are two completely different things, and that is my personal view, because since I came into the Ministry I asked the same questions. It cannot happen if you have a manifest because then the cesspool operator would have to define where the sewage is coming from.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: So that we can be clear, could he separate out the waste that is coming by vehicle which he has explained by the need for the manifest? As I understand it, the ones who bring in sewage on vehicles are the ones who would lie, for whatever reason. We understand that, but the ones that are connected to the system, the 15 per cent, we do not understand why they would have the same oil/water problem.

Hon. A. TRUSS: The 15 per cent that are connected can be handled quite efficiently by the sewage plant. As a matter of fact, the plant is under-utilised, because it is geared for a capacity of two million gallons daily and is handling an amount of 600 000 gallons. The 15 per cent that are already connected include large industrial disposers of sewage, like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Geriatric Hospital and some of the industries in the area. So it is only 15 per cent in terms of numbers but it is 600 000 gallons as against two million gallons which the sewage plant can handle.

The oil which I mentioned to you at first that damaged the sewage plant came off a tanker. It was poured in a cesspool; the fellow carried it there and dumped it, put a spoke in the wheel and shut down the sewage plant. That could or should not happen again.

Aside.

Hon. A. TRUSS: There is no legislation to deal with what happens to him because the law is not clear.

(A VOICE: When are you bringing legislation?)

Hon. A. TRUSS: I took up the portfolio on February 1, and I do not want to be critical of anything that happened prior to February. You must understand that we are dealing with changing circumstances all the time. I am not saying these things were not thought about, but the point is that they have not yet been implemented. That is the point I am trying to make.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way: He is discussing it in the context of when he took up the portfolio, but we have to discuss it in the context of when the sewage plant was opened. There was somebody administering it, so there must be answers. Could the honourable Member, while he is explaining, say to us, 'All right we have now determined that a certain kind of legislation is necessary and we are bringing it?'

Hon. A. TRUSS: I have said that. I have said that, now we have been able to work out the difficulties with the sewage plant, we are going to bring the necessary legislation to ensure that the checks and balances are brought into play to avoid what has happened in the past from happening in the future.

Another area we have to look at, which is an area that was dealt with at length by the honourable Member for Christ Church West, is the lagoons. I will deal with that, because that is one of the areas that will have to take some load temporarily.....

Interruptions.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I was dealing with the honourable Member for Christ Church West. We are faced with a problem in Barbados where health hazards are caused by polluting not only the land but the sea, and it is a major problem. I have explained to you that the sewage plant handles 15 per cent of the 1 600 people that were supposed to be connected to it, and it is under no stress. It can handle it quite efficiently. I have explained some of the problems that are involved in getting the other people to connect. Although there is a fund – I believe the fund is $600 000 – that people who cannot afford can borrow the money to make the connection, there are problems. The otner problems are in many instances in the area of Bridgetown where we have absentee landlords. They live overseas and the people who live on the land are saying they do not see why they should go to the expense of making the connection to the sewage system, so we have to deal with that problem.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member may wind up. Your fifteen minutes are up and you may come back again.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: I can understand why the Members on the other side are so eager to hammer home their points on a matter which perhaps is new to the Minister. I think it is unreasonable to them, knowing the circumstances of the new Ministry and a new Minister performing that function, to want to extract the kind of information in so short a time, but indeed we on this side are aware of the problems which they want information on, and it is not too big a matter for us here on this side to handle.

On Subhead 3, I want to suggest some points to the Ministry of the Environment, points which I feel are becoming matters of concern to the public and myself, and which I feel need urgent legislation to enforce some matters. One point is the apparent lack of legislation to control the practice of horse bathing on some of our most attractive beaches. This is the concern of many Barbadians who want to enjoy a day at the seaside, and it is a problem for some of our visitors, and I would like to suggest to the Ministry of the Environment that whereas we would not want to restrict horses from bathing on the beaches, there be time limits imposed so that it would bring satisfaction to those who have an investment in horses and to the public.

6.50 p.m.

It becomes a concern when one is relaxing on the beach to find five or six horses attended by very small boys coming down the beach, and those persons who are not used to such an atmosphere begin to panic. It becomes a problem when the horses then begin to pollute the environment by their droppings and no effort is made to clean it while Barbadians and visitors alike are taking advantage of the beaches. We must not forget that a lot of money is spent in tourism overseas telling the would-be visitor of the white sandy beaches of our country, and that these people have come here to enjoy what the advertisements say. As I have said, I would like to see an imposition of hours rather than a restriction on bathing horses.

Another problem which is becoming very rampant in the society of Barbados is the non-reporting of accidents involving animals, which are left exposed to pose a further problem to other motorists. In cases where they are killed, or the accidents take place in residential areas, a most unnatural and offensive stench is left for the public to smell. I think that legislation should be enacted to make it more responsible of the public to make a report to the relevant authority when animals are accidentally killed rather than to be left on the streets or highways to become a problem to the public.

Equally as disgusting is another practice involving vehicles which are involved in accidents, vehicles which are burnt and left on the highways to be disposed of by other persons. I believe that the Ministry of the Environment should also take very serious action in ensuring that the responsibility for the removal of these vehicles becomes the responsibility of the owners in the first place, and that a time period be given to them to have these vehicles removed. A case in point is a vehicle which was burnt about five months ago somewhere in the Christ Church area. The owners left this vehicle by the wayside for a number of weeks, and that posed a problem to on-coming traffic in the night coming around the corner. Without any illumination there was this vehicle perched on one side. In recent weeks, I have noticed that some kind person has pushed the vehicle further on to an embankment, removing some of the danger that that vehicle might cause.

These are things which I feel are causing some concern to the public, particularly the bathing of horses. Also equally disgusting is the practice of leaving these vehicles unattended and I would like the Ministry of the Environment to seriously consider ensuring that some

kind of legislation is enacted so that these problems are attended to with some haste.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I want to deal with a point on the environment which the Minister himself made earlier, the point about the disposal of sewage and waste at Cowell Street. The proposal, if I heard him correctly, is a temporary proposal which would envisage taking waste out to sea contained in 50–gallon drums with cement, using the same techniques the Mafia used in New York to lower bodies when they did not want them to be seen. This is common knowledge.

I want to draw to the honourable Member's attention that this would have to be very carefully thought out. I am not in favour of it because of the seas around Barbados in terms of our environment, and as you know, burial at sea is undertaken under very meticulous conditions. Whereas we may be burying the odd body in a particular area that has been very carefully worked out, when it comes to what will be a fairly large accretion of waste in a relatively short time, even though it is properly packed, the fact is that there are tremendous pressures on the levels where it will start to build up, and it has been demonstrated in some of the honey pot areas, it has been demonstrated in the coastal areas of Florida, it has been demonstrated in certain areas of Australia, that these attempts.....

Hon. A. TRUSS: On a point of elucidation: The honourable Member for St. Michael West is quite correct, but Barbados is a coral island and we have had experts to study this, the question of burial at sea or on land in relation to these matters. The only other area in Barbados where you can bury anything without that fear is the Scotland District.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, I am not questioning the burial at sea at all. I am saying that we accept burial at sea because the danger is not very high. I understood the honourable Member to be saying that there would be a temporary solution, that you would in fact be using the barge to take waste out to sea and that you would dispose of it at sea. That is what I am talking about. I said we have buried at sea, but we accept it because it is very infrequent and does not create a problem, but it is this business of taking industrial and other waste out to sea.

I was going on to make the point, and I showed that there are examples where it has been tried, where because of the intense pressures under the water, even when these cans are packed well, and despite the most elaborate safeguards, that the environment has in fact been contaminated in a number of areas. The problem for us is that once something goes wrong in that regard, for us it is so costly to correct it, not only in terms of discovering but in terms of what it actually will do to our environment, and so I want to caution the honourable Member. I know he said he would be advised by a marine biologist, but it was a marine biologist that advised us on the Stavronikita. It is always somebody who is an expert who advises the honourable Member and myself.

7.00 p.m.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, we have engineers in the Ministry of Health, now the Ministry of the Environment, who have been around for a long enough time that they understand a number of the problems. But out there in the marine area, we have not had, in my view, enough expertise that knows not only Marine Biology – and as a scientist yourself, Sir, you know that we all can graduate and that is what we are deemed, but it then takes some time to learn the craft – and we have not had enough marine biologists in Barbados who have been steeped in the ecological development and growth and moves and patterns in Barbados. What I am suggesting is that we take that kind of advise very slowly and very carefully.

I well remember that when the people who came to advise us on the Sewage Plant, which is now in place, they showed us that an equivalent plant, somewhere in North America, was working so well and so beautifully that after the effluent had been processed, the remaining waters were being used to develop fisheries. I remember seeing the fish swimming around in the water, which was good for the promotional film. But as you know, certainly we are taking a much longer time to get, as my colleague said, the balance. And we are not going to criticize the plant, because we understand that it is new to us. When, however, the honourable Member says that there is a new possibility of spending an additional $50 million to put up a plant to burn off that sewage which cannot be used by this plant, we are talking now about gargantuan sums of money, bearing in mind that we are going to be sewering the south coast and we have been discussing sewering the west coast. We are talking about massive capital development. I think that we have to find better solutions than merely taking advice from persons who would make recommendations of that kind. I have no doubt that the honourable Member will allow himself to be guided by the – I make no apologies for using this term – native advisers in these areas and that we should go very cautiously.

In the context of the Cowell Street disposal of wastage, I think that the time has come for us to make a decision about that, outside of barging the sewage. He has been talking about manifests. But even ships' manifests have a way, if the right things are passed, of not being what they say they are. I say that because I want to make this point. In Barbados today, there is at least one industrial plant that I have reason to believe is misleading the inspectors in this country, as they go to examine the

disposal of a very dangerous industrial waste. And that industrial waste, as I can understand it, is the kind of dangerous industrial waste that will get very easily into our water table.

I do not wish, for obvious reasons, for anyone to push me or to ask me which plant. I will speak to the Minister off the Record and tell him what I think, but I believe my information is good. Apparently what happens is that when the inspectors go to the plant, certain steps are taken to comply with the rules and regulations. But after the inspectors have left, the plant resumes disposing of this waste in a non-professional way, let me put it that way. The point is that the waste which is coming out of that plant is so destructive that, in North America, its equivalent has caused hearings by the environmental division, precisely because they do not know what to do with that waste. We do not have a lot of experience in the disposal of industrial waste, and I think that we have to be extremely careful and – I am going to use my term – we have to be hard-nosed. We cannot afford, in this small country with the peculiar ecological situation to allow our water to be contaminated.

I will say no more at this point, except that I say a word to the wise.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I thank the honourable Member for his cautious remarks and would like.....

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: 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. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that, Sir.

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. S. CRAIG: I beg to move, Sir, that this sitting be now suspended until 7.30 p.m. this evening.

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

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

7.10 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 Mr. J. G. ODLE resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Hon. A. TRUSS: The Ministry of Tourism and Environment handles many areas, and I am quite surprised that we spent the time discussing one area mainly. The Ministry involves building development, water control, marine pollution and disposal of derelict vehicles, noise pollution and waste disposal, which we have talked a little bit about, public cemeteries, environmental insanitation, recreational facilities such as parks and beaches, coastal erosion, which we have dealt with, and the general beautification of Barbados. To deal with some of the areas, and those that were asked by Members on the other side – I have made a list of them – and I would like to point out.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member will give way: Do you mind dealing with the answers at one time when the other Members are here, in due course? I propose to move on to another subhead unless you wish to speak at this point in time.

Hon. A TRUSS: I would like to get this out of the way. You can come back and I will be happy to answer you. I notice you have been very quiet for the whole evening, but I am waiting for you.

The Sanitation Service Authority operates three land fills in Barbados – Kingsland in Christ Church, Workmans in St. George, the Pulverisation Plant, and Black Bess in St. Peter. We have a maior problem in terms of getting rid of the refuse. The land fills can only be sited by law in certain areas that are approved water zone areas. As a result of that, we have run into difficulty, particularly at Kingsland, because of its proximity to the houses in the area and the Authority must very shortly find an alternative site. They are presently looking at an area in St. Thomas, and, hopefully in the very near future, we will be bringing a Bill to compulsorily acquire twenty-five acres in order to provide sanitary land-fill facilities for the Sanitation Service Authority.

In terms of the treatment of sewage is that the Bridgetown Sewage Plant operates very sufficiently and can handle all of the sewage. It handles over 30 per cent of the volume of the sewage, although only 15 per cent of the connections have been made. But the major industrial places have been connected, like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and the Government Headquarters.

We now have to look at the south coast, because it is in serious trouble. Ninety-five per cent of all of the reefs on the south coast are dead as a result of pollution. Open lagoons, as they are commonly called, as mentioned by the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) have to be created, and the area identified is an area in Graeme Hall, but not in the swamp itself. It is 300 metres from Graeme Hall Swamp and 250 metres from the nearest houses. It is an area that will have an open lagoon, and they will have surface aerators which will mix the sewage with the air. We have done studies on this and we have sent our local people overseas, and they have guaranteed us that there are no offensive odours emanating from these open lagoons.

One of the main advantages of these types of systems as against the Bridgetown Sewerage System is the lower capital costs for one. For example, the South Coast Sewerage System, if we go to an aerated lagoon, will cost $3.4 million as against $11 million for the Bridgetown Sewage Plant, and will do basically the same type of work. In terms of energy requirements, it will use about thirty-three and a third per cent less energy to operate than the Bridgetown Sewage Plant and we would not have a problem of the daily disposal of sludge. At the present time, the Bridgetown Sewage Plant, because of the volume, has to get rid of, every two weeks or so, the sludge that accumulates. This is used as fertilizer in the agricultural sector in the country. With a lagoon you do not have to worry about sludge for as much as ten years.

The effluent from these lagoons is designed to be discharged into the ocean after treatment, and again there is no smell and the pollution is minimized. The probability of the effluent reaching the Graeme Hall Swamp is next to nothing. The studies have been done and the effluent will be disinfected and not affect the Swamp which is another of the Ministry of Environment's projects in terms of a national park. It will be a tourist attraction. So on the one hand, we have to deal with the problem of sewage and on the other hand we are cognizant of the fact that we have to protect Graeme Hall Swamp, because it is the only inland water that we have in Barbados where the migratory birds moving from North America to South America settle.

These areas were addressed before I came into the Ministry, as well as after. There are other methods, that is the oxidating ditches and rotating biological contactors, but these are not as efficient as an open lagoon. The open lagoons are perhaps the best we can go with for the south and west coast after several studies have been done.

Many Members mentioned coastal erosion, particularly the honourable Member for Christ Church West, whose constituency is in that area. As a Government, we are very concerned about Rockley Beach, and immediately after the Estimates are approved, money is provided in these Estimates to build groynes from Oistins all the way down to Bay Street. The problem of beach erosion on the south and west coasts, and it has been checked by the experts in Barbados, is that on the south coast between one season and the next there can be as much as twelve to fifteen metres differential on the beaches. The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, who goes to Accra Beach, could attest to that. On the west coast it is even greater. The movement of the beach from one season to the next can be as high as twenty to twenty-two metres. All of this is presently being studied.

Erosion can be the result of multiple things. There are natural causes, such as the winter swells, hurricanes, and sea level rises. There is pollution, which is causing death in the near-shore reefs and, especially on the south and west coasts, there are badly sited man-made defences that are built such as the groynes in breakwaters. The Government in the last few years has tried to remove these wherever they have been placed indiscriminately and without permission from Town and Country Planning. A series of offshore breakwaters will be built along the south and west coasts to ensure that the beaches are protected and that there will be a build-up of the sand along these areas.

7.40 p.m.

The pollution sources, among other things, include pesticides, weedicides, sewage, suspended matter, garbage, fertilizers. All these things are washed into the sea and, unfortunately, we in Barbados are not yet as tuned to the environment as we should be, and we really need to have a public relations programme, in fact, an educational programme starting at the primary levels in schools, to teach Barbadians that Barbados belongs to us and we have to protect the environment.

The Coastal Conservation Project Office has a variety of talent in it at present. They are professionals in the fields of Engineering, Surveying, Geography, Oceanography, as well as the regular technical and drafting personnel. From time to time we do feasibility and pre-design studies of coastal conservation throughout the island, including the Crane Beach, but, more importantly, on the south coast and the west coast, because this is where the heavy concentration of people are. We are presently doing a coastal engineering study and probably it will take a decade before we are in a position

to really understand why we are having these shifts in coastal erosion that we are having. The Coastal Conservation Project is continuing to monitor and to collect data based on the amount of work it is doing in these areas, because we have discovered that not enough attention has been paid by the last Government and, indeed, by this Government – it is not a question of apportioning blame to any one Government – to these matters of the environment, particularly in the area of education.

When a particular beach is suffering from severe erosion, immediately the Coastal Conservation Project Office moves into action. They do detailed surveys and they come up with what they consider to be constructive productive measures. In order to improve some of the data, we have set up a wave observer network to increase our knowledge on incoming wave levels, which also have an effect on the erosion of our beaches, because when one considers that on the south coast the coral reefs are dying, they no longer act as a preventative measure against the waves and spring tides coming in, and this is why the spring tides coming in have been washing right up, at least, to the car park at Accra Beach, for instance, and across the street to Chefette.

Asides.

Hon. A. TRUSS: As a result of the dying coral reefs, sometimes you get spring tides washing as far up as Chefette and Accra Beach. This has been happening for years. What we are trying to do there is a coastal revegetation programme at least on a pilot basis, in order to ensure that we are on the right track when it comes to these areas. Now, we know very little about it.

The problem that was mentioned by the honourable Member for St. Michael West is a very valid one, and that is, sometimes you have persons who come from overseas and the Government of the day do not necessarily take the local experts opinion into consideration. In this particular case, I would like to point out that we have listened very attentively to the local experts as well as to foreign experts, and in terms of coastal conservation, there is no hard and fast rule as in the area of getting rid of solid waste or sewage. It is like the field of Economics, in which you can have ten economists in a room to solve a particular problem and they all come up with ten different solutions. You are dealing with nature, and whenever you make or effectuate changes in nature, you are never quite sure what will happen. Even though you may make a calculated or intelligent guess in terms of projection, and even though you may take into consideration the points raised by the other side, in all fairness one can never be absolutely sure what the outcome will be until after the project has been started.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute more.

Hon. A. TRUSS: We have effected certain changes, like at the Barbados Beach Village Hotel and Golden Palm Hotel on the west coast, by building certain groynes as a pilot project. In terms of rebuilding the beaches in these areas, these systems are now working more efficiently than anticipated, but even though they work more efficiently, there is still need for fine tuning. We will use the examples and the knowledge which we have gained on the west coast and try to apply them around the island, but it is not an exact science.

Am I winding up, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Hon. A. TRUSS: The Ministry of Tourism and the Environment works very closely with the Ministry of Agriculture concerning fishing harbours, and conducts hydrographic surveys where and whenever possible, but the point is that in order to achieve effective coastal management, it is necessary to adopt an overall approach and this is often a multidisciplinary type of approach which will range from urban planning to coral reef planning to wave dynamics. It is, indeed, not an exact science.

The question that the sum of $7 095 544 under Head 85 - Ministry of Tourism and the Environment – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 83 – CIVIL AVIATION AND SHIPPING – CAPITAL

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $5 030 000 under Head 83 – Civil Aviation and Shipping, Capital – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

7.55 p.m.

HEAD 82 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY – $5 703 000

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to move that Head 82 – Capital – Ministry of Trade and Industry, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): I want to know from the Minister if he intends to increase the pro-

motional aspect. I wish them to shut down the promotion in Brussels. It is a waste of money. The promotion office is not likely to bring in benefits. Bring the money that we are using in Brussels and put it into North America. We on this side will help you increase the amount of money if you need to for promotion, but the office in Brussels is a waste of money.

If we had some difficulty before when the dollar was not so strong, you could almost be certain that there is not going to be any investor from that side of the Atlantic who is going to find Barbados attractive, unless he was interested in getting into the US market. The US themselves, up to that trick, have already started taking steps to make it as difficult as possible for those investors who use the ACP – EEC Agreement, the Lome Convention, to come into countries like Barbados and then springboard into the US, which is in competition with Barbados and other countries for investors. What the US is doing is pre-empting that kind of investor for Barbados by introducing them into the States themselves. The amount of investment that is coming out of other countries into the US is growing at such a rapid rate that the US itself is beginning to be concerned, at least some of the thinkers in the US. But at that level that level of investment does not concern us.

The point I want to make is that, psychologically, investors in Europe are not particularly interested in putting plants in the Caribbean and places like this. So I would like to recommend, without going into any great detail, that the Government give very serious consideration to diverting what funds we are using in places like Brussels. We can maintain an interest with the Honorary Consuls and these people, give them a little additional allowances to assist in any enquiries which are made, but I think we need to redouble our efforts at personal promotion in North America, and, quite frankly, when I say "North America" I do not include Canada, because again it is fairly established that the Canadian investor does not have either the resources or the will to come to this part of the world as a serious investor.

That is all I am going to say on this Capital Head. I have some questions, which I really ought to ask, about the furniture complex, but in the national interest I am going to reserve those questions, I think my colleagues over there will recognise that I am playing the game along the proper lines. I will stop at this point.

Hon. H. B. St.JOHN (Christ Church East Central): There is no question or doubt that the Government has the office in Brussels under evaluation right now. We had a very big argument, a big row in the Lomé Convention negotiations about the effort that the Centre for Industrial Development was making in helping the national ACP offices to get the benefits of the industrial chapter of the Lomé Convention, and since Barbados and the Caribbean were the spokesmen for two successive conventions on the reform of the Centre for Industrial Development and the access provisions, the new Rules of Origin, we could not on the one hand, being advocates for everybody, then remove our office. We just could not do it.

The Centre for Industrial Development has been much better capitalised in this Convention. We are not going to have a European heading it anymore. This was a great breakthrough. We have told them straight that the ACP countries, Trinidad, Nigeria, Barbados, Fiji and Mauritius were setting up promotion offices as units of their embassies, and we expect that the Centre for Industrial Development would do what the Convention envisaged – that they would put forward the money, they would identify the industrialists. But if the whole thing is going to collapse, all of us have told them that if they do not provide the money for the Centre for Industrial Development to complement out little effort, we are going to move out the offices, and that is the only reason we are there. I was the spokesman on the Rules of Origin, Mr. Humphrey was the Deputy Chairman of the ACP, and as the ACP promoters in the Centre for Industrial Development, we could not possibly have removed them but we have it under evaluation.

We are making a very big thrust in North America, and there is one point I wish to correct, because we had it said the other day. When we talk about the health instruments as one of the areas that Booz Allen Hamilton had identified, it is not health instruments. Health instruments is a part of it. I know it came out in the report like that, but we subsequently had another report in which we challenged this thing, and it is the health care industry, not only medical supplies; it is the health care industry which is a much bigger industry, the fastest growing industry, one that defies inflation and things of that kind, and that is the one that we are interested in, but we are spending much more money in the United States of America.

As far as Canada is concerned, our general conclusion is that Canada is like us; they are looking for American capital.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am glad that the honourable Member has cleared that up, because when it was said I squirmed. In that health care industry let me recommend to the Government that those persons who are going to be promoting that industry be given a short intensive training course in understanding the industry. It is no point our sending our people out to promote that industry if they do not understand it. It would be better for them to go and spend a month or two immersing themselves in what constitutes the health care industry, because if you go talking to industrialists in that field, there are questions which they will ask about Barbados' capability which can only be answered if you are on their

wave length. I am recommending that training be given even to our experienced people in the four areas identified by Gonzales, which we had identified before anyhow.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The other thing is that we have changed the recruiting pattern of promoters. A generalist is useful and you need a generalist in your office, particularly people with experience whom we are trying to recruit. For instance, we have an electronics engineer who has done a Masters in Business Administration, and we have him because if he is to talk and advise us on the electronics industry and the type of firms that are good or not good, he must have this background. Similarly, we are looking for promoters with specialised knowledge who then do the marketing skills and other things, and we are getting them. We are throwing up more and more of them.

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): I still think it is a good thing for the time being. Whether or not the office will be closed is a debatable issue. I recently returned from ITV in Berlin, and I had the pleasure of addressing a group of people who are interested in industrial development in Barbados, and I still think that there is a possibility that we may be able to salvage something in West Germany. From a tourism point of view, we must remember that over 16 820 Europeans came to Barbados.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way: I am not suggesting that we close down all the offices in Brussels. It is just the industrial promotion office, not the Embassy.
8.05 p.m.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I understand that, but in a way they are connected. Because of a recent enactment by the United States Congress on the CBI, we in Barbados can offer German industry new opportunities for low cost entry into the United States of America, provided that 35 per cent of the manufacturing process is done here in Barbados. Barbados has gone to a lot of trouble to offer incentives which relate to Income Tax, Customs Duty exemption, construction and rental of factory space at favourable rates, naval training programmes, guaranteed repatriation of earnings on capital. In addition, the promising areas for foreign investors include exports of light manufacturing and data processing, electronic parts assembly and financial services.

We are building up a situation in Barbados where we have white collar workers who are extremely intelligent, and we pride ourselves on the fact that we have the highest literacy rate in the Caribbean, indeed in the world. Under the terms of the Act a German company – and I found this to be very interesting – will enjoy duty free concessions. You must remember also that the wage we pay in Barbados is one-fifth what they would pay either in the United States of America or in West Germany, so that is indeed a tremendous advantage for them, and for foreign investors that have German connections that are already operating in Barbados, including Intel, Playtex, Corcom and TRW. So we have a track record in dealing with West German companies, and I believe that the time may yet be too short to find out whether or not, if we do have a major promotional effort, we may not be able to capture some of that market.

As I said, the tour was very well received and a lot of the German industries were not aware of what Barbados had to offer.....

Asides.

Hon. A. TRUSS: That may be true, but I still think it is worthwhile for us to look at it a second time before we just pitch it in.

The question that the sum of $5 703 000 under Capital – Head 82 – Ministry of Trade and Industry – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

CAPITAL – HEAD 81 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL SECURITY AND SPORT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $3 319 000 under Head 81 – Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Sport – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

CAPITAL – HEAD 80 – MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, AS AMENDED – $5 234 240

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 80, Capital – Ministry of Information and Culture – as amended – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): I would like to ask the Minister whether the fact that it is not mentioned here means that there is absolutely no subvention whatsoever for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. I would like to ask the Minister if there is a subvention anywhere at all in the Estimates for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. I am under the impression that there was some land acquired for the construction of studios for the Caribbean Broadcasting

Corporation. Has this land been vested in the Corporation? Can the Minister confirm whether this has been done before I go any further?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): I can assist you in this respect, since I am looking after this Ministry in here. All that you have to say and ask, ask now and I will give the answers when you are finished.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): I would like the Minister to give us some indication of what is the position with the officers seconded from the various Ministries to the National Cultural Foundation. Is it a fact or not that after Crop Over they are going back to their respective Ministries?

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): My understanding is that at the end of the Festival they are given the election. They can choose to stay with the National Cultural Foundation or return to their substantive Ministries.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: In other words, they have the option now whether they will stay or go back to their substantive Ministries.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I think perhaps the Minister had better check and find out what is going on in there, because all kinds of hell have broken loose in the National Cultural Foundation, according to our information. They have been given letters instructing them to return to their respective Ministries on a staggered basis, some at the end of March, some a little later, some a little later up to the end of October. What is happening is that the National Cultural Foundation apparently wants to keep the ones that have worked very hard in Crop Over, and as soon as Crop Over is finished then they will go back to the Ministries.

I think it needs looking into.

Hon. L. R. TULL: If the honourable Member will give way: How many times do you want an answer? They will be given an option to choose whether they want to stay with the National Cultural Foundation or go back to the Ministries.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am saying that they received letters telling them to go back to the Ministries. You said at first that they have been given, now you are saying they will be given an option. I have no doubt that that is your perception. My information comes more from the Commissions than it would from the Foundation itself.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I will accept that, but I recommend that the Minister double check, because so far as the Commissions are concerned, as my information goes, there is no option.

The question that the sum of $5 234 240 under Capital – Head 80 – Ministry of Information and Culture – as amended stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

CAPITAL – HEAD 79 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $12 390 000 under Capital – Head 79 – Ministry of Housing and Lands – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

8.15 p.m.

HEAD 78 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – $7 487 886

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 78 stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: (St. Michael North West); There is very little time to speak; nevertheless I should like to make the point that our health services seem now to have picked up the momentum it should have, after the first two or three years. From time to time, we get a lot of statements suggesting that things are happening, and very often, when you check them out, you do not get the kind of impact that is made to be given.

I suppose that in the limited time, I could probably look at one or two areas. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is still a problem. I understand that the Minister is trying to suggest that in the near future, things will be all well.

Aside.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Certainly the background to all of this must stem from the fact that the Government, once again, has failed to deliver a service which, obviously, would have generated the kind of energy that is so necessary to provide the health services to the point which we are accustomed to. There is no point labouring on a National Health Service when a number of things are still not in place. What has happened is that we have developed or built a number of institutions which a not functioning in the way they should. I should l the Minister – I hope he does not say that he would gi e me the information later on – to tell me what is happening at the polyclinics? This is a general practice service. Could the Minister say how often the GPs go there and provide a normal service?

I am almost certain that there are complaints about people going and not getting the kind of service at the polyclinics, which are intended to relieve the pressure from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That being so, we could probably look at the difficulty that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital itself is suffering from. In the same Subhead, we have a vote for the replacement of equipment. I wonder if the Minister could say what kind of equipment they are going to replace. I know for certain that there are times when instruments are not always to hand. I believe that this could be as a result of outdated equipment. I think that a public hospital should always try to equip itself with the kind of means to provide the service that we have attracted from the wider community.

I should like to suggest that a piece of equipment should be placed in the hospital at this point in time, as we are all going into the computer age, which will take care of head and ear injuries. It is an expensive piece of equipment, but it provides the opportunity for injured persons in accidents and persons with eye injuries....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: If my colleague would just give way, since I am taking a note: Would you be able to identify the pieces of equipment that are all worn out and known to the hospital so that we can make the.....

Aside.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You are going to have a lot of advising to do. You can take it from me.

Identify all of them that you know. Go on, because I have heard this talk about old equipment so let us hear all the pieces that you know should be identified.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: The equipment that I am speaking about is not available at the hospital at this moment. What I am talking about is that there are times when sometimes the sterilizing equipment is not functioning. It cannot be happening every day, but it happens.

Aside.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: What I am trying to point out is that some of the equipment there is aged and all of us know that it needs to be replaced. But the position is this,.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I should like the honourable Member to identify them to me. There are some pieces of equipment in there that must need to be replaced over a period of years, so if you can identify these pieces of equipment, there is an IADB loan available. I would be in a position to tell you exactly if they are going to buy the equipment now.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: It is very simple. Sometimes, the faucets that they use are not modern. Very often, the machine for respiratory conditions, especially for children, is not always functioning. What I am trying to get over to the Minister is that we need to upgrade the hospital, just as how we always think in terms of upgrading all other institutions. And since it is necessary to do this at all levels, including at the scientific level, to take advantage of the new scientific development I am suggesting that there needs to be introduced into the hospital a modern piece of equipment, even though expensive, to save a lot of expenditure. Only recently, Barbadians had to go to Trinidad to get a similar kind of treatment from that type of machine. We believe that there are many more cases, due to the fact that that type of machine is not available, that may go unanswered.

I believe that that kind of equipment could save dollars; foreign exchange, if you put it that way; it could save people from going abroad. My view is that if we can spend thousands of dollars in other areas, I believe that we can have money available to provide this. As a matter of fact, I was made to understand that a grant or donation was made by a private individual asking the Government to match that quantity in an effort to provide that piece of equipment. I would probably be interested in knowing if the Government has really taken that offer or if it were refused. If the offer were taken, what was done with that kind of grant?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am about to bring down the guillotine. There are just about one and a half minutes.

I would like the Prime Minister to wind up.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Everybody is as concerned as the honourable Member over the state and condition of the equipment at the hospital.

The Government is fully cognisant of the fact that there is a need to upgrade certain areas of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It is precisely for that reason that we applied for a loan to the Inter-American Development Bank for upgrading surgery, the Paediatric Ward, the Gynaecological Ward and other areas. Discussions are going on now.

We also have to determine what use will be made of some of the Health Levy which has been collected. There are strong feelings that part of the Health Levy should be appropriated annually to upgrade the equipment. Because everybody contributes to the Health Levy, although only a certain age, over sixty-five and up to a certain age, will get benefits from the National Health Service. There is a feeling that all of us who contribute should have the security of feeling that part of that money is going to continuously upgrade the equipment

at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the polyclinics. That is the argument that is going along. We will settle it.

Do not think that we do not think of these things.

The question that Head 78 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

8.25 p.m.

HEAD 34 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $89 405 514 under Head 34 – Ministry of Education – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 76 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – AS AMENDED WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $15 312 335 under Head 76, Capital, Ministry of Education, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 36 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – AS AMENDED, WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $49 434 202 under Head 36 – Ministry of Health – as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 37 – CAPITAL – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS, WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $4 926 766 under Head 37, Capital – Ministry of Housing and Lands, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 38 – MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, AS AMENDED, WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $5 603 343 under Head 38, Ministry of Information and Culture, as amended stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 39 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL SECURITY AND SPORT, AS AMENDED – WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $18 031 494 under Head 39, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Sport, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 40 – MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY – WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that the sum of $5 709 610 under Head 40, Ministry of Trade and Industry, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 41 – CIVIL AVIATION AND INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING, AS AMENDED, WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $8 952 855 under Head 41, Civil Aviation and Shipping, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 43 – MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENT, AS AMENDED, WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that the sum of $32 842 752 under Head 43, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 50 – POST OFFICE – WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the sum of $4 044 653 under Head 50 Post Office, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

THE SCHEDULE – AS AMENDED WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that the Schedule as amended be the Schedule of the Bill.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I second that, Sir.

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

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2, as amended, was called and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 were called and passed.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, we have the Supplementary Resolution to do at this time.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1984–85
No. 42 – $1 126 842

Order 10(a) was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to grant the sum of $1 126 842 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1984–85, Part 1 – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1984–85, No. 42, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

HEAD 14 – ESTABLISHMENTS – WAS CALLED AND PASSED

HEAD 21 – STATISTICS – WAS CALLED

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Head 21 stand part.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I want to raise a matter which has given me some concern. In relation to statistics, it is my understanding that a census is carried out in this country; one was carried out for the year 1970 and, as I understand it, one was carried out for the year 1980. We are now some five years passed 1980, and up to this particular date no report of that census has been made available to the members of the public or to Members of this Honourable Chamber. I believe that the census contains or should contain quite a deal of information which is of use and benefit both to the general public and to special interests and groups in the country. I wonder if the Minister could give some kind of explanation why the results or report of that census has not been laid in Parliament and has not been made in public. Information is gathered, I understand, on a wide variety of areas – housing, education, agriculture, general population statistics and the size of the population. But the results of that census has not been made available, and I think something must be wrong here that that particular document is not available.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Cap. 192 of the Laws of Barbados embodies the statistics. In Chapter 192, it indicates that the Director shall produce the statistics for this country. Section 11 says: "Any person who hinders or obstructs the Director or any person duly authorized in the execution of any part conferred under this Act."
8.35 p.m.

This is one of the areas in the public administration where the officer in the performance of his professional work is subject to no direction from any Minister. If one looks at the time within which the Statistical Department produces the statistics on a quarterly basis, one would find that sometimes an entire month would go by before, for example, the unemployment statistics are made available.

Aside.

Mr. B. M TAITT: It is his duty. It is no duty of the Minister of Finance to have the Statistical Department sending the statistics up to the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Finance looking at them and making any adjustment whatsoever.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I think the honourable Member is quite honest and correct in saying that he has never

heard of any adjustments. I believe him, and I am saying it now, because I think there comes a time when a certain level of administrative responsibility must be exercised and when those officers who have statutory duties must perform them. I am saying that the Chief Statistician in this country has a statutory responsibility to publish the statistics as soon as they are completed.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That he does).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He does not. I do not wish to be invidious, and I wish the honourable Member would not force me to be. I am calling upon him to do his statutory duty. I am not going to get involved in any kind of statement here which might reflect adversely on anybody. I am only calling on the Government's Chief Statistical Officer to publish the statistics from here on. Let me put it this way. From now on let us get the duty done according to the law. If he does not, I am serving notice on him that we will go to the courts and we will ask the court to make him do his duty.

I also wish to raise a question about some of the surveys which are being done in this country. I am hearing on the radio, for example, that there is a survey going on now for persons 60 years old and over. There are some of us who are sceptical about that survey.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I know the Prime Minister is going to play this straight down the line.

Connected with this survey that is going on, on the radio you hear this advertisement that the Ministry of Health is supposed to be carrying on a survey for persons 60 years and over. The methodology that is being used, as far as I understand, needs examination. Let me put it like that. The persons who are chosen for these surveys, it would seem to me, ought to be persons that are within the Administration. They should be persons who are trained in survey work. They should be persons who do surveys as a matter of their vocation, if you will.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I did not hear the honourable Member's *sotto voce* remarks. I would like to respond to him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please let us get on.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I know what he was saying was important. He is saying that there are not enough of these people here. We are doing continuous household surveys in Barbados on a daily basis. We have been doing surveys now since Adams was in short pants, and the Statistical Department should know. I am putting it to you that the Statistical Department should know what kind of staff it will need temporarily or otherwise for doing surveys. But when one examines some of the information which is being taken in by the people doing the surveys, and when one examines certain information which they are giving out.....

(ASIDE: How you know that?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Because I have a lot of old people in my constituency. Some of the questions which they ask cannot have any relationship to the objectives that are being declared for the surveys.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You can talk until you turn blue. I know my colleagues know what I am talking about.

Just before this survey for the persons 60 years and over, there was an unemployment survey, if you please.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: This is a different kind, not the normal one. We had two young men from St. Peter walking through Parris Gap, Westbury Road – let me be more specific – telling people that they have some jobs lined up for them but the Government wants to get this survey of the unemployed youth.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is the point. You do not know about it, but these people are going around doing "surveys". All of this falls under Statistics. I am saying that all of the surveys being done in Barbados should be identifiable if they form part of the national statistics. There should be a section of the department that is dealing with surveys. These persons should be persons who are trained and should be identified and identifiable. I am saying that this business of having *ad hoc* arrangements for surveys which are alleged to be part of the general statistics of the community seem to me to be a part of another exercise.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not know. I am raising questions. That is the point. They are not from Systems. They say they have I.Ds and they say they are from the Government. I have doubts about it, and the Ministers over there have doubts about it. I am saying that we ought to have a system in this country where statistics are gathered in a systematic way.

There are one or two other things which one could say but I will leave it for the time being. I am going to

fire this shot across the House. If the honourable Members on that side feel that they have to do political surveys, they should do them as part of the political party activity and do not import them into the general administration, either as part of temporary jobs or part of any department. I am going to leave it at that. I want to make it clear.....

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The last survey he was there. He got beat 5 – 1. The honourable Member for St. Michael North East, the last survey that was done he got 45 and the other got over 340.

The point I am making is this.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You has just one minute more.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I understand, Mr. Chairman. This is in your interest. I have nothing more to do with them. I will stop now in your interest, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to make the point that I think there needs to be some clarification. There are three or four different kinds of people from Government departments who are going through this country saying they are doing surveys. I say that statistics coming out in Barbados should be authentic. People who are not getting the information and doing the questionnaires should be doing just that. I am going to say some more in due course.

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): I would not like to leave this debate after a week with the public of Barbados having the impression that the Barbados Labour Party Administration is so very inefficient that after five years we are unable to produce statistical data. People in glass houses really should not throw stones.
8.45 p.m.

When the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) and indeed the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) were in power, it was the Right Honourable Member for St. John who referred to the civil servants as an army of occupation. No Final Appropriation Bill was laid in 1974, 1975 or 1976. When we came into power on September 2, 1976, we laid them in 1977; so do not preach to us about efficiency. The Auditor General's Report on page 19 of the Customs department, Item 118, said, and this is a document of the House, "No Accounts have so far been received in respect of the financial years 1974/75 and 1975/76". That is a reflection on the DLP's inefficiency. People in glass houses should not throw stones.

When they were in power they understood only too well that a Government has to put up with certain constraints. We understand that. They must understand it now and must not try to make cheap political mileage out of something like this. The Auditor General's Report every year from 1966 to 1975 was two years late.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: None of this is statistics.

Hon. A. TRUSS: These are statistics: the Final Appropriation Bill, the Auditor General's Report, the Accountant General's Report.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, Please! The honourable Member must be heard in silence.

Hon. A. TRUSS: The Accountant General's Report was late from 1969 to 1974. We laid them in 1977 after we came to power in 1976. There were no Economic Reports laid by the Democratic Labour Party in 1974, 1975 or 1976. There was no Budget in 1976.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is a rule with respect to relevance.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Put the question, Sir.

The question that Head 21 – Statistics, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 25 – Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs – was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 25 – Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1984–85
No. 43 $69 852

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

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

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

RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE EXPLANATORY NOTE TO HEAD 23 – LOANS AND ADVANCES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Hon L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report the passing of the Appropriation Bill as amended and three Resolutions in Committee of Supply.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: 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.

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

On separate motions of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, the resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

THE PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS ACT, 1985

Order No. 2 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to consolidate and revise the laws relating to the keeping of places of public entertainment and relating to the imposition of taxes on entertainment to which the public is admitted.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): This Bill was really circulated for quite a while. It has to be done, it is very important that it be done, and I would urge on honourable Members to let us really finish off the work of Parliament in the spirit with which we started. It has to be done, Sir.
8.55 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: (Christ Church East Central): Part of this Bill contains the provisions in the Budget, and specifically page 20 of the Bill, the Second Schedule, dealing with the tax imposition on video tape cassettes. We put this in circulation for some period of time so as to be able to meet the deadline. That deadline expires in the month of March. If we adjourn tonight we do not intend to come back in before April, and that is the reason why we wish to have it done. That is all.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Speaker, let me be certain. Can I speak on the matter raised by the Honourable Prime Minister?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, I have no objection to that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Okay. We have absolutely no objection to the point taken by the Prime Minister. As he said, however, there is no device by which we can pass a piece of legislation in part, and the part that has been added in this Bill, the entertainment part, has provisions in it which we find, let me say, debatable.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is now attempting to debate the very Bill.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. I am just outlining why we are taking the position we are taking.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are dealing with your objections to the Bill and your interpretation of a part of the very Bill that you say you do not want to debate.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: What I am saying is, he said that part has to be passed and we are saying that the other part is debatable.

Mr. SPEAKER: But then you cannot now go on to explain the provisions of the Bill although you are not debating it.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I accept that. I just make the point that the reason why we are taking the position we are taking on whether we want to do this Bill now is that the other part of it is debatable.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If the honourable Members will make a solemn promise in here that they will not raise an objection in the future on the ground that we have not brought in our Budget Bills within the period of time, I do not mind postponing it, but they cannot have their cake and eat it. We are ready to proceed. It was circulated and laid in good time.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, we will debate the matter. It appears to us that there is part of it which is budgetary and part which is outside of the Budget, as I understand it, and that is why we were asking for a postponement. But if it is necessary to have it debated we will debate it.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: They were given notice of it since 26th February. You have to appreciate the position which the Prime Minister has explained to you.

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

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, this Bill before us says it is to consolidate and revise the laws relating to the keeping of places of public entertainment and relating to the imposition of tax on entertainment to which the public is admitted.

A part of this Bill is the result of budgetary measures and therefore is not subject to any comment from this side, because once a Budget has been imposed a Budget has been imposed. However, in what is deemed to be the consolidation, there are some aspects of this Bill which seem to us to embody policies which are going to be detrimental in a general way to a number of persons who may inadvertently be caught in the Bill. Because one cannot imagine that it was ever intended that every single person in Barbados who would hold a dance, a fete, a bazaar, anyone who would have any kind of function for which fees are charged, will be subject to the provisions of this Bill.

As you know, Sir, in Second Reading one does not go into detail in any clause, but our understanding of this Bill, unless we are vastly mistaken, suggests that, on the one hand, certain organisations will have now to make sure that tickets are printed and will have to make sure that those printed tickets have a portion for taxes and a portion for the proprietor. There is another aspect of this Bill where, quite correctly, the keepers of dance halls and other areas will have to pay a licence. There is no problem with that on the face of it, and indeed there is no particular quarrel even with the quantum that will be called for from the various places. Indeed, Sir, provision is made for exemptions. Those exemptions include religious organisations, cultural organisations and educational organisations, if my memory serves me correctly. It does not say anything about political organisations, so for example you will find that if the Democratic Labour Party holds a function, the Democratic Labour Party will fall into a new category, a different category.

Let me not deal with the political organisations yet, let us look at the others those who can have exemptions. Those who can have exemptions will now have to report to the competent authority, within a specified period, the details within seven days of the function they held. Those details are specifically outlined in this Bill, and Sir, any of us in any organisation, church organisation, cultural organisation, would know that to be able to give the kind of report, including the disbursement of the funds, within seven days of holding such a function is a very difficult proposition. The Lord knows that when you keep a function and you sell tickets, trying to get the tickets in is in itself a mammoth task. There is no one in Barbados who does not know that. To report in seven days, what are you going to do? Give an interim report to the Commissioner and then subsequently after you have got your details give another report. Which organisation in Barbados is so efficient? Which of the cultural or educational or other similar organisations in Barbados are so efficient that they can provide what is required in this Bill?

We believe that there are certain aspects of this Bill that, if they were properly thought out, if they were properly conceived, cannot be executed in the same way as they were conceived. As they are written, it appears to us that is an unnecessary and unreasonable imposition on the ordinary people in the community. We are not for one moment going to suggest that there should be no regulation. We are not even going to suggest the level of regulation there should be. There has always been regulation, but when once a person who is holding a fete went and paid his occasional licence, he has fulfilled his obligation.

9.05 p.m.

Now, Sir, the owner of the Liberty will have to pay $200 a year. That is how it should be. Every single person who holds a dance at the Liberty, according to our understanding of what is here. If one looks at Cap. 181, the old Act, Licensed Places of Public Entertainment, that argument is very clear, so I do not have any problem with that. But if one reads the new Act, which, presumably, consolidates this law, it changes the law, as far as we can make out. We have been happy to hear and to be shown how it is to be right to give the same meaning in the old Act to the meaning in the new Act, and once we have passed it in the law, the competent authority is bound to carry out the law.

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Are you sure that he has staff to carry it out?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that one has to.....

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I have no doubt that the Income Tax Department would need to strengthen its staffing requirement in order to carry out the requirements of this Act. If the Income Tax Department, which, I believe, is the competent authority, will be carrying out the requirements of this Act, I have no doubt that they will require additional staffing. That is a matter which I am sure the Administration must have taken into consideration.

The question I want to raise is, why now must the political organization to which I belong be subject to a special consideration? Why must we be removed from either of those areas in which we had some kind of political privacy in our organisation? According to this, the Democratic Labour Party, and the Barbados Labour Party for that matter, will now have to print their tickets and they will have to impose a tax, as part of the cost of those tickets. I am saying that that is an unnecessary and unwarranted inclusion in an area of life which is not going to interfere with anybody. The truth is that most of us, I am sure your party and my party both raise funds by holding functions. This party I can speak for. We do not have any method of raising funds, other than the functions we keep.

I am in the process now of holding an excursion on Easter Bank Holiday. That excursion has never made money. It has taken a large number of people over to various parts of this island, and it has provided a social and to me a political activity. According to this law, next year – because I do not believe that the Senate passed it and we passed it and it comes into force and that the Income Tax Commissioner will go outside seeking to lock up anybody – certainly, by next year we could not be heard to say that we did not know the law and that we did not understand it. So I will tell you now, Sir, that my excursion would be finished, because I would not be involved in that kind of activity where we have to.....

(Hon. L. R. TULL: You want to get out of it. I do not want to get out of it.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not want to get out of it because it is politically beneficial to me.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: Why do you want to get out of it?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Is the honourable Member asking why we would get out? Because of the volunteers we have, the people who sell tickets, the burden which would be imposed on us.

Right now, you have to pay $386 for the bus. You know that when somebody is going to an excursion, you cannot talk about standing up. You are going to have to give them a seat, then a seat for the little child and a seat for the basket.

Aside

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I did not know that you have a seat for the basket.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes. You take a basket to an excursion. The point is that the bus does not hold so many people that you can make a profit.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: He is bluffing!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not bluffing. I do not understand. The honourable Member cannot be serious. The honourable Member obviously has not read it.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Sit down. You will get an explanation.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member has said that I will get an explanation, and I would be happy to hear from him. We do not wish what I am saying to be true. But all of us who have looked at it have come up with the conclusion.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: This section will include the excursion.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the reason why I have not been specific is that under the rules of debate at Second Reading, one is not allowed to discuss clauses; one will be able to discuss these in detail when we get to Committee. But if one looks at 13. (1), it says

> "No proprietor of entertainment shall provide any form of entertainment unless he has obtained from the Commissioner a certificate of approval in respect of that entertainment."
>
> In Clause 2:
>
> "Proprietor" includes
>
> (a) any person on whose behalf payment for admission to an entertainment or a place of public entertainment is received or any person responsible for the management thereof;
>
> (b) a person acting as agent of a person referred to in paragraph (a);
>
> (c) a person responsible for the management of any entertainment or place of public entertainment; and
>
> (d) an owner of a place of public entertainment or an entertainment area."

Clause 2:

> "place of public entertainment" means any premises kept habitually or used for entertainment whether or not at stated intervals, in which the public may join or at which members of the public may be entertained for payment, directly or indirectly, of money;"

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Is that for dances?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No. I mentioned excursion as a fund raising event. If I have misled the honourable Members, I apologize to them. I mentioned excursion because if it is a public event in which you are going to be charging a fee to enter a public hall, then you have to collect a tax.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the excursion presents a problem, everything I have said about a dance holds good. Every single word I have said about a dance at the Liberty or at Marine House or at the Auditorium – all of that holds good. And what I am saying is that it is not acceptable because each person who is holding such a dance will now have to print tickets and include a x.

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is not necessary.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: They say it is not necessary. It may very well be that I do not understand. All I can say is that if what I understand is so, this House

is in a very strange condition when it can pass that kind of law, and I will be voting against it. I find myself not being able to understand it any better than that. And unless someone can explain it to me in better detail, unless someone can tell me that what I am saying is not so, I am unable to support it.

That is my position. They say to me that I do not understand and that it is not so. Therefore, I will sit and let them explain it. I say, however, that as the law is written in this, when we pass it, that is the understanding that we have.

I rest my case.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Second Reading of a Bill is devoted to the general debate of the principles of the Bill. I think that the honourable Member has conceded that this Bill is really a reproduction and a consolidation of pre-existing law and the introduction in a couple of sections of the provision of a Budget, which was the subject matter of a debate in this House before. So as far as the general principles of the Bill are concerned, unless the honourable Member objects to the consolidation of the pre-existing law, I cannot see how the honourable Member can object to Second Reading.

It seems to me, from the submissions that have been made and the speech that has been made by the honourable Member, that he may have difficulties with particular sections of the Bill which are dealt with in Committee. We are perfectly prepared at the Committee stage of the Bill to listen to every representation that is being made by the honourable Member and to meet, if necessary, any objections which the honourable Member can point out to us which would have the effect that he has stated in this House.
9.15 p.m.

Our understanding of the provision is that the Bill is quite clear. There is a charge for the holding ownership or the operation of public places of entertainment, the public places of entertainment as specified in the Schedule, and the charges are there. The charges are modest and reasonable, and they are there to ensure public safety and to ensure that the Commissioner of Inland Revenue is aware of the category of entertainment. There is also a charge in addition to that of an Entertainment Tax on particular forms of entertainment. That is the scheme of the Bill. There cannot be any objection of principle to an Entertainment Tax on forms of entertainment where a Bill consolidates the law in which there is an Entertainment Tax now on these very forms of entertainment.

If the honourable Member, when we come to Committee stage, is able to demonstrate to us that there are new categories of entertainment which were not charged before and which were not in the Budget speech and which should not be in there, we will be ready to meet him. But he has to be able to do that.

It is the Government's position that the principle of this Bill on the Second Reading cannot be faulted, and the honourable Member, according to his speech, does not fault the principle of the Bill. When we go into Committee and he can convince us that this charge of Entertainment Tax in in areas that were not charged before or the tax is too high, we will deal with that then.

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): We object to the aspect of this Bill which provides for the provision of the laws in relation to the imposition of a tax on places of public entertainment. Our contention is that the Bill provides for a substantial extension of the areas which are now becoming taxable and which have not been taxed before.

One of the difficulties of dealing with that aspect purely in Committee stage is because one would need to do a number of cross-references to come to the conclusions which we have drawn. One has to look at the Schedule, you have to look at Section 13, you have to look at the description of places of public entertainment, and you have to look at the description of the proprietor of public entertainment. It is particularly in relation to the description of the proprietor of public entertainment that we have that problem.

I do not want to be invidious and refer to the details, but the description does underscore the point I am making. The description of proprietor includes any person on whose behalf payment for admission to an entertainment or place of public entertainment is received, so you are going to engage a whole lot of persons who had not been in that net before, people who hold dances at the Liberty. We are not dealing with the people who own the places themselves, we are dealing with the persons who organize the dances. Our contention is that those persons, for instance political parties, who hold dances to raise funds, the various constituencies of political parties who from time to time need to hold dances to raise funds, when one looks at the total Act itself, by a combination of the various provisions and definitions you reach the situation where all those persons fall within the net or ambit of the Act itself. It is in that context that we object to the legislation as it stands.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Hon. A. TRUSS, Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. J. G. ODLE, Mr. L. L. SISNETT. 10

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, and Mr. M. KING. 4

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be postponed for further consideration.

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

The question that the Bill be postponed for further consideration was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

9.25 p.m.

MESSAGES FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE ACTING GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce Message No. 5/1985 from His Excellency The Acting Governor-General to the Honourable The House of Assembly:

> His Excellency the Acting Governor-General has the honour to refer to his Message No.3/1985 regarding the absence from duty of His Excellency Sir Hugh Springer, GCMG, KA, CBE, Governor-General, and to inform The Honourable the House of Assembly that the period of absence from duty by Sir Hugh has been extended to the 14th of April, 1985.
>
> His Excellency the Acting Governor-General further has the honour to inform the Honourable The House of Assembly that the designation, under section 29(1) (a) of the Constitution, of Senator The Honourable Sir Arnott Cato, KCMG, to perform the duties of Governor-General during Sir Hugh Springer's absence has been extended also to the 14th of April 1985.
>
> A. S. Cato
> Acting Governor-General.

Government House,
BARBADOS.
22nd March, 1985.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the rules of this Honourable House indicate that we must advert to Your Honour's attention that due to the death of an honourable member that Your Honour has certain obligations of notification in respect of the honourable member. Of course, the time of filling this seat is not Your Honour's problem so that I accordingly move that the requisite address of notification be made by Your Honour.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House will take the necessary steps to inform the Governor-General of the issue of the writ for the by-election to fill the vacant seat for the constituency of St. Thomas.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): This brings us to the end of today's sitting. As usual, I would like to thank the Clerks at the Table, the Hansard Reporters, the Press and the entire staff of Parliament and you, Mr. Speaker, in particular – it was a very difficult job, although it was not as difficult as I have seen in the past – and members on the other side for what I do not really consider as sturdy a debate as I have seen in the past.

I reiterate that the offer which was made in 1977, and which I, after I assumed the role as Leader of the House, also conveyed that you may indicate to us the Heads which you wish to call. I think it would make the debate much more interesting rather than the style which you adopt now. I am not critical of your style, I am saying simply that the offer is there for you to call the Heads. This would demonstrate quite clearly that the Government is not running away from any debate, and I do not think that the Opposition would ever feel so.

However, I would like to say "thanks" to honourable members for whatever contributions they have made and to my colleagues and to you, Sir. I sincerely hope that on April 16, 1985, that you all will have cool heads and come back very refreshed.

I beg to move that this sitting be now adjourned until April 16, 1985, at 12 o'clock noon.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Leader of the House in respect of the thanks expressed to the Members of Parliament, the staff of Parliament, the Press, and the presiding officers, both of the House and of the Committee, for the participation in these debates and in making them yet another stage in the stable development of our parliamentary democracy in this country.

In respect of this offer of calling Heads, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if the Leader of the House has a suggestion to make, the appropriate place for such offer is in the Standing Orders Committee of this Honourable House where such matters which require an amendment to the Rules of the Chamber would be

properly and appropriately discussed. No such offer has come before that particular body. This is not a case of simply saying, 'We make an offer.' We are dealing with Parliament and I believe matters must be done in a proper manner. If an offer is being made, the offer must be made properly in the appropriate Committees of this Chamber.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Just briefly. I could not really support that it would be removing the actual manoeuvres of the leadership of the House. I still put it to them that they are free to convey to me the Heads which they would like to indicate. If I am to understand that they are not accepting my offer, well, I am very, very sorry, Sir. You let me down.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 16, 1985 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

9.35 p.m.

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CHELTENHAM, Hon. Dr. R. L. (Christ Church East)
CRAIG, Hon. L. S. (St. James North)
FORDE, Hon. H. deB. (Christ Church West)
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MILLER, Hon. B. A. (City of Bridgetown)
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