
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 – 91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, September 30, 1986.

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

PRESENT

Hon. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. P. M. Greaves, B.A., (Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications)

Hon. E. E. Greaves, B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Trade and Commerce)

Dr. D. G. Blackman, B.A., M.A.

Hon. M. A. King, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Hon. W. O. Franklin, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Mr. D.A.C. Simmons, Q.C., LL.M.

Mr. O.S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.)

Mrs. M. Barker-Welch, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development)

Mr. C. V. Walker, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture)

Mr. E. Bourne

Dr. E. A. Simmons

Mr. C. A. Neblett, B.A., A.C.M.A.

Mr. C. L. Trotman, M.A.

Mr. R. L. Morris, B.A., Cert. Ed.

Mr. P. J. M. Miller

Mr. R. P. Byer, LL.B., L.E.C.

Mr. ACTING CLERK: I have to announce the absence of His Honour the Speaker, and the Deputy Speaker.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: In accordance with Standing Order No. 5, Rule 3, I propose that the honourable Member for St. Andrew take the Chair as Acting Speaker for today's sitting.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that.

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

The honourable Member for St. Andrew took the Chair.

Prayers were led by Rev. I. Harewood.

MINUTES

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, August 5, 1986.

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

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: If there are no objections or observations, let the Minutes be taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have received the Accounts and Statements for the months of May, June and July as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following documents:—

The Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Barbados Water Authority for the period 1/4/84 – 31/3/85.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On behalf of the Prime Minister I beg to lay the following:—

Report of the Air Transport Licensing Authority for the year 1985.

On behalf of the Minister of Finance, I beg to lay the following:—

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 1986.

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 3) Order, 1986.

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 4) Order, 1986.

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 5) Order, 1986.

The Motor Traffic (Motor Vehicles) (International Circulation) (Amendment) Order, 1986.

The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 2) Order, 1986.

The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 3) Order, 1986.

The Hotels and Restaurants (Rate of Tax) Order, 1986.

Report of the Accountant General for the year 1985–86.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Barbados National Bank for the year 1985.

The Annual Report and Financial Statements of the National Petroleum Corporation for the year 1984–1985.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Insurance Corporation of Barbados as at 31st December, 1985.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:—

The Law Revision (Rectification of Omissions) Order, 1986.

Annual Report of the Family Law Council, 1985.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:—

The National Assistance (Amendment) Regulations, 1986.

The National Insurance and Social Security (Non-Contributory Old Age Pensions) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1986.

The National Insurance and Social Security (Benefit) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1986.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:

Resolution to approve the borrowing of an amount in various currencies equivalent to U.S. \$10 million from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) for the Second Education and Training Project.

Resolution to authorise the increase of the amounts which may be borrowed by the issue of Saving Bonds from \$25.0 million to \$50.0 million.

Resolution to grant the sum of \$39 269.00 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1986–87, Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1986–87, No. 5, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, the following Bills were read a first time:

Bill to declare the boundaries of the several parishes of Barbados.

Bill to validate the collection of registration fees respecting certain motor vehicles.

12.30 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16(4), 42(5) and 44(1) be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be the instant Order of the day.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant Order of the day.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT
BAY STREET, ST. MICHAEL

Order No. 1 was called – to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Bay Street, St. Michael, for the provision of office accommodation for the Government.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Acting Speaker, Order No. 1 seeks the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Bay Street, St. Michael, for the provision of office accommodation for Government.

To give just a brief resume of what took place before this Resolution came about. After the death of Dr. A. W. Trieloff, it was discovered that this gentleman owed some outstanding land taxes and other debts to the Government. The estate of Dr. Trieloff then decided that they would offer to Government two properties: one property which forms the basis of Resolution No. 1 and the second property which forms the basis of Resolution No. 2. The first property which forms the subject-matter of Resolution No. 1 with which we are now dealing is a property on Bay Street in St. Michael. The land is 300.35 square metres or 3,232.94 square feet, and there is also a building on the land. The property has been valued by valuers assigned to do that task at \$180,000, and this property was offered to Government as a means of repaying the outstanding taxes.

I may mention at the moment as well that the property at Oxnards which forms the subject-matter of the second Resolution has also been offered to Government at a price of \$15 000, and together the total money that can be had from these two acquisitions is \$195 000. As I have said before, this money will be used to clear off outstanding land taxes and other debts owed by the estate of Dr. Trieloff.

In the beginning when the property was first offered to Government, a process of private treaty was looked at in order to acquire the properties, but this was abandoned because of certain title defects with respect to the Bay Street property. The property was afterwards acquired by the process of the Land Acquisition Act. With that short background, Mr. Acting Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I beg to second that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Acting Speaker, it is my understanding that the purpose of which my Government is seeking to acquire this property is for office space, and specifically I understand that it will probably house the office of the Supervisor of Insurance. I believe that despite the provision of office space for various Government offices over the last ten or twenty years it is still a fact that some Government offices are in need of additional office space, and in some instances upgraded office space. But I believe that the acquisition of this area of land, certainly for the past Government has a greater significance than the provision of office space for the Supervisor of Insurance.

There was a development plan for Greater Bridgetown which the Government had carefully thought about. We had had advice from an outstanding lady architect now deceased, Dr. Barbara Hill, and from various experts from the Organisation of American States in order to improve the physical and other developments of the whole of the area spanning from Bay Street back to the Bridgetown Harbour, and also internally including areas such as Church Village, Green Fields, etcetera. The Organisation of American States experts had also advised on the future planning and development of the area from Bay Street to St. Lawrence, and I believe that those plans are worthwhile, and I hope that the present Government will study them carefully and where possible carry out the proposals and develop the proposals set out in the plan.

It had been discovered that there was a tremendous pressure for bathing facilities at the Graves End Beach, and we had hoped that the beach stretching from what is referred to as Dr. Arno Trieloff premises right back to the ice house, the Bico building which is now unfortunately in ruins, would have been developed as an alternative beach to enable the people of Barbados not only to believe but to exercise their rights in the words of the calypsonian "Dah beach is mine". I hope that that plan will be developed.

The first part of the plan for improving the beach facilities is shown in the area as you will see between Bico and what is now the Department of Fisheries. It was intended that with the establishment of the Bridgetown Fishing Harbour that the Department of Fisheries would be moved there and the current office building for the fisheries would be demolished, just as we have demolished what was formerly the National Petroleum office. So there is an overall developmental plan for the area, and I trust that despite the cutbacks on capital works that it will be possible in the five-year development period – the continuation of this development plan and the new Government's development plan – to

continue with the beautification of this part of Greater Bridgetown providing additional facilities, office space, bathing cubicles, bathing areas and also the other amenities that are necessary.

12.40 p.m.

It is also my understanding that at Dr. Trieloff's building, in addition to the office space upstairs it was intended to have changing cubicles downstairs and what other beach facilities for people who use that beach. I wonder whether the Minister is in a position to say whether it is still intending to use the facilities for that purpose.

I said it is part of an overall development, the planning for which has been done over a period of years. One would see already because of the initiative which was taken by Government, private enterprise has itself started to redevelop part of the Bay Street frontage with various restaurants which have gone up there. People have repainted and upgraded their own facilities and if you look over at the carenage you will see not only the best little warehouse in town, but you will see a rebuilding taking place as well with shopping and similar development and the expanded fishing harbour to the west of that. You will notice recently that B.S. & T., for instance, have upgraded the old warehouse into an office building. It was intended that Marshall Hall will become the new home of the Barbados Development Bank and the plans for the extended fishing harbour included plans for restaurants, fishing, et cetera, a total of an overall scheme of development.

I believe, therefore, that we have no difficulty in supporting this Resolution. We see it as part of the overall redevelopment of Greater Bridgetown and at the same time adding social and other amenities to the community while giving a spur to economic development.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Acting Speaker, there are just two small points I wish to make. From time to time I see pronouncements in the newspapers on various matters relating to the management of the affairs of this country. That is what we call Government. Some of these pronouncements are inspired by self-seeking persons who feel that they are entitled to be placed in honorific positions. As a matter of fact, at the beginning of this Session of Parliament I was horrified to learn the composition of the Senate long before I had even adverted my own mind or consulted the Leader of the Opposition on the question of the composition of the Senate of this country.

I hear overseas — I see and read overseas journalists pontificating on who should be the next Chief Justice of Barbados. That appeared in the newspapers a couple of days ago. Now I wish to make it clear as long as the Constitution of Barbados reposes in me, the Governor-

General and the Leader of the Opposition the authority to carry out certain functions — I think that I know the Leader of the Opposition well enough to know that he would not be the kind of person who would speculate on matters of this kind — and, until I have taken counsel with myself, I do not speak to journalists or have leakages or even to the Members of the Cabinet until I have discharged my Constitutional functions.

How this relates now to the matter in hand is that I heard from the Leader of the Opposition that he understands — I did not hear the Minister say that he understands — that this is going to be used for the Supervisor of Insurance whoever he is.

(Asides)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Oh, that was the proposal of the last Government but this is not the proposal of this Government. This is a new Government. I understand now where the misunderstanding arose. I am not saying that the question of accommodating the Supervisor of Insurance is not one of the matters which will be considered by the Accommodations Committee. We are looking at the whole question of accommodation of Public Officers. Some people are occupying too much space and some people have too little space and a drastic sort of re-adjustment will have to be made.

We are so well endowed with physical plant in Barbados in the Government that first the Government sold off a dwelling house next to Government House for what can be considered of more than a reasonable sum after spending nearly the same sum on repairs without advertising it or putting it up for auction as far as I know, and they currently have a building next door to the Governor of the Central Bank in the hands of the Public Auctioneer. I have stopped the sale of that because how can we justify acquiring new properties and using the taxpayers money, which is not the case here, well indirectly because we will not receive the Estate and Succession Duty. But how can we justify spending public money on acquiring new buildings when we are getting rid of Government buildings and we are allowing other Government properties to fall into states of dilapidation and disrepair?

So I wish to make it clear that I am not aware that the Minister has appropriated the properties which is the subject matter of this Resolution here today for any particular office or officers, and if any such officers are casting longing eyes on these properties they better take their eyes off of them because decisions will not be made by journalists for this Government.

Now I should like to come to — I am more or less *ad idem* with the honourable Member for Christ Church West on the need for proper planning for the City of Bridgetown. We need planning, we need beautification but

not at the expense of human habitations. We need office space and we need proper allocation of the resources in and around Bridgetown in order to have a systematic programme for improvement of the City and the amenities which the City is supposed to afford. But when we come to this particular stretch of Bay Street, I just want to draw it to the attention of the House that what used to be the old Rum Refinery building and later became Barbados Ice Company that an application was put in to the Government for the building of a commercial businessman's hotel under the last administration. That expression is not used as a term of opprobrium but just as a point in time when the affairs of the country were being looked after by other people. It was four years before any reply was given to the company which had mobilized all the funds, had submitted the plans and drawings for the establishment of that hotel which would have created employment for people in and around the City area, and by the time the Town and Country Planning Department condescended to grant permission, the interest rates had gone up and therefore the funds could not be mobilized. Therefore, we could have had a considerable improvement in the area already if some of these Government departments would get off their chairs and go out and do the work which they are paid to do.

12.50 p.m.

I hope that in future instead of every town planning application being immediately responded to by a request for an extension of time within which the Town and Country Planning Officer should reply, that within the twenty-eight days that they are asking for they can say yes or no, we agree with this application or we disagree with it.

Too many people in this country have had their plans for development frustrated, and I do not like to make statements which I cannot confirm, but many of us in the legal profession know that we have had to dissuade our clients from making any contribution to the personal development programmes of the people working in the Town and Country Planning Office. We have told them under no circumstances. I think that goes for legal practitioners on both sides of the House. The reason why we do not get development in Barbados is because we have been advising our clients not to make these contributions to these personal development programmes. We are concerned with national development, not personal development programmes. I am not going to call any names. I hope the honourable Member for Christ Church West does not tell me to charge somebody or shut up, because he might provoke me into doing so.

All I should like to say is that I agree with the honourable member. We need to improve the physical appearance. As far as I remember — I hope I am wrong — but right in that immediate vicinity there is a dilapidated construction which could only be a fit habitation

for vermin, and we are not doing enough demolition of properties. As a matter of fact, I remember now where it is, it is near the roundabout. I saw it this morning and it struck me forcibly that right next door to a lady called Mrs. Walcott by the roundabout in Culloden Road and Collymore Rock, there is a property which is in danger of collapsing on any person who is passing by, and we do not find alternative accommodation for people who are living in substandard conditions, and there is no point in our buying a lot of property on behalf of the taxpayers unless we are prepared to upgrade the physical accommodation of the people who have to live in the Bridgetown area.

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

**ORDER NO. 2 — RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT
OXNARDS, ST. JAMES FOR HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT**

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Acting Speaker, as I stated when I was introducing the first Resolution, the subject-matter of this second Resolution also forms part of the agreement between the Government and the estate of the late Dr. A. W. Triefoff in order to repay some of the outstanding debt owed to Government.

Therefore, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I second that, Mr. Acting Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker I took advantage of the Standing Orders and I gave notice by circulating certain measures over the past week, some of which we now propose to do. I move, Sir, that the next Order be Order No. 3.

**ORDER NO. 3 — RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF CERTAIN PARCELS OF LAND SITUATE IN THE PARISHES OF ST. MICHAEL, CHRIST CHURCH, ST. PHILIP AND ST. LUCY TO DEVELOP MAINLY FOR HOUSING PURPOSES**

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Acting Speaker, this Resolution seeks to vest in the National Housing Corporation lands already acquired by Government.

The Lands, as set out in the Resolution, are lands at Checker Hall in St. Lucy; Bartletts, Christ Church; Harmony Lodge, St. Lawrence; Simmons Road, Clapham,

Christ Church; Wellington and Nelson Streets in the City; Bonnetts, Brittons Hill; Wavell Avenue, Black Rock; Parkinson Road, Grazettes and Battaleys in the parish of St. Peter.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I will take this opportunity to make a few comments on these respective pieces of acquisitions because some of the observations I have seen are, to say the least, a bit questionable, and I start with the one at Battaleys.

The acquisition at Battaleys in St. Peter was acquired for \$75 137.45 and this was acquired for resiting of houses dislocated as a result of the construction of the Speightstown By-pass Road. I have observed that when this acquisition was taking place, that it was pointed out then, that the acquisition of this land was contrary to the recommendations in the Speightstown Development Plan which was accepted by the then Planning and Priorities Committee of the former administration.
1.00 p.m.

I also observe that it was pointed out in the plans that recommendations were made for specific portions or areas of land for resiting all dislocated persons. It was also pointed out and it was recommended that this land should remain in agricultural use. Apparently, that recommendation was ignored.

That is not the acquisition that has caused me quite a bit of concern. The one that has caused the most concern is the one at Wavell Avenue.

On March 18, 1982, the former representative for St. Michael West Central, he was at that time Minister for Sports, the Hon. V. L. Johnson, took the Press down to the area in Wavell Avenue and gave a very long speech about transforming the area down there. At the time when he made this speech to the Press, no decision was made by Cabinet nor the Central Planning Committee of his administration.

In fact, on July 28, 1983 it was stated that no Cabinet decision nor indeed no Planning and Priorities Committee decision to authorise the acquisition of these lands had been proposed.

An officer of the Ministry of Housing then inquired how it could be that you could go into people's lands without any decision being made by Cabinet or by the Planning and Priorities Committee. He then got a reply coming back to him on July 28, 1983 over the telephone telling him that the Planning and Priorities Committee approved the project.

The Planning and Priorities decision, as stated by the Solicitor General, is not sufficient authority for the acquisition of lands and the Ministry of Housing was

told that it must be done by a Cabinet decision or a Minister's decision. This was stated by the Solicitor General on August 15, 1983.

Now, we come to the alarming part. On October 18, 1983, the late Prime Minister, the Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams, expressed his reservation about the purchase of that land. In fact, the late Prime Minister stated that he knew of one lady who was offered \$35 000 by a gentleman named Randolph Frazer who lived at 1 Coakesback Road at Claxton in London for part of her land, and the Government was now trying to offer her \$15 000 for the entire land.

The Prime Minister of that day went further. He said, "it is surely not the policy of Government to prevent individuals from buying land if all we are planning to do with the land is to develop it ourselves." That was the late Prime Minister speaking.

On November 10, 1983, the Permanent Secretary in Housing then informed the Prime Minister by a Minute that this decision to go into these persons land at Wavell Avenue was a Planning and Priorities decision. On the same day, the Prime Minister wrote back and asked him, "What do you advise?" Would you believe, Your Honour, that immediately after that the file disappeared and resurfaced on December 2, 1983, almost four weeks after? It resurfaced in the Ministry of Health with this Minute to the Minister of Housing. "This file was missent to the Ministry of Health." Now, you can draw your own conclusions and I can draw mine. I believe the file was hidden and then sent to the Ministry of Health two days before and then came back down.

Let me say that the Honourable Prime Minister had asked for an investigation into why that Honourable Minister went into those people's land. Needless to say, that the file having disappeared, the investigation went through the window, and the answer that the Prime Minister was looking for when he asked the Permanent Secretary, "what do you advise", that went through the window as well. In the meantime, there was not another word about any investigation or any advice by the late Prime Minister.

An officer in the Ministry of Housing again asked the former Government, "where is the Cabinet decision authorising the acquisition of this land?" This was on December 22, 1983. Up to then there was no Cabinet decision to acquire the land. Do you know when Cabinet approved the acquisition of that land? Cabinet approved the acquisition of the land on March 29, 1984, and people were going into these people's lands illegally, without any authorisation, since 1982, two years before.

Let me say something. I have investigated this, and I discovered that at the Planning and Priorities Committee

meeting, where the authorisation was given to go into that land, the Honourable Prime Minister was not there. I did not have the time to check whether he was there at this Cabinet decision, but I doubt it because he would have remembered that he had asked for a reply and none came, so I have my doubts whether he was there at that Cabinet meeting as well.

I have gone through a lot of these files in the Ministry of Housing and it is amazing how the former Member for St. Michael West Central, the Honourable V. L. Johnson, went about acquiring land and disposing of taxpayers money.
1.10 p.m.

I have seen in files where he had ordered MTW to go into people's land, and I will give you an example: one is at Clarke's Gap, Spooners Hill, and there is one at Bel Air in St. George. He ordered MTW to go into Clarke's Gap in Spooners Hill and put in roads, not even realising that the property owners had already had permission from Town and Country Planning to develop their land. When he discovered that, he had to stop the works, but by then he had spent \$210 740.07 which up to this day the Ministry of Housing cannot get back; so the fellow to whom the property belonged was sitting pretty. If you come and put roads on my land, I do not have to pay back. We have now discovered that there is no way you can get back that money. He went into Bel Air and did the same thing and more money was spent than at Clarke's Gap, and the Ministry of Housing cannot get it back, because the main reason is that the designating order cannot be retroactive; so we have discovered now that all that money, about \$½ million in the two developments cannot be recovered by the Ministry of Housing.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if you look at all the files, whether he was Minister of Labour, whether he was Minister of Transport, no matter what he was Minister of, the gentleman operated to suit himself. He was a law unto himself.

Now I come to the acquisition of the land at Wellington and Nelson Streets. What I have discovered with most of these acquisitions is that the order always went out from the past administration that "it is expedient for this project to commence immediately and for the contractors to be permitted to enter upon the said lands to undertake certain preliminary works." Those words recur time and again in all these acquisitions. There was a great hurry for these things, and that is what has happened at Pond Side. There was too much hurry. That is why there has not been much thought given to what was being done at Pond Side.

I believe that other members on this side will speak about Pond Side. I would just like to make one point about Pond Side. They said that the major problems

existing at Pond Side were (1) dense housing and (2) the lack of proper services. Would you believe that the past administration went into Pond Side, took up a piece of land that is less than one acre and the original plan was to build 74 units on that land? They increased the density. They gave no thought to what was happening in Pond Side. They went on a piece of land that was 0.744 acre and decided to put 74 units in an already densely populated area, and said that one of the problems in the area was the density of the housing.

Now the Town and Country Planner told them that to put 74 units there was crazy; he even told them that 50 units were too many, but they settled for fifty.

Now I am just showing you the inconsistency of the past administration. They said that one of the problems in Pond Side was a lack of proper services. Would you believe that this housing development was considered without any thought of recreational facilities for anybody at all in Nelson Street? They did not even look at anything to do with the disposal of garbage; so you were to stand up in your top window and throw out the garbage. No thought was given to this development at all.

The whole problem with the past administration is that everybody was following somebody else. When the Representative for St. George South gets a recreational facility, the one from St. Lucy wants piece too, and when the honourable Member for Christ Church West gets piece, the honourable Member for the City wants piece too; so there was no planning at all with many of these acquisitions, and I was alarmed when I saw the number of playing fields acquired in the last year. The thing that amazes me is that you could see everybody was jumping on. You get a playing field, therefore I want one. You get a community centre so I want one. There was no planning at all, but that was the death knell when they knew they were on the way out. Everybody wanted to impress their constituents that they were doing something.

Sir, you will find that in the next two or three years there will be a lot of acquisitions which we will have to come in here and vest in the National Housing Corporation, and I will speak on them at length, but in all of these Ministries, you will see where decisions were made over the past five years that bear no relationship to commonsense.

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

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Acting Speaker, I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Acting Speaker, from what the Minister has said, the negotiations or transactions for the acquisition of these properties have been going on for a period of four or five years.

I have to declare an interest because I heard him mention the name of a Barbadian who is resident in London who was the person to whom the late Prime Minister referred, who had offered to pay the sum of \$35 000 for a parcel of land for which the Government had offered \$15 000. Somewhere along the line, the gentleman who was a client of mine did acquire the land for \$35 000 and it has taken over four years, much to his embarrassment and to mine, and the Government has not thought fit to compensate that gentleman or any other person for the acquisition of this land.

We are embarked upon an elaborate programme of construction of super highways in this country. Much destruction of human habitation has taken place; people have been bulldozed out of their lawful dwellings and sent to live elsewhere. Some of them have been given rent of the magnitude of \$450 over two or three years to go and find alternative accommodation, but have not been compensated for the acquisition of their properties or for the destruction of their dwellings. I do not think in any civilised society you should turn people out of their ancestral homes, removing them from what the Latins used to call their *lares et penates*, their household gods, and having deprived them of the comfort of their dwellings — I see the honourable Member for St. Peter is looking for a translation to the honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Laughter

Asides

1.20 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: No, I am very serious about this — I was only making a little aside. How would you feel, Mr. Acting Speaker, to be turned out of a house that you and your parents and your grandparents had lived in when you think it is in the interest of what some people consider the national welfare and that you are sent to live in some remote part of this country and you are not compensated for the destruction of your own home, so that at least you can consider starting life afresh in the kind of accommodation which you have always looked forward to? And I think it is a shocking thing that here in the 20th century in Barbados, we sit down with equanimity and see people's houses bulldozed and the people who are the victims of that kind of treatment are given no encouragement to seek the proper redress.

I hope that by the 1st January that we would have the office of Ombudsman established. The matter is now up for consideration as to the details of remunerations,

salaries, and conditions of service and office accommodation being considered now by Cabinet.

I think that the Ombudsman will find that he may be called upon to do a lot of work that the Courts of Law in this island should be doing. But the reason why people do not have recourse to the Courts of Law in this island is that the laws delay, the expression must have originated in Barbados, because people who initiate litigation sometimes have to wait four and five years before any consideration is being given to putting their names down on a list.

Particularly there is a superstition in Barbados that if you put the Government in court you would have to wait a little longer because the people who are supposed to work for the Government, and I chose my words advisedly, supposed to work for the Government, are past grand masters at the art of log rolling and impediment, and obstruction. So you have a situation in which people have rights and they do not have any remedy, and I hope that the office of the Ombudsman will not be overburdened with matters which should properly occupy the attention of the Justices of this island. But as I said before, it is regrettable that people are deprived of their very livelihood. Some people have been turned off their farms, turned off their gardens, the places where they would normally expect to derive some kind of sustenance and have had to wait four and five years and even longer without any prospect of being properly compensated.

In my respectful submission, Mr. Acting Speaker, a delay like that is tantamount to expropriation, and expropriation of people's property is directly, I would say, forbidden by our Constitution. Because what is written into the Constitution of all these Commonwealth Caribbean countries is that no man should be deprived of his property without proper compensation, and if you deprive a person of their property indefinitely, although you tell them that you have the intention of paying or that you will receive a reply, it is tantamount to expropriation without compensation if those people are not speedily compensated for their losses.

So I hope that the Minister will look into these cases. I cannot know everything that is going on in the Ministry of Housing and Lands. The first thing that they need is proper staff, and when I write a letter to the Ministry of Housing and Lands, I do not expect to be replied to by unsuccessful solicitor's clerks. I am a Queen's Counsel and I want the dignity of a reply from somebody of my equivalent status who can make some sense when I read the letters. I am not calling any names. But one of the defects is that we are trying to do things too cheaply here in Barbados by getting a lot of unqualified people to do things that professional people should be doing and I want the Minister to look into that as well.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, I just want to make a short contribution on this Resolution particularly as the first Resolution has to do with the vesting of the area of land in Checker Hall in St. Lucy in the National Housing Corporation and to state that certainly one welcomes the fact that there is in St. Lucy at the moment a National Housing Corporation project. But I would want to make the point that whereas in the past we were pressing for an area of land for housing, one at the time did not recognize that there would have been the level of displacements by the construction of the cement plant and now by the Northern Access Road. The result of this is that a lot of the lots which originally would have been allocated for normal housing situation have had to be used for lack of a better term for these emergency purposes. So that those persons who have been displaced and whose properties have been acquired as a result of the construction of the Arawak Cement Plant and the Northern Access Road and those persons in the St. Lucy area have had to be resited in this particular area. I would, therefore, want to indicate to the Minister, as I have already done, that we do not consider that this particular housing development is enough to satisfy the needs.

It is a fact that there is a considerable need for housing in St. Lucy. From the very outset I am making my position very clear that I will be coming after him and ensuring that we get another project in this constituency because we do not consider that this really is enough to satisfy the needs. But certainly we recognize that this is a step in the right direction and will want to see this continued in that way. So that I would certainly support the Resolution to vest this area of land in the National Housing Corporation.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, I find some sympathy with the problems adverted to by the Honourable Prime Minister in terms of

(Aside)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, I have not had any personal property. I do not have any land. I got only where I live. That is all that I have, nothing more ... in terms of the delay that appears to follow after the procedure of acquisition has started and the land owner is compensated. But I believe, Sir, that it has a history and the history is tied up with the functioning of Government and the bureaucracy that one finds in Government irrespective of the personalities who comprise the political directorate from time to time.
1.30 p.m.

Now, Sir, as I understand it, it is accepted I believe on both sides, it is accepted by the legal officers in the Ministry of the Attorney General and by the practitioners in the Ministry of Housing and Lands, and it has been

accepted without question that once a section 3 notice is published under the Land Acquisition Act, that automatically entitles the Crown to enter upon the lands of the land owner, and more often than not this has happened. I am told that in some cases the section 3 notice has been issued and then the land owner has still been asked to pay the property taxes and that would have to be wrong, because once you start assuming powers of dominion over the land I should think that you are entitled to pay. The Crown is then the person who should be looked to for the land taxes. But it has always been accepted that once the section 3 notice is published the Crown can go in and start work on the land, and the full procedure necessary to mature the land acquisition procedure then takes a while to complete.

Where there has been a problem over the years, as I found when I assumed responsibility for the Ministry last year, was that in the Ministry itself the Department responsible for land acquisitions had not modernised itself. What I am saying, Sir, is an absolute fact. I visited the office of one of the officers responsible for land acquisitions and I found in the room files all around the room packed high on top of filing cabinets. The only thing that was free from files was his desk and his seat. I enquired what was the reason for this, and I was told that we were going through an exercise to try and strip the files and put them in order. I had to ask for a temporary officer to be appointed to assist in this, because the gentleman who was doing it was studying law at the University, and he had gone off on holiday.

What had happened in 1985 was that the Ministry was still using the same procedure as applied in the early seventies. Land acquisitions were not as frequent and as many when the present Government was last in power. The Crown Solicitor's Department at the time was responsible for the administration of these acquisitions, and if you had seven or eight in a year it would have been all right — it would have been passable, I would not say it would have been all right — it would have been passable to put all the documents relating to those seven acquisitions in one file, but where you were acquiring, for example in respect of the new road, 150 and 200 properties — 362 properties, I am indebted to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture — 362 properties, you would find, Sir, as I found, and the present Attorney General has probably seen it for himself, my friend's title deeds, my title deeds, your title deeds, the Prime Minister's title deeds, all in one file mixed up. They are bound to get lost, they are bound to be misplaced.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In respect of my constituency there is an area is Allen View where people's land had been acquired in the late seventies for the extension of the Cave and to this day those persons have not been compensated. I tried my best as Attorney General to try

and get the procedure speeded up so that these people could be paid. They were my constituents, but apart from being my constituents, it was a human matter, and to this day I came, stayed for a year and left, and the people have not been paid, and all I have received is one piece of foolscap with a series of names, not accurate, because for example, Mrs. Holford's name was not on that and hers should have been on it, and no indication as to when people would be paid or who had been paid. So that you found that in the management of the Department they had failed to become sophisticated and to take account of the pressure of work and modernise themselves. That is the basic reason.

To overcome that, the last Government established a separate unit under Mr. Davis in which the lawyer's clerk who has failed to pass — I believe the one to whom the Honourable Prime Minister was referring. I think we know who we are talking about — there are a few people in there, Sir, a couple of lawyers and some who have had passing acquaintance with the law who are assisting, and who by years of being close to the law ought to have — I did not say they would have — ought to have picked up something about the proper procedures required under the Land Acquisition Act.

But I think an attempt was being made, Sir, to ensure that the Department became more streamlined so that it could deliver justice to the land owners with greater speed.

I observed the Prime Minister on television one night advising the country that if there were land owners who had been dispossessed and they had not got settlement within fourteen days to flood the Attorney General's Office with writs or originating summonses under the Act. Since I have come back to private practice, I have had one of these matters and it is now outstanding for about three months, and it would only be an embarrassment to the Honourable Attorney General to file a summons in the circumstances, because these things take time and you have to ensure that the title is proper. That is the biggest problem, ensuring that the title is clear and valid, and we have problems where people have settled on land for years and do not have a proper title.

But from all that has been said, Sir, it appears that the new administration — we give them a year, 18 months, Sir — will not have any of the problems that previously affected the other administration, and that this business should be set on a course where there could be a speedy dispensation of money to follow the speedy acquisition of the lands. Perhaps the Government would consider — I cannot remember if I had actually minuted it, I certainly raised it with my Cabinet colleagues — but perhaps we could look at a procedure under which so long as the land has been acquired and there is a valid

title, a part at least of the proceeds could be paid to the person dispossessed to show at least Government's good faith. Perhaps the way in which one would calculate the amount of money to be paid could be based on the last land tax certificate.

It is not beyond us to work out a mechanism to enable part to be paid and the Crown hold the balance on account until the business is sorted out. Of course, this Government is very keen on refunding with interest, so that if you hold the money beyond six months, for example, then interest becomes payable.

1.40 p.m.

If you hold the money beyond six months for example, then interest becomes payable, but that is a matter... I just throw it out and suggest it is something to look at and the mechanics, of course, would have to be worked out by the technicians.

Now, Sir, with respect to the matters raised by the Honourable Minister with regard to Mr. Vic Johnson, I...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not tell me about defending. The defending will come at a different place and a different time.

(Aside: You mean in court?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A lot of cases are in court already. The only difference is that I will be prosecuting one, and certainly will be leading in one in which he is plaintiff.

But, apart from that, I do not believe that the Honourable Minister was seeking to suggest that the gentleman was dishonest.

(Aside: Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: No).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You say "No"? I am obliged to you for that. I hope you will have the courage to read it into the records.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You are saying "No". What it seems to me is the burden of the complaint of the Honourable Minister is that a former Minister, in his zeal to deliver services speedily to his constituents, in the same way as the Honourable Minister of Trade was asking the Honourable Minister of Housing ten minutes ago to deliver more houses to him quickly in St. Lucy — nothing wrong with that — the only problem is that there are twenty-four that will be asking this Minister of Housing all for housing estates and playing fields.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, we are not going to get any. You have twenty-four to deal with and then come to us. We are very understanding.

He made a commitment and a promise to his constituents that he would build the Belfield Sporting Complex without Cabinet approval, as you said, or Planning and Priorities blessing.

I would only wish to say this that so far as I am aware, the construction of recreational facilities was never a matter that occupied the attention of the Planning and Priorities Committee or, indeed, the Cabinet because the decision whether you are going to have a pavilion at Belfield or somewhere else is a ministerial policy decision for the Minister responsible for Sport. When he is formulating his capital programme for 1987, the Minister will take into account that he has \$2 million to spend and he wants to do this or that. If it was over \$100 000 it used to come to PPC but most pavilions were built for between \$50 000 and \$60 000.

I think you will find that Belfield was phased. Part was finished one year and part in the next financial year. But the fact that the former Member may have committed the development at Belfield may have also been good politics because he would have tied any subsequent Minister because he did not stay in that Ministry long, and he committed it, and in all of the planning and so on, one would have to plan against the background that there was a commitment to the people of Belfield.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am believing everything I am saying because it accords with not only commonsense, but political sense, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was Chairman of the Sports Council, yes, but your Press picture would not show me down at Belfield though. Your Press picture did not show me down there precisely for the reason that I am saying that the Minister would have gone and made the policy decision and then written to the Sports Council to say that in your planning for year 1983, take into account the establishment of a playing facility at Belfield.

The Honourable Minister of Employment, the Honourable Minister who is creating all of these jobs, who has the country very happy and satisfied, he was a member of the Sports Council at the time and he would know that that is how it was done. A policy decision would come down as to where the Minister wanted a facility located and then — I am amazed that it seemed that there

was some neglect among the bureaucrats properly to document these matters — because when a decision was taken about a playing field, it was usually taken in conjunction with representatives of the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministries responsible for Sports and Agriculture. Perhaps those were the main three and there was always a site visit because it would cross wires.

If you were going to take a piece of agricultural land out of agriculture to establish a playing field, you would have to have the input of the Ministry of Agriculture and all of us would meet and a decision would be taken, a recommendation made to the Ministry. The Ministry would then send to the Ministry of Housing and Lands for that Ministry to start the process for acquisition of the land.

But, Sir, all of these bits of land which form the various schedules to the Resolution, I believe, will redound to the benefit of Barbados ultimately, even though there may have been one or two administrative infelicities, as the Honourable Minister said, because he has not told us what he is going to do with all the land and if all the lands are going to be built on, for example, Parkinson's Road, Grazettes, whether that is going to be let out in house spots or whether they are going to erect houses, or whether they are going to sell the spots.

Similarly, at Bonnetts, I believe they are building terraced units there and perhaps, in his reply, the Minister could give us some indication as to what use these spots are going to be put.

The fact that he has come to vest them now is a problem that has always plagued the Ministry of Housing and Lands. The lands are acquired and at the date of acquisition then vested in the Crown. Then, the National Housing Corporation, as the executing vehicle, goes and does work on the land, and after a period of years you find that the lands are not properly vested in the National Housing Corporation. I am sure this is what he is seeking to do today. We had this problem when we were first in Government. We brought a number of them just to regularize the title to the land and property vest in the National Housing Corporation.

I hope that the Minister will shortly tell us, not necessarily today, of his policy for housing. I note that before the elections of May 28, 1986, he and his party were highly critical of a number of the housing projects, including Wotton, and I was very pleased to read that the Minister on a visit to Wotton was himself very pleased and happy about what he had seen at Wotton.
1.50 p.m.

I think, Sir, those are the main points I wish to raise on this matter. I believe the honourable Member for St. Peter will be speaking and perhaps will be able to

tell us if Battaleys is where I think it is, when one is going to Heywoods and you get on the new road, just before you get to the traffic lights on the right hand side. I cannot remember that being in agriculture, but the honourable Member for St. Peter who is familiar with the area will perhaps deal with it. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Acting Speaker, they tell me that the first time you speak you should be careful to relate to parochial matters, and since I am dealing with a constituency which has been entrusted to me, entrusted for quite a while — it is a long entrustment — I should want to use the occasion to remind the Honourable Minister for Housing that when he is planning for the 1987–88 year that there are areas within St. Michael Central, especially Waterford and Goddings Road, where we should need to have some work done. I should not wish to stand here merely to make reference to this, because I am sure I can speak to him directly and I have no objection to being referred to as a person who wants a piece of the action provided that it is for St. Michael Central.

I rise because I was concerned about a number of things that were said and I wanted to make a few observations. My concern regarding the kinds of behaviour which one reads about and which one notices, the kind of behaviour which leads to the zeal that the honourable Member for St. Thomas has referred to, and the kind of zeal which leads to the twelve storey block which we now see standing above the squalor which there is around it leads me to the view that persons of that ilk should be brought before the courts and charged with conspiracy against the State.

Mr. Acting Speaker, my concern relates to the fact that we have to be very careful in countries of this size dealing with people of our kind to ensure that we do not build the kind of country where people are not prepared to give of their best at all times, and where they begin to see differences getting wider and wider with time. I should like, Sir, to make reference to the fact that when once the National Housing Corporation sets itself the task of managing the housing stock that there is, it should concern itself, as the Prime Minister has said, with the state of dilapidation that there is.

I am concerned, Mr. Acting Speaker, when we look at some of the housing stock which there currently is, which is in private hands but which is rented, with the fact that when one visits such areas, one sees so much grass growing through the flooring, one hears the residents speak and sometimes is able to recognise oneself that the people who live within those houses are not sheltered against the elements, and that there is little or no privacy within such houses, and the question for me, Sir, is what can be done in such areas, given the fact that Government has limited funds to disburse and cannot

meet the commitments or the aspirations of all the people regarding their wishes for housing. At the same time, I am concerned that we do not have the differences that I have made reference to, and I should like the Minister, Mr. Acting Speaker, to give consideration to the idea that it may be necessary, indeed it is necessary, for the National Housing Corporation at the same time that it is looking at the management of those houses which are vested directly within its control, that it looks or seeks to get the opportunity to look further afield at those houses which are in private hands to see what can be done in that area. It may be necessary to give thought to a form of registration of houses, especially those houses, even chattel houses, which are available for rental. Where that is done, Sir it may be necessary for Government in seeking to have regulations to recognise that there is a need for the establishment of certain basic minimal standards. I recognise, Sir, that such basic minimal standards might need to be dealt with by having Government put into those private hands some form of grant or perhaps some form of loan which will help individuals to bring their private houses to that basic minimal standard that I am speaking of. But even if Government has to go to that extent, Mr. Acting Speaker, I consider that it would be in the interest of people who are seeking housing as a whole, because Government in doing so would recognise that it has a problem being solved partly for itself, the problem of being able to meet the demand for housing stock. I do not consider that Government would be physically able or financially able to meet all the housing requirements that exist, and Government would therefore have to recognise that going hand in glove with its own aims and its own programmes will have to be a rental programme of entrepreneurs and private business persons. Government may therefore need to make sure that when those houses are in fact being given over for rental that they are given over to rental at a level which Government may be satisfied with, levels which in fact can meet needs which the people have.

I am suggesting that where Government establishes such registration and regulations, Mr. Acting Speaker, it may be necessary as well for Government to look at the rental regime which may exist, because I think that all of us who have constituents recognise that there is a constant complaint being made that as soon as an individual has to put a shingle on a house, the rent goes up sometimes by as much as \$5.00 a week or \$10.00 a week, and there must be the need for us to safeguard individual renters from the kinds of problems of that sort, and Mr. Acting Speaker, it may not be that you want to get rid of the person, but where the demand for houses as there is in Barbados is much greater than the supply of houses, we will get that kind of exploitation. We need in looking at the plan for the management of the housing stock of Barbados to make sure that we recognise that kind of problem.

Beyond that, Mr. Acting Speaker, I wish to make the suggestion that the National Housing Corporation needs as well to recognise that increasingly there is a demand by individuals not merely to have housing but to have house spots, and where we are finding as in this Resolution that there are tracks of land available to National Housing Corporation, I should like to see that it is well advertised and well known to the public at large early that some of these spots are in fact available, especially in the lower income groups for houses of the chattel type. Because a lot of people who are concerned with having houses may in fact be able to build their own, and they want in fact to have their own expression of their independence by building their houses, but find themselves in the problem of not being able to find somewhere on which to place them. I would like to suggest, Mr. Acting Speaker, that it might be necessary in this acquisition to be sure early as to where there will be housing available and where there will be land available for the purchase by individual house owners.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, in moving the suspension for lunch, I should like first of all to compliment the honourable Member for St. Michael Central on this his maiden speech, a fine speech.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I beg to second that.

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

2.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: The House is in session.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, before resuming consideration of the matter that the House was deliberating on the Suspension, I should like to crave leave of the House, Sir, to resume. I will refer back to the Orders of the Day – Notices.

NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I would like to give Notice of a Resolution and I would also like to state, Sir, that the Government would like to have this matter dealt with in all of its stages today.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Thank you, Sir. Mr. Acting Speaker, I give notice of a Resolution to approve the

borrowing of the additional sum of \$10 million dollars from a Consortium of Banks for which the participating County Natwest Capital Markets Ltd. will act as agent for the purpose of assisting in the continuation of the Government's Capital Development Programme already in progress prior to May 28, 1986 and to assist in meeting foreign debt repayments due to fiscal years 1986/87 and 1987/88, Sir.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: We now revert to Government Business. Item No. 3.

Mr. R. MORRIS: Mr. Acting Speaker, the honourable Member for St. Thomas in his address to the House mentioned the Wotton situation. He mentioned that the Minister of Housing and Lands had toured Wotton and had stated that he was satisfied with what he saw of the buildings being erected for those people who had to be resited, and he said that in words to the effect that somebody, some individual would be reaping the sweets of the Wotton programme.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that kind of comment really is so divergent from my own political philosophy that I had to make a response to that kind of statement, because as far as I am concerned, Sir, the only persons who should be reaping any sweets from any development plans at Wotton will be the people who live there and the ones who have suffered severely during the period of neglect by the former administration. Because the clear signs of problems affecting those dwellers at Wotton from 1981 when they were affected by flood difficulties when the then Minister of Housing and Lands, DeLisle Bradshaw, toured the Wotton area but could not come up with immediate plans for resiting those residents.... As a matter of fact, the then Prime Minister Bernard St. John had to wait for a crash programme. I will take some credit for pushing him into that programme...

Applause

Mr. R. MORRIS: Not taking any credit for the benefits that came from the actions that he started belatedly and that were not completed up to the time when we became the Government.....

But I want to advert to the whole question of resiting. I think that it is very important that when people undergo pressure as a result of things like flooding that Government must immediately take emergency measures to make these people as comfortable as possible and I am sure that there are people in St. Peter who would be affected in the same way.

I am not at all, Sir, happy at the way how the matter was approached by the last administration. It did

not appear to me that the question of resiting the affected dwellers in Wotton was seen from humanitarian grounds or even the grounds of need, but were treated as a last minute political expediency. Because it seems to me that the kind of thinking that could have been done — the land was available next door, or the land that was used eventually was available next door. But it was only after about October or November last year that any plans were really made for resiting the residents.

But I think that the other problem that comes up is alternative sites for resiting persons who are affected by problems such as the one at Wotton. Now the land on which these houses are being sited has been used for a very long time by the youths of the area for playing facilities and other forms of recreation, and I want at the same time to look at the last administration's policy in terms of land use, because the point about Gall Hill is a touching problem for me where you had the Pride of Gall Hill Football Team, first division, doing extremely well and because of the Sites and Services Programme, a programme in principle I have nothing against, but I believe we always have to look at the particular instance where that pasture that was used by these young men has been used in the Sites and Services Programme. I venture to say that I am not happy that the choice for housing is a very wise choice for those who know that particular area of Gall Hill. I have no doubt that they would also be suffering from a problem of drainage at sometime also, when in fact that pasture could have been left for the enrichment of the area and certainly for the benefit of those young people.

The point I am making, Sir, is that when Government is employing land it is very important, of course, that some land be put aside for housing development. There is a great need for housing. I would like to advise caution in the use of the land and my second point is that in cases where there is need to resite people, and I am not talking about resiting in the case of a programme like the Airport to Seaport Road. This is something that was planned over time and you knew what you were going to do. You would have known definitely the kinds of problems that the homeowners would have faced and so on and there is no excuse in that case for the kind of early action to make sure that they are not disadvantaged. But I am talking about emergency cases where people have to be resited because of acts of nature. I can see no reason whatsoever why administrations have to delay taking action and why they have to act in a very belated way in making sure that these people are not disaffected after time.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, this simple Resolution has no doubt brought forth quite a lot of debate, and I am not surprised Sir that any Resolution

dealing with land acquisition, in my experience, usually gives occasion for persons to make speeches concerning their constituency needs or in this case, so soon after the change of Government to use it as an excuse for the odd criticism about their predecessors in office.

I wish however in the best tradition of this House and indeed of Commonwealth Parliaments to congratulate the honourable Member for St. Michael Central on what is obvious a very good maiden speech, Sir. It is one of the best I have heard other than for the little blemish of the personal remark he made in the third sentence. I think it all goes very well for this House that in his maiden speech he can make what the Acting Leader of the House today describes as an excellent speech. I believe that we will have to watch him very carefully in debate, Sir, very carefully indeed and mark him down as one of the people we will pay closer attention to only to remind him that his entrustment is only for a limited period of time less he forgets, Sir — less he forgets, Sir!

(Laughter)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Well Sir, it really was a very good speech. It had a lot of food for thought, a lot of suggestions and policy, and direction which I think that the Honourable Minister of Housing could well pay attention to, Sir. So I wish to really congratulate him on a very excellent speech.

Now, Sir, this Resolution seeks to transfer to the Ministry of Housing areas of land which have been acquired compulsorily by the Government, and the House has previously concurred in these acquisitions. I have listened very carefully to all that the Honourable Minister has said and frankly his criticism of the two particular parcels of land which he singled out, the one at Battaleys and the other at Wavell Avenue, and that the Minister as he was entitled to do in my view went and said what was the proposal he intended for this area.
2.55 p.m.

He was, after all, the parliamentary representative for the area and I congratulate him on his sagacity in making a statement in his constituency about what he would have liked to have seen happen at Wavell Avenue, and secondly, he was also Minister of Sport. I would not want to criticise any Minister of Sport who in his own constituency says that he intends to make sure that a particular parcel of land was going to be provided with adequate facilities for his own constituents.

The Minister says that people went on this land prior to the land being acquired by the Government. I believe that the honourable Member for St. Thomas has given an answer to that point.

I want to make the following comments on the Land Acquisition Act. Under section 3 of the Land

Acquisition Act the Government has power to go in and survey and carry out a certain limited amount of work in relation to land, even before the Government has finally determined that it wants really to acquire the land. It is entitled at a later stage to abandon the acquisition.

Under section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act the Governor General can authorise the Chief Surveyor to go in and carry out works, and very frequently in the Official Gazette one sees both section 3 and section 4 notices being published, and the law permits compensation to be given where actual damage occurs even if the Government subsequently does not carry through with a section 5 acquisition.

Now, Sir there are cases where even although neither a section 3 nor a section 4 notice has been published Ministries go in and commence work. There are various reasons for this, Sir. I am not saying that that accords with the law. In areas of tenantry development where people are occupying tenancies in particular, it has been my experience that some of the land owners give approval for road construction to take place, and in any event people are being encouraged not to ask for compensation in each case where there is an improvement taking place to their own lands.

The honourable Member cited Bel Air. I suspect he means Bel Air in St. George. Can anyone deny that the development which has taken place in Bel Air in which the Government has spent over a million dollars is beneficial to those persons who occupy the area and also to those people who own adjoining lands? In my own constituency — I can cite the Rendezvous West Ridge — the Government has gone in and put in a road leading from Rendezvous Road into Forde's Road, in which not only the tenants are benefiting but several other land owners who now do not have to develop the lands themselves, and although no compensation has been paid, yet I believe that the benefits that Government has conferred outweigh the compensation which would have been demanded by some of these land owners.

I would not like it to be thought that where Government is doing overall development in tenancies, that it must buy every square inch of land over which it is doing its development. I think people must recognise that they are getting a benefit from public funds and people must be prepared in their own interest to make some contribution as well to that overall development, because it must be a corollary that if we are to go in on each occasion and pay compensation, the Government may want to use the Betterment Levy Act more in order to get an ensuing benefit from land owners whose lands are being improved considerably in some cases. So one has to watch this.

Now, Sir, I think the honourable Members have referred to the delays which have occurred in land

acquisition. Both the Honourable Prime Minister and the honourable Member for St. Thomas have made the point that these delays are in many respects inordinate, and that is probably quite true Sir. But part of the difficulty which has occurred, in my experience, has occurred because of questions concerning first title, and we would be surprised at how many titles in Barbados are really not certifiable titles, although the period now for proving titles has been reduced to 20 years; and secondly, because of the difference in points of view between the Government and the person whose land is being acquired concerning the amount of compensation.

The Honourable Minister of Agriculture, when he was in his private practice, had a considerable experience of the variation, the divergence of view between the acquiring authority and the person whose land is being acquired. On many occasions many of us referred to him because of his expert knowledge in that field to get a valuation report, and even despite his expert knowledge the Government valuers may continue to disagree over the price of valuation.

Let me give you an example that occurs in the constituency of the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central. At Top Rock there are two parcels of land being acquired, almost side by side. The Government has offered one land owner \$4.00 per square foot and has turned around and offered the other \$3.75. The difference, I am told, is because one area of land which is being acquired is smaller than the other. That could lead to one person feeling that he is being unfairly treated. There really is, in my view, no significant difference between these two areas of land, but the Government officials are trying to get the best deal for the Government, and the person whose land is needed by the public wants to feel that not only his sentimental attachment to the land but the market value of the land is being reflected in the compensation.

Now, Sir, these acquisitions go on for several years, in my experience. Part of the parcel of land being acquired here in Bonnetts has been acquired since 1981. I know for a fact that several of my constituents have not yet been compensated, but I would not like honourable Members to believe that these difficulties of which we speak occurred only during the period 1976 to 1986. I have been in this House long enough, and also been in practice long enough to be fully aware that these problems are not new to Barbados. They occurred under the administration prior to ours, they occurred in our administration, and unhappily I predict that they will occur in this administration as well. I do not think that you will ever get rid of some of the problems. We must seek to minimise them. I think that cognisant of the problems which have occurred that the past Government set up the procedure to try to minimise the problems as they occurred from time to time, and I am happy to say that the special unit in the Ministry of Housing is now functioning at a reasonably

high standard of efficiency, although I must confess that one still from time to time sees them asking for valuation reports when I think we need to sit down and talk to each other across the table.

3.10 p.m.

Despite the fact that we have used the Section 5 procedure of this Act, one sees them insisting that title deeds must be produced or affidavits by two people as to ownership of the land when the land has been in the names of these parties according to the Tax Demand Notices, and in any event, the title of the Crown becomes indefeasible because of the Section 5 notice.

We, perhaps, need to simplify the Land Acquisition Act. For instance, this procedure in itself is really a procedure in using Parliament's time twice. If it was intended that these lands should go to the National Housing Corporation, use the acquisition powers under the Housing Act and come into Parliament and acquire once and for all for National Housing Corporation, or, at the same time, ask Parliament not only to acquire but also to do the Vesting Act at the same time.

But, in any event, it seems to me that the Crown Vesting Act, as well as the Land Acquisition Act need drastic overhauling and the Minister should have the power by order, subject to negative Resolution, to vest lands. Nobody is going to believe that any Minister in this day and age is going to take the Crown's land and give it to someone without due consideration. There are enough checks and balances there, so I would hope that the Minister will have an opportunity to look seriously, along with his Parliamentary colleague, the Honourable Attorney General, at revamping the law so as to get rid of some of these problems.

But, Sir, I would be less than a good representative if I did not use the opportunity, to refer to two valuable — unlike the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, I have no problem in saying that I enjoy the sweets. I enjoy the sweets of votes coming from any acquisition that benefit the people who vote for me, and there is no calumny in that statement, and certainly I was very pleased when the Government acquired both Bonnetts and Simmons Land, Bonnetts particularly because it has been one of the most run-down areas that one could find.

In fact, when we did the survey, fifty-six out of every one hundred households did not have the basic facilities that you would expect to find in a household today and the Government is now doing the development of Bonnetts. We did some of it and they are continuing with the programme for the other houses there, and I hope the Minister is in a position to let me know what is happening with the roads because I understand the tender for the roads went out, and the contract may have been

allotted and I want to know as well when the roads will be put in out there, Sir.

The Minister may also be aware of the fact that the Government has acquired in Bonnetts land going right back down to the walls of Sir Neville Osbourne. It joins Sir Neville Osbourne's land, and yet those tenants are not paying rent to the Government. They continue to pay to the former landlords and in many instances where Government has acquired land, Government does not seem to follow through and ensure that it exercises its ownership as one would expect.

Now, Sir, in Simmons land, I am very pleased again that that area was acquired. There was neither water, roads, nor light in that area, despite the fact that there were several residents. The purpose of acquiring Simmons land, like the purpose of acquiring St. Lawrence, was for the purpose of moving houses to make way for the Access Road, but there are going to be about sixty house spots over and above those that are needed. Now, I am aware of the fact and the Chairman of Housing is here, that the people from Christ Church West alone, had sent in over one hundred and sixty applications to purchase house spots there.

Now, what I want to know is what is the Government's policy on this: Is priority going to be given to those persons who need to acquire the lots and who are coming from the surrounding areas where their children are already going to schools in the area? They are working in the Wildey Industrial Development so that there should be some priority list in terms of need for these persons.

But what it shows, Sir, if I myself am aware is that there are over one hundred and sixty applications for less than sixty house spots in Simmons Road, it shows that there is still a crying need for people to own house spots and that therefore, the Minister is on the right track if he follows through with the policy which we were implementing to acquire more land for sites and services and, in my experience, you need to have a land bank. You have to put in the basic sites and services and, in my experience, if loans are made available to people and the red tape in getting the loan is not so bureaucratic, you will find that the Barbadian initiative and love for his own house will take care of a lot of the housing needs in Barbados.

We will always have a number of people who cannot acquire their own homes or even when they acquire them cannot keep them. We have a state duty to look after them, but I am satisfied that the right push in housing in this country will see Barbadians better housed, although, let me confess, that in terms of the Third World, we still remain better housed, better clothed and we have much better health than several other countries

in the world today. Not that there is not room for improvement, but I believe that we have good examples of how improvement can be achieved both in the private and public sector.

The Barbados Workers' Union project is a shining example of a private enterprise striking out and doing well. So too the work done by Ideal Homes and so too the work done by people like Land Development, Mr. Pillersdorf, who is Property Development.

I believe that in the public sector that the Government has in the West Terrace Project done extremely good work and we have had much improvement on what used to be the housing units before. Just as I believe that at the middle income level the predecessor to the Urban Development Corporation did a very good scheme on the initial Husbands Development, so we have within Barbados the experiences and the expertise to carry out a thriving housing programme.

More and more now we have access to our own basic materials. We have cement. We have limestone, coral stone which is now being sliced properly by machine out of St. Philip North, I believe, or St. Philip Chapel, but very good limestone which can be used. We have most of the basic raw materials, very good building sand from St. Andrew, and I think, given the liquidity in the banking system, which we have here, and given the not very high foreign exchange cost that is involved, that we should all put our heads together and approach this question of housing in a very serious manner.

I think my constituency, like the constituency of the honourable Member for the City, happens to be a very densely populated area and there is still a growing need in these areas for more housing. We are running out of land mass. We may have to give some consideration to going up. I know the Minister has reservations as to whether the density at Pondsides was adequate or not.

I do not always agree with the Chief Town Planner on his concept of density for the City area. I see the Central Bank is allowed ten storeys but he is restricting private enterprise to three and four. I do not know why the double standard. One must expect and understand that land resources are very scarce resources in a land of 166 square miles. Density will have to increase. What we have to ensure is that in increasing density our construction standards provide the other amenities of which the Minister spoke.

We have to provide common playing fields, not in every district either and that is where I take some issue

with my friend, the member for Christ Church East Central.

3.20 p.m.

I do not believe that we can have playing fields every half a mile. I think the Government when it goes into this will find that it is not the correct policy, despite the pressure we are under as politicians to tell our constituents that they are going to have playing fields. You have to be realistic about this. I boast in Christ Church West of having the best basketball teams. The honourable Member for St. Michael South East is now getting a little benefit from it in Clapham Park, the Clapham Bulls. We have the best basketball teams and yet we do it without any real access — the Minister of Sports knows this — to any big pasture because there is not the land, but I think we have to tell people that every village cannot have a playing field, and we must make the communities interact more and share facilities in the long run.

I agree that we must spend on sport more, particularly having regard to the need to provide young people with avenues for expression. Sport and culture should get a higher percentage, no doubt, of the national budget, but we have to be realistic as well; we have to not put in an amenity every hundred yards, and at the same time we have to increase densities bearing in mind the overall aesthetic values of the City of Bridgetown.

I would like to see the City of Bridgetown become a thriving city where people live again. I agree with the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister on the point of rehabilitation. There is a strong case for rehabilitating a lot of the broken down buildings which we have.

Speaking now Sir, in my capacity as representor, let me declare an interest, my mother's estate. I know for a fact that one of the difficulties which confronted landlords of those eras were the very high estate duties. You got such low rents and yet you had estate duties eating up estates, and it was not possible for the estates on death to take over caring for even existing housing stock, and that is part of the problem in St. Michael. When we go into many of these cases, the people have died and their heirs cannot continue to develop the property as is. Maybe there is a strong case for some of the measures of which the honourable Member for St. Michael Central spoke.

So, Sir, whilst I welcome again the Resolution, I hope that we can get over the period of allotting blame. I want to say Sir, that Ministers have to take ultimate responsibility for the acts of their civil servants, but in many instances you know, when you read the files — I read those files carefully too — it is not often a political person that makes an error. I wondered why that file disappeared for a month.

Laughter

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I cannot believe at all it is because of a politician that it disappeared. There are all sorts of reasons why things are not followed up and sometimes it is not possible to get them followed up in the manner which we hope they will. I hope that the people in Black Rock, I do not know if it is the estate of Jordan, because if it is the estate of Jordan, let me right away declare an interest having given the estate some advice.

But I hope that they will get their compensation now speedily, and that the suggestion of the honourable Member for St. Thomas will in future be followed where the Government and the persons whose lands are being acquired are in dispute, the Government should pay without prejudice what the Government says that it thinks the land is worth and leave it thereafter for the person to justify the extra amount that they are asking for. At least in that event there will be some movement forward, and I want to tell the Minister that the rate of six per cent interest is no longer realistic. Even the Supreme Court is giving eight per cent now, and it seems to me that we should amend that part of the Acquisition law to allow interest to accrue after a reasonable time for the parties to get together on any outstanding monies, particularly where the Government has made no offer and has made no payment on its offer.

Mr. P. J. MILLER: Mr. Acting Speaker, the Fifth Schedule to this Resolution deals with the acquisition of an area of land which is commonly called the Pondside area. It is in fact only a part of that area known as Pondside, and I was very pleased in discussing with the Honourable Minister for Housing to learn that he believes that we should look at developing the whole of Pondsides area and not just that small portion of it.

You see, Sir, the constituency of the City of Bridgetown has probably what is the most expensive per unit cost public housing estate in the country; but while that is so, and not that it means that that estate is worth what it costs, because I guess it is widely known that one can never ask an economic rent for those units. While that is so, and I heard the honourable Member for Christ Church West admit that, the City like his constituency, probably needs the type of low income public housing that we are looking at for the Pondsides, probably more than most other constituencies.

But, Mr. Acting Speaker, my concern is beyond just providing this public housing. It goes in an area of determining how we are going to deal with the people who have to live in these areas, and that we do not just put up these housing estates for probably political expediency, but that we bear in mind the persons who have to reside in these areas, and we bear in mind their develop-

ment and the children's development, I think we would be going a long way towards the overall development of the City and providing this shining example that I keep hearing about all the time.

I recall when the Pondsides area was to be cleared, it was interesting that it was happening at a time when there was need to be a rush, and as the Honourable Minister for Housing said before, the people were rushed off that land and officers from the National Housing Corporation had to find somewhere to put these people immediately, to the extent that I know of three individual family groupings who were put in one house in the St. Michael East constituency, and the conditions under which these people had to live were just not satisfactory.

As a private citizen then I made some noise and was able to get a young lady and her children moved out of that area and put in the Kensington Lodge area; so it is that kind of attitude that I would hope we would see the last of. I am sure that following my discussions with the Minister of Housing on the Pondsides area that he agrees with me that we need to develop it in a manner where you have recreational facilities for the children.

I am not speaking of playing fields now because I do agree that we cannot all have a lot of playing fields, and the City already has enough satisfactory playing fields; so I am talking mainly of recreational facilities. I am talking about somewhere that the children whom you are putting into a very busy area could have to play without being in danger.

There is enough said about compensation for the persons whose land has been acquired in that area, and I have already indicated to the Honourable Minister that I would like something done about that with some expedition.

We often hear, Sir, about the shining example that the City is going to be, but somehow most of the time I tend to hear of the commercial area of the City and not what I like to call the Inner City, the City where people reside. There has been much talk about development in the Green Fields area and the Cats Castle area, and I would impress on the Minister to pay some close attention to these two areas.

Finally, Sir, in support of this Resolution I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to also look at the whole question of the Church Village area, that area behind the Central Bank building.

(Applause)

Dr. E. SIMMONS: Mr. Acting Speaker, having lived for the past sixteen years and practised next to what is

the biggest housing area in this country and now being the representative for that area, I would like to make some observations, because I think we must think not only of building houses, but we must think primarily in this country in the latter part of the 20th Century of community building, because the building of housing areas introduces into a country some very complex problems.

3.30 p.m.

We come from a background of village life and when we impose on a country whose own values spring from the community, the village, and we impose on that country the housing estate, the values of that country are disrupted and we have to seriously look at what difficulties we are creating within a community when we create a housing estate.

We find situations where people are torn away from their aunts and their uncles, and their grandfathers and transposed into a foreign setting. And so in creating new housing areas, one has to look not only at putting up buildings but at how best to effect the gradual development of that community. We know that for example, in St. Michael South East which is, as I said before, one of the bigger housing areas, there was a stigma attached to that community, and there is still a stigma attached to that community at all levels of the community so that people who come from that community, despite the intelligence of their grey matter at times find it difficult to find meaningful places in this society, because in our country we tend to compartmentalize people according to the area from where they come.

Yet in our community in St. Michael South East because it is an old housing estate you have some of the most vibrant artistic forms existing — one of the few areas where there is an active arts and crafts area and youngsters who put on plays regularly every year despite the fact it is overlooked. But this is something that has sprung from the society itself because of the societal needs in that area. What I am saying is that, as the Minister said, when you wake up overnight and decide that you are going to put up seventy-five units in a limited area, it shows a definite disregard for the development, the orderly development of the country. We have, therefore, to look at serious problems such as sanitation, such as drainage, and we know the kinds of problems in the housing areas that develop because of these, and one of the most fundamental things that is lacking in the Third World and is probably brought out even more within the housing areas is the problem of maintenance.

In the last ten years in the St. Michael South East area, because of the serious cut-back in personnel you have a situation where there is bush growing every place. The wells are not well kept and, therefore, even in the

dry seasons, the well becomes a breeding place for mosquitoes especially in an area where you have overcrowding, poor health standards and lots of young children. These areas are therefore prone to be centres for the outbreaks of diseases, and I am saying that in order to have orderly development of a country if we are looking at the total developmental structure of that country, we need to sit down and plan orderly how we develop the country. To walk around the country and acquire land, Mr. Acting Speaker, and just to put up a few areas here and there to meet the needs of a few people is not good enough.

I know, Mr. Acting Speaker, that there is an urgent need for housing. Of the over five hundred people I have interviewed so far, over two hundred — their needs are the needs of acute housing and I may say that it is a fact that in this country we still have people who sleep at night in motor cars, the shells of motor cars. It is a fact and housing is an urgent need.

But we have to be very, very careful that when we erect houses we have the infrastructural development that will go along with the housing development. You need the maintenance men such as carpenters and masons, these things which are sadly lacking now in the housing departments. You will find in the older housing areas people who have made several requests to the Housing Authority for their windows to be repaired on Government property that they have to put up sheets at their windows at night to stop the rains from coming in because of the lack of maintenance. I am saying that these are problems that need to be addressed urgently and that we must look carefully that when we develop our housing areas that we have the maintenance infrastructure to go along with it, and it goes further. Whether we in this country should not look at a policy which is not original on my part but which has been talked about time and time again, whether we should not look at the possibility of some of these people being owners of these properties because when you own your own property you tend to place more emphasis on keeping that area upgraded.

I think, therefore, in our planning of housing developments we should think not only of the infrastructural part of it, but we should also think of the ultimate ownership of the people who live in those areas.

So Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to see in our planning in this country the whole concept of ownership within a housing area and the orderly development of the family structure being carried forward.

I thank you.

(Applause).

Mr. R. P. BYER: Mr. Acting Speaker, my contribution to this debate like most of the contributions that have gone before me spring from the fact that one of the oldest housing areas in Barbados is located in my constituency. But that is not the only reason why I would want to make a contribution to the debate and as I go on I will explain that.

Now the Ellerton Housing area was, I believe, and I am subject to correction here, built after the Hurricane Janet and I think it was the one built after the Pine Housing Area. Now since that time not much work has been done to improve the conditions in the Ellerton Housing Area and the units there have been allowed to run down and are in urgent need of repair. The latest I understand is that there is a plan or I believe it is the intention of the National Housing Corporation to transfer the individual units to the occupants of those units. I understand that the difficulty at this stage is that since the housing area was developed so long ago it does not now conform to, in so far as transfer of these units are concerned it does not conform to current planning regulations.

Let me demonstrate or let me explain what I mean. In the Ellerton Housing Area you have two units being serviced by one well and I believe that it is a requirement of planning permission that each unit should have its own well and that this is the reason why the lots have not been transferred to those people.

3.40 p.m.

I believe that it is part of, or a requirement for planning permission that each unit should have its own well, and this is the reason why their lots have not been transferred to those people who occupy them. Because I am the representative of that area, I would call on the Minister of Housing, in so far as he is able to, to make some enquiry about it and see whether the officers of the Town Planning Department could not do something to speed up the process of transferring those units to the people who occupy them. They are uncertain about whether those units will be transferred to them in the current circumstances, and as such they are not doing anything to maintain them.

As the speaker before me said, things must be done to maintain these units, there must be an infrastructure of maintenance, if not the units will fall to pieces, and that is the position in Ellerton. A lot of them are housed by more than one family, a lot of them are over-housed, over-occupied, I may say, and as such they are bursting at the seams and something has got to be done very urgently to alleviate the situation of the people in the Ellerton Housing Area. So, Mr. Minister, I am asking you to look into that problem for me.

Much was said this afternoon about land acquisitions and so on. There is also a problem, in so far as the compensation is concerned, still experienced by some people in Ellerton. You will recall that the St. Lukes-Ellerton Primary School was built in Ellerton and that to do this certain lands had to be acquired. It is my understanding that many of the former owners of those lands have not been compensated as yet, and this goes as far back as 1979, or thereabouts, and some of the people whose lands were compulsorily acquired have not been compensated. The same thing goes for some people whose lands were compulsorily acquired for the siting of the pulverisation plant at Workmans. They are experiencing difficulty in recovering compensation.

Sir, I would like to go a little further in this debate, and I would like to make some mention of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act in so far as that Act impacts upon housing development in Barbados. I think I can say without fear and with some degree of certainty that the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act was used as an instrument of housing policy to some extent by the past administration. This is what I mean, that people were living as tenants on house spots belonging to, in some cases, plantation tenancies or designated tenancies as they are termed under the Act, and also there were other tenancies that became tenancies when the Security of Tenure (Small Holdings) Act was amended to reduce the number of house spots that comprise a tenantry.

Now, under section 20 of that Act the Minister — and I believe in this case, although the Minister is not described under the Act, it is the Minister of Housing and Lands, I do not know if I am correct — but the Minister has the responsibility of designating an area a tenantry, but he does this on the advice of the Chief Town Planner. A curious thing is happening. Once the advice is given, the Minister designates an area a tenantry. Now when that is done, the people — the landlord firstly and then the tenants — are now in a position where they can negotiate the sale of the land. Conveyances are prepared and the land ultimately passes to that person who was formerly a tenant. But what we see is this — and I am speaking specifically in this case now about an area like Dash Valley — that in some cases tenants are told that they can acquire the freehold of the lot, but yet when they make an application to the Chief Town Planner they are told that they cannot construct the type of accommodation that they would want. One of the reasons, I have discovered, is that in some cases many of the tenancies as we now have them are developed or exist on Zone 1 water areas, and this is where the real conflict comes.

It seems to me that somewhere along the line something wrong is happening. There is some crossing of wires. Either the Minister is not advised properly when he designates an area a tenantry, or there is some confusion in the Chief Town Planner's Department when an area is

designated a tenantry. I would think, Mr. Acting Speaker, that an area should not be designated a tenantry if the area sits on a Zone 1 water area, and then the landlord would have to look for another lot of land to transfer to the tenant where that restriction would not operate. It operates in the Dash Valley area where lands are transferred from Constant Plantation to residents of Dash Valley, it operates in the Clifton Hall area in St. John where lands are transferred from Clifton Hall Plantation to tenants in the Clifton Hall Tenantry, and when they apply for planning permission to build, then they are told they cannot construct the kind of accommodation that they would want to construct.

It is my understanding that there is a cut-off period, that being 1973, where people in these Zone 1 water areas are allowed to construct septic tanks if they have been living on the lots that they want to develop previous to 1973.

It would seem to me that one of the solutions to the problems that I have just outlined could be that the Tenancies Freehold Act be looked at in this regard to see if a solution could be found to the present difficulties experienced by residents of the areas that I just mentioned, that is, Dash Valley and Clifton Hall. Or, alternatively, that the cut-off period could be extended to accommodate some of the difficulties created by the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, because when that Act was conceived the cut-off point, that is 1973, was already in place.

Those are only some of the difficulties that one experienced because of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, but I would not want to examine any more, I would only want to look at that one section in so far as it impacts upon housing development in Barbados. If you want to extend the housing stock in Barbados, if you want to improve it, and if you want to allow people to develop the lots on which they live, it would seem to me that the Town and Country Planning Act should not serve as a hindrance to development, that the Chief Town Planner should be told, or should carry out his functions more precisely. I do not know if I am being fair to him in this regard, but just let me say that another way, that there should be more co-ordination between the Minister and the Chief Town Planner in so far as the designation of tenancies in Barbados is concerned, so that the problem I have just outlined would not occur in the future.

Thank you.

3.50 p.m.

Applause.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Your Honour, in winding up this debate on this Resolution, I would like to say that I am very impressed with all of the speakers here today and as far as two of them were concerned it appeared to me as though they were lecturing on housing administration, the honourable Member for St. Michael Central and the honourable Member for Christ Church West.

I will start from the bottom and move up. The Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, if you recall, this administration had said in its Manifesto that that is one of the Acts that would be looked at. I am not going to get into legal arguments since I am not a lawyer, but my gut feeling tells me this Act has to be looked at because it is not only causing problems to the landlords, but it is causing problems to the very people whom it was put forward to help.

People question why it is today there are so many people looking around for house spots and from my experience in my constituency I know the reason for it is that landlords previously would rent their lands to tenants and are refusing to do it now because of this Act, so this Act needs to be looked at for very many reasons.

I believe the motives and the reasons behind the Act were laudable but it is just that the Act as it stands is causing some trouble and it needs to be looked at and it will be looked at.

The next thing I have to deal with is maintenance. Many of the speakers here today dealt with maintenance and I know that that is a serious problem in the St. Michael South East constituency. Now, what we have to understand about this problem of maintenance is that the previous administration, through a deliberate policy, has cut down on the staff of the National Housing Corporation. They have got rid of masons, painters and carpenters. That was a deliberate policy of the previous administration.

Now, this whole idea has to be looked at. Was it sensible to just lay off a large number of persons who could have carried out the maintenance on all of these estates? Was it sensible to lay them off because of probably a shortage of funds? I do not know what was the reason for laying them off but I would believe that if in the housing areas you are going to say today that they are in dire need of maintenance, and you are going to lay off most of the people who could have carried out the maintenance, then the money that you said you were short of which made you get rid of those people, you could, at least, have kept on the people and got the money from some other place. That is my view. This Minister and this Ministry will be looking into the idea of bringing those people back to work to do some maintenance in the housing areas.

Sites and services.....

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You cannot bring them on immediately unless you look at the pros and cons so the first thing you have to do is to look.....

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Well, there are no cons. Look at the pros then.

I turn now to the sites and services and as far as the sites and services are concerned, the honourable Member for Christ Church West and myself are at one. I believe that there is a great need in Barbados for more sites and services projects.

My view is — and any Barbadian realizes — that Bajans are people who once they get a piece of land, a house is going to go up on it. This is true. Every Barbadian wants to own his own home and once he can be given a piece of land which he knows is his, he is going to put a house on it and I believe that sites and services, these things have to be the way forward for this Government so we are at one with sites and services.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West wants to know when the roads in Bonnetts will be built. Well, the reason for the delay in the building of the roads in Bonnetts is that there were some houses in the pathway of the roads and those houses had to be moved before the roads could be constructed. My information now is that the houses are being moved and as soon as those houses are moved, the road construction will start.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas asked what is being done with several portions of land which were in this Resolution. As far as Checker Hall is concerned, there were sixty-four lots, all fully developed. Five houses were accommodated from the resiting of the Arawak Cement Plant and another eighteen are going to be sited there because of the construction of the Northern Access Road, and this leaves forty-one remaining lots which would be available for sale or rental.

I also have taken into consideration the view of the representative for St. Lucy when he says that there is a great need for some kind of housing development in St. Lucy but if, as he says, there is a great need for housing development in St. Lucy, he needs a lot more than forty-one lots and that has to be looked at.

Harmony Lodge — there were sixty-five lots at Harmony Lodge, seven houses already there from the resiting programme. The opportunity will be taken to use

the remaining land to accommodate the houses presently sited on the edge of the swamp area by the Pepperpot. Those would be about six or eight and then there are other lots left for sale. I believe three lots at Harmony Lodge have already been allocated to tenants as a matter of urgency and there are about forty or over left.

I have also had a request from persons who have an interest in the Pepperpot that they would like to purchase the three lots adjoining the Pepperpot where they are of the view that tenants would not or might not wish to live so close to the noise and that sort of thing, and it would allow them to extend the Pepperpot. That is an application that has come in, but I am just saying that.

Simmons Road — this was for the purpose of relocating those residents who will be dislocated as a result of the construction of the Wildey/Rendezvous/Sergeants Village, Christ Church corridor for the Airport/West Coast Road, eighty-eight fully serviced lots. Some of them have been used already. We do not know the exact figure but the excess lots in this area, after the completion of the relocation of houses will be incorporated into the sites and services programme and the honourable Member for Christ Church West raised the suggestion as to whether these extra lots will have some preference for the people living nearby or the people from wider areas.

There is some merit in the suggestion that people who are living nearby should be given priority for these spots since they have already been living nearby and that matter will be looked at, and I believe, favourably.
4.00 p.m.

In Bartlett's tenantry the ten lots have already been utilised. The housing development at Bonnetts includes 114 three bedroom terrace units. Sixty-four units have already been provided, there are 34 fully serviced lots for sale or rental and there will be an area for recreational facilities. Wellington and Nelson Streets we are still looking at. In Wavell Avenue there are six fully serviced lots. I do not think anything has been done about those yet. They have not been put out. Parkinson Road, 22 serviced lots, and we are now in the process of getting applications for purchase of those lots, and in due course you will hear about what is happening there.

I think I have covered most of the queries by honourable Members. I should just like to say that I also have my views. After listening to all the views here today, I also have my views on housing like all of you. I do not expect that my views will be right, and I have some views that may not agree with the views of others.

I believe fundamentally that the Ministry of Housing will have to look into the idea of selling houses as opposed to renting houses. I believe this has to be the future policy of any administration. As the honourable

Member for St. Michael Central said, Government has to look into the idea of involving the private sector, and that is very important. There will always be people who find it impossible to buy their own homes, therefore Government has always to be there to build houses for people to rent, but I think that in the main, Government should be looking to the private sector especially like the West Terrace project where persons can go and look at a house and tell a contractor "I like that house, I want you to build one like that for me" and the contractor tells them to pay down ten per cent of the money for the house and you get a mortgage. What Government will also have to do is to try, as long as there are available funds, and help people to get up to the required down payment, because the down payment is what is causing the problem, and I believe that if many persons could get the down payment on a house, many many persons would own their own homes because they would be able to pay the monthly rental.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the Government has to look at bringing up or topping up the down payment because if the contractor tells the tenant that he has to pay \$4 000, the tenant may only have \$3 000 and Government will have to look into the area where they would have to lend the person the other \$1 000 probably without interest or something like that and give a number of years to pay it back. I think we have to look into the area of building houses for sale and not so much for rent, bearing in mind that we will always have to build some for rent, because some people will always need a house to rent because they are unable to buy their own house.

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

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

THE PARISH BOUNDARIES ACT, 1986

Order No. 5 was called — to move the second reading of a Bill entitled the Parish Boundaries Act, 1986.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Acting Speaker, in 1912 the Parish Boundaries Act was enacted to define the boundaries of the parishes in this Island. As you are aware, Sir, there were at that time 11 parishes and the City of Bridgetown. When the Island was settled there was a much smaller number of parishes. I think there were originally five and then they were extended and by 1912 there were 11 parishes.

Some time around the middle of the 19th Century the constituency of Bridgetown was carved out of the parish of St. Michael, and Samuel Jackman Prescod, the first man of colour to sit in this Assembly became the representative for the City of Bridgetown.

Now in 1980, in preparation for the carving up of the constituencies of this Island for the election of 1981 the Government in its wisdom repealed the Parish Boundaries Act. Anyone who consults the debates of the House of Assembly at the time when the Act was being repealed would see that I pointed out that the repeal of the Parish Boundaries Act was not necessary for the redefining of the constituencies in this Island, and I further pointed out at that time that by repealing the Parish Boundaries Act certain anomalies would be created in that the jurisdictions of the magistrates courts of this Island as contained in the Magistrates Jurisdiction and Procedure Acts from time to time depended on the definitions contained in the Parish Boundaries Act which referred to a map which had been drawn up by two naval cartographers referred to as the Parsons Map of Barbados which was the map which fixed the boundaries of the parishes in this Island, as a result of a survey carried out by Commander J. Parsons, Royal Naval Officer in 1869 and 1873.

The Act is still in most of the bound volumes of the Laws of Barbados, although it no longer has any effect. I believe that I said at that time, and I have not checked it, that some young legal practitioners should challenge the jurisdiction of the magistrates in all the cases which were coming before the magistrates courts since the repeal of the Act, because it was not in my opinion necessary for someone who lived in the parish of St. Michael to register his motor car in the St. Michael area since there was no parish of St. Michael.
4.10 p.m.

The truth of the matter is that there is no such parish of St. Michael in Barbados today. It is only in our minds that there exists a parish of St. Michael, that there exists a parish of St. John or a parish of St. Lucy as the case may be. There are constituencies which still carry some of the parochial designations, but these constituency boundaries no longer coincide with the boundaries which had been delineated by Commander Parsons in his survey of 1869 and 1873. So that the constituency of St. John contains some parts of the original parish of St. Philip and has been deprived of some of its original areas which have been added to the constituencies of St. George North, and the constituency of St. George South, and the constituency of St. Joseph.

The point I am making is that we should not confuse constituencies with parishes because that coincidence no longer subsist in this island. There are very few constituencies, probably the constituency of St. Lucy is one that I can think of, which is probably the only constituency in the whole island where the parochial boundary coincides with the constituency area.

I do not know who advised the administration at that time that in order to carry out a re-definition of the boundaries of constituencies it was necessary to repeal the

Parish Boundaries Act. But the person must have been very inept, because in the very re-definition of the constituency boundaries, reference is made to the parochial boundaries such as from the point where the boundary of the parish of St. John meets the sea to the point where — I am just speaking at large — where the turn-pipe, the boundary of the parish of let us say — St. George meets the turn-pipe and the parish of St. John and in the very enactment redefining the new constituency boundaries reference is made to an Act which has been repealed and which can be burnt up and anybody coming tomorrow if we burn all the Laws of Barbados nobody would know what you meant.

The repeal of the Parish Boundaries Act was not only inept — let me say plain ignorance. I cannot see anyone, without reflecting on the legal members of the profession here, who were in the Cabinet at the time could sit down and allow their colleagues to create such an ineptitude. We had previously when we created single member constituencies re-defined certain areas and removed parts of certain parishes and ascribed them to different parishes to constitute new constituencies such as the Orange Hill constituency in St. Andrew. Orange Hill was originally part of St. James North.....

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Where did we put it? St. Andrew — and Orange Hill was then transplanted not physically but on the constituency map to St. Andrew and there was a good reason for this, and despite the people who fulminate against that, which was the only change which was made, it has not been changed up to today. The only change that has not been made is the single one that we made and this was for demographic as well as geographic and topographic reasons.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: There were no geo-politics in that.

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It is the one change that the House of Assembly made, I believe, prior to the 1971 election which up to now in 1986 has not been changed by any administration. But we have had a certain amount of gerrymandering of constituency boundaries, the constituency of the honourable Member on my right which is now St. Michael North has been shafted right up the centre with a narrow corridor like the corridor that went from Brussels to Arnhem — 76 miles long.

I do not honestly know what entered into the minds of the administration of that time. But the fact is that the Parish Boundaries Act was repealed and we are fortunate

that nobody has challenged the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court of Law because I am sure that some magistrates or the Government would have had to pay damages to persons who had incurred penalties under a lack of jurisdiction.

We are re-introducing the Parsons Map done by the British Navy as a reference point, but I wish to make it clear. The Parish Boundaries as defined in that map were probably suitable at the time when the Navy carried out the survey in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. But we are confronted now with a situation where, with the developments that have taken place in Barbados that what we are asking the House to pass today can only be a temporary measure, because the monumentation under which the naval survey was done has long been lost. In other words, people only guess at where the boundary of St. George say joins the boundary of St. Thomas and St. John because there are no monuments. If there were monuments, the monuments have long since disappeared. Furthermore, most of the boundaries themselves if you look at a map of Barbados, Mr. Acting Speaker, have been drawn in straight lines. Some of them pass through people's back yards. Some of them pass through people's drawing rooms and some of them even divide husband from wife in the bedrooms. So one does not know whether the baby is born in St. George or St. John because the boundaries have been drawn as straight lines which is very good naval practice when you are at sea, because there are no bedrooms to draw lines through. But when you are dealing with a land situation, you need boundaries which are easily identifiable and which both the enumerators for election purposes or the people who are responsible for the collection of taxes would clearly be able to demark and identify.

4.20 p.m.

We have been looking into this problem. It is therefore going to take some time before the Chief Surveyor and his staff, and such outside help as he can rally to his assistance, will be able to present a new comprehensive map of Barbados with trigonometrical stations and visible monuments, a monument being something like a stone, a big rock or a piece of iron or something like that, which is clearly identifiable and which surveyors themselves and the general public can clearly identify as the locations of the points from which the boundaries are being drawn.

It is therefore highly probable that in the re-definition of the parish boundaries, which will not be done under this re-enactment, but some subsequent re-enactment which we hope will be completed before two years' time, therefore the lines will not be straight lines. They are unlikely to be straight lines, they are more likely to run along the centre lines of certain high-ways or gullies or some such clearly identifiable landmark.

I think that I have tried to summarise the reason for the re-enactment of this piece of legislation, and I should like to assure the honourable Members, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the Government is moving with due despatch to reintroduce up-to-date legislation which will remove all these anomalies.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I second this motion, Mr. Acting Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Acting Speaker, I want briefly to just intervene on this bit of legislation and to say that I think the Honourable Prime Minister does not really accurately recall what happened when the Electoral (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1980 was passed in this House I believe on the 11th November, 1980.

In actual fact there was very little debate on the measure on that occasion and no voice was raised against the passing of the legislation. The question was resolved on all readings. I am reading from Hansard debates for the Second Session 1976–81 of the House of Assembly on Tuesday, 11th November, 1980, and specifically the debate on the measure started at page 4561 and went through to 4567.

The Right Honourable Member did intervene at one stage, because there was some argument as to whether he had been enumerated and why he had not been enumerated, and he intervened, and then the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, Dr. Haynes, wanted to make a point and he caught Mr. Speaker's eye a little too late and then he was advised by the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Thomas to make it on the Third Reading. He tried to make the speech on the Third Reading, at which time Mr. Speaker told him that he honestly could not make such a speech on a Third Reading, so that the question was put and went through in the affirmative without division, and unfortunately the Parish Boundaries Act was repealed in the Schedule to this Miscellaneous Provisions Act for 1980. But I do recall the Right Honourable Member speaking in another debate at some subsequent time about the effect of the revocation of that Act.

Now, Sir, I believe that the recommendation — it is a long time of course since I have sat in ministerial office and my recollection may not always be accurate — but I believe that this one came about when they were drafting the provisions of the Act. It was felt that with the abolition of the Local Government Act and with the redrawing of the constituency boundaries there was no need for a definition of parishes such as that, and that almost all of the specific bits of legislation affecting parishes had included in them a definition of the boundaries, whether it was the Barbados Harbours Act, the

Local Government Act, the Magistrates (Jurisdiction and Procedure) Act, Cap. 117.

The Right Honourable Member is correct that those Acts in themselves refer to the parishes of St. Michael or Christ Church or what not, and I believe that the draughtsman at the time had advised that it would be possible to know what were those parishes because although you were repealing the Act it did not mean that when those particular bits of legislation were passed, that what were the exact designations were not known, and that is how the legislation went through.

Now, I believe that what is necessary is really for us to go through the several bits of legislation, and it is a difficult exercise — the Honourable Attorney General of course will have to get his legal draughtsmen to undertake that — to see where there is any definition of any particular parochial boundary, or where it has relevance in the laws of Barbados. I must admit that that exercise was not done at the time when the Act was repealed. No doubt in this age of computers if our laws are on computers it is easy to pick up that, but it is a very difficult exercise to do.

Part of the difficulty I have with re-enacting the Act is that we probably are still not much wiser, because I think that outside of the Museum I do not know who would have Commander Parson's Map of Barbados from the Admiralty survey which he did in 1869 and 1873. I think it is said there is a copy of it in the Public Records Office in England, but it is very difficult to know what are the parish boundaries really in Barbados even now, because the existence of this survey is not around.

In addition we must bear in mind, Mr. Acting Speaker, that there have been physical changes taking place in Barbados, which makes the Admiralty survey of 1869 and 1873 by itself almost irrelevant to the definition of the parishes. If you would think, we have got rid of Pelican Island, which no longer exists, which I am sure was shown in that survey, and we have extended the parochial boundaries of St. Michael to include the area now encompassing the Deep Water Harbour, and really we are going to have some difficulties in saying what really is the land mass fully comprised in these areas.

I think that was again one of the considerations at the time, and we had asked the Chief Surveyor to look and give us an up-to-date reassessment. I think the British Government were very slow in assisting us with this project at the time, but I have the Right Honourable Member's assurance that they will be working on the matter. The House is only passing a measure that is really to a limited extent representative of what is now the full parishes of Barbados. The Honourable Member is very right that even Commander Parson's survey really is almost today archaic in many respects.

I can cite in the Christ Church boundary there is an imaginary line which passes through the bedroom of Lady Chandler in Gunsite Road. One part of her bedroom is in Christ Church and the other part is in St. Michael, and if you come up to Observatory Road you will find the same problem occurring. In many instances a lot of the problems which occurred in the elections of several years have been because officers, enumerators, in dealing with this imaginary line do not know which side of the road the line goes, and this is a real problem.

4.30 p.m.

What we need now, Barbados being much more developed than it was one hundred and thirteen years ago, is really on the ground realistically to use highways wherever possible as demarkating boundaries whether it is for the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court or whether it is for the jurisdiction of the constituency of the enumerator. Indeed, I would look forward to the day when Magistrates do not exercise their power by virtue of where they are sitting. I believe if you are a Magistrate for the island, you are a Magistrate for the whole island and you are not only a Magistrate for District "A" or District "C" and I can see that if we set out quite clearly the enumerated boundaries, that people know where they are, a lot of the criticisms that we have heard and a lot of the fear of gerrymandering would really disappear.

The honourable Member speaks about his own constituency. Obviously he has had the benefit of the largest percentage of votes because he is fortunate to have Brereton in his constituency. I think he is very fortunate to have Brereton in his constituency. The honourable Member for St. Philip North would like to have Brereton now in his constituency. I am not sure the honourable Member is prepared to give it up yet, but there have been changes like these.

There has been the change in Orange Hill which was made, and we all from our political spectrum have various views as to why particular changes are made at any time. I am pleased to hear about this assurance that everything is going to be put right in two years.

I have previously in this House on many occasions said that there are certain things that have great political importance but in the overall importance of Barbados we have as much as possible to remove the political rhetoric and feeling that come from them if we are to have Barbados governed sensibly. I do not believe, for one moment, that the country will be perpetually governed by one of the political parties. I think there will be changes in Government from time to time and we have to accept those changes, but we both have a vested interest in making sure that the machinery that exists for effecting change allows a fair chance for change without fear in the minds of anyone of us.

That is my view and if the assurance is that we are going to get these matters settled so long before the constitutional period for an election, I am happy about that because I think a lot of the invective, a lot of the fear, a lot of the assumed assumptions that are made will be removed and I have no difficulty in accepting the re-enactment of this, given the limited time available, and given the circumstances. I do not think it is perfect. I do not think it gets us fully down the line.

I would like to see a proper study done to see if we really need another designation of parishes at all, whether we need that, whether we even need to deal with these problems differently, whether we can set out the boundaries of Barbados as a whole for the purpose of international law, or maritime, or other jurisdiction differently, and whether the particular bits of legislation that have effect on any particular area of Barbados can have proper definitions and designations without the need of the parochial boundaries.

We have had a lot of the things from England. The parochial boundaries, after all, is a parochial legacy of our British heritage, so to speak. With the abolition of our vestries they are becoming very unimportant. For instance, the Carlisle Ward did not exactly follow the boundaries of Christ Church. It incorporated a bit of St. Michael. With the abolition of Local Government that has gone. Now we have got to the stage with single member constituencies crossing across the boundaries, there is even less significance for the need for such an Act.

I hope that we will see a proper study done. We, the Opposition, have no difficulty, although there is some reservation in some points. We have no difficulty in seeing the re-enactment, although we have a reservation on the matter of the whole thing, and I hope that in committee the opportunity will be taken as well to correct a spelling error that has crept into the third line of Clause 2 of the Bill where "Admiralty" is spelt "Admirality".

Sir, I hope now with the Honourable Prime Minister being satisfied of the need which the Navy Branch of Her Majesty's Royal Barbados Defence Force can perform and now keeping the strength of the Force, in fact, I believe he might even be thinking of increasing the strength of the Force by two hundred if my reports might be right — I am not sure whether they are right, Sir. I thought I heard from somebody attending the parade that the Prime Minister now thinks that two thousand might be proper for the Cadets for the size Force but eighteen hundred including the reserves and the regulars now being a proper size for Her Majesty's Barbados Royal Navy, I hope that we can see the Navy being taught the skills of surveying and that we would not have to depend

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Well, on navigation too, but we would not have to depend on a survey made by Staff Commander Parsons in 1869 to tell us what are the parochial boundaries of Barbados.

So I look forward to us having this skill as well within our Surveying Department and also within our Defence Force as well.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, before the Honourable Prime Minister replies, I wish to ask him to clarify something that is causing me a little difficulty with this Bill.

Now, as I understand it, the Map of Barbados done by Commander Parsons and his two lieutenants, is not to be found by reference in any of these Laws of Barbados which were revised in 1978 but the map itself resides somewhere in Britain. Now, this is 1986. We are now independent.

This Bill does not have a schedule as I would have expected. The old Bill did not have a schedule, Chapter 109 in these laws. I was checking it just now. It does not have a schedule so that we are referring in the Bill to the Map of Barbados done by these people, delineating, as I understand it, the eleven parishes, but we cannot find that document and the delineation.

If a student is asked where can he go and find in the Laws of Barbados something setting out the eleven boundaries, he cannot find it, but we have referred to this map here which is not part of the law now because we are enacting this now that we are independent.

We are trying to incorporate the map by reference. I do not believe that we can properly do that without having a separate schedule to the Bill setting out whatever would have existed in the previous definition or copy of the Act. It may be, and I am only guessing because I have not had the time to check it, the old Laws of Barbados that we are familiar with, six or seven volumes of the dark green.....

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are not in there? They may have been in there. If you look at the volume incorporating 1912 you may have found it, in the old Laws, 3 or 4, one of those that we would have started with when we started practice, before these blue ones. It may be in there but they are now out of existence since 1978 when the Laws were revised so that what I am submitting for consideration — and it is my reservation about the efficacy about what we are doing today — is that we should have something representative of the map of Parsons in a schedule and whatever else he had. However he wrote up the delineations then we should bring them back in for

the time being until the next two years when the old business is revised and modernised. That is the reservation that I have.

4.40 p.m.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Acting Speaker, the problems adverted to by the honourable Member for St. Thomas are problems which were recognised, I believe, when the Bill was being considered, but as you Sir will recall or will notice, this Bill is in essence a re-enactment of the Bill, almost in identical terms which in fact existed on the Statute Book before it had been repealed.

I think what we are concerned with is what is the greater mischief. It seems to me that you have a greater problem by not having some definition of parish boundaries than by having a definition which admittedly by all sides is not the best that we would want, and I think the Rt. Honourable Member for St. John in his opening comments on the matter did make the point that it is a temporary measure, and that steps will be taken as soon as possible to get proper and effective surveys done for the proper and effective definition of the parishes.

But some of the problems adverted to by the honourable Member for Christ Church West for instance are about the fact that since the map to which reference has been made, the Admiralty Survey Map, clearly there have been some physical changes in the character of Barbados in the absence of Pelican Island and perhaps Culpepper. These to my mind do not make any significant difference because the land mass of Barbados itself in relation to the existing parishes as we have come to know them through the years has not been changed, and even although Pelican does not exist any longer and even although there have been additions to the parish of St. Michael, we know that those additions can only form part of the parish of St. Michael — the additions in St. Michael I am talking about — and can form part of no other parish than St. Michael. Similarly the accretions in Christ Church, in Oistin and in other areas where land has been reclaimed will form part of the parishes in which those lands have been reclaimed; so that from the point of view of the physical accretions to the existing parishes as Barbadians have known them throughout the years, I think there can be no difficulty whatsoever.

What the legislation is in fact seeking to do is to restore some commonsense, so to speak, in the order of things in the country, because without this a lot that exists does not make sense. The whole election machinery does not make too much sense because a lot of that is defined by reference to existing parish boundaries, and if we do not have some point of reference albeit not entirely satisfactory, we make nonsense of so much by which our lives are organised at this time.

So I just urge on honourable Members to recognise the Bill as an attempt and a step in the right direction

and in the fullness of time with the appropriate surveys and the proper maps a full definition of the parishes or any other appropriate definition for the boundaries of districts or areas in the country will be sorted out.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Acting Speaker, the difficulties were first encountered by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission who had been trying to rationalise the distribution of the voting population in this Island. The parishes as we know them certainly at the time when I was born and for a long time thereafter were local administrative units were the parochial authorities had powers of taxation to begin with, and exercising these powers of taxation they were given the responsibility for the looking after of certain schools and roads in this Island, except for those parishes which later fell under the administration of what used to be described as the Central Road Board with headquarters over here where the Fairchild Street market is now located.

Round about the middle of the Nineteen Sixties an attempt was made to rationalise the local administration and three Government authorities were set up, the Northern District Council, the Southern District Council and the City Council of Bridgetown, and at a still later stage, I cannot remember the year, I do not think it was 1964, there was a total repeal of Local Government and the powers then exercised by the Local Government authorities especially in relation to sanitation and health and roads were transferred to statutory authorities which now exist.

We still have parish churches, but since the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Barbados, those parish churches, imposing buildings most of them, no longer have any prominence in the religious life of this Island, neither are the taxpayers of different persuasions called upon to support the clergy who ornament those edifices.

In some parts of Ontario in Canada and in the north of England we hear of ridings, and those ridings still coincide sometimes with electoral districts, and the whole concept of a riding was the distance that a priest could cover in the course of a day's riding on his horse, and if you drew a kind of semi-circle or circle from his residence or his seat as it were, then you would understand what the riding was, and this was translated later on into the Local Government jurisdiction.

Here in Barbados the priests appear not to have been endowed with horses and carriages so it appears to me that the parishes were established on the basis of what a poor priest could be expected to walk in the course of a day, and that is why our parishes are much smaller in area than the ridings that you get in Yorkshire or in Ontario.

The point I am making is this: that the justification for a parish as an administrative area no longer exists; but

whenever we revise what is called the Parish Boundaries Act, when we bring in the new legislation, I think that there will be a need to retain for historical reasons if not for geographic reasons, the parochial names. In other words, I would still like to see that there is a constituency of St. Lucy, no matter where the boundaries are.

(Laughter)

4.50 p.m.

I do not presage the elimination of the parish of St. Peter but merely its absorption in the parish of St. Lucy. I think similarly when we come to Bridgetown I should like to see the definitions of Bridgetown changed into something like Bridgetown East Central and Bridgetown North and that sort of thing rather than St. Michael. Because it is clear with our urban spread that it does not look good when I look into reference books, particularly a place like the United Nations, I see that the capital of Barbados has only a population of 12,000 and I think I had pointed out this years ago to the Government Information Officer and I think we have to re-define that the Greater Bridgetown area embraces nearly the whole of the parish of St. Michael and part of the parish of Christ Church as well, and these constituencies will have to be redesignated if I had anything to do with it like Bridgetown rather than St. Michael. I would like to see that when we publish books abroad that the capital of the island of Barbados has a population of 120,000 people which is more closer to what it really is rather than 12,000. These are merely my own thoughts.

So that when we come now to the new legislation it should make it a lot easier for the Electoral and Boundaries Commission in redefining the constituencies, but I would be the last person no matter where the boundaries are re-drawn to want to see that the old parochial names that we got accustomed to — I would like to leave this House representing the constituency of St. John and no other constituency. I would like to see for historical reasons that we maintain these descriptions although they may no longer be administrative divisions.

There is only one other thing I should like to say on this and that is that I agreed with the honourable Member for Christ Church West. I do not see if he appoints a magistrate for Barbados that he should be limited in his jurisdiction.

A former Speaker of this House, Sir Frederick Clarke, was married by my godfather. But my godfather was the magistrate for District "B" and he married Sir Frederick Clarke in District "A" and it is questionable whether Sir Frederick Clarke was ever lawfully married.

(Aside)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: They had to get something done. They had to get a special assignment for the day retroactively after the marriage took place and Sir Frederick Clarke was a very respectable old man; he was Speaker of this House for something like 40 years, and you get that kind of anomaly that he calls on a magistrate who he can trust who is his friend and said I want this thing done quietly and then it is discovered that the magistrate had no jurisdiction.

Well, I do not see if a person who is appointed a magistrate that he should be restricted to being the coroner or magistrate for a particular district. He is for wherever he is sent from one day to the other.

The other thing is this whole next question of motor car licences. I live in Christ Church but my motor car is licenced in St. Michael, and I have no intention of changing my motor car number because that is what my constituents have got accustomed to. I know several people — I believe the honourable Member for Christ Church West may be a constituent in St. John but he has not changed his motor car number yet. So I am not quite sure whether he intends.....

(Aside)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: But as far as I know he is not a constituent in St. John — very few of us. This is the number that I had from a week after I arrived in Barbados in 1950 and I do not have any intention of changing that number. So I think we have to do like the other territories in the Caribbean and just go to the Licencing Office, licence your motor car without any "M" or "L" "X" or anything like that and have a common system of licencing. I think that is what we will have to revert to. I only mentioned that parenthetically because I know a lot of people like to pride themselves that they have a "J" number or an "X" number, but I think that that is silly. I think we should have a private vehicle or public service vehicle and that is all we really need in this island and then we would get around this business of having twelve different types of licence plates and so on.

So I think that once the Members of the House are agreed that it is desirable both from a juridical standpoint and from a social standpoint that we should do something about the Parish Boundaries Act, I should like to assure Members that the Government will work with all due dispatch in order to see that it is done.

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

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Mr. ACTING SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Clause 2, Mr. Chairman, I am going to move an amendment to Clause 2. Mr. Chairman, I move that the word "admiralty" appearing as the third word in line 3 of Clause 2 be omitted and the word "admiralty" be there inserted.

The question that the word proposed to be omitted stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 2 as amended was called and passed.

Clause 3 was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill with an amendment in Committee, and Mr. ACTING SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

5.00 p.m.

On the separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, the Bill as amended was read a third time and passed and cited as the Parish Boundaries Act, 1986.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, earlier today I gave notice of a Resolution to approve the borrowing of an additional sum of U.S.\$10 million. This matter I have had circulated to honourable Members. I have had some discussion with the Leader of the Opposition and I understand from him that there is no objection to it being done today. Therefore, that is the Government measure I am asking now to be called.

Order No. 7 was called.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING OF
U.S.\$10 MILLION FROM A CONSORTIUM OF BANKS
FOR WHICH THE PARTICIPATING COUNTY NAT-
WEST CAPITAL MARKETS LIMITED WILL ACT
AS AGENT, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING IN
THE CONTINUATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S
CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
ALREADY IN PROGRESS PRIOR TO
MAY 28, 1986 AND TO ASSIST IN
MEETING FOREIGN DEBT
REPAYMENTS DUE TO
FISCAL YEARS
1986/87 AND
1987/88

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Acting Speaker, the Resolution, which is fairly exhaustive, explains the pur-

pose and the intent of the matter which we are now discussing, which is to approve the borrowing of an additional sum of \$10 million from a consortium of banks for which the participating County Natwest Capital Markets Limited will act as agent, for the purpose of assisting in the continuation of the Government's Capital Development Programme already in progress prior to May 28, 1986 and to assist in meeting foreign debt repayments due to fiscal years 1986-87 and 1987-88.

The reason for this Resolution, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that the Government is authorised under the Special Loans Act from time to time to borrow from any bank, corporation, company or any other institution sums of money not exceeding in the aggregate \$375 million on such terms as may be agreed upon between the Government and the lender or lenders of any such money.

Under section 3 of the Act, any money borrowed under the authority of the Act shall be appropriated and applied to such purposes as Parliament may approve by resolution, and any such money and interest payable thereon shall be charged upon the general revenues and assets.

By Resolution No. 44/1986, this Parliament approved the borrowing by Government, pursuant to section 2 of the Act, the sum of U.S. \$30 million from a consortium of banks in the United Kingdom for which the participating County Natwest Capital Markets Limited will act as agent. I should like to say that my understanding is that Natwest is National Provincial and Westminster Banks in England, one of the big five joint stock banks.

This issue was over-subscribed by U. S. \$10 million, and rather than come later on in the year to ask approval to go again to raise another loan for the purpose of our debt repayments and other necessary purposes, it is considered advisable that we take advantage of the over-subscription and that we authorise the borrowing of the additional \$10 million at this stage.

In February, 1986, Mr. Acting Speaker, the then Cabinet estimated that the country's immediate need for foreign exchange borrowings would be approximately \$114 million. Parliament has already approved \$57 million to be borrowed from Japan, which I think was raised this week or last week, and the balance of money was to be raised from the County Natwest Capital Markets Limited as our agents.

It is estimated that the debt repayment and debt servicing in each of the five years, including financial year

1986-87, will be of the magnitude of \$200 million to \$220 million.

5.10 p.m.

We are not earning enough foreign exchange by our exports and that is the main reason why the Government finds it essential that we should raise our foreign exchange by external borrowing in order to meet our current commitments for debt repayment and debt servicing.

We do not have a problem in Barbados with liquidity in so far as the banking system is concerned but we, like most other countries in the region, have a severe problem, particularly since the falling off in the prices of sugar and our lack of foreign exchange earnings to cover our known commitments in the way of debt repayment and debt servicing.

We hope that once we can cover our commitments for debt repayment that we will go to the local markets in future for most of our capital requirements and this will mean, of course, a considerable amount of our curtailing our dependency on our foreign programmes except in so far as these foreign programmes may be at extremely concessionary rates.

Having said that, I do not think I need to say any more, Sir.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to second the Resolution, Mr. Acting Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, I believe that it is a very healthy thing that we, who constitute Members of this House of Parliament, should ever so occasionally show a spirit of unity where there is a policy or point of principle, that requires unity in the national interest, and I really want to say at the outset of my contribution to this debate that there will be from time to time economic policy initiatives and issues advanced by this Government which I will find it very desirable and proper to support.

Indeed, Sir, on reflection I feel that had certain elements in the Caribbean been aware that there was a unity of purpose between the major parties in relation to matters such as the extent of trade protection and the blocking off of markets for periods of time, rather than our fighting among ourselves to impute blame in this party or that party, that Barbados would have made far greater progress in breaking down the barriers of protectionism in the region.

I must say this as a preface to my contribution on this Resolution because I want to say for the records that I believe that a country at Barbados' state of development, a country which has a financial and capital market structure such as we have in Barbados, will from time to time find it necessary to borrow and to borrow abroad and the House really must have my assurance that I will not really test the patience of the people of Barbados by getting into any heated debate in relation to the rationale for foreign borrowing. We have under-developed capital markets of sort, Sir, and we are still a country where there is, in part, a foreign exchange constraint to our development.

There are many useful things that the state can still do by way of the creation of public assets, physical and otherwise, to advance the welfare of this country and I intend fully, where it is desirable, to support Government when it borrows money from abroad to advance the development of the people of this country. I believe, Sir, that this country must borrow and I do not think that we in the House should be as divided as we seemed to have been in the past whenever the Government goes out to borrow money for productive purposes that are designed to advance the welfare of the citizens of this country.

In relation to this instant Resolution that is before us, the Addendum to the Resolution states that the former Cabinet estimated the country's foreign exchange borrowing needs for the fiscal year 1986 to be Bds.\$114 million. This was in the context of a capital programme proposed at the time of \$186 million and it was in the context of certain projections that we had at that point in time in relation to the size of the likely revenues that should have accrued to Government within the context of a particular taxation structure and within the context of a particular estimation as to the size of the country's current expenditures.

To date, the Government has, in point of fact, committed itself to borrowing \$117 million, as I understand it, within the context of a capital programme, not of \$186 million, but a capital programme of \$140 million odd as the case may be, so that the first point I want to establish in my contribution to this debate is that I am not opposed to foreign borrowing, *per se*. I am, however, insistent on the view that such borrowings must be designed to advance the development of this country and it seems clear to me, Sir, that when we tote up the full extent of foreign commercial borrowing which has so far been approved by the House, \$117 million plus this additional Bds. \$20 million, U. S. \$10 million, together with the project financing which is associated with the capital programme itself, and which could be as much as about \$60 million, that in point of fact, the foreign borrowings that we are likely to enter into this year may well approach \$200 million in the context of a situation where our capital programme is to be scaled down from

\$186 million to \$150 million so that in the absence of additional information from the Minister of Finance and Planning, I am led to the persuasion that the foreign borrowing which might approach \$200 million, together with the local borrowing by way of National Development Bonds and so on, is really indicative of a situation where the Government of Barbados is now having to borrow to meet its housekeeping needs, that we have reduced revenues so substantially that there is now a shortfall in the amount of revenues available to Government to run the Civil Service, and, in addition for borrowing for productive purposes which I support, that we are now being put in a position to have to borrow to meet recurrent expenditure needs on a day to day basis.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there is — I do not want to say a conspiracy — but there is an inclination to try to justify each and every conscious decision taken by this administration in terms of some infelicities of the past.
5.20 p.m.

I rather suspect that we are having that same kind of inclination borne out in the message that is sent by this Addendum where we are being told that the loans being incurred in 1986, are to meet foreign debt repayments due in 1987 and 1988. We may reasonably wonder why we are borrowing today in order to pay debts that fall due not today but two years hence.

I would have been more assured that this was the case if the Honourable Prime Minister were to tell us that part of these funds that are being borrowed now are in point of fact going to be set aside by way of a Sinking Fund as a deliberate policy by Government to do exactly what this Addendum says that it is intended to be done, and in the absence of that kind of information that a special suspense account will be created by the Ministry of Finance to ensure that part of these funds will be set aside deliberately to meet these debts when they fall due two years hence. In the absence of such statements, I must come back to the conclusion that these funds are being borrowed to compensate for revenue shortfalls.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I must stress that point because last year we were in point of fact faced with the situation of borrowing in advance of debt repayments and you will recall what we did on that occasion. We created a suspense account at the Central Bank into which we put the money that we borrowed in order to meet debt payments in the future, and I would be perfectly satisfied, Mr. Acting Speaker, to accept that in point of fact these borrowings are related to future debt repayments if the Minister of Finance can really give the assurance and actually state that there will be a similar suspense account or some Sinking Fund arrangement created of an interest bearing character that would allow us to justify the borrowing today in order to settle commitments that fall two years hence.

Mr. Acting Speaker, in closing I can only say that I am pleased that the name of Barbados is still so good that we can go on the international market and make a placement for loans.

Laughter

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The financial position of this country is influenced by a set of continuing factors and these loans have been under negotiation now for a long period of time, it is not the invention of the Democratic Labour Party, and that despite the talk that we left an empty Treasury and so on and so forth, I am still pleased that the name of this country is still good enough in the international world that we can have a situation where a loan by this Government is over-subscribed.

If I may conclude, Sir, I have no difficulty whatsoever with Government borrowing for productive purposes, but the sheer size of Government's borrowing to date this year both domestic and foreign clearly illustrates, Mr. Acting Speaker, that our borrowing requirements now stem not only from the size of our capital programme or the deficit associated with it, and indeed \$114 million was our total debt, but you have gone past \$200 million already for the year. The size of our borrowings both foreign and domestic for the year to date illustrates, Mr. Acting Speaker, that there is a factor at work which has to do with more than the continuation of the capital programme.

I really must in closing as well enquire of the Minister of Finance and Planning whether there is any information to hand which will substantiate his assertion that the debt repayments by the Barbados economy both private and public will amount to more than \$200 million per year.

We had a debt repayment profile worked out for us in January 1986 and the information on that debt repayment schedule was used by the Minister of Finance in the Ministerial Statement that he made to the House earlier this year.

The fact of the total society having to repay \$110 million BDS this year is all set out in that debt repayment schedule. Unless there has been a substantial change of which we are not aware, then I am to believe that the debt repayment for the entire society for 1987 – and I am just seeking information if there is new information – should be no more than \$125 million, 1988 \$150 million, 1989 \$92 million and things of this character.

I thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: First I should like to invite the honourable Member for St. Peter to read the Addendum. The Addendum to the Resolution answers

most of the questions which he has raised. The Addendum states that in February 1986 – something which I read before – that the Cabinet at that time estimated that the country's immediate need for foreign exchange borrowings would be approximately Bds. \$114 million. We went on to say that we have borrowed \$57 million of that in Barbados dollars in the form of Japanese Yen and that this Resolution seeks the authority to borrow an additional sum of US \$10 million from County Natwest.

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: This is an additional US \$10 million. That is US \$30 million. In other words US \$40 million would be Bds. \$80 million and if you add \$80 million to \$57 million, you have \$137 million which would be our total foreign exchange borrowings. If we did not take this \$20 million it would be almost exactly equivalent to the amount which in February this year.....

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: We do not have any capital programme yet. What do you mean by a smaller capital works programme? We are carrying on the capital programme. We have never said that this money is exclusively for the capital programme, and that is why I invited you to read the Addendum. The Addendum then goes on to state that the Resolution seeks authority to borrow this amount of US \$10 million –

- “(1) to help finance certain capital works programmes already started before May 28, 1986;
- (2) to assist in meeting foreign debt repayments due in fiscal year 1986/87 and 1987/88;
- (3) to reduce the pressure on foreign exchange reserves and liquidity of the Central Bank which will result from the substantial debt repayments over the next four years; and
- (4) to take advantage of the favourable market conditions to build up a reserve to meet future repayments.”

Now nowhere in your speech did you allude to the fact that the main burden which we have to bear on our shoulders, yours too, is the repayment of our foreign debt. In other words, if you go back about seven years and you see the loans that were raised, let us say from 1980/81 all bunching up with their repayments in 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989, you will understand why I made the statement that the magnitude of the debt servicing is of the vicinity of Bds. \$200 million a year.
5.30 p.m.

Now I hate to quote this as my authority. Where is my authority? Quite apart from my own examination of the funds — you asked me for the authority — does not go very far from here. The Governor of the Central Bank came and sat down next to me when I was trying to sleep I always sleep on airplanes except when I am flying them myself and interrupted my slumber with a loud giggle and said — “Mr. Prime Minister, do you realize”. I made this statement before. You go and ask him.

(*Aside*: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He told me in my office the same thing. He told me.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Well, I said that I do not really like to quote him as an authority on anything, but he asked me where I get it from, and he said Prime Minister, do you realize that in the next 5 years we have a debt service burden of approximately \$200 million a year? Now debt service as the honourable Member for St. Peter should know by this time not only includes the interest payments on the existing loans but the repayment of the loans which were bunched up way back in 1980-1981 and you say that you do not believe that and you were in there working and you do not know that? You do not know that?

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The total national debt which is not quite true. If the honourable Member wants refinement, I have sent and investigated his statement and when I use the figure of \$200 million, it is true that in the last year if we do not borrow anymore money it will only be \$187 million. That will be in the year 1991. So I would like to make that refinement. But I have checked on Dr. Blackman's figure and it is worse than you think. So if he is now denying that he said so, go and ask one of the other officers in the bank who deals with this question of the foreign exchange reserves. But surely the Addendum to the Resolution clearly sets out — the honourable Member was asking

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You did not have sinking funds with this. You did not use that expression. There was before the election \$50 000 000 put aside in what the honourable Member calls a Suspense Account in anticipation of having to pay back a substantial part of the money that is owed in this year before July 1986. But the Central Bank does not need a Suspense Account. You should know that too. You either have the reserves or you do not have any, and you do not take part of your reserves and put them into a Suspense Account because who is going to pay the interest on a Suspense Account for foreign reserves. A Central Bank does not lend out its foreign.....

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: What's that? Assistant what? Excuse me, Sir.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I see what you are saying. Oh! You had to make sure that they did not take away the money. Oh, I see.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It is still part of your foreign exchange reserves. The point I am making, unless the people in the Central Bank are dishonest, they have no right touching your foreign exchange reserves except with the permission of the Minister of Finance. So if you made him put it into a Suspense Account because you were frightened that he was going to carry it away, well I do not blame you.

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Well, that could be the only reason to set up a separate account. You cannot get any interest on that money. Who is going to pay you interest on your foreign exchange reserves unless they invest it with — I forget the name of the bank that the Governor likes to invest his money with, the one he used to work with up in Brooklyn or somewhere so — Irving Trust. Well then is when you take part of your reserves and ask Irving Trust to hold on to it for a couple of years. But there is no point in having a name Suspense Account because I know you were supposed to be keeping money there but still had to go and borrow in the end.

So what I am pointing out in the Resolution is that it says that we have taken advantage of the favourable market conditions to build up a reserve. Well, the reserve is part of your foreign exchange reserves no matter what name you call it on. In other words, we are improving our foreign exchange reserve position. We did not go for the \$10 million because we did not really need it at this time because with the two loans it would help us to meet our debt repayments and pay our interest charges. But since the issue was over-subscribed, we have decided to build up our reserves at this time because of the favourable market conditions. I think that even the honourable Member for St. Peter will understand that.

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: What's that? It has nothing to do with revenue at all. Revenue shortfalls are usually met by Treasury Bills or borrowing from the commercial banks and the commercial banks have so much money in the Central Bank that they do not know what to do with it. As a matter of fact, they are like 7% over the compulsory reserve ratio that the Central Bank

asked them to put in. You should put 30% in the deposit and we had to increase it to 37% because they are so liquid they do not know what to do with the money. If we want money to pay civil servants or anything like that we got Treasury Bills and we got the commercial banks. We do not have to go and borrow expensive money in London or Japan for that and the honourable Member should know that.

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: What the honourable Member is saying that we did not have the right of reducing taxes. We did not have any right putting money back into the pockets of the people in this island and as a result of doing that we are going to borrow money now to pay the civil servants. Is that what he is saying?

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: In other words, is that what you said?

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Acting Speaker, that brings us to the end today of Government Business. Sir, before I move the Adjournment of the House, I want to say that there were some good contributions made today on the debate, but I particularly want to compliment those Members who spoke today for the first time. They have already done so with the Member for St. Michael Central, also the Member for the City and the Member for St. Michael South who today made contributions in this House for the first time. I thought their contributions were very constructive. For that, Sir, I would like to compliment them.

Sir, I move this House now stands adjourned to Tuesday, October 7, 1986 at 12 o'clock noon.

The question that the House now stand adjourned until Tuesday, October 7, 1986 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. ACTING SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
5.40 p.m.

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