

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 - 91

Tuesday, December 15, 1987

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

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, JP. (Speaker)

His Honour J. J. PAYNE, (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A. (Econ.), JP.,
(Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Hon. B. M. TAUT, B.A. (Hons.) M.A., LL.B.
(Hons.), (Minister of Health)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A. (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Transport, Telecommunications and Immigration and Leader of the House)

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

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, B.A., M.A., (Minister of Transport and Works)

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., JP.,
(Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development)

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Housing and Lands)

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

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

Hon. M. BARKER-WELCH, (Acting Minister of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development)-

Hon. C. V. WALKER, (Minister of Education and Culture)

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P.

Mr. E. BOURNE

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS, M.D.

Hon W. W. HALL, (Minister of Tourism and Sports)

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT, B.A., (Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office)

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. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, December 8, 1987.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the House of Tuesday, December 8, 1987, be taken as read and that they be confirmed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, these Minutes stand confirmed. PAPERS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The Public Officers Loan and Travelling Allowances (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1987.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The 9th Annual Report and Financial Statements of the National Sports Council for the year 1st April, 1986 to 31st March, 1987.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I give notice of the following Resolutions:

A Resolution to amend the Explanatory Note to Item 12 of Head 36, Subhead 34 - Environmental Engineering Division.

A Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of sixteen parcels of land at Bridge Road, St. Michael for the purpose of the construction of a new bridge.

Sir, I have been in consultation with the Acting Leader of the Opposition, who has agreed with the Leader of the House, with Your Honour's concurrence, to do these matters today in all their stages, or any other matters that may come before the House.

Laughter.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, the following Bill was read a first time:

A Bill to amend the Special Loans Act.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, the Replies to Questions 62 and 79 are now ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move, Sir, that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

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

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

SPECIAL LOANS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Order No. 2 was called - To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St Michael South): Mr. Speaker, this Bill, as the Objects and Reasons indicate, seeks to amend the Special Loans Act to facilitate the borrowing of money by the Government of Barbados from other Governments. Specifically, this is in relation to an agreement between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the People's Republic of China in respect of a loan for the construction of a gymnasium which had been agreed upon, and indeed entered into, between the Government of Barbados on May 16, 1986. It is a project that was entered into before the change of Government and it is for an object and a purpose with which the present Government is in agreement. I do not think there is any difference over the need to have adequate facilities for sporting activities in this country, and, no doubt, the Minister responsible for Sports may wish to speak on this particular aspect of it.

What concerns us here at this time, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that having entered into the agreement, it was discovered that the legislation to permit the borrowing of the money would present some difficulties because the Special Loans Act did not specifically make provision for Government to Government loans; it referred to borrowings from any bank, corporation, company or other institution. To make it abundantly clear that the agreement has full legislative backing, we have come for this amendment to the Special Loans Act to include the borrowing of money on a Government-to-Government basis.

The loan is for 30 million Yuan, Chinese Yuan, and

(Aside: Yuan?)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: -* Yuan - that is approximately Bds\$16.5 million. As I indicated, it is for the construction of a gymnasium, and what we are seeking to do is to amend the Special Loans Act in order that the provisions of the loan may fall within the terms of the Act. This is a procedure that we are following to make sure that this Honourable Chamber is able to carry out its responsibility of checking on expenditures by the Executive within the framework of policies as laid down and approved.

I commend this particular measure to this Chamber.
12.30 p.m.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. 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. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part.

There is just a slight amendment here, that after "Government", a comma should be inserted. The words are "another Government", and a comma should follow after the word "Government".

I beg to move that Clause 2, as amended, stand part

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to second that

The question that Clause 2, as amended, stand part was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

On separate motions of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Special Loans (Amendment) Act, 1987.

Order No. 1 was called - To move that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the island.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAUT, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY Mr.

CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1987-88, No. 27 -
\$30000

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - \$30 000

SUBHEAD 19 - GERIATRIC HOSPITAL

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a relatively simple matter. There are two buildings in the compound of the Geriatric Hospital which are earmarked for use by the medical staff of that institution. There are two doctors who are already employed in the Geriatric Hospital. The buildings have not been used for some time, and the Government has been paying rental for the two doctors. It occurs to us that if the buildings are renovated and brought to a livable condition, then the doctors will be able to live in these quarters, and we will be saving some money. The sum of about \$30000 is necessary to supplement the Head since this would not have been budgeted for.

Mr. Chairman, in due course we will have an opportunity to discuss the development of geriatric services in the country. I do not believe that today is the day when we necessarily have to discuss that, and so I shall do no more than to ask that this Resolution stand part.

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

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division. 12.40 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1987-88, No. 28 -
\$245000

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH -
\$245000

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, although this matter is in the Ministry of Health vote, it is

a matter that really is concerned primarily with the Government as a whole, and the Attorney General's Chambers.

In January 1985, the Cabinet agreed that proceedings should be instituted against Fhzipatrick Construction Ltd., the contractors for the Bridgetown Sewerage Treatment Plant and the River Road Pumping Station. The dispute started in April 1980, following the failure of the cofferdam for the construction of the River Road Pumping Station at the end of March, 1980.

Mr. Chairman, the design specifications and drawings for the Sewerage Project were prepared by the consultants' lawyer, Matusky and Skelly, including the specifications and drawings for the concrete structure to house the pumping equipment at River Road. The cofferdam, however, a temporary construction device for the laying of the foundations, was designed and constructed by the contractor. The contractor's design was approved by the consultants. However, the contractor provided that the approval of drawings submitted by the contractor "shall be general, and shall not relieve the contractor of responsibility for the accuracy of such drawings, nor for the proper fitting and construction of the work."

The design of the cofferdam was based on the same subsoil information as was the design of the building. The subsoil information used by the consultants had been made available to the contractor, but the contract specifically provided that the interpretation of data disclosed by test borings or other preliminary investigations was not guaranteed by the Government.

The excavations for the cofferdam started in March 1980, and bearing soil, was found to the south, that is, the Rediffusion side, and in the centre at between 15 and 18 ft., which was well within the assumptions made. At the north wall, however, the contractor encountered peat to a depth of 73 ft. The cofferdam failed, and work came to a halt. This was at the end of March, 1980.

There was no activity on the site throughout most of the following year, and there were ongoing proposals, in the meantime, between the contractor, the consultants and Government, including the legal advisers of the parties, before a solution could be found.

The site was relocated 70 ft to the west. The contractor claimed an additional US \$834128. The Government, without abandoning its position that the responsibility for designing and constructing the cofferdam rested with the contractor, who was not entitled to any additional payment on account of its failure, paid the contractor the sum of US \$497000 "without prejudice" so as to get the work done and avoid further losses. The contractor had refused to resume work without such a settlement.

Subsequently, the consultants brought a claim against Government for, *inter alia*, additional consultancy services arising from the failure of the cofferdam and the redesigning of the River Road Pumping Station at the new site. The claim went to arbitration, and after many related court proceedings, including an application by the Crown for a Case Stated, a settlement was reached with the consultants in the sum of US\$320 562. Of this sum, about US\$170 000 relates to the failure of the cofferdam.

The attorneys involved for the Government were - I have to call this name, Sir - a Mr. Henry Forde, Mr. Asquith Phillips, the Deputy Solicitor-General and Mr. Jack Kannry of Berman, Paley, Goldstein and Herman of New York. Subsequently, it was decided that the Deputy Solicitor-General should institute proceedings, led, if at all possible, by the Attorney-General himself, with Mr. Kannry retained as consultant to the Government.

The Attorney-General applied to the High Court for the appointment of an arbitrator in this matter. The High Court granted the application and appointed Mr. Rafel Bermudez of Puerto Rico as arbitrator.

In January 1987, the arbitrator granted an award in favour of the Attorney-General of the United States of US\$2.3 million.

Fitzpatrick did not contest the matter at this stage. In May, 1987 the Barbados High Court confirmed the arbitration award.

Asides.

Let me repeat that out of an abundance of caution, Sir. On January 30, the arbitrator granted an award in favour of the AttorneyGeneral - oh, I see - of Barbados of US\$2.3 million. Fitzpatrick did not contest the matter, as I said, and we had confirmation in the High Court in Barbados in May, 1987.

In June our attorneys in New York filed an action in the New York Supreme Court seeking to enforce the judgment against Fitzpatrick, since the company was in the process of construction in New York and had assets there against which a claim could be made. At this point, Fitzpatrick entered the fray and is seeking to have the matter removed from the New York Supreme Court.

A great deal of documentation, the typical documentation that has to be prepared for filing these kinds of matters in the United States Courts, has been prepared. Mr. Kannry has been drawing his refreshers and re-refreshers and retainers, and whilst judgment is being awaited, Mr. Kannry has moved to obtain an Order of Attachment to prevent Fitzpatrick Construction from obtaining final disbursement of US\$800 000 owing to it on a New York State Department of Transportation Construction project which is nearing completion. A decision on this is still awaited. 12.50 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, Fitzpatrick Construction is a Montreal-based firm, and in the initial stages of the proceedings litigation had been started in Quebec. However, because of ^ the sum of money which we would have been required as security, this action was discontinued. The possibility of pursuing the matter in Quebec is being raised again, and a recent letter from the lawyers who had been retained for the Quebec litigation has been received. I have my own views on that, but I am here in the capacity as Minister of Health and, therefore, will leave the legal matters to the legal people.

Whilst we await the outcome of the proceedings in New York, it seems an appropriate time to review this whole matter. That will have to come, but in the meantime, it will be necessary for us to continue these proceedings to a certain point. As I said earlier, we are taking steps to attach US\$800000. In fact, the matter was heard in Chambers before a New York State Supreme Court Judge on whether an arbitration award granted in another jurisdiction, that is to say, Barbados, will be enforced in New York State, and it seems from the pleadings and the information which has >, become available that we will be able to get the award, and that we will be able to attach the US\$800 000 outstanding to Fitzpatrick. In this regard, one is prepared to recommend that the matter be continued up to that point. Beyond that, quite frankly, I think that the Government will have to cut its losses.

One of the problems about articulating publicly about this matter is that if you telegraph to the other side what your thinking is, they might use the long purse approach to string the Government out and see if they can cause abandonment on the part of the Government. On the other hand, when one considers the amount that has been spent so far, and that is likely to be spent, in legal fees on the Government side, it is probably desirable that we bring this matter to a swift conclusion. In any event, I believe that the Government of the day entered this matter with good faith. It is very easy when one is observing matters *ex post facto* " to know exactly what ought to have been done, and so one could easily say now that we ought not to have pursued the matter, we ought to have cut our losses then. But I think that the principle involved is that construction companies and other contractors which come from outside of Barbados into this country must understand that when they are dealing with the Government of Barbados, they are not dealing with a Banana Republic, that they cannot, because they may have large assets in a particular metropolitan country, come into Barbados and push the people of Barbados around via the Government I think the decision to pursue Fitzpatrick would have been made with that basic principle to the fore, so I am not in any way going to suggest that the matter ought not to have been engaged in.

What I will say, however, is that there was a point at which, having made the point that we would pursue the matter, we perhaps should have stopped at that stage. We

are now at the stage where we have, as I said earlier, to conclude the present suit in the New York State Supreme Court, and after that I believe that the Attorney-General will be called again to make a decision.

So, Sir, this Resolution for \$240 000 is to supplement the vote. Theoretically, it is recoverable, because should we be able to recover the funds, clearly we would have recovered our costs as well. I do not think, however, I can mislead this Committee into believing that there is a great deal of optimism that we are going to recover all of our costs. Such is the nature of litigation.

Mr. Chairman, I apologise to the House for taking so long with this matter, but I think it required that kind of information if one could explain \$240000 at this time for that particular purpose, and so I sought to give the Committee, and, indeed, to put in the record, the history surrounding this matter.

I now beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the Resolution, but I feel that I must raise a concern that some of the members of my constituency and I have, relating to the main plant in the Lakes Folly area. You will recall, Sir, that some time ago, when that plant was put in place in Lakes Folly, the former Barbados Labour Party Administration, and certainly I believe even when the plant was conceived by the former Democratic Labour Party Administration, it was recognised that persons living within a certain distance of that type of plant would have to be relocated, I would imagine for health reasons. What happened is that the plant was started, and during the time it was being constructed and certainly when it was completed, from time to time the former Labour Party Administration did relocate some of the residents of that area. But for reasons better known to themselves, quite a few of these residents were not relocated, and when the Democratic Labour Party Administration came into office, there were still several people living as close to the perimeter fence as about 100 feet

Anyone who traverses that area, who visits or lives in that area, will testify that conditions around there, because of the foul smell that emits from the plant, are unlivable. I recognise that the onus for relocating the rest of those persons living mainly on the northern and western perimeter of the plant will fall on this Administration, and I would like to think, and I certainly believe, that the Honourable Minister of Health and maybe the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands are looking at this matter with a sense of urgency, because though being a layman in terms of matters of medicine and health, I would tend to think that the conditions caused by that plant cannot be healthy.

Whether it is working well or not, I will not argue, because I do not know how a sewerage plant is supposed

to work; I do not know if it is supposed to emit foul smells. But having gone there and smelted it first hand, and almost tasting it, because the smell is so bad sometimes that you can almost taste it in your throat, I would tend to hope, and I firmly believe, that the new Minister of Health in this new Administration, and the Minister of Housing and Lands, would probably want, with some degree of urgency, to examine the situation in that area of Chapman Lane with the view of doing something to correct what I think is a very serious problem. 1.00 p.m.

Sir, I just wanted to make that short intervention and I thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): With respect to the points raised by the Honourable Minister, in a previous debate, I think we probably voted some funds before, in this Session, for the lawyers overseas. I recall warning the Government then that precisely what the Government is not doing is really the procedure that the Government needs to adopt. I am not saying that the Government has not been following. I am complimenting the Government for being very watchful and careful about the build-up of costs in this matter.

At the time I took the decision in January 1986, as the Minister will appreciate, one was taking a decision informed by overseas counsel who were in touch with the matter in New York and in Canada, Mr. Kannry, and who was advising as to the likelihood of success in the various proceedings. I remember signing the documents for the arbitration to proceed with the Puerto Rican arbitrator, and we recovered an award in the arbitration proceedings of about \$2 million.

There is a very difficult area in terms of recoverability and enforceability of that foreign award in New York, and we had to rely upon the expertise of New York lawyers to tell us whether there was a chance of recovering actual money. It seems that there may still be that chance, and I think both Governments have allowed the matter to proceed on the basis that the available expert advice from America is that the money was recoverable. If it is recoverable, then the Government would be amply vindicated and satisfied, even though it may not recover all of its cost. The winning litigant should not always recover all of his costs, the client is expected to pay a proportion of the costs. I do not think that they follow that principle too rigidly in Barbados. But at least we will get back, I think we were looking for \$1.6 million, and any costs on top of that that were allowed in New York. I think those damages would leave something over, when the appropriate vote was replenished, for the Government to recover whatever it had to recover, and there would be some excess over and above the expenses. But the New York lawyers are very expensive and everything is charged for on a time basis, and I think that if the court holds that the money is recoverable and the Government recovers

it, at that point the Government should bring the whole matter to an end, because there is very little chance of success in the Quebec court

I am in total agreement with the way in which the Government has gone about the monitoring of this matter and the monitoring of costs with a view to ensuring that we do not throw good money after bad money. There is a chance that we will recover, and if we can recover, at that point I think the Government should bring it to an end and the point would have been made to Fitzpatrick and other like-minded foreign contractors that we cherish our independence very dearly, are prepared to guard all that we have fought for zealously, and that we are not going to be pushed around by foreign contractors, some of whom may have assets in excess of those of the Barbados Government. We may be small, Sir, but we can have principles.

I am supporting the Government entirely in this matter. I hope that it will shortly be resolved, and that when it is resolved, the Minister will find an appropriate occasion to let the House know the outcome of the proceedings.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I assure the honourable Member that as soon as the matter is resolved, one way or the other, we will come back to the House and let them know.

I respond to the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller) by saying that the question of the sewage plant is a very serious matter. One of the difficulties which the plant has run into has to do with the kinds of things which have been extruding into the sewage system, which, from time to time, literally gums up the works. It is a problem which would not have been foreseen when the design and construction was completed. It is a problem which relates to the habits of a community and the methodology of that community, which will take some time before disposal habits fall in line with what the sewerage managers would like to see.

From time to time, for example, they find objects in the sewage. Sometimes, they are finding oil. There are disposers of waste matter who seem to have no regard for the rest of the community. The same mentality which allows people to take lorry loads of garbage up to the Belle and empty them in the cart roads around the Belle, without regard to the water resources of the country, allows some people to pump oil into the sewerage plant. All of these things together create problems in the sewerage plant, and, therefore, from time to time it literally clogs up, and when it does, it is a very unhealthy situation. 1.10p.m.

The Government is operating at three levels. One, it is going to continue to try to educate the people who are attached to the system and/or use the system in the proper disposal of waste. Two, it recognises that the people to the

west and the north have to be moved. My colleague, the Minister of Housing, will address this matter in some detail ^ later when we do another supplementary, but the answer is that the people from the west and the north of the sewerage plant will be moved and the matter should be expedited.

I believe some of the people in the area have already written to the Ministry. I would like to assure them, through their representative, that the matter is receiving urgent attention. As I said, my colleague will be seeking money later on to assist in the moving of these people.

As you know, attempts are being made to get more people to tie up to the system. Not enough people in Bridgetown have been attaching to the system, but I am told by the managers that in the last few weeks they have been able to get a more efficient operation of the sewerage plant; efficient not in terms of the works themselves, but in terms of the scheduling, disposal and methodology.

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When all is said and done, Mr. Chairman, we have the very serious situation that when people are selling us systems, they paint very beautiful pictures. I recall very well that the initial concepts of the sewerage plant were sold to the country during the time when we were the Government. I recall that when the experts came down and we saw the promotional material and the film which accompanied it, we saw an actual film of a prototype plant, and the effluent having been treated, there were beautiful fishes swimming round in the water which came out of the sewerage plant I am yet to see the clear, beautiful effluent which flows out of the waters in Chapman Lane.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: My friend here is asking me if I have looked, but the truth is you cannot get close enough ^ to look, and for the people who live in Lakes Folly and around the surrounding areas, it is not a pleasant thing. We are going to have to take steps to move them, and hope that over the medium term we will become more efficient, that life will be a little easier and that we will have gumming up less frequently.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am told by my colleague *sotto voce* that even the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce is beginning to suffer the effects of this magnificent structure, which happened to fly the flag upside down yesterday. No wonder the flag was upside down, that is a distress signal!

Mr. Chairman, I believe that I have answered all the queries.

The question that Head 36 - Subhead 1 - Hand part was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1987-88, NO. 29 -
\$1974830

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS -
\$1974830

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN (St. Philip South): Mr. Chairman, this supplementary seeks to carry the Ministry of Housing and the National Housing Corporation until the end of the financial year. I will go through the different subheads, Mr. Chairman, and you will see that Head 37, Subhead 1 deals with about four or five different things.

The first thing is that the Ministry of Housing and Lands recently acquired a number of temporary posts which were created by the Establishments Division, and in addition to that, the post of Chief, Property Management Unit, was upgraded. The estimated expenditure under this subhead for the remainder of the financial year has been worked out and it comes to \$168 668. It is because of the increase in salary and also the upgrading of the salary of the Chief of the Property Management Unit.

There are also some posts, as I mentioned before, which have been established by the Establishments Division. These have not yet been filled, but provision is being made to cover any eventuality, because they should be filled very shortly.

One of the other topics under Subhead 1 is Rental of Property. This is becoming an embarrassment now, because this has been going on for a very long time, but the Court Process Office is still located at Roebuck Street as a result of a fire which damaged the Supreme Court building.

Originally, the reason being given was that the trouble was air-conditioning. Recently, I have heard that they cannot go back into the Supreme Court building because it has to be rewired to accommodate the new air-conditioning.

For the time being, we are renting property at Roebuck Street at \$4000 a month, and a supplementary is needed up to the end of the financial year, \$46 000.

Under Furniture and Equipment, provision will be needed for those new members of staff which I mentioned earlier, and that comes to \$12 500.

The next is Professional Services, and the sum under this, Mr. Chairman, to all intents and purposes, will be reimbursable. What happens here is that in support of the housing guarantee loan, the Government of Barbados entered into a grant agreement with US AID whereby funds are made available to meet the cost of undertaking the Housing Credit Fund programme. Financing under the grant agreement is devoted to technical assistance for project

management and administration, as well as the development of a comprehensive national housing plan. USAID is expected to contribute US\$470000, and to date approximately US\$350000 has been provided for short term technical assistance, long term resident technical assistance and training.

As I said before, the money is being provided by USAID and is therefore not a sum which Government will have to provide; it is just Government coming up front. That covers Head 37, Subhead 1. 1.20p.m.

Subhead 2 is a supplementary for the National Housing Corporation. Because of increased activity during the year, through trying to facilitate many of the contractors in Barbados, the National Housing Corporation finds itself needing additional funds if we are to continue the increased activity that we are undertaking. There has also been a slight increase in staff there, and we had to settle some outstanding commitments which were brought forward from previous years, including last year.

The Town and Country Planning Department, Subhead 7. This comes about because a decision was made to relocate the Town and Country Planning Office from Bay Street to Block "B" at the Garrison. This was finalized after the preparation of the Draft Estimates and expenditure for the new telephone service was therefore not included. An additional \$5000 is now requested for the service change for the PBX and \$2 872 for the tie key system.

Other funds are being sought for an additional telephone which is utilised by the Research Division of the Town Planning Department. Another small sum of \$420 is required to meet the cost of service charge payments for the remainder of the financial year, and an additional sum of \$72 is required in respect of a telephone allowance for the Chief Town Planner and the Deputy Chief Town Planner.

As you see, Mr. Chairman, and as it is recognized by the gentlemen on the other side, the supplementary is necessary at this moment.

I beg that this Head stand part.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 37 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1987-88, NO. 30 -
\$10870000

HEAD 79 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS -
\$10870000

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN (St. Philip South): Mr. Chairman, the sum being requested sounds like a very large sum, but when you realize that of this sum \$6 million is for

the acquisition or the purchase of the St Joseph Hospital complex, you can see that the money is well merited.

A total of \$2 million was voted in respect of property acquisition for the financial year and, to date, we have spent \$1812366.84. Of the \$9 million under Subhead 1 - Purchase of Buildings and Lands - some \$7360000 is needed for compensation of major acquisitions such as the St. Joseph Hospital Complex, \$6 million; the Savannah Club, which we recently decided to purchase for \$600 000; and purchase of land for housing construction, \$760000. The remaining \$1640 000 is needed to meet outstanding compensation claims for numerous parcels of land acquired, including land acquired for sites and services projects. I must say that a lot of the land which we are endeavouring to pay for now was acquired before this Administration took office. Some go way back to between 1978 and 1986.

Subhead 8 - Renovation and Construction of Government Offices. Many of the buildings housing Government offices, as you know, Mr. Chairman, are in a state of disrepair. The Ministry of Housing and Lands are carrying out as much remedial work as possible during this financial year to remedy this problem. As far as possible, the Ministry will utilize the services of the Ministry of Transport and Works and the National Housing Corporation to undertake the works.

The money being requested under this subhead is being requested to ensure that, at least, we continue work on these projects until the end of the financial year. They include Savannah Lodge, the Treasury Building, the West Wing of the Public Building, Land and Surveys Department, Foreign Affairs, the Customs Bond House, Culloden Farm and Parcel Post Building. Most of these are being done at the moment; others will come on stream as soon as we are finished doing some of those that we are doing already.

Subhead 2 is the National Housing Corporation. As was mentioned previously by the Honourable Minister of Health, part of this supplementary is for the relocation of houses and persons from Emmerton. Some of them will be relocated to Simmons Land - I think seven houses - and then there will be the removal of 20 other houses from Emmerton.

To give you some other examples of what we are planning to do within the next two or three months, originally we thought that only 16 persons would have to be relocated from Six Men's but now there are 31. Twenty houses will have to be relocated from Speightstown to Golden Mile, and we have to remove four houses from Parish Land. 130p.m.

The funds being asked for under this Head are to cover the construction of the starter homes, which are almost complete, and the relocation of houses in those areas.

I know that certain Members may wish to say something about the St Joseph Hospital, and with those few words, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution. I think it is public knowledge that I had the honour to be the chairman for the reopening of negotiations for the St. Joseph Hospital on behalf of my Government, and I think it is also common knowledge that there were some very scathing attacks directed at me by the supporters of the members of that side. I therefore have to set out in some detail my feelings and what the committee has been doing.

First of all, I take this opportunity to say that I appreciate the hard work that was put in by members of the committee, and I consider it to be a very high level committee. It comprised people like Mr. James Williams, Hospital Director; Dr. Shillingford, the Chief Medical Officer; Miss Ena Walters, who was Deputy Chairman of the Committee and was the Matron at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital; Mrs. Devonish, President of the Barbados Registered Nurses Association; Dr. Many, who was at the time President of the Barbados Medical Association; Dr. Pat Bannister, Psychiatrist from the Psychiatric Hospital; Dr. Richards, who was at the St Joseph Hospital; and Mr. McAlister, the engineer at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I have no reservations in naming the committee because I think the committee has worked hard, and every member of that committee was well qualified to serve on it

I think that when we look at the St. Joseph Hospital, there were certain things we had to put in perspective. The hospital was built in 1966 by the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, and it rendered great medical service to the island of Barbados. That hospital operated reasonably well until the years between 1976 and 1986, when not only the hospital, but indeed the medical fraternity of Barbados, found itself in great difficulty. As a matter of fact, it was during that time that the doctors of this island had to form a trade union, because they felt that the threat of the then Government was so great that they had to organise themselves to fight against what they considered to be an evil Government I am talking about the Barbados Labour Party Government. It was during the years 1976 to 1986 that the medical fraternity, which existed in Barbados for over 350 years, all of a sudden found itself threatened and therefore had to form a trade union. I am saying that this is the background of what happened with the St Joseph Hospital.

There is a feeling that was put out that the hospital was closed because of financial problems, that there was under-utilisation of the hospital. That is partly true, but other factors contributed to the closing of the St Joseph Hospital,

and some of them should not be taken lightly. One of the problems that existed was that when the St Joseph Hospital was in financial trouble, it petitioned to the Government to do one of two things or both: (1) to allow more obstetric and gynaecology, primarily pregnant mothers to come to the hospital to be delivered, therefore creating better revenue for the hospital and easing the great load which the Queen Elizabeth Hospital had; and (2) that some of the beds at the St Joseph Hospital be used as public beds. If a bed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital cost, let us say, \$50 a day, you would hospitalise the patient at the St Joseph Hospital and pay to the St Joseph Hospital the same \$50 a day that it cost at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. This would have accommodated the people in the north, cut down on their time and travel. The Government of the day did not agree with it

There was another factor that was very important, and I think it is one that we need to know about and look at very carefully. During this period of time, there were 'reposals made by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of the United States to come into Barbados and in the Eastern Caribbean and sell health insurance. Blue Cross and Blue Shield were stipulating that since Barbados had the best medical services in the Eastern Caribbean, the island of first choice would be Barbados; but the problem was that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital did not have enough private beds to accommodate the increase in medical patients having to come from the Eastern Caribbean and as far away as Trinidad. Therefore, it was necessary to provide more medical beds, and Blue Cross and Blue Shield were willing to pay the rather lucrative fee for a hospital bed - I think it went up to something in the vicinity of \$250 a day - which meant that, for the first time in Barbados, the hospital operation would have been a paying one.

It seems as though there was a group of business people, including some doctors in Barbados, who thought that maybe it would have been a good thing, and this would have to be done in conjunction with the powers that be, to close down the St Joseph Hospital, rather than buy it for the people of Barbados, acquire some other part of the island, and this conglomerate would go to an insurance company and borrow money and build their own hospital, and out of that kind of facility they would be reaping all of the financial benefits that would accrue to Barbados. This is another area where I say that I make no apologies to have been chairman of the committee group, because I worked at the St Joseph Hospital from 1970 until its closure, therefore I knew some of what was going on and some of the levels at which people were operating.

Attacks were made on me by supporters on that side saying that I had a vested interest in being chairman of the St Joseph Hospital Committee. There are members on that side who are legal advisers for the St Joseph Hospital, and

I am sorry that they are not in their seats today, because I think when these kinds of statements are made, people have got to understand what is going on. While the Barbados Labour Party Government was in the act of closing down the St Joseph Hospital, you had members of the Government working for the St. Joseph Hospital, while at the same time telling the people of Barbados that the St. Joseph Hospital should be closed. If there was a conflict of interest, that was a conflict of interest. I want to set that part straight

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St Thomas): On a point of order: the honourable Member for St Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) has imputed that members of the past Government, by which he can only mean the Cabinet, were involved in dishonest dealings in respect of their public responsibility in regard to the private sale of the hospital. If he is speaking about a member of the then Barbados Labour Party, which was in Government, in his private legal capacity, it is a different matter, but he said the Government, by which we understand him to mean the Cabinet 1.40p.m.

If he would clear it up or withdraw it, I would be happy with that, Sir. We do not want to be contentious today at all.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before you made the interruption, I was wondering about it, and what you said has helped me to make up my mind. I think it ought to be withdrawn if it is an imputation of improper conduct on the part of the Cabinet of the Barbados Labour Party. It ought to be withdrawn.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Maybe you can restate it.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS; if I misled you, I am sorry. What I am saying is this.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have to withdraw it Dr.

E. A. SIMMONS: I withdraw the statement.

The point I am making is that the present Leader of the Opposition, while sitting in Parliament when the party he belonged to was the Government of the day, was saying to the people of Barbados that the hospital was not viable and should be closed down. The Leader of the Opposition at the same time was legal adviser to the owners of the St Joseph Hospital. My interpretation may be incorrect but to me that is a conflict of interest.

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I will get to that later. I will explain why I came to those observations because I have documents here

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: He is reflecting on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, who

is not in the island and not in his place. It is an improper motive being imputed, Sir, because just as he has said that it would be highly improper for me to suggest that because his brother was Minister of Health.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, do not state it I understand the analogy. Do not do it

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am only trying to develop the point, Sir, to show

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand it I am going to ask him to withdraw the remark again.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was the chairman and he had been a doctor down there.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And he drew fees from down there, Sir. Why are we getting into this?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You all tear down the man in his own private, professional capacity.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member take his seat now?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He did not make any decisions for the Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the statement.

In the newspaper articles and the editorials in this country, I was attacked personally, that is the point I am making, and I have a document here, which I will make a document of the House, called "The Island Jewel, Barbados, West Indies". It is put out by & company called Jackson-Cross of Philadelphia and it is addressed to the Minister of Health. The point I am making is that while the statements were being made

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that the present Minister of Health?

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: No, not the present Minister of Health.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Give me the date when it was published, printed or whatever, then.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Nineteen eighty-six. The date is not very clear, but it is addressed to the Minister of Health, Senator O'Brien Trotman.

Aside.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: A stamp date is 18-09-1986.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before you proceed, you have another three minutes before you complete.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: This property was put on sale in the United States, I am talking about the St. Joseph Hospital complex, and these were the recommendations made by the company in the United States. The document said:

"Because of its location, terrain, and existing buildings, it appears that the complex is well suited for the continued health care services, including geriatrics, surgical, maternity, intensive and general medical care."

The point I am making is that while the Minister was advised that the hospital should be bought and continued as a general hospital, we were being told that the hospital should be closed and should not be used as such a facility, because their whole thing was to close the hospital.

During this time, pressure was being put on the nuns at the St. Joseph Hospital to accept St. George's Medical School. The St. George's Medical School came to Barbados and the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners was completely opposed to the presence of St. George's Medical School in Barbados. They felt that it would create problems for the University of the West Indies, and indeed it did! Their forecast was correct!

One of the problems was that a former Minister in the last Government put pressure on the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, and because they refused to accept the St. George's Medical School, pressure was put on that institution.

All of these factors must be looked at in their entirety to understand why the St. Joseph Hospital was closed. We on this side agree with the analysis made by the people at Jackson-Cross. We feel that in view of the insurance and other facilities in Barbados, the St. Joseph Hospital is right for Barbados. I end by saying that Barbados is one of the few Caribbean islands that has only one general hospital.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES (St. Lucy): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution.

It is a strange twist of history that almost two years to the date today we are again discussing the St. Joseph Hospital, this time, of course, from a different perspective, because around the 15th or the 16th December, 1985,¹ I was leading a campaign in Speightstown in St. Peter collecting signatures and calling on the Government of the day to do whatever it could to assist in saving the St. Joseph Hospital from going under and hence from closing its doors. I then took the matter even to the streets of Bridgetown, where we were able to get overwhelming support for the position which we were taking. I, therefore, would like once more

to express publicly my thanks to those petitioners who were brave enough to come out and append their signatures to the petition, thereby showing their support for the stand which was being taken.

It is somewhat, I suppose, gratifying when I look through the file to see photographs of pregnant women, old people, white people, all classes and creeds of people in Barbados giving

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: of course, black people. I mean that was obvious, the majority of people.....support to this approach, with the then Government adopting a very stubborn position, and indeed a most deaf ear to the petition. Today we have reached a point where the Democratic Labour Party Administration, having made a manifesto commitment, seeing the need for a hospital of the St. Joseph type in the north, is discussing a money Resolution which will provide for the acquisition of that hospital.

I do not think that I need to go into the need for such a hospital in the north, but I do so if only for the benefit of the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), because when this matter was discussed, he took a very interesting attitude. Rather than being supportive of the position and supportive of the petition which was being organized, calling on the Government to save the hospital from being closed, the honourable Member took the view that he would give me whatever assistance he could to find \$15 million to buy the hospital. That is the kind of attitude which was being demonstrated by the Member for St. Peter, and the St. Joseph Hospital is situated in the constituency of the honourable Member.

The hospital employed over 100 people. The Government of the day claimed that it was interested in jobs and saving the jobs of people, and yet the honourable Member for St. Peter, who represented the constituency from which a large number of people who were employed at that hospital came, took that kind of attitude. I am going to wait and see how he will vote on this today, because I am again going to call for a division of the House on this vote. I want to find out if he has changed his tune today. I could not understand at that time, when I was, for practical purposes, out there alone fighting to save a hospital and to preserve medical services in the north, how the representative for the constituency which was contiguous to mine would take a position which was opposite to the one which I was taking. He does not want a hospital in St Peter. That is the position which he has taken. 1.50p.m.

I am very glad, Sir, that the Government is carrying through its commitment on this. The honourable Member ought to know that the St. Joseph Hospital played a very important role in the delivery of health services in the north.

It is true that it was, a private hospital, but it had a certain arrangement where it allowed poor people from the north to have access to its facilities at very little cost, and very often without cost. When we put that facility back in place, it will, in my view, provide the kind of services about which the people in St. Peter, St James and, of course, St. Lucy, St. Andrew, and maybe all over Barbados, will be proud.

Sir, services will be provided. But the Member for St. Peter does not want those kinds of services in St. Peter, because, as I said, he took a position where he said I would have to look for the \$15 million. It was nothing at all to do with the Government. Indeed, he even indicated that the closure of the hospital was because of the Barbados Workers Union and the negotiations which the Barbados Workers Union conducted on behalf of those employees at the St. Joseph Hospital. I am not going to get into that particular matter, because I am sure that two members of the backbench are very competent to deal with that particular charge; I will leave that for them. I am sure that the honourable Members who represent northern constituencies will also be having their say on this.

The important thing is that we will have these services in the north. The hospital will reduce pressure on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and will also make it easier in cases of emergency, because I am sure that we will have the kind of facility there that will prevent people from having to travel across the island into Bridgetown to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That can also have an effect on reducing some of the pressure on our transportation services, because it will be within easy access to the people from the north. If the honourable Member for St Peter does not understand these things, or could not understand the point which we were making when we were calling on the Government to save the St Joseph Hospital, I really wonder what he would understand. It was a very clear case of a representative not being appreciative of the needs of the people in the north. I hope that today, when we go to the vote, the honourable Member will be supportive of this Resolution.

He said that the Barbados Labour Party Government could not find the money to buy the St Joseph Hospital. The Democratic Labour Party Administration will find the money to put the St Joseph Hospital back in operation, thereby fulfilling a very important pledge which we have made to the people of Barbados, more particularly to the people of the north, and it will be yet another of the many promises which we have made to the people of this country which is being fulfilled. I really feel very glad today that we have reached this point.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South East talked about how he was attacked in the editorials of newspapers and by persons for the role which he played on the committee that was set up to plan for the reopening of the St Joseph Hospital. I do not think that he was subjected

to the kind of abuse that I was subjected to when I started out on my one-man campaign, supported when I reached Speightstown by Mrs. Sybil Leacock and by my esteemed friend, the then Senator Wes Hall, who came down to lend some moral support, and of course the Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne). They came and they gave support, and when we came into Bridgetown, the other Members, and potential Members, from St. Michael and Christ Church all came and lent support to the cause. But I was abused, I was told that I was being political, I did not know what I was doing. All sort of abuse was hurled at me, but I was not deterred by that, because I believed that we were on a good course and it was something which was for the benefit of the north and for the people of Barbados.

We had a Resolution brought into the Lower House by our late, esteemed Leader, and one was taken to the Senate. I dare say that both of those Resolutions did not meet with any success because of the fact that the Barbados Labour Party Administration was opposed to the reopening of the St. Joseph Hospital. I believe they were glad to see the hospital doors closed. Today, we are going to vote money to acquire the St. Joseph Hospital. I hope that we will have a hospital when it reopens, and I am sure that this is what will happen, of which we in the north can all be proud, one which will be providing the kinds of services that are needed. I am sure that, in the fullness of time, the Minister will be able to make a full statement on the kind of facility which will be opened for the benefit of the people in the north. 2.00 p.m.

I want, therefore, Mr. Chairman, to compliment most warmly this Government for this most timely step. It could not come at a more opportune time than in this period of glad tidings and greetings, a mere two years after I was slapping tar around this country collecting signatures and asking support for this arrangement. I feel that this is a wonderful Christmas present for the people of the north and to those persons who supported the Democratic Labour Party in this struggle.

Thank you.

Applause.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. Chairman reported progress to His Honour the Speaker and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3:15 p.m. this afternoon.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

The question that the House be suspended until 3:15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 2.05 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, there is a matter that we have given other Members notice of, and about which I have spoken earlier today with the Opposition members. It was not available at the time when Government Notices was called. I am now seeking that we recommit Item No. (g), Government Notices, so that the appropriate notice can be given with a view to having* this matter dealt with today in all of its stages, with the co-operation of the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of the House is seeking to have Government Notices recommitted. It appears there is no objection from anyone, so the leader can proceed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES (RE-OPENED)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I give notice of the following:

A Resolution to grant the sum of \$120000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1987-88, Part I Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1987-88, No. 31, which forms the Schedule to this Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move that Order No. 3 be the instant order of the day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 3.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT BRIDGE ROAD, ST. MICHAEL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BRIDGE

Order No. 3 was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Bridge Road, St. Michael for the purpose of the construction of the new bridge.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN (St. Philip South): Mr. Speaker, in January, 1983, proceedings were instituted under the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, for the compulsory acquisition of several parcels of land at Bridge Road, St. Michael, to facilitate the construction of the bridge

and the associated road works. Accordingly, the provisions of Sections 3 and 4 of the said Act were invoked.

Cabinet subsequently decided that the Ministry of Transport and Works should seek to have these small portions of land donated or transferred for a small sum, instead of invoking the procedures for compulsory acquisition of the several areas required.

Cabinet further suggested that the Ministry of Transport and Works should consider whether or not the provisions of Section 8 of the Highway Act, Cap. 289, could not be applied in these cases. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that it was a case of delaying tactics here.

The proceedings which had commenced under the Land Acquisition Act for these parcels of land were suspended while the Ministry of Housing and Lands awaited further instructions from the Ministry of Transport and Works. These instructions never came. I am not going to be contentious today, but I could be if I wanted.

In May this year, Mr. Speaker, almost four years after the compulsory acquisition procedures were started, the Ministry of Housing and Lands drew this situation to the attention of this Cabinet. Concern was expressed that Government had appropriated those several parcels of land without compensating the owners. Cabinet therefore agreed that the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, should be invoked to regularise Government's use of the people's land. 3.20 p.m.

Proceedings had been instituted since June 1983 regarding the acquisition of 21 parcels of land at Bridge Road. Since then, survey plans received from the Ministry of Transport and Works have indicated that some 25 parcels of land had actually been used in the programme at Bridge Road. However, when these survey plans were compared with the schedules in the published notice, only 16 parcels of land could be clearly identified for acquisition. The Ministry of Housing and Lands has consulted with the Ministry of Transport and Works with a view to having the matter relative to the other nine parcels of land regularised. It is possible that the Ministry of Housing and Lands may be able to complete the purchase of the remaining parcels of land by private treaty, provided that the owners possess title deeds to the respective parcels of land.

In the meantime, it is proposed to proceed to complete the acquisition processes in respect of the 16 parcels of land, and that is what we are dealing with today. In this connection, on November 19, 1987, Cabinet approved this Resolution coming to Parliament, and we are here requesting the approval of Parliament in respect of 16 parcels of land acquired for the construction of the Bridge at Bridge Road, St. Michael.

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

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

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN (St. Michael East): Mr. Speaker, I applaud the long overdue action taken by the Government to compensate the long suffering residents in Bridge Road from the constituencies of St. Michael East, St. Michael South Central and St. Michael Central who have suffered the loss of property as a result of unavoidable encroachments, together with consequential damage inflicted, on the properties of many of the residents who live at Bridge Road itself, which the Ministry of Transport and Works failed to rectify. The matter is now in good and efficient hands, however, and the people at Bridge Road can look forward to not only having their homes repaired, but the rest of the project implemented.

The Bridge Road project was conceived by me, although other people are taking credit for it. I conceived the Bridge Road Project, the initial plans were drawn up by me, and it is I who instructed that the Bridge Road Project should be financed from the Transport Levy. People are talking about the Transport Levy Fund, of which they know nothing. They do not know anything about the concepts of the fund or anything, but I will deal with that later when I come to deal with the Transport Board.

The Bridge Road Project was conceived not as a simple restoration of the bridge, but as dealing at the same time with the enormous problems of drainage within the Bridge Road area. For reasons best known to the powers that were in MTW at the time, the drainage phase of the project was never implemented. Residents can now be assured that the expectations which they had of relief from flooding within that area will in a very short time be fulfilled.

Once again, I must congratulate the Government for acting on this long overdue problem, and I sincerely hope that the residents affected will get the cash in their hands as soon as possible.

Asides.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I am aware of that, but there has been a lot of talk. I hope that the process will be expeditiously concluded and that money will be in the pockets of these individuals before the day of yuletide.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to make a very long contribution to this, but it would be remiss of me if I did not express gratitude at recognising that the St. Michael Central part of this divide is going to be taken care of as a direct result of the comments made by the Minister responsible for Housing and Lands.

I am particularly interested in the comment which was made by the Minister responsible for Transport and Works dealing with the matter of drainage. The residents of Deane's Village, especially the Deane's Village United Football Club, which has recently been promoted in the Barbados Football Association competition, would be very pleased to know about this, because the very small ground which they now use for their training exercises, small but useful ground because it is within the village itself, was until this moment threatened with the possibility of being given over to a programme of drainage, especially as a result of some problems at Her Majesty's place of incarceration. Once we understand that the drainage is going to be done, I am satisfied that the Deane's Village Football Club would be able to move further from the third division to the second, where they will now play, and I look forward to seeing them in the premier division in the coming season. I do not play football, Mr. Speaker, but I still think I have a reasonably good left foot

In connection with the Bridge Road Project, it would seem to me that once it is seen against the rest of the area as a whole, it loses something when it is placed in juxtaposition to the Bank Hall Cross Road, as a road going from Bridge Road up to Eagle Hall. It is not, I think, Sir, inopportune for me to suggest to the Government that urgent need is required to have the Government take measures to extend that Bank Hall Cross Road so that the flow of traffic from Eagle Hall across Bank Hall Cross Road and into Bridge Road can be smooth and without the present bottlenecks which now exist

The people in the SL Michael Central area recognise the improvement which is possible as a result of the Bridge Road extension. They also recognise the extent of the improvement which they can be to their living standards as a result of the drainage" improvement which will exist. But we would like to think that once there is a move made to widen and, if possible, to sidewalk the road at Bank Hall Cross Road, the lives of the pedestrians might be made all the better along that highway.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Speaker, this is really puzzling to me. These are small areas of land with one as low as 10 square metres. Why was it necessary to use this procedure of compulsory acquisition? With respect, it seems to me that in a four-year period these owners could have been compensated by private treaty or whatever. These are small pieces of land. I do not know what was the reason for the delay. 3.30 p.m

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I said at the beginning I did not want to be contentious on this issue. But from reading the file, the impression given to me was that the former Minister did not want to pay the people for the land.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: It was a question of stating - one thing one day, another thing another day, and the next day something else. He was going to and fro and to and fro and nothing came out of the situation.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The former Minister, the former representative for St. Michael West Central.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am tired speaking about that Minister, I do not want to speak about him again. But the problem was that he decided one thing one day, then another thing the next day, then goes back to the person. He kept going left, right, left, right, so nothing could have been done. That is why it went on like that As you said, I cannot understand why just 58 square metres of land could take so long, or ten metres. And that was the reason.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I said I do not want to get much further in this.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY Mr.

CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1987-88, NO.30-\$10 870 000 (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We will resort to what we were discussing before the luncheon adjournment.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, whenever the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) believes that he has a matter that can be described as economic or political breakthrough, he is very wont, Sir, to give vent to his over-developed appetite for rhetoric at the expense of good judgement, very often, Mr. Chairman, to his embarrassment. He has already embarrassed himself very considerably by the announcement of a breakthrough in trade with Trinidad which was supposed to have brought 3 000 jobs. In December of 1985, he sensed that there was a possibility for a political breakthrough in St. Peter

concerning the acquisition of the St. Joseph Hospital. Like the breakthrough in trade with Trinidad, the breakthrough in St Peter is just a figment of the honourable Member's imagination.

Mr. Chairman, in this particular debate two particular points of fact stand above all of what has been said today. The first is that we are in the process of approving the acquisition of a property at St. Joseph Hospital and at Ashton Hall in St. Peter for \$6 million. The second point of fact that stands above the controversy which is about to unfold is that the actual process of arriving at a figure and bringing that figure to the House is a process, Mr. Chairman, which has taken two years to bring to this state of fruition. These two points of fact, Mr. Chairman, rather than the surrounding points of rhetoric which some persons want to bring into this debate, will form the core of my presentation to the House.

You must remember, Mr. Chairman, that in November of 1985, it was brought to the attention of the Government of the day, by way of a meeting between persons acting on behalf of the St. Joseph Hospital and myself, in my capacity as representative of the constituency and the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, that the owners of St. Joseph Hospital had taken an irreversible decision to close the hospital by January 19, 1986, and that they were also asking \$15 million for the property without equipment,

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Fifteen million dollars. My response, Sir -and this matter was entirely canvassed in a debate in the House of Assembly on December 17, 1985 - was that it was very much to be regretted that an irreversible decision had been taken as regards the closure of the hospital, and that the Government of the day, Sir, was in no position, at an instant notice, to commit itself to purchasing a property of \$15 million without having gone through a proper process of evaluation as regards the appropriate price to be paid for the property, Sir, or, even for that matter, determining the precise use to which the property once acquired should be put. Mr. Chairman, these points were very well established in the debate which occurred in the House of Assembly on December 17, 1985.

I want to establish first of all, Sir, that one of the fundamental points in this controversy surrounding the St. Joseph Hospital was whether or not we should have paid \$15 million for a property without ourselves having the opportunity to conduct a proper evaluation, as any serious Government should, as to whether the property was worth \$15 million. I do not apologize now, Sir, for having taken a position that I could not at that point in time support a decision to acquire the St. Joseph Hospital for \$15 million because we did not know what we were buying. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Michael

South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes), speaking in the debate in this House on December 17, 1985, said these words:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the page?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I will quote, Sir. It is Hansard page 3136:

"The St. Joseph Hospital is a good capital investment. It is not worth any \$15 million, and I will oppose very much any proposal to purchase the hospital for \$15 million. So I think it would be a waste of time even considering paying any \$15 million for any hospital of that kind."

That has always, Mr. Chairman, been one of the central points in dealing with the whole matter.

The second essential point, Sir, and it reflects in a very fundamental way on our concept of ourselves as a sovereign people, relates to whether we should have been stampeded into a decision to purchase or to just keep the hospital going purely because we were operating in the context of a charged political situation.

I said, Sir, that this matter has taken now two years to come to the House. The hospital at that time gave us a letter in December, dated December, I think, the 5th, saying that they were intending to close on January 19. We would now have to believe, if we are to take the honourable Members on the other side seriously, that what has taken them almost two years to bring to a satisfactory conclusion is something that we should have done in less than two months. 3.40 p.m.

The Prime Minister at the time, Mr. H. B. St. John, spoke in the House of Assembly at that time saying that the Government of the day had asked the hospital to keep all of its options open, and he cited at that time the potential use of even the National Health Service proceeds to try to find a workable solution. But the hospital in its letter said that its decision was irreversible.

In a sense, Mr. Chairman, what we are forced now to reflect upon is whether any Government, B or D, should be stampeded into a decision to purchase a property without going through what any Government, B or D, should do - inquire, first of all, into whether the expenditure is a reasonable expenditure; determine the use to which the property would be put, and arrive at a sensible decision not on the basis of a schedule set for it by any private entity, but on the basis of a schedule that takes into account all of the relevant factors in the particular matter. I say to the House this evening, Sir, that the \$6 million that we are now paying for the St. Joseph Hospital is a vindication of the position that we took not to be stampeded.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: But that is the point. It is a vindication of the decision that we took not to take a hasty decision by January 19, 1986 merely because the St. Joseph Hospital directorate said they were going to close the hospital by January 19, 1986. It would have been a waste of public funds if we had merely reacted to the fact that we were dealing with a matter that was in the public domain as a political controversy and acquired a property in January 1986 for \$15 million which now can be acquired by a Government of the same country for \$6 million.

The Government has not as yet indicated, except indirectly, the exact use to which the hospital will be put, and I find this interesting in the light of a document that was made a document of the House by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) when he spoke on August 5, 1986 in the debate regarding the fiscal proposals introduced by the then Minister of Finance and Planning. The honourable Member for St. Michael South East made a document of the House a report by a committee which at that time, Mr. Chairman, was making the point that "the team does not recommend continuing the previous use of the St. Joseph Hospital as an acute general hospital under either private or public auspices."

I have referred to this particular debate of the House of Assembly on August 5, 1986 because it related to the honourable Member for St. Michael South East raising the question of the acquisition of the St. Joseph Hospital. I was pointing out to him, Sir, that even at that time the question as to whether the St. Joseph Hospital should or should not have been an acute general hospital was something that had not even then been settled, because it says that "the team does not recommend continuing the use of the hospital as an acute general hospital either in the public or in the private domain. So we were expected to take a decision by January 19, 1986 which even up to August 5, 1986 was still a point of issue over which the team led by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East was agonising.

All things considered, therefore, Mr. Chairman - and if you were to go back to the debates and my points that I raised on the St. Joseph Hospital you will see - all I want to ensure is that the best possible use, the most rational use, is made of a facility that can be of value to this country. I would like to remind the honourable Members of the three points of principle that I raised in December of 1985 when this matter came up before the House. I said then, in Hansard, December 17, 1985, page 3142:

"I want to submit to the House that the issue which must concern us at this stage is of a threefold nature. The issue simply is whether, after 20 years of problems, we can work out a sensible and permanent role for the St. Joseph Hospital in our national health system; secondly, whether that role will be in the private domain

or in the public domain; and, thirdly, whether we can satisfactorily arrive at a definition of that role, which may involve the expenditure of considerable sums of public monies, in accordance with the schedule which has been set by the private owners."

I am obliged to you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, I think I understand some of the difficulties faced by the last speaker, the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), because, quite frankly, he spoke with the tone of a non-negotiator when he makes a \$15 million offer by a person interested in getting rid of a property seem to have been cast in steel or concrete. The fact, as I understand it, is that if they put up \$15 million, you negotiate. I do not think that this Government was faced by an offer of \$6 million because that is the purchase price we are now settled at. It has to be a matter of negotiation, therefore, I understand the difficulty he is faced with. He seems to expect all of us here to understand that because the Sisters said that they wanted \$15 million, it meant that somebody was constrained to pay \$15 million. If you had difficulties in negotiating, well let us understand that, perhaps, on your side you do not understand the importance of negotiating.

What made it difficult for me is when the honourable Member for St. Peter at that time, faced with a difficulty in explaining why his Administration was willing to listen to the voice of the St. Joseph Hospital owners, who were saying they wanted \$15 million, could say no to them, but would not listen to the voice of the workers - 100 of them - who were going home, supported by the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) and others, and he and his side could not say they would do something to lessen their burden. You were listening to one voice, but the other voice was not one you were willing to hear. But one of the reasons why the Democratic Labour Party administration made the decision certainly to take a different position on St. Joseph Hospital is that they are conscious of the jobs that were held by those 100 persons, and also the kind of service that could be offered in the north. 3.50 p.m.

There are a few of us who ever had the experience of negotiating a contract that depends on workers being displaced. It is a very nerve-racking experience. It is one that is full of frustration, hurt, pain and sadness when you are dealing with 100 workers and you are telling them that they are going to lose their jobs, that the institution in which they are operating has to close, when you know, in fact, that that position can be saved, and by a Government that considers workers. Because the honourable Member for St. Peter starts his tale at the end, he does not give the background to the situation. He gives the impression that they were faced with a *fait accompli* by the Sisters, that

they were saying in December "take it or leave it" Why does he not go back to the situation when the hospital was experiencing difficulties and it realized that it could come out of these difficulties with help from the Government of the day, the Barbados Labour Party.

I want to make it clear that I accept that the hospital is one that has suffered some financial difficulties over time. It has nothing to do with the rate increase whatsoever. We have a letter from Sister Catherine Marie Bolongia, dated December 6, 1985, in which she talked about "the years of prolonged economic losses, increasing cost of supplies, coupled with the limited number of Sisters, declining census in revenues dictated this irreversible course of action."

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order: Spiralling wages!

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I am going to give you all the facts. I am going to put that in context for you. I gave you - 'all of the different factors and then you want to put in "spiralling wages." I am going to give you the context of the spiralling wages, too. If you are the kind of people who take what people say without analysing them, I am not like that. I put all in a context, and I am going to give you the context of the wages. But that is what she said, that these were the problems, so let us understand that these problems existed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the document you referred to is already a document of the House.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I am willing to make it one.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think it is already one. You do not have to make it one. I just want to be certain about that.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Order decided that it was going to be difficult for them to continue in Barbados. Let us put this in another context We are talking about a Catholic Order operating in what is, basically, a non-Catholic country. There is not the same level of commitment, for instance, as the Order had in St. Lucia, because you will know that at the same time they were going through difficulties here in Barbados, in St Lucia they were taking full responsibility for the hospital that was being run there.

The Order was in difficulties. The Order was not satisfied with carrying on the operation here. They came squarely to the Barbados Government at the time asking for help. When we met the people who were negotiating on behalf of the hospital, we were told that under the Administration, when the honourable Member for St. Michael East (Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman) was Minister of Health, he was willing to provide help to that hospital that would have saved those 100 jobs. He understood the plight * of the workers and he understood the need for health care

in the north of this country. When O'Brien Trotman became the Minister of Health, he discontinued all discussions, none of the doors was any longer open.

The hospital at that time, because it was told that there would have been an opening in Government for help, had started a reconstruction programme, an ICU unit, a 24 hours emergency service, an ambulance. It had started to revitalize itself with the understanding that the Barbados Labour Party Administration would have come to their rescue. So a part of it was the vacillation of that Administration. They were telling the people at one instance that they were going to give them the support, they were going to send people from the QEH and pay them per capita, and give them other support, and then another Minister comes along and says, "No. We are not interested at all in that project." Can you understand why then in 1985 the people were saying, \$15 million, take it or leave it? They had lost any confidence whatsoever in dealing with the Barbados Labour Party Administration. Let us be clear about that

At one time, the hospital came to us and said, 'look, we are going to close our doors in the next year.' This was in 1984. Then they came back to us and said 'No. We are now looking at a different position. We will not be closing our doors.' As a negotiator, you are dealing with employers who tell you that in one year's time they are going to close their doors, and you are negotiating against the background that there are two health care services primarily in Barbados at the time, two significant ones. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was one and St. Joseph Hospital was the other.

Let me give you some comparison between the wages of comparative levels of the workers in these two establishments. You were talking about negotiations and wages; let me put to your understanding what a negotiator has to do when he is negotiating for workers or for a Government. The Senior Sisters at the QEH were working for \$2491 in 1985. At St. Joseph Hospital, the level of comparison was the Supervisor, working for \$1 575. The Staff Nurse at the QEH was working for \$1 687. At St. Joseph Hospital, the comparative figure was \$1260, for the Senior Nurse. At the QEH, a Special Nurse was getting \$1450 a month; the SRN/SCM was getting \$1210 at St Joseph Hospital. In other words, there was a massive disparity between two sets of workers, all in health care doing similar kinds of work, and we were told that they were going to close in a year's time. In a circumstance like that, would you not try to get the best for your workers if you are told that the building would be closing? Why should we settle for the least when these people are going to be without a job? That is my position as a trade unionist, and it is one that I stand by any time.

When we came back at the next negotiations, we were told by the Advisory Council, represented by Dr.

Carmichael, that the sale was off; they were looking at other options and were going to continue negotiations because they had some hope that Government would be able to help. My position was this: If St. Joseph Hospital is going to become part of the QEH operation, if we are going to be integrating in the same sort of system - and that was the proposal, that the QEH would be referring patients and so on to the St Joseph Hospital - then you cannot have two sets of people working in the same system but carrying different wages and salaries. We decided that we would start now regrading, so that at some time in the future, not in one step, these workers would be on the same level - simple, basic trade unionism. So talking about 18 per cent in one year and 7 per cent in one year without putting the context in which these discussions were carried on can only lead to skewed and distorted perceptions of what was going on. The honourable Member for St. Peter knows that, but the idea was this witch-hunt against the trade union - St. Joseph Hospital is closing down so the trade union caused it by wages.

That is far and away from the truth. The wages did not cause the closure of St. Joseph Hospital, St Joseph Hospital closed because of several factors escalating over years. But it could have been saved by Government taking a particular position in bailing it out, because one has to understand that in all social welfare services, you cannot always expect to make profits, and this was a situation, I think, where the Order had been satisfied up to a time to supplement the resources of the hospital, but then felt it had a greater commitment to what was happening in St. Lucia than in Barbados. It had nothing whatsoever to do with wages.

I want to make it clear that the Barbados Workers Union and the workers represented by the Barbados Workers Union cannot take the blame for the closure of the hospital, and it is reprehensible and unfair to try and attribute that blame to those workers. We went in there to save those jobs as far as possible, but we realized that we were up in a situation where the Government of the day was not at all concerned.

It is clear to me that the honourable Member for St. Peter, at any rate, was not really speaking for himself in that debate on St. Joseph Hospital. He was speaking for the Government, and primarily and specifically for the Minister of Finance of the day, H. B. St. John, and St. John's position on the matter was that he would try and sell the hospital to some private people. The Government had no intention whatsoever of buying the St. Joseph Hospital, because he and the Government did not have that kind of social perception about the role of the hospital, they were trying to divest it to private persons. There was the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, his former acolyte and willing follower, and Mr. St. John - and the former Prime Minister and Minister of Finance now apparently has ambitions of

being the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's follower in turn - one representing the hospital, the other the Minister of Finance, discussing a matter that relates to 100 jobs and health care in the north, but they could not see eye to eye. Therefore, I do not think that the honourable Member for St. Peter could persuade the Prime Minister to buy the hospital and satisfy his constituency in the north. I do not blame you, I cannot blame you, because even though you did show a positive position that you wanted the hospital purchased, I believed that you could not persuade your Minister of Finance in the right direction. 4.00 p.m.

I heard your three principles. They are solid principles, but you do not seem to show an interest in 100 jobs and the fact that that hospital had something to offer the north. I believe that you were taking a position that was your party's position. It could not have been a position of interest in the 100 people who were let off!

One hundred jobs lost does not mean anything to you on the other side, it means a lot to us on this side. One hundred jobs lost is enough to go and sit down and negotiate the purchase of a hospital, and that is why we take principled positions in the Democratic Labour Party. We were concerned about the loss of jobs, and that is why we pressured you all to try and retain those jobs. We were concerned at the fact that that hospital had been there serving the north and performing an extremely good function. Clearly, there is still a duty now on this side to examine how best the institution can be utilised, but because we have the collective ability in here to do that, we will promise you that we will come up with a programme that can use the hospital.

If you are only asking the question in your three principles, one question is how well you can do it. You do not ask those questions when you are in Government, you make those decisions and you carry them out. You get up in a House debating something so important and you set out three principles in a question form! When you are a leader, you have to take decisions and follow them. We will find out the principles, policies and programmes that will make that hospital a successful hospital. If on your own side you could not come up with a programme to make it useful and functional when it was there before - you are not talking about a new entity, you are talking about an entity that existed for over 20 years - we will know what to do with it.

I want to put in a plea. I feel confident in saying that a number of those 100 are probably still out there trying to get a job, and I would therefore only like to put a plea to the Minister of Health - and this is a plea that will not be lost on deaf ears - that when you are reopening - to the Establishments Division, too - some consideration would be given to those persons who formerly worked at the

hospital. I have never heard them say anything bad about the hospital. They all want to work there, they are very enthusiastic workers, and I would like to put in a plea that some of them be engaged. Even now it might not be too late to start naming them, because the one-year Nurses' Assistant Course is now going again, we are now providing training for nurses, and some of them, Sir, can be integrated in that course.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, the type of grandstanding by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) is understandable. You get the impression that today is some time in August 1986 and a Democratic Labour Party Government, concerned about 100 jobs had just won the Government, decided not to give itself an opportunity to go into this matter in a proper way, but, instantly and within two months, had decided to purchase the hospital to protect 100 jobs. I must remind the honourable Member that they have approached this matter with deliberate haste, that we had utterances from the Democratic Labour Party that the hospital would have been opened in December 1986 - that was put across, Sir, as a matter of public commitment by the Democratic Labour Party to protect 100 jobs - and then we were told, Mr. Chairman, that the hospital was going to be opened by April 1987. But behind all of this, there was a general understanding that given and despite your commitment to the protection of jobs, the matter concerning the acquisition of a property that could commit Government to a large up-front capital expenditure, together with downstream recurrent expenditure that you could not at that point in time identify, had to be approached with deliberate haste. That is why it is significant that we are dealing with this matter two years after it had happened. If the honourable Member wants to knock my statement on these principles, he can knock me on some of these principles, but I think it is offensive for the Government of this country to be held up to ransom by a schedule that is set that does not give that Government sufficient time to carefully weigh decisions and all the facts before it in a way that a Government should weigh them.

Mr. Chairman, I want to tell the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central that he alone is not the only person concerned with the 100 jobs. We are all concerned with jobs, but it does not absolve us of the responsibility for making sure that we get the best possible price for the assets that we have to buy, and if it had taken you two years to acquire the St. Joseph Hospital, I say thank God that after two years, we will have the St. Joseph Hospital to be made operational again. But in the same way that it has taken you all two years to acquire that hospital, there was simply no way by which we could have arrived at an arrangement by

January 19, 1986 as regards the pertinent facts surrounding the hospital, and in particular, Sir, we could not have arrived in that two month period at any reasonable estimate as to the value of what you were purchasing.

I am not, Mr. Chairman, going to go this evening into contentious issues pertaining to some of the background on why that hospital was closed. The honourable Member for St. Michael South East will very well remember a corridor conversation that we had. The hospital has had a long history of troublesome negotiations with Government, stretching as far back as even before it was opened. Indeed, Sir, the hospital was only opened, after an initial decision was taken by the then Democratic Labour Party Government not to entertain its request to be even in this country, after it had given a commitment, Mr. Chairman, that as a *quid pro quo* for tax concessions.....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It has had a long history of troublesome relationships with Government. I have a document here that I must make a document of the House. It is called, "A Summary of Consultations between the Ministry of Health, and the St. Joseph Hospital on the Proposals and Provision for Services for Patients" and so on. This carries you back - I will make it a document of the House - to 1974.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point I am making, Sir, is that if you go back to 1974

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This thing about the hospital becoming involved in contentious relationships with Government after 1984 is not true. It goes back to 1974, under the past D.L.P. Administration. Step by step, Sir, you will see that there has always been inconclusive arrangements worked out between successive Administrations, successive Ministers of Health, as regards grave issues with the hospital.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central takes my point lightly, but I want to repeat again that we perhaps have now the opportunity to at long last come to some understanding, as I said, as a matter of principle, as regards the permanent role of the St. Joseph Hospital in the national health services of this country, and I stand on those points.

I am obliged to you.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman there is an old Barbadian saying, and it is that you should not allow the tail to wag the dog. That means that the dog should be in charge of the tail. The

honourable Member who just sat down is making a point which seems not to gel with what the former Prime Minister, Mr. H. B. St John, said about the St Joseph Hospital. In his words, the buying of the St. Joseph Hospital was out of contention. 4.10p.m.

I rise, Sir, to support this Resolution primarily because it demonstrates the commitment of the Democratic Labour Party to the promises that it made to the people of this country. This promise came about as a result of the Barbados Labour Party's stand on the acquisition of the St. Joseph Hospital, and in the 1986 Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, at page 19, Sir, the Democratic Labour Party said:

'A DLP Government will seek to acquire the St. Joseph Hospital for the national hospital system. If acquired, this hospital will cater for both public and private patients as obtains at the QEH.'

In the short period, just only 18 months, we have been able to negotiate and arrange for the purchase of the same St. Joseph Hospital.

In contrast, Sir, when you look at the actions of the Barbados Labour Party as it relates to health matters in this country ever since 1976-1977, you wonder what were their intentions for the health services of this country. It was the former Minister of Health of the Barbados Labour Party Government that stopped the training of nurses. It was also a Barbados Labour Party Government that for a period closed a number of polyclinics in this country.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Tell them!)

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: What you have to contrast against all that, Sir, as I said, is that commitment by the Democratic Labour Party to continue to develop a health service that the people of this country can be proud of. We have, since we have come back to office, Sir, restored training for nurses. We have also restored the payment of nurses who are in training.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party has no leg to stand on when we are talking about the health services of this country. They claim to have created the polyclinics, but when they came into office, they found the Warrens Clinic in operation. But they have created them! We have to be very careful that we do not allow the Barbados Labour Party's arguments to prevent us from continuing on the path of progress for the people of this country, because they will continue to confuse even themselves, and in so doing may try to confuse the rest of us. Our path is very clear. It is a new path to a better way, not only for the Democratic Labour Party, but for all the people of this country.

This action by the Barbados Labour Party not to continue discussions for the re-opening or the continuance

of the SL Joseph Hospital is in spite of the fact, as the honourable Member for SL Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) has said, that there were loud calls from the people of this ~* country, by way of their signatures, to have the negotiations for this hospital to remain open. One must therefore conclude that even though we may find that the honourable Members on that side will wish to support this Resolution, it is clearly known what their action was. It is clearly known by the record of the Barbados Labour Party in health matters in this country that it seems to come beneath all other things that they have embarked upon.

While I am on this Head, Sir - I said I am going to support this Resolution based on my appreciation of the fact that the Democratic Labour Party is again keeping one of its manifesto pledges - it was drawn to my attention, Sir, that there are certain Government offices, and I state Government offices as different from schools, that are being used for purposes other than the conduct of Government business. I would like to ask the Honourable Minister if this is a Government policy, if it is a new policy or if the matter V can be thoroughly investigated.

I give my support wholeheartedly to this Resolution.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I will not be long. I do not think it serves any useful purpose at this stage of the debate to rehash the history of the St. Joseph Hospital and the problems that led to its closure, the problems that the hospital had with Governments starting from 1962 and culminating in the ultimatum at the end of December, 1985 from the lady, who gave the reasons, as she saw them, for the forced closure of the hospital. What I think we should at this part of the debate address is the future use of the hospital. Government has had its 18 months to look at all of the possible uses for the hospital, and it would have received representations from all kinds of -4 interest groups as to how best the hospital could be used in the future.

The first thing that I find a little bit odd about the presentation today, Sir, is that we are told that the \$6 million is for the purchase of the hospital, but we are not told whether that \$6 million includes a component for the purchase of equipment in the hospital. Is the \$6 million just to purchase the property? If that is so, if it is an expenditure to cover the cost of the property, what is the position with the equipment that may be existing at the premises? I would not be surprised if some may have already gone to St Lucia, where I believe there is a sister organization. The House has not been told, and I would like an answer - Government must have the answer - to whether we are spending \$6 million to buy the hospital or the hospital plus all the equipment

Secondly, how soon does Government see this facility becoming operational? If you had 18 months, you would have not used 18 months to negotiate from \$15 million to \$6 million. You will have used 18 months to negotiate the price and to know how you are going to integrate this hospital in the general health services. And so I think that the public deserves to know, now that the purchase is virtually *a. fait accompli*, when can we expect that health services will be provided at the St. Joseph Hospital site. 4.20 p.m.

Thirdly, what type of services will be provided. You had 18 months to ruminate, contemplate, cogitate and decide. You must be able now to tell the people you spent \$6 million of their dollars to buy this, and this is the use you have for it

These are some of the fundamental issues that must now be addressed. We went through all of the problems that prevented the earlier purchase of the hospital and resulted in the offer being knocked down to \$6 million. I want to know now about the future, and I think that the public deserves to know. I do not want an expansion, Sir. If the Minister of Health, for example, can encapsulate the future policy in a matter of minutes so that we can get a bird's eye view, I would be grateful for that, Sir, because I am sure that he cannot do more than encapsulate at this

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON (St. John): Mr. Chairman, I only have a few words to say on this Resolution, the first set being that I think there are not many Resolutions that could give me as much pride to come before the House of Assembly as this one.

Contrary to the approach that the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) wishes to propagate, which is that when the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) took up the cause with respect to the St. Joseph Hospital, there was no breakthrough in St. Peter and that such a breakthrough was a figment of his imagination, I think this is a tremendous breakthrough for the Government, particularly the fact that this hospital has been acquired at the cost only of \$6 million, that in addition to that, it means improved health care for the people in the north - in fact, for the people of Barbados as a whole - and that once again, as the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) has mentioned, persons will be re-employed as a result of the reopening of the hospital. It is a tremendous breakthrough for this Government.

Contrary to the opinion that he wishes to give, that it is a vindication of the position of the Barbados Labour Party, if there is anybody whose position has been vindicated in this particular exercise, it would have been the honourable Member for St. Lucy, not any member of the Barbados Labour Party, least of all the honourable Member

for St. Peter and the other 14 or so political cadavers, if I could use a medical term, who said goodbye to their seats on the last occasion, along with a few others who languished for some considerably long periods in the Other Place. The honourable Member for St. Lucy's position has been vindicated, and even more so the position of the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) as chairman of the committee which worked on the purchase of the hospital, and probably on a number of other things which the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) would have asked about

For him to come in here now today and shock everybody by adopting this position that all of a sudden all the platitudes and high principles that he has been espousing for the longest time have now been vindicated as a result of the purchase of the St. Joseph Hospital, I do not even want to hear him on that subject. The subject I want to hear him on is the economy, because it is 18 months after he made the prediction that there would be devastation and that kind of thing in this country. Those are the things he should be starting to try and vindicate his position on, not vindicate his position on the purchase of the St. Joseph Hospital.

He has adopted an approach consistently in here that he is not going to say anything new. He is either going to repeat himself consistently or repeat the speeches he has made before, or he is not going to speak at all and run away from the debates. It is as simple as that. That is all it has come down to.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir: Can I make the point that the honourable Member is repeating the same speech he made last week, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He gives you this impression that he is coming with these principles, and he lists them one by one, things he has said before, things he said last week, and he tries to suggest that as a result of what he had said in here, and possibly elsewhere, everything that is going wrong is what he predicted, and everything that has happened that is right is something that he had some hand in achieving. But the people at NCC know, just like the 100 people who lost their jobs at St. Joseph, where they stand with the Honourable Shadow Minister of Finance. Last week, he adopted a position that may have meant the loss of 1200 jobs in this country, and callously, as far as I am concerned, on the former occasion adopted a position which meant the loss of 100 jobs - perhaps people who may very well come from St. Peter, if not all of them. I do not really know, none were from St. John, but I know there may be some from St. Peter and a considerable amount from St. Lucy, people from the north that he would say he grew up with, pitched marbles with and went to school with.

When they were losing their jobs, he was talking about \$15 million and isolating that, as usual, from the human element, the people.

It is the duty of a Government to make decisions that are in the best interests of the people, and I think that this Government has taken a decision in purchasing the St. Joseph Hospital that is in the best interest of the people. As the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central said, an offer of \$15 million is neither here nor there. We have it for \$6 million now, it is a promise we made and a promise that we have kept, and instead of adopting this approach, a difference of \$9 million and his position is vindicated, you should, as the representative for the constituency of St. Peter, tell us what you think about the St. Joseph Hospital now. What purpose is it going to serve, as far as you are concerned, in St. Peter?

You do not have anybody else over there to ask, no former Ministers of Health. The only former Minister of Health of any considerable note is now sitting on this side. You can even ask him. Those are the things you should be worrying about, not getting up in here week after week and rattling off figures and forgetting the human element. That is the problem that the Barbados Labour Party is going to have every time they come to discuss a social issue and the Honourable Shadow Minister tries to see it only in terms of the dollar value, only in terms of the money spent, but not in terms of the citizens of this country and how they are going to benefit from decisions that are made, or making points that, in my view, would enhance their standard of living by telling them, "If we are not going to spend this money, how are we going to achieve these things?"

You are an economist, you stake your reputation as an economist on these things, and I am not going to forget them, and a lot of people over here are not going to forget them either. Every time you take these positions - it will be with great regret, but it will have to be done - it will be necessary for us to point out to you that neither have you been vindicated nor have your predictions been right, and that the Democratic Labour Party, instead of all of that, intends to fulfill all of its promises to the people of this country.

Thank you.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, when this matter of the closure of the St. Joseph Hospital was raised, one of the reasons given was that there was a spiral in wages, a matter which was lost sight of by most people who have been clear-sighted in the matter, until it has pleased some persons, for whatever reasons, in more recent times, to re-introduce that non-point into the discussions. Because it has been raised, it is a good point from which I would wish to make a contribution.

It is a fanciful thing, very frequently indulged in, that persons will make reference to an increase from \$1 to \$2 as a spiralling increase, when in fact it has only been a dollar increase, and very often they will make significant use and abuse of statistics when it suits their own purpose. 4.30 p.m.

It is not inconceivable that when, as a concept spiralling wages have been taunted by the Barbados Labour Party Opposition, they have been labouring under a similar misapprehension. It is important for anyone who recognizes the relationship in wages and salaries between the workers of the St. Joseph Hospital and the workers at comparable establishments to be aware that there was anything between a 25 per cent and 45 per cent differential in favour of the workers at those other institutions, and I refer especially to institutions like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. R. L. Morris) was able to point out by specific examples the difference between one person working for \$2400 and another working for just over \$1600 a month. As someone who dealt with that group some years before my colleague, I was aware from the outset that even the management of the St. Joseph Hospital was at one with my colleague and myself in believing that it was only useful and justifiable that they should endeavour over time to bring the wages and salaries at the St. Joseph Hospital to the same level as the workers were getting at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, because they were, as we are, concerned with the view that there should be equal pay for workers of equal value.

It was something which we were not always sure that everybody in Barbados understood, and I do not think that we are all equally assured even now. So if there was an effort made to raise the rate of salaries and wages at the St. Joseph Hospital, there was no question of there being any spiral, and whereas we could excuse the administration of the hospital for using that political language, we would not accept such talk coming from representatives of the people of our country when they should be able to recognize that that was a fiction rather than the truth.

What I think, Mr. Chairman, is true is that there seemed to have been some contradiction in the positions of various members of the Government of the day. Confused, perhaps, Mr. Chairman, is one word we can use, bewitched perhaps, is another and bewildered even a third word that one could think of in the circumstances. One had only to look at *The Advocate* and the *Nation* of December 19, December 22 and December 31, 1985, as examples to recognize that confusion, bewitchedness and bewilderment

On December 19, 1985, the Minister of Health at the time, the person whom I have the misfortune to have the same name as, indicated that the St. Joseph Hospital was used by the middle class who did not want to go to the

Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I shall want to advert to that in a minute or two. On December 22, 1985, the Attorney-General of the day, who is currently still in this room, said that the Government was willing to talk. But on December 31, 1985, the Prime Minister of the day, in the statement of principle *ex cathedra*, pronounced, Mr. Chairman, that Government had no intention of buying the St. Joseph Hospital.

I do not deny that the Attorney-General of the day spoke with the best of intentions. I would venture to say that if he had had his way, he would have been able to give words of encouragement to his leader on that occasion. But, perhaps, having just barely made it into the Pearly Gates just a few months before, he did not have a position of any prominence or influence and could only express a very personal opinion, which clearly had nothing to do whatsoever with the views expressed by the Minister of Health, in 1985, O'Brien Trotman, who claimed he was in a position of influence, a position which the Prime Minister of the day Mr. St. John felt he had to support.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, when one hears the comments about the urgency of the decision that had to be made by the Government of 1985, it is necessary for us to recall that when the Minister of Health, O'Brien Trotman, said that the hospital was for middle class persons, he said that talks had been ongoing with the hospital for over one year. He did not specify how much more than one year, but he made it very clear that talks had been ongoing for more than one year. That does not necessarily mean that an offer was put on the table and that negotiations were going on about that offer of \$15 million for a year but when it comes from a Minister, it would suggest that somebody considered that something important enough was happening that a Minister of the Crown should be involved in discussions for over one year, and that discussions should have gone over that period.

I am not of the view that it was necessary for a decision to have been made in that one year, nor am I of the view that we or anybody, should castigate the honourable Member for St. Peter for making a decision in a month. The Minister of St. Peter must not understand that anybody is castigating him. The honourable Member for St. Peter must ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This is the second time you have said "the Minister" for "honourable" somewhere.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry. I do have a problem with this kind of pronunciation and arrangement of words. I am sure that you, Sir, as well as the Member for St. Peter, will forgive me. It is not anything to do with the yuletide season. It is just a lapse that sometimes overcome my humility.

The honourable Member for St. Peter must not believe that anybody on his side was accusing him of having to make a hasty decision. I think that what was important was that there ought to have been a statement of principle up front and early indicating what the representatives of the people of Barbados, the Government of the day, were prepared to do in terms of principle regarding an institution of health care placed in the north of the island, which was not, Sir, an institution for middle class persons, but which was, and is, and can be, an institution for people of all levels of social behaviour and exercises to use and find succour and help from.

All that was required was a statement of principle from the Barbados Labour Party and that statement of principle, in my submission, Mr. Chairman, was made on December 31, 1985, when the Prime Minister of the day said that Government had no intention of buying the St Joseph Hospital. That is where the matter starts and finishes. So with the best will in the world, the honourable Member for St. Thomas could only have hoped to influence a statement of principle, but he could not have had very much to say once there had been an *ex cathedra* pronouncement from the Prime Minister of the day. 4.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I am making the point that the Minister of Health made a statement on December 19, in which he said that the Government of the day was not going to have anything to do with the hospital, it was only a middle class institution. The people who work at the Arawak Cement Plant and the people from the Spring Hall Land Lease Scheme who could get injured anytime, and who would need to have a casualty department available to them, according to the Barbados Labour Party are middle class people. The people who live in St. Peter and who are poor people, who have emergencies in the middle of the night, are supposed, accordingly to the Barbados Labour Party, to get taxis or whatever form of transport they can get, Brathwaite's transport, and have to make their way to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

A casualty department, having been conceived as early as 1982 by the Minister of Health of the day, the honourable Member, now for St. Michael East, could have been recognised as a useful tool by the Government of the day, but it was supposed to be a middle class institution. That was on December 19. The Member for St. Thomas, honourable Member that he is, attempted to give his personal opinion at that time, or in his capacity as Attorney-General, but I am suggesting that he was outvoted and overruled on December 31, 1985, when the Prime Minister pronounced.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: Let the honourable Member for St Michael Central set out the sequence. Let us get some dates. The emergency debate in

here was on December 16, 1985. It was then that I spoke, and then that the Prime Minister of the day spoke. He did not at that time rule out the Government wanting to continue discussions. Fifteen days later, I believe you said the end of the year, the Prime Minister obviously changed the position and the honourable Member is right, but as of the date of the debate, the Government had a position which was reflected in the spirit of what the Prime Minister then said, and precisely in what I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to suggest, by any stretch of the imagination, that the Government may not have had a position before Christmas. Anybody had a position before Christmas, but Christmas is a time for jollity, drinking and making merry, and very often, because of the felicitations of that season, people begin to forget whatever they may have thought of in societies before Christmas. I am submitting to you, Sir, that on December 31, 1985, the Prime Minister of the day, Bernard St. John, in a Press Conference made a pronouncement before the cameras of television that nobody was able to challenge, because it came from the Prime Minister of the day, and that Prime Minister and Minister of Finance made an *ex cathedra* pronouncement that the Government had no intention of buying the St. Joseph Hospital. I will grant you, Sir, that that was on December 31, and that was Old Year's day, and that is also an occasion for jollification and merriment, but I have no reason to believe that in a television broadcast, anybody could have gone before the cameras and present a position of Government other than in a sober manner. I am therefore left to arrive at the conclusion that having caucused, and having, in all sobriety, over the Christmas season sat down and reasoned together, even the Attorney-General and the Member for St. Peter and all of the other members of the Government of the day, had come to a position, reasoned, consolidated with careful thought, that the Government saw no useful purpose for it to serve either the residents of St. Peter or the residents of St. Lucy, or indeed any of the other residents of Barbados, and therefore the St. Joseph Hospital had no use.

I am of the view that the hospital has a very vital part to play in the delivery of health care to the people of Barbados, and I wish to compliment the Democratic Labour Party Government for going to the trouble to negotiate in what must have been a very professional manner. When we are looking for negotiators for another organisation, we shall have to discover who were the spokesmen on the Democratic Labour Party's side, and we shall be able to offer them some kind of useful occupation in another sphere at another time, because anybody who was able to bring a side which is at a final position, an irreversible position, of \$15 million down to a resolution of \$6 million, I think ought to be complimented for very professional negotiations.

Therefore, Sir, I wish to compliment the Government, and I am sure that the people of Barbados will in time recognise the tremendous benefits that are to be derived by all of us [^] from the acquisition of this very useful piece of property.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to respond to a few comments made by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) and a couple of questions asked by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons).

Since I am trained with a scientific background, I like to remind that there is a law in Physics that says that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. The honourable Member for St. Peter said that the Sisters at the St. Joseph Hospital were holding the Government to ransom. I am quite sure that the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother would have said that the Government was holding the hospital to ransom, because it is not only the St. Joseph Hospital administration that was running into problems with the Government, the doctors of this country at that time were being called vagabonds by the Minister of Health, and > I would just like to draw a simple illustration of one of the things that the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother had to go through.

There was an ambulance, to which the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) made a reference. It was donated to the St. Joseph Hospital, I think, by the Canadian Government. When that ambulance arrived in Barbados, the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother did not have the money to pay the duty on the ambulance. It was stipulated that the ambulance would be donated and used at the St. Joseph Hospital, so that if they had an emergency, the ambulance would pick up the people in the north and take them to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. What did the Government of the day do? Because the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother did not have the money to pay the duty, instead of waiving the duty in the interest of the people of this country, they transferred the ambulance to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Within six months, it was mashed up. I do not know if the person who was driving had a licence, but that is one of the problems with which the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother were faced. So when you talk about being held to ransom, we have to put the thing in the true perspective. 4.50 p.m.

The honourable Member for St. Peter asked a question, which he said was a very principled question, on the floor of this august Chamber some time: What role would the St. Joseph Hospital be put to, what role it would be playing in the medical health care system? I made the point before that despite the fact that the hospital had had years of financial trouble, we knew at that time that the economic position with respect to medical health care was going to change considerably because of the advent of Blue Cross

and Blue Shield. That is precisely why the Democratic Labour Party, without reading the document that I read before, which was prepared in Philadelphia, came to the conclusion that the St. Joseph Hospital would have been viable. If the Barbados Labour Party had done their homework - they had negotiations with the people from Blue Cross and Blue Shield, they know that Blue Cross and Blue Shield in the United States and Canada have been very, very successful - they would have projected that there would be a good future.

There is another aspect with respect to health care and the St Joseph Hospital which I think I ought to mention. We keep saying that the facility has served a useful purpose for the people from the north. But it has also served a useful purpose for our sister countries, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica. If there is one set of Caribbean people - we are supposed to be one unit - who have missed the St. Joseph Hospital, it is the people in what we call the low islands, whose medical care is not at our level and who were able to come to the St. Joseph Hospital and get there a facility that they do not have at home. And they paid in hard currency, which we in Barbados would be beneficiaries of.

The honourable Member for St. Peter made a comment about the two year lapse. I want to put that in its true perspective, because he keeps making the point that it took this Government two years to bring the Resolution here for the \$6 million, despite the fact that it is not two years, but we will grant you the two years.

Aside

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Seventeen mouths.

The point is that in order to acquire a property, you have to find out who the owners are. We discovered after dealing with the people, that nobody in Government knew who owned the St Joseph Hospital, which meant that you on that side never were really seriously interested in finding out about buying the hospital. I do not know who you talked to that told you that you had to pay \$15 million for it, because at the time we had the negotiations, nobody knew who the owners were. We had to go to Rome to find out who the owners were.

The other factor is this that the lawyer representing the St. Joseph Hospital happened to be the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I do not believe it!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: If there was anybody who should know who the owners were, it should have been their legal people. So if there was a hold-up in the negotiations causing us 16 months to find out who the owners were, we can only say that the Leader of the Opposition must have known, and that is one of the reasons it took us 16 months. I want to get that in clear perspective, that it took us a long time to

find out who the owners were while the Leader of the Opposition was the lawyer for the St. Joseph Hospital.

(Aside: I do not believe you. I do not believe that!)

Laughter.

(Aside: Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: It is true.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: The Honourable Member is attacking the absent Leader of the Opposition. He must tell us when his committee wrote and asked the lawyer for the information about the true ownership of the hospital.

I hope that honourable Members do not go down this line, too, because the Honourable Minister of Health, at the public meeting on the 26th,....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, no!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:..... went down that line and has people in real dollar bills trouble now, Sir, by inveighing against the professional competence of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: All right. Point made.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You said that the man was holding up the thing. Henry never had the deeds from the people. He never had instructions to negotiate with you all on September 26.

Aside

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Let the honourable Member continue.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Peter patted himself on the back by saying that they did a good deed because we are now able to acquire the hospital for \$6 million when they would have had to pay \$15 million for it I want to make two points about that. The first point is that the honourable Member, as an economic genius, must know that Government does not have to accept.....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I knew I was bound to hear that acknowledgement some day, economic genius!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS:.....any offer put to it But the point is this that while they were duty bound to accept a \$15 million offer for the St Joseph Hospital....

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You missed the point.)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS:..... they went down the hill on the road just across from Heywoods and acquired land at less than a cent per square foot and compulsorily acquired it.

(*Aside:* Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Six Men's*.)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: They compulsorily acquired land in Six Men's

(*Aside:* Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Robbed the people!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: for less than a cent per square foot and they have now come to this Chamber saying that they were duty bound to accept a \$15 million offer.

The other point I want to make is with respect to the fact that they claim that they have saved the Government \$9 million. It is not true! There is something called disuse atrophy. It happens in plants, even in the human body, when, if you do not use an organ, whatever that organ is, ...

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: It would fall away.

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: If you take a plant like the St. Joseph Hospital, and you close it, it will fall apart.

(*Aside:* Overuse.)

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I am talking about disuse.

If you close it, it means that to start back up that plant, most of the machinery that has been lying idle will have to be replaced. If you had skillful negotiators on that side, as we have on this side, you would have got it for \$6 million, it would have never been closed, and all the equipment that needs replacing now, the people of Barbados would not have to pay to replace it. You really have not saved anything. You have been lazy, you have not carried out your duties, and that is part of the problem.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas asked a couple of questions. I am surprised at one of them, because he asked what will the hospital be used for. I am quite sure he has read the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party more than once. We stated two years ago what the hospital is going to be used for. It is in there. Just read it.

He also wants to know when it will be re-opened. When it will be re-opened has to do with all the repairs and all the things that have to be done. Until the experts do their jobs, I do not think we can say it is going to be opened tomorrow or next week. When you put a plant like that to lie down, you cannot predict when it will be opened, because I know that in the future, I am going to hear that we promised to open it next week and it is not opened next week. I think that part of the answer has to do with the fact that because it has been lying down there for two years not being used, a lot of things that should not have had to be done, will have to be done.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, this debate has gone fairly far and wide, and I suppose by now most of the points of politics have been made. I think the Opposition has now taken about four different positions on the St. Joseph Hospital, but I feel that as the Minister of Health, I should respond to some aspects of the debate and put in perspective the issue.

First of all, when all is said and done, the basic reason for having the St Joseph Hospital is to provide a service. It is to provide a higher quality of health care for the people of Barbados in the first instance. It is perceived that the St. Joseph Hospital will fall within the ambit of the perception we in the Government have of the quality of health care which the people of Barbados should have.

The question which the honourable Member for St. Thomas, (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) wishes to hear answered can be answered, in short, that the hospital will provide acute care, emergency operations and many of the services which are now available at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

We did not spend the last 18 months working out exactly how the hospital is going to be used, because owning the hospital is even now not complete. What we are doing is getting the \$6 million. We are still awaiting the deeds from the legal advisers of the people who owned the hospital; when those deeds have come, presumably we will complete the transaction.

A reasonable anticipation of when the hospital will re-open is some time in the middle of 1988. It certainly will be in the next financial year. But unlike the Barbados Labour Party, we will not equivocate, nor will we seek to hide in any particular set of phrases about the hospital.

The simple fact is that the Barbados Labour Party, as it has done in many of its relationships with the public, has sought to suggest the basic reason why they did not acquire the hospital was the cost of it being \$15 million. I think it is a tribute to the people of Barbados that we have been able to reach agreement on a price of \$6 million. As late as last year, it was felt that we could not acquire the hospital for less than \$10 million, and I think that the price of \$6 million is a good price. 5.00 p.m.

I hasten to add that that is for the property itself. As for the equipment within the hospital, there are certain aspects of the old hospital plant which are still usable, and we will use those, but we have no intention of visiting upon the people of Barbados any machinery or equipment that is not at the required standard, that is not state of the art in 1988, and so, to a large extent, the equipment which we use in the hospital will have to be additional cost.

We will come back to the House and we will make a full statement in great detail about the uses to which the

hospital will be put, but when the committee, which was headed by the honourable Member for SL Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons), reported to the Minister of Health at the time, who had established it in July 1986, they made fixed recommendations as to the use of the hospital. Those recommendations included that the hospital provide services mainly to the residents of the northern parishes of St. Lucy, St. Peter, St. Andrew, SL Thomas and St. James. However, the hospital would accept both public and private patients from throughout Barbados, and if possible, from outside of the island as well. That is the broad framework, and I think I can say at this stage that that broad framework would be acceptable, and is accepted, by the Ministry.

I also have to say to the House that this matter has not been discussed in its final stages with the Cabinet, and therefore, I do not feel able to give the House detailed information. However, we have had about five different submissions to the Cabinet on this matter, because it is not a simple acquisition. We are not discussing the purchase of a property in Bridgetown, we are talking about the acquisition of a property and the proper use of it as a hospital, and since it is a hospital which is going to be integrated into the rest of our services, we wish to be extremely careful.

One of the things which we are certain about, and a recommendation which was made, is that the hospital.....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do not make me go into politics. You know I would curse you very bad.

(*Aside:* Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You could curse me worse than I could curse you?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, yes. You want to let us just start? Let me just finish this first.

We are going to try to make sure that the hospital is capable of breaking even, or showing a modest "profit". I do not share the view that services provided in a community must be done on a profitable basis, but we wish, when we have completed the hospital's methodology, that it has a reasonable expectation of maintaining its own costs. This we will do by an appropriate mix of public/private patients, and to this extent, one of the philosophical considerations which we are looking at is using the hospital for one or other specialties which would commend it to use for people other than Barbadians. For example, we do not have in Barbados a substantial plastic surgery clinic that goes on on a continuing basis, even though the service is provided. One of the areas we have been having discussions in is to allow for a higher quality of plastic surgery mechanism in our health service delivery. I use that merely as an example. There have been a number of others, but at the end of the day we will have to have the right mix.

There are, as you can therefore see, Mr. Chairman, certain philosophical considerations which we have to examine in great detail, because we will not necessarily agree with everything that has been recommended, nor will everything we decide upon be acceptable to everybody. But what we would like at the end of the day is that the hospital is perceived by all in Barbados as a second Barbados hospital rather than a specialty hospital somewhere in the north reserved for certain people.

Mr. Chairman, it is very difficult to talk about the details of the hospital at this stage, because they have not been finalised. The recommendations of the committee are being examined in the Ministry in some detail. We can state without any difficulty that as soon as the negotiations are completed, we will take steps.

There has been a complete architectural examination of the building and of the Maria Convent, which is in the same complex. Indeed, the complex comprises a number of areas other than the actual building in which the hospital is housed. The hospital only has 108 beds, and we have to examine the desirability of transferring psychiatric geriatrics to the convent, or having geriatrics only in the convent area, or not having any psychiatrics or geriatrics in the vicinity at all.

One of the other things we have to raise questions about is whether we are going to run the hospital as a statutory corporation, having a board run the hospital, or whether we are going to have some combination of the statutory corporation - that is to say, a board within the context of a ministerial responsibility - or some other combination or derivative thereof.

One of the major problems which has to be addressed is the kind of availability which doctors will have in the use of the hospital. The old St. Joseph Hospital had one advantage which the Queen Elizabeth Hospital does not have. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is based on the English system of medicine, and the consultants who practise and the surgeons who perform in that hospital must all be members of staff. Those who practised in the old St. Joseph Hospital had what are called in the United States visiting privileges, and it is obvious that although the St. Joseph Hospital will be part of the Government's institution, we may not wish necessarily to have the identical methodology as exists at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. 5.10p.m.

These are matters which have to be discussed, not only internally in the Government, but with the people who will be using the hospital; first of all, the doctors and other professionals, and secondly, the patients and the potential patients. This is not a matter that will fall too easily in Barbados, because there is a great divide among the professional people as to this approach to medical care in a hospital system. I have a very clear view on it, but I would

not wish to state that view until we have discussed it and seen what is the best way forward. In the final analysis, whatever we do, we have to arrange for those professionals who have been faithful to the hospital to be able to continue practising in the hospital if they so desire. I think it is only fair, because whatever reputation the institution has had in the past, it has been due, to a large extent, to the professional competence of those visiting professionals who worked in the institution.

I am not, Mr. Chairman, going to spend anymore time on the hospital at this stage. I will promise that as we have completed our discussions and consideration, we will make a possibility for a full debate of the hospital and the methodology available so that all honourable Members would have an opportunity once again to examine this important and, I think, momentous decision to acquire the hospital.

It is clear that we will not call it the St. Joseph Hospital. I do not know what we will call it, but I think we will have to rename it. We will determine what to call it.

I wish now, with the indulgence of the House, to just deal with two things. I really think that it is unacceptable for the honourable Members to attempt to shift the politics of the decision-making to the length of time in the negotiations. I understand their position, especially that of the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur). To describe him as a drowning man catching at a shadow might be to overuse the cliché, but the fact is that the Barbados Labour Party had been having discussions with the people at the hospital for ten years - not one year, ten years - and there was a prejudice against the St. Joseph Hospital which was manifested in the attitude of the late Prime Minister, Tom Adams, in the attitude of the Minister of Health, O'Brien Trotman, and in the attitude of the Prime Minister and Minister of Economic and Financial Affairs, Bree St. John.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member for St. Peter is not in that class. I want to leave him for himself. He has difficulty, because he represents St. Peter, and he took a position defending a foolish Government two years ago, and now he finds himself here in this House where he has to stand on his own integrity. I have a suspicion he is going to support the Resolution and he has to find an argument, so he is saying that he moved from \$15 million to \$6 million. The truth is that you move from 18 to 3, that is the only move you made.

Your problem is that you have to deal with the reality of St. Joseph Hospital in St. Peter and you represent St. Peter. But the rest of the Barbados Labour Party never had any intention whatsoever of buying the hospital, because they associated the hospital with the Democratic Labour

Party's pledge against their attempt, illegally and immorally, to bring the hospital school in here, and arising out of the controversy with Professor Walrond and the other doctors, Tom Adams and company built up an animosity against anything to do with health.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one more minute.

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

As a result, there was never any clear thinking. The files are replete with obvious examples of cloudy, mushy and sometimes no thinking at all on matters of health.

There is another time coming when we will be able to discuss these matters in greater detail. I do not think the honourable Members who sit in here now should bother to get themselves embroiled in defending the people who have gone, because it is not possible to defend the indefensible, and their history on health, personified by O'Brien Trotman's magnificent stand on the Ministry of Health - you see how well I said that, Sir? - cannot in any way hold water. The best thing for them to do when we come in with a measure on health is to vote with us and let the people say/those three are intelligent and they are behaving the way we want them to behave.'

Thank you very much.

The question that Head 79 - Ministry of Housing and Lands - stand part - was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows :-

ATES: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. P. M. GREAVES; Hon. B. M. TAITT; Hon. M. A. KING; Hon. E. E. GREAVES; Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN; Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN; Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN; Hon. C. V. WALKER; Hon. M. BARKER-WELCH; Mr. P. J. M. MILLER; Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE; Dr. E. A. SIMMONS; Mr. C. A. NEBLETT; Mr. E. E. BOURNE; Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON; Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS and Mr. O. S. ARTHUR- 18.

AMENDMENT TO EXPLANATORY NOTE TO HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, SUBHEAD 34 - ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING DIVISION, OBJECT NO. 12 - OPERATING EXPENSES

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that this will last very long. This Head in the Estimates reads: ".... Research, Lodge Hill air pollution study, seminars, magazines, postage, landfill operation, removal of derelict vehicles and derelict houses."

This Head used to read "the clearing of sites, etc.", and the intention has always been to remove derelict vehicles, derelict houses, where necessary, and where persons have not responded to the Environmental Engineer

or the Public Health Inspector's call to clear up their sites, which might be in an unsanitary condition, or maybe in need of debushing, which makes it unhealthy, in the same way that the Government can remove the derelict vehicles, the Government would then clear the site and charge the owner of the land. However, because the note is not clear, the accountants in the Ministry wanted to conclude that monies from the vote should not be spent in this way when the Minister sought to have the vacant lots cleared, and out of an abundance of caution, we have decided to come back to Parliament and have the note changed so that the clearing of vacant lots will now properly fall within the Head, where it was always intended that it should be. 5.20 p.m.

I will say a word while I am on my feet about derelict vehicles, run-down houses and vacant lots that are filled with under-bush and other things that make for an unhealthy environment. There are a lot of people in Barbados who are doing violence to the environment. There are people who are throwing old utensils, old pots, unused cartons in all kinds of open lots, preferably a lot that is not their own. Unfortunately, the system of law we have says that if you own a lot, you have responsibility for clearing up that lot, and if we do not look after our neighbour's welfare, then we have to pay for it.

Barbados is currently at the beginning of a dengue difficulty. Let me put it that way. As of yesterday, we had about 54 confirmed cases of dengue fever in Barbados. On the face of it, that is not alarming, but since the fever is spread by mosquitoes, it can become an epidemic in a very short while.

Dengue fever is very debilitating, but apart from that, it can have a tremendous effect on our economic development, because our own citizens will have to stay away from work, will need at least a week to recuperate from it, if you are lucky, because some persons have been known to take as long as three weeks. It is uncomfortable and quite undesirable, but apart from that, since we rely to a large extent for our economic wealth on visitors coming to the country, when your country has been declared to be a place of dengue, then those visitors will wait until you are free of dengue before coming. So the need for us as a community to pay some attention to our habits is very very evident and very important.

We have embarked on a mass education campaign. We have the Chief Medical Officer and the senior medical officers of health out in the field. We are asking the Press, both the electrical media and the print media, to assist in the dissemination of information. But really, Sir, the best way to do it for each of us, is to take a special interest in ensuring that we do not contribute to the degradation of our own environment.

Again, Sir, because of the nature of this day's sitting, I do not wish to go into a long, descriptive definition of what needs to be done and how it can be done, but suffice it to say that we are embarking on a systematic programme of enforcement. We are going to be asking persons by way of notice to clear up their lots. Those persons who do not clear up their lots, when we know who they are, we have no alternative but to prosecute them, because failing to prosecute them would be failing to do our duty to ourselves and to our colleagues, our friends and our fellow citizens. So we are going to prosecute where necessary, but I would hope that it will not become necessary, I would hope that people will jump to assist in the clearing of their lots.

Secondly, where we find lots that cannot be identified, the owners cannot easily be found, we will clear the lots, and when we find the owners, we will seek to charge them the cost. That is what will happen with this vote.

I must however caution that the mere changing of this note will not result in the Ministry of Health being able to clear every single lot that has growth in Barbados. There is a concept that the Ministry of Health is responsible for clearing lots. That is not true. It is the responsibility of the owners of lots to keep the land in a tidy condition. That has been so from time immemorial, and it is still so.

Although the Government has spent a lot of money removing derelict vehicles, I think that the least those persons who are about to abandon vehicles can do is to drive them to the place where we are throwing away the vehicles and leave them, because the time before the last we moved vehicles it cost \$45 per vehicle, the people who moved them said that they made a loss on them, and the last contract was something like \$75 per vehicle, as I understand it. You can see, Sir, that if you remove 300 vehicles at \$75 it is costing the country a lot of money to move those vehicles. We have no choice, because they are breeding grounds for rats and mosquitoes, and therefore we are going to continue to move the vehicles, but I would like to appeal to the population that those who are going to abandon old cars should try and drive the old cars on to one of the abandoning sites and leave them there.

There are people who do not realise that the keeping of plants in the household is a potential danger. I do not wish to suggest that people should not keep plants, but if you have a large quantity of plants in your place, and if you are watering these plants and have water settling, then you are providing a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and that is where the dengue mosquito is at its most prolific. We have found that inside the household, where the temperature is just right where there is a water container of any kind, be it a plant or an old pot, or a can, the dengue mosquito is going to flourish.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that by making the appeal from the floor of the House, it will be disseminated even wider

than it has up to now and that we can be spared the difficulty of a dengue epidemic.

I would only finish, since I used the word "epidemic", by making reference to an editorial in the *Advocate* today. I believe that editorial comment should be accurate, it should be informed and informative, and it should be based on the integrity of the paper. When an editorialist writes, he or she is writing to influence the whole country, and he or she becomes part of the record of the country. In today's *Advocate* editorial there is a reference to a Minister having said that they are talking about an epidemic of AIDS in the Caribbean, but they are not mentioning New York, and that it was foolish, or words to that effect, because if you have a problem in New York, you still have the problem in Barbados. The editorialist is being deliberately wicked, because if you reach the stage where you could write editorials, it has to be assumed that you are relatively intelligent, that you seek to be informed and that you will not allow yourself to be so misinformed as to write foolishness. Therefore, you have to conclude that whoever wrote the editorial is wicked and pernicious. 5.30p.m.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Michael West were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the Record.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am making the point, though, Sir - what I said, and I stand by it - is that we in the Press have to be extremely careful in the Caribbean not to accept the communications which come from outside of the Caribbean and repeat those communications without examining them. We have a mere 51 cases in Barbados and a mere X number of cases in the Bahamas, yet in the reporting it was being said that we in the Caribbean had an epidemic of AIDS. That is an economic assault on the Caribbean, because if you say that there is an epidemic of AIDS in the Caribbean, visitors are not going to come to the Caribbean, and that is therefore going to affect us economically. If you talk about an epidemic, you have to talk about San Francisco and New York. If you use a strictly speaking, medical term, an epidemic could be five cases, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons), who is the only other qualified person in here in these matters, can say. I am sorry, I see my friend the Honourable Member for St. Michael East (Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman). He is also qualified in these matters.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is a fraternity.

Laughter.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: To speak on health matters.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The point I am making, Sir, when one sees the kind of Press which we can get, for example, recently the kind of Press which we got in London, it is not fully understood in the Caribbean that there are people out there who will deliberately sow seeds to turn people away from Barbados and in another direction. That is serious. People do not understand that there is an economic war. And because we have been doing well in this country, there are persons out there who will spend some time trying to stop us from doing well.

I will go no further at this stage. But I stand by what I said.

(Aside: Out there where?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Out there.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I stand by what I said, Sir,

(Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Can you blame the Opposition?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I would blame the Opposition in this respect, not the honourable Members who are now in their places, but the person who is writing the editorials. I have said, and I will continue to say, on the floor of this House, that it is wrong for a practising politician to have the opportunity to write three editorials a week. I am saying it is wrong for an editorial writer of the *Barbados Advocate* to be a practising politician. Since Mr. Best is not a practising politician, nor Mr. Hoyos, then Mr. Barrow should not be a practising politician if he is going to write editorials. But since he is a practising politician

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Which constituency is he practising in?)

(Aside: David, that is debatable, "if he is a practising politician.")

(Aside: He is practising like Poonka, all over the place!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is practising all over the place, as he is accustomed to. What he may be doing at the moment is sizing up who looks like the possibility. You know how he knows how to hive on. You know that better than anybody else.

He is a practising politician and he should not be writing editorials. If he does, he should put at the top of it, "PAID ADVERTISEMENT", or at the bottom, "The editorial writer is a member of the Barbados Labour Party".

I do not think that the people of Barbados should have to wallow in that intellectual filth, which is pouring forth constantly as serious thought, when, in fact, it is designed to turn people's minds away from the Government and from

the Democratic Labour Party. There is nothing more heinous, wicked and pernicious than a person to use the Press, which is one of the estates of Government in this country and in countries of democracy, in such an underhand way. It is one of the most dangerous things that can be done to a people, and particularly the young of a community. I will continue to speak about it until the owners and perpetrators of the *Barbados Advocate* recognize that they are doing themselves and this community a disservice by having Nigel Barrow writing editorials continuously. I can call his name in a private capacity.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He can call his name. He did not refer to him in any scurrilous or indecent way.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, read the rule-again; you will see that he is quite proper.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not even going to get involved in discussing honours because the Barbados Labour Party is not worthy to be discussing honours.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is not a matter for us to discuss. If you want to let us have a debate on that, I can have one, too!

It is the prejudice which you all have that if a person did not go through certain processes, he could never make a contribution. I say to you that if you are 13 years old, and you go to work in a store in Bridgetown, and you end up being a Managing Director of your own business that is worth in excess of \$5 million, and you employ people and you show black people that you can make it in commerce, you have made a contribution to a company in Barbados.

Applause.

(Aside: That is irrelevant!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not have any difficulties with that at all.

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back to the debate.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I was on the subject.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am on Health, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before you do, I would just like to make a pronouncement about the name. What Order 28, Rule 10(a) says is this:

"No reference may be made in debate to the character or conduct of any person except in his official or public capacity."

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am discussing his public capacity, writing editorials. The honourable Member knows that, Sir. He is not a bad lawyer, Sir, so he knows.

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He is quite within the rule, as far as I am concerned.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Of course, Sir. He knows it. One of the things I have no difficulty with is when he gets up and challenges me. I know when he is serious and when he is making sport.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: All right, let us get back to the debate.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is a good lawyer.

I am going to just stop now, Sir. Suffice it to say that it is the responsibility - I just want to remake this point - of owners of land in this country to see that that land is kept in a sanitary condition. It is the responsibility of persons who are disposing of cars and other vehicles to see that they dispose of them in a proper manner. It is the responsibility of citizens not to take their garbage and sling it over to the property of somebody else.

(Aside: Or in gullies.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There are persons who drive motor cars and take their garbage and throw it on other people's properties.

The other thing is that the gullies in Barbados are now at a point where, if we are not careful, we are going to create a very serious problem in this country. All kinds of things are being thrown into gullies. People do not seem to understand that the gullies are a very important part of the ecological life of this country. The gullies are not there for dumping trash in, they are part of the natural configuration of the land and they are there to provide a natural drainage. When, therefore, we have rain and the gullies cannot empty properly, the water finds alternate routes, and that contributes to some of the flooding which we have had.

Mr. Chairman, I am much obliged to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this matter, Sir.

I move that this Head stand part

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, some time ago, when I was living in Husbands

in St James, I had occasion to walk out with my stick to try to dissuade some people from dumping right next to where my plot was, but when I saw the size of the persons who were dumping this commercial waste and my own lack of stature, I had to apologize and go back to my own house. I say that only by way of saying that we have a problem of dumping not only in gullies and other places, but very often right next door to residences, and every effort should be made by us to endeavour to find a way to have it discontinued. 5.40 p.m.

My main concern, though, Sir, is with dengue fever. Some time ago, I had occasion to draw to the attention of the former Minister of Health that in Olivees, it had been discovered by the Public Health Inspectorate that the dengue mosquito had been found in some well that was there. I know that he and the Ministry were making some efforts to deal with the matter, but I am still concerned, that there seems to be some difference of opinion in regard to how the matter could be dealt with.

My own view, as representative of the people in that area, St. Michael Central and in Olivees, was that we should like to see the well cleared and allow for the water which is backing up now into the street. But we understand that there is a body of opinion that feels that if you put a certain kind of marine life - fish, I think - into this well, it would eat up the dengue mosquito and therefore remove the problem. It may very well be, Sir, that that is true. In the intervening period, however, we have a problem of a backing-up of water which is very stale and unpleasant, and which seems to carry with it other concomitant problems. I would therefore wish to urge the Minister that in his noble efforts to improve the environmental welfare of the community, he takes some time out to look at this area.

The Goddings Road area is another problem that we have drawn to the attention of the authorities. There seems to be a similar problem, although the mosquito has not yet been discovered.

In the Devil Hole at Savannah Road, we have that problem of dead animals and dead anything else. We are not always sure, but when the stench comes back across Savannah Road and Park Road, we are bothered by that ecological problem. Indeed, the environmental problem, generally, is severely impaired.

We have from time to time drawn to the attention of the authorities that if the rain sets up in that area, (hen there is a flood in Savannah Road, and it may very well be that it is because areas like the Devil Hole in that region are not being properly protected. I would imagine that it is very difficult to be able to deal with problems of that sort across the island, but efforts must be made in that direction, and I

make this very quick plea on behalf of my constituents in St. Michael Central.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak of a concern I have in the Friendship area, specifically as it relates to the same gully situation which the Minister referred to. It is very heavily bushed, very widely used for the disposal of old mattresses and old everything, and is in itself creating a mosquito problem in the area. Some time has elapsed since I spoke on this matter, but I am yet not satisfied mat much has been done to alleviate the problems that are faced by the people in this area.

Sir, the Resolution speaks of the removal of derelict houses and vehicles. There are large areas of land which, apparently, the owners are not using. They are not housed, neither are there any vehicles, but they are creating the kind of problems that I am talking about, and I am wondering if the Ministry is not in a position to go about a programme of clearing these sites and charging the owners for them. I am very serious about this.

Asides.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: All right. I just thought that this was very important if we were to get on to the problem of eradicating the mosquitoes.

Mr. E. BOURNE (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman, the mosquito which carries the dengue fever, just like the *Aedes Egypti* or *stagamaya faciato*, has been around for quite a long time. I think that a programme was started about 35 years ago to eradicate this mosquito, but for some reason or another, we in Barbados cannot rid ourselves of this insect.

This mosquito, as the goodly Minister was saying earlier, thrives well in clear water; the clearer the water, the better it likes it. I think that it is the responsibility of all citizens of Barbados to get rid of water barrels, old pots and pans and derelict old cars, and if possible, every day empty the plant pots which people carry in their households for keeping water to feed the plants. If you look carefully at these pots when they are either filled with water by the householder or from rain, you will see the larva, and in many cases the adult mosquito, and this mosquito is a bit different from the other species, the *Anopheles*. It carries marks on the body, and it has the tenacity to attack you during the daytime.

I feel that the sanitary inspectors are not doing their jobs properly, if at all. I remember as a youngster growing up in this country that every week, at least once a week, you would be certain to see a sanitary inspector going around in the village. I have been here from Canada for ihe last four years and I cannot ever remember seeing one, and I think we will have to impress on the electorate to do the job effectively and not to be afraid to prosecute if necessary.

As regards the old cars, the Minister is asking these owners to drive them to the designated areas. I think that he has to use more force than that of persuasion, because the owner of an old car always seems to think that there is some hidden piece of change in the old car, and that is the reason most people would try to keep it as close to the house as possible, not knowing that it is a health hazard to the community at large. So I think, Mr. Minister, that we will have to come up with some better idea, maybe prosecution or something like that, to get these people to drive these cars to the dump sites.

Earlier, I heard people talk about dumping on private land. I think it is a disgrace when you pass through the Belle Gully to see what goes on. When you consider that there is a reservoir for the storage of drinking water not far away, I think that people who take it upon themselves to dump that kind of garbage should be ashamed. The smell of most of the garbage is not becoming at all, and at one time I was saying that the Government should put security guards or some kind of watchmen in the Belle, in particular, to capture these people who practise this indiscriminate dumping. 5.50 p.m.

As regards derelict buildings, I think the time has come when we should employ building inspectors, like some countries, who should see to it that when these buildings are not kept to a certain standard, a recommendation is made that they should be demolished. I do not see why we should be waiting around and begging the owners to get rid of them. We should just demolish the buildings and charge them a fee.

I am about to tell the Minister about one not too far away from me, an old Nazarene Church. That has to be pushed down. I do not care how it is done. It is a health hazard and it is a danger to the pedestrians walking the street. We must get rid of these eyesores.

The owners of these derelict buildings and lands which need debushing know full well that in the countries where they reside, this practice cannot obtain. You could not even keep your garden unkept for a week. The building inspector would come along and give you a notice, and if you did not cut it by the next week, you would be fined. One hundred dollars is the minimum, and if you persist, the property would be taken away from you.

I was threatened with \$100 at one time, and I got it cut fast enough, so, Mr. Chairman, I have no hesitation in supporting this Resolution.

Thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful for the interventions by the honourable Members.

So far as the public health inspectors are concerned, the problem is that in the days of which he spoke, we had

practically the same number of public health inspectors that we have now. The number of houses that have been built in Barbados have multiplied fifteen-fold, but the Ministry responsible for Establishments has remained basically the same, and we have this problem of having to go and ask for more public health inspectors and it is a problem.

The number of visits by public health inspectors has increased annually. I went into the Ministry of Health and one of the first things I did was to find out what they have been doing, because I had not seen a public health inspector for some time. They showed me that they have, in fact, been covering a substantial number of houses. There are just not enough to go around.

The other ludicrous thing which the Labour Party permitted to happen - I do not understand how - is that they have public health inspectors who do not qualify for a car loan, so they have the public health inspectors who do not qualify for a car loan, working in St. Philip, St. Thomas and St. Andrew and all the ones that have cars are working in town. But there are other certain relationships, so you can see that there is a problem.

In the Ministry, at the moment we are having a comprehensive reorganisation of the routes and the territories of the public health inspectors and the environmental engineers, as they are called.

They had a number of employees who worked with Aedes Egypti. They were merged with the public health inspectorate and put out into the polyclinics as part of the public health care approach, a decentralisation. Now we have the dengue epidemic, we have to draw them back in. Everybody is concentrating on the dengue, but it is clear that what we need is an addition of, at least, 15 new public health inspectors.

The problem with that is that it takes three years to train a public health inspector. Once more, the Barbados Labour Party stopped training, so we are now in a position even if we create seven more posts or 12 more posts, it would still take some time before we have additional public health inspectors. These are some of the difficulties which were not perceived by an unenlightened Administration, during the time when they concentrated, as the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) said earlier, on dollars and cents in finite terms and did not recognize that there were other aspects to the investment of money. We are taking steps to correct these measures.

So far as the derelict houses to be pushed down, there are certain legal procedures which must be gone through. However much one of us would like to push down a particular building, if we do not go through certain legal procedures, we will push down an old derelict building and then some Q.C. will come on behalf of the owner, who

would come forward where we could not find him before, and we would have to give that owner some money.

During the time of the Labour Party Administration, they got the Defence Force to start moving cars. It has cost us a piece of change, because they took up what appeared to be a derelict car - for all practical purposes it seemed like a derelict car - but by the time they had moved it and dumped it, it had taken flesh. So they moved the lady's car without her permission and the Attorney-General had to pay her a piece of change. That is one of the reasons why we have to be fairly hesitant about what we move.

We are looking at ways of dealing with this, but there is no way you can change legislation to take away people's property. You have to go through these processes. I promise the honourable Member, however, that the diligence which the Democratic Labour Party has brought to all the things it has done, is being vigorously brought to the matters in the Ministry as related to what was said here today.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1987-88,

No. 31-\$120 000

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - \$120 000

Hon. B. M. TAITT (Si Michael West): Mr. Chairman, this one should take no time at all. The Ministries of Education and Health are in the Old Hospital Compound at Jemmott's Lane, and as you know, that building is quite old. There are a number of things that have to be renovated, but the Government Electrical Engineer has recommended that we rewire the building as a matter of urgency, lest we have a disaster, and since the funds would not have been anticipated, it is necessary to supplement the vote and for that we now come.

I beg to move that Head 36 stand part. Hon. E. E.

GREAVES: I beg to second that

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I want to make one general point about this problem of wiring. It not only exists in the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, there are a lot of old buildings. Marine House is one that could burn up any time, and I want to make a plea to whoever is responsible. The Minister of Housing has gone, but I believe it comes under him; he is up there. 6.05 p.m.

There are real serious problems with the electrics at Marine House, and I want to ask the relevant Minister, as a matter of urgency before December 31, to look at the wiring, connections, the voltage and the power generally to the area by the stage where the bands operate when there is a function. I know of more than one instance within the last

year where people's electrical equipment was blown because of a fault with the power supply, and there will be dancing there over the holiday period, and so that we would not have a fire or cause damage to people who are operating there in the next few weeks, I hope the Ministry can look at this urgently before Christmas and make sure that the power supply is of the correct voltage. There are really serious problems there.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I give the honourable Member the assurance that I will pass on to the Minister of Housing his request.

The Government Electrical Engineer has designated the need for wiring almost every Government building, and we are going to have to look for a massive sum of money. I think Government Headquarters is in the process of being rewired, and in our case, we are going to have to put down a transformer.

I am sure the Honourable Minister has heard, and therefore we are assured that he will take what you had to say to heart.

The question that Head 36 - Ministry of Health - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of six Resolutions in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

QUESTION 1MB

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Question Time be now taken.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

Parliamentary Question No, 62.

QUESTION RE PROVISION OF MULTI-PURPOSE HARD COURT AT HOTHERSAL TURNING

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, Parliamentary Question No. 62.

To ask the Minister of Housing and Lands: 1. Is the Minister aware that provision of a multi-purpose hard court by Government has long been awaited by the residents of the Hothersal Tinning area in Saint Michael? 2. Will the Minister - (a) consider the use by Government of part of the area of the compound of the Friendship Community Centre, where there is adequate land available for the

purpose, for the construction of such a hard court, and (b) give a commitment to include such a facility in Government's plans, for immediate implementation?

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 62, asked by the honourable Member for St. Michael North East, is as follows:

"1. Yes, Sir.

' 2. Consideration is being given to the construction of a hard court at Friendship Community Centre, St. Michael. Provision will be sought in the Estimates for 1988-89 to meet this commitment."

Mr. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 79.
QUESTION RE CHANGING FACILITIES AT FRIENDSHIP COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, Parliamentary Question No. 79.

To ask the Minister of Tourism and Sports: Will the Minister ensure that the following provision is made at the Friendship Community Centre: (a) better and adequate changing facilities for sportsmen and sportswomen using the facility, (b) provision of a multi-purpose hard court to develop and enhance the potential of the young adults of the Friendship community, and (c) adequate servicing of the playing field by the Sports Department, and give the assurance that such improvements will be provided with soonest effect?

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 79, asked by the honourable Member for St. Michael North East, is as follows:

"1. Friendship Community Centre is under the aegis of the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development and the upgrading of the changing facilities will be carried out by that Ministry. The necessary consultations with the Ministry will take place.

' 2. Consideration is being given to the construction of a hard court at Friendship Community Centre, St. Michael and provision will be sought in the Estimates to meet this commitment

" 3. The playing field is adequately serviced and the assistance of the National Sports Council is given as the need arises."

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Will the Minister see to it that the Sports Department carries out its programme as effectively as it should?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is really not a supplementary as such, but I think the Minister understands.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Yes, Sir, I shall seek to do so with all the alacrity I can command.

Mr. SPEAKER: That concludes Question Time.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, that really brings us now to the end of today's sitting, and barring any unforeseen circumstances, it also brings the sitting of this Honourable House

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the honourable Member for St. George South (Mr. R. P. Byer) would like Order (h) of the Order of Business recommitted to give notice of a Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no objections, leave is granted.

RESOLUTION URGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEMORIAL TO THE LATE LOUIS ALBERT DEWITT LYNCH, FORMER M.P.

Mr. R. P. BYER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:

WHEREAS the late LOUIS ALBERT DeWTTT LYNCH, Member of this Honourable House for the constituency of the City of Bridgetown from December, 1961 until his death on 7th March, 1969 made an outstanding contribution to Barbados as a legislator, as an educator and in sport;

AND WHEREAS it is important as a record of the history of our country that we record by fitting memorials the achievements of major contributors to the development and progress of our nation;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable House urge Government to assist in the establishment of an appropriate permanent memorial to the memory of the late LOUIS ALBERT DeWITT LYNCH.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, after two false starts I think I can say now it appears that we have come to the end of business for today. It also brings us to the end of the year's sitting, because barring any unforeseen circumstances, God forbid, I hope that this will be the final sitting for the year 1987.

We have had a very eventful year. For one thing, Sir, we have been able to move back, after sitting for the better part of the year in the Other Place, thanks to the generosity

and kindness of the President of the Senate, to (Mir own place here in very enhanced conditions and circumstances. We have seen celebrations of 21 years of Barbados as a nation. We have seen the death of a Prime Minister and we have seen the appointment of a new Prime Minister. Those events, Sir, have really made this year 1987 a very memorable one. 6.10p.m.

We have also had some very useful work done in this Chamber. I want to thank all honourable Members who have contributed to the work of Government on both sides of the House during this year, as well, Sir, as the staff of Parliament.

It is only left now, Sir, for me to wish Your Honour the Speaker a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Those wishes also go out to all honourable Members on both sides of the House, as well as the staff of Parliament.

I now move, Sir, that this House do now adjourn until January 19, 1988 at 12.00 o'clock noon, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that motion for the adjournment.

The Opposition would wish with deep sincerity to be associated with the remarks of the Honourable Leader of the House. On behalf of the substantive Leader of the Opposition, who was out of the island, Sir, we wish to convey to members of the Government and their families the best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. To the

Clerks of Parliament and the staff, generally, who have facilitated our business during this year, we also express our greetings and best wishes for the yuletide season. **

We look forward to coming back on January 19 to renew our commitment to doing the people's business.

Mr. SPEAKER: In accepting the greetings from both sides of the House, I would like to extend to them a warm, pleasant and peaceful Christmastide, hoping that the New Year would bring for them much more joy and happiness and that this Parliament will continue to show its goodness towards each other, showing its patience and, more so, its co-operation. I believe I can say this on behalf of the Chairman of Committees and the Deputy Speaker, who, I believe, have all enjoyed your presence here during the year.

As I said in the past, I felt the new surroundings would encourage the kind of enlightening debates. In the New Year, after you have not drunk too much, eaten too much and spent too much, I hope that you would have enough reserves to return full of fight, vigour and new experience. 'I»

I am sure you would like me, too, to thank the staff for their hard work during the year and extend to them on my behalf a very pleasant and happy New Year.

The question that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, January 18, 1988 at 12.00 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 6.15p.m.

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