THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986-91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, January 20, 1987.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.15 pjn. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. Weekes, (Speaker) His Honour J. J. Payne, (Deputy Speaker) Hon. L. E. Sandiford, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), J.P., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education and Cul-.ture and Leader of the House)

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

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

Hon. Dr. R. C, Haynes, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P. I (Edin.), (Minister of Finance)

Hon. M. A. King, Q.C., LL.B[1]., (Attorney General knd Minister of Legal Affairs)

Hon. W. 0. Franklin, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister j>f Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Hon. N. K. Simmons, (Minister of Health) | Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Q.C., LL.M. Mr. O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Ecori.) Mrs. M. Barker-Welch, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Com-/nunity Development) Mr. L. L. Brathwaite, J.P. Mr. E. Bourne Dr. E. A. Simmons Mr. C. A. Neblett, B.A. Mr. R. L. Morris, B.A., Cert. Ed. > Mr. P. J. M. Miller — Mr. R. P. Byer, LL.B., L.E.C.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

MINUTES Mr.

SPEAKER: The House is in session.

The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, December 16, 1986.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. C. V. WALKER, and Mr. C. L. TROTMAN entered the Chamber and took their seats.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of the meeting of this Honourable Chamber for December 16, 1986, have been circulated.

I beg to move that these be taken as having been read, and that they be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of this Honourable Chamber on that date.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations, let these Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I have received:

Accounts and Statements for the month of November 1986 as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 9) Order 1986.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Member for St. Philip South, the Minister of Housing and Lands, I am commanded to lay:

The llth Annual Report of the National Housing Corporation, for the year 1983-1984.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of:

A Resolution to approve of the vesting in the National Housing Corporation of the parcel of land situate at Six Cross Roads, St. Philip, to be developed by the National Housing Corporation for housing purposes.

A Resolution to approve of the compulsory acquisition of land at Walkers, St. George, for the purpose of augmenting and facilitating the relocation programme arising from the Glebe Development Project.

A Resolution to authorise the payment of retiring benefits in the form of a gratuity and monthly pension to Mrs. Yolande Toppin, a former public employee of the Handicraft Development Centre.

A Resolution to grant the sum of $48 352 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1986-87, Parti- Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1986-87, No. 20, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Bill to amend certain enactments relating to the payment of pensions, gratuities and other allowances.

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

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend certain enactments relating to the payment of pensions, gratuities and other allowances be read a first time.

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

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

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the replies to Parliamentary Question No. 14, asked by the honourable Member for St. George South, and Parliamentary Question No. 44, asked by the honourable Member for St. Andrew, are ready.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Right Honourable Prise Minister.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The Speaker, the Repr to Parliamentary Question No. 54, asked by the honou able Member for St. Thomas, is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now thi instant Order of the day. 12.25 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting in order to facilitate the speedy and efficient despatch of today's business, but with the usual consideration for the rights of the Opposition.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS Hon.

L. E. SANDIFORD: Order No. 1. Mr.

SPEAKER: Order No. 1.

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 this Island.

On motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREA VES, 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 1986-87 No. 19 - $269 357

HEAD 35 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - $269 357

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, the amount of money provided in the Estimates for the current year as approved by this Honourable Chamber has proved inadequate for the purposes indicated. It is therefore necessary to seek additional sums in order to ensure that public business may be conducted in accordance with the decisions of this Honourable Chamber.

The amount of money being requested as a supplement is as follows - and the Addendum sets it out very clearly: $80 000 for utilities; $9 357 relating to the rental of property; $180000 for operating expenses.

In respect of the item relating to utilities, the charges relating to the consumption of electricity and water were not provided for in the Estimates in relation to the Ministry's operations - from Culloden Road, where the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is now located. The average for electricity is approximately $5 000 per month, and for water $3 000 per quarter.

In addition, there are certain charges relating to utilities in respect of the Brussels Mission. The situation has been somewhat aggravated through the closure of the IDC office in Brussels, which shared part of the cost for utilities in that particular Mission. So that with the closure of that office, the full cost is now borne by the Brussels Mission.

In respect of the rental of property, for which the sum of $9357 is being requested, the Government has established an Honorary Consulate in Miami. It is therefore necessary to meet the cost of rent for suitable office accommodation in Miami, and that accounts for the request for supplementary provision in respect of rental of property.

In terms of operating expenses, from time to time, as part of the normal operations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, officers are transferred from one Mission to another Mission, or from one Mission to headquarters, or from headquarters to a Mission. This is part of the on-going operations of any Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when tours of duties may be completed, or, for the best deployment of staff, such transfers and movements of personnel are considered desirable. The sum of $180000 is being requested under this particular Head. It must be borne in mind that when officers are moved, their personal effects and other charges have to be borne by the Government and, hence, this particular request is being made.

If there is any additional information which may be required by this Honourable Chamber for consideration of these items, we will seek to give this information, if it is available at this time.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I second the Resolution, without prejudice to my right to speak.

The question that Head 35 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the Speaker, the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREA VES, the Resolution was read a first time, second time and agreed to.

12.35 p.m. *

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Order No. 2, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 2.

BORROWING OF US $1 924 500 FROM VENEZUELAN INVESTMENT FUND (F.I.V) RE THE BARBADOS NATIONAL OIL COMPANY LTD.

Order No. 2 was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the borrowing of the sum of US $1924 500 from the Venezuelan Investment Fund (F.I.V.) for the purpose of assisting in the financing of petroleum exploration and development operations of the Barbados National Oil Company Ltd.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, this is a relatively straightforward matter, with which Members on the other side should be fully familiar.

The Resolution seeks approval for the Government to borrow US $1924500 from the Venezuelan Investment Fund for the purposes as set out in the Addendum, namely, the financing of petroleum exploration and development operations of the Barbados National Oil

Company. I think that probably if I gave just a little background, the reason for bringing this Resolution would become immediately apparent.

In November, 1983 the then Government of Barbados signed a loan agreement with the Venezuelan Investment Fund under which up to 38 632 500 bolivars of the funds deposited with the Central Bank of Barbados could be utilized by the Barbados National Oil Company for the execution of projects relating to exploration and development, specifically in the area of drilling wells and for its overall production operations. Sixty-five per cent of the resources were for the purchase of goods and services produced in Venezuela. The remaining 35 per cent was to be used for the financing of the local counterpart expenditure.

An appropriate Resolution was brought to Parliament for that amount, but the Resolution was in bolivars. At the time of the signing of the loan, the rate of exchange of the bolivar to the United States dollar was 4.2925 bolivars to US$1. By the end of March the exchange rate had changed to 7.4925 bolivars to US$1. As a result of this very severe devaluation of the bolivar, the proceeds of the loan contracted by Government for on-lending to the Barbados National Oil Company had been effectively reduced from US$9 million to US$5.1 million.

The then Government wrote to the Venezuelan Investment Fund on June 1, 1984 and sought to obtain additional financing for the capital programme. An arrangement was reached between the past Government and the Venezuelan Investment Fund where there would be some compensation for the losses as a consequence of the devaluation, and on August 8, 1985, the F.I.V. approved the loan for US$1 924 500, which is the subject of this Resolution.

The problem arose, Sir, because, in substance, when the Resolution, which was designated in bolivars, was passed in the House, it was at the time, and at that exchange rate, assumed that it would be US$9 million. As I pointed out earlier, as a consequence of the .devaluation, in fact it was only US$5.1 million. So the legal question arose as whether this Administration could go ahead and sign the agreement — because in terms of US dollars it would have been well within the wall of the Resolution — or whether a new Resolution had to come before Parliament. The advice of the Attorney-General was sought in this matter and the Ministry of Finance was advised that, in view of the designation of the loan, it would be necessary, from a legal point of view, to come to Parliament and seek approval of this Resolution.

It does not constitute any additional borrowings in US dollar terms. In point of fact, it is less than the $9 million. It is only US$6.9 million rather than US$9 million. However, in terms of bolivars, of course there would be an increase. It is in order to conform with the strict legal interpretation on this matter that we thought it desirable to come to Parliament to get its approval before signing this particular loan.

One brief point I should like to make, Sir, is that, as you know, during the past year, because of the large fall in the price of crude oil, it became necessary to reduce the level of oil production at the Barbados National Oil Company. This, of course, would have meant a curtailment of the drill programme, which is extremely expensive, and that policy decision resulted in a significant reduction in the losses which the oil company would have incurred had it continued to produce oil and sell it at the low price that was obtained during the past year.

Over the past few weeks there has been an increase in the oil prices again, and it looks as though the prices might stabilize — no one can say for sure — somewhere around US$18 to US$20 a barrel. Should the prices stabilize at that level, I think that the Barbados National Oil Company would once again be in a position to increase its oil production without incurring the major losses which it would have incurred if we had continued at that level in the previous year.

We have tried, at the same time, to reduce the oil production to a level which does not compromise that output of natural gas. 12.45 p.m.

I think that several things might begin to coalesce at this point. With the development of the LPG Plant and with the new pipeline which will be delivering additional gas, particularly to the Barbados Light and Power Company, and to consumers, we may be able to bring back into full production existing wells and undertake a *cautious* drilling of new wells over the next year. It must be remembered that even at a price of $18 to $20 a barrel, the operation will just be viable, or may be just viable, and certainly cannot support the financing of an extensive capital programme. It will have to be a gradually-phased programme.

It must also be borne in mind that when that capital investment was made and oil production was started, there was no provision for the financing of the capital development programme, and one of the problems which you have had is that the capital programme was being partially financed out of current earnings, and on top of that the borrowings which have been made not only for the acquisition of the oil field but also for subsequent exploration.

So the operation will be marginal, but I think that with the increased utilization of natural gas, provided the price of oil remains at that kind of level, then we can approach it in that way. I "think that it is quite

appropriate now that we should begin to get in the spare parts that they need, which are bought largely from Venezuela under this agreement, to get the oil company prepared for further drilling and whatever it is they do to the various wells to bring them back on stream.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Christ .Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition has no problem in supporting this Resolution. In many respects it is in keeping with the Opposition's oil policy when it formed the Government of this country.

The first conclusion I have drawn from the speech of the Honourable Minister is that the Government is now satisfied that it is beneficial to the country to maintain a stake in the ownership of the oil industry. J hope that the Minister will be giving the assurance before the end of this debate that this is not one of the assets which the Government has any intention of selling off.

The Minister has given a very brief background to the arrangements entered into between the Government of Barbados and the F.I.V., the Venezuelan Investment Fund, and also, I think, through that fund with the Government of Venezuela, to assist with the financing of certain development projects in Barbados arising out of what is known as the San Jose Agreement. I think it is appropriate that the Committee should reflect a bit further on the historical reasons why such an agreement was necessary.

After the first oil crisis in 1973 - 76, every country in the world that had any hydrocarbon resource set about ways of developing those resources, maximizing those resources, and, in some instances, searching for those resources. Those who had no hydrocarbon resources, began to look at alternative energy supplies as a way of cutting down on very heavy energy cost bills. Barbados was no exception. Soon after the Opposition became the Government in 1976, we set about looking for finances to carry out a survey of the energy resources, of Barbados, not only hydrocarbon but other energy resources, with a view to formulating a policy based on our known stock, and also formulating a policy in the long term to have an alternative energy supply. It is against that background, with the second oil crisis, that we set about trying to obtain financing, from the Venezuelans in particular, for the development of the resources at Woodbourne and elsewhere in this island.

Barbados imports the majority of its oil supplies from Venezuela. I think other than fuels that we re-export, jet fuel and what not, most of our oil resources come from Venezuela. At the time of San Jose, the arrangement was that 50 per cent of the rebate on oil supplies would be given by the Mexicans and 50 per cent would be given by the Venezuelans, and we were obligated to import half of our oil supplies from Mexico and the remaining supplies from Venezuela. But, unfortunately, the Mobil Refinery could not cope with the heavy Mexican crude, and we had to negotiate with the Venezuelans and Mexicans that we be allowed to import our crude, Mr. Speaker, from Venezuela, and that the Venezuelans would take up the whole cost of the rebate on the foreign exchange cost of the oil supplies.

This agreement was, therefore, negotiated; Corresponding funds were lodged in the Central Bank, and we had to obtain the approval of the fifth F.I.V. before those funds could be spent or disbursed. What the Minister said in relation to this Resolution about the devaluation in bolivar and the consequent reduction from U.S. $9 million to U.S. $5 million in the value of this particular loan is quite correct, arid, therefore, based on legal advice, he has come back to the House once more for us to vote for these funds.

I believe that the project has been totally beneficial to Barbados. We have managed in the period of time to build up a stock of reserves of natural gas, to such an extent today that the Government, following on on the proposals and studies which we had done during our time in office, have been able to sign an agreement only a couple of weeks ago with the Canadians and the National Petroleum Corporation for financing of an LPG Plant.

I do not know whether there has been any change in the arrangements which were being made for that facility. It has been my understanding that private enterprise in Barbados, along with private enterprise in Canada and the National Petroleum Corporation, will be bidding in that venture. At least those were the firm arrangements up to May 28, 1986. It goes to show that there is really some continuity in Government despite the change in faces. I am glad to see that that proposal is beneficial. I am looking forward to the time when we do not have to import the large stock of LPG which we now import from elsewhere in the region, and that Barbados will be self-sufficient, at least for a certain number of years, given our known reserves now in this, because, let us face it, most of that supply is sold to people in the country who depend on it for fuel.

I am pleased to see that the oil drilling programme is going to be continued. It has also always been the view of the Opposition that we will have to continue an oil drilling programme. There are perhaps two reasons for this. Associated with the programme is the drilling for natural gas. It is well known that we do discover more natural gas than oil *per se* in our programme, and if we are to embark on the LPG plant programme, we will have to continue drilling in some form or another for sometime. The cost of drilling has also decreased between 1983 and 1986. The Minister probably has the statistics with him. He will note that the cost of drilling as carried out by the Barbados National Oil Company showed a significant decrease from the time we assumed ownership of the Barbados National Oil Company and, therefore, it became more beneficial for us to drill. 12.55 pjn.

The price of crude fell from a high of about US$25 per barrel to as low, in February 1986, as US$14 a barrel. I think that as 2 result of that tremendous fall in the price of crude on the world oil market, whether you take the Texas oil crude, or the Brent oil crude, or the Platt's Oilgramme figures, there was a tremendous fall, there are two consequences that followed. One is that the cost of drilling looked to be more expensive for Barbados, and a decision had to be made at a policy level as to whether to discontinue drilling at that stage and rely on importation of your crude from Venezuela.

The second was that the Government decided to pass <sn a part of the windfall at the pump. Despite passing on a part of the windfall at the pump, which, of course, the Government considers is part of its touching up programme, it also increased the Consumption Duty payable. So that if today the prices which were prevailing prior to 1986 prevail, there would be a higher amount of income going to the Government out of those prices. I think the Minister, would recognise that he laid the Order in this House some time ago.

I think the Government has to be very careful, looking at the long term effects of its energy policy, in ensuring that enough resources are here available for the future. This must be obviously so, and we are happy that they have now taken a firm decision, I hope, to continue the drilling programme initiated by the former Government.

Oil prices have begun to rise reasonably significantly, from a low on the futures market of US$9 at one stage, and they are now being quoted on the futures market at between US$18 and $20. I believe that given the decision of OPEC to reduce oil production, assuming that decision sticks, one is liable to see the price of oil settling down at between US$20 and US$22 over the next few months. If that is so, then there is a clear case for the continuation of the drilling programme, because it would be viable, more than viable, as the Minister well knows. In fact, it is in the interest of Barbados, in any event, to find out what are its natural resources and to try to develop them in the long term, and the Minister must also be aware of the foreign exchange savings which result whenever we can provide this resource for ourselves. So that, Sir, as I said, we have no difficulty in supporting the Resolution.

I hope I can get from the Minister some firmer statement on the long term aspects of his energy policy. I wish to know, for instance, what steps the Minister is going to take, if he is going to pursue the policy we enunciated on alternative energy sources, particularly the development in solar energy and wind energy. I have seen reports that there is some problem at the Lamberts wind energy mill. I want to know what are those problems and what is being done about them. I know that the Minister found a complete brief on energy saving and conservation measures which were being taken, and the policy which was being developed. I want to be assured that the Minister is following up on those, and I also wish, Sir, to hear whether the Government has any intention of renegotiating with Mobil the agreement which comes to an end in 1990 and which was entered into by the then Government in 1962.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, Sir, like my colleague I join the debate to give support to this Resolution since, in many respects, it reflects a continuation of a policy that was started under the Barbados Labour Party. I also can support the Resolution because it underscores in a very important way the tremendous value to Barbados of having a real stake in the oil industry in this country, and I am pleased that the Minister of Finance has, if only by implication, indicated that the assets of the Barbados National Oil Company are not assets which the Government intends to dispose of in the immediate future.

Sir, the record speaks very eloquently for itself. As a result of the decision of the Government of Barbados to invest in the oil industry in this country, we managed in a short period, between 1981 and 1985, to more than triple oil production. Oil production rose, Sir, from 211 000 barrels in 1981 to 679 000 barrels in 1985, and natural gas production increased from 9.9 million cubic metres to 33% million cubic metres in a space of three years. I think, Sir^ a phenomenal accomplishment, if there was ever any! 1.05 p.m.

I should also add that the volume of our oil imports fell from 1.1 million barrels in 1981 to just over half a million barrels in 1985, and the amount of scarce foreign exchange which this country had to use to import oil also fell from $69 million in 1981 to $29.9 million in 1985.

My colleague could have also added that the oil industry has benefited Government revenues as well. It is not generally known, but, between 1981 and 1985, over $10 million in oil royalties flowed into the Consolidated Fund from the activities of the Barbados National Oil Company. Another $3 million accrued to land owners, particularly in the south-eastern part of Barbados, by way of rents, a direct contribution of the oil industry to the local economy in which it was located.

I entered the debate, Mr. Speaker, to make the point that this Resolution is underscoring to us that there is more to an oil policy in a country than the mere setting of oil prices, that in point of fact, Sir, our energy policy must be a policy undertaken at a number of levels involving exploration, if you are interested in improving our reserves and building our reserves to make investments such as we have now in a Liquid Petroleum Plant, production with a view to easing the foreign exchange burden that an oil import bill can cause, an appropriate energy pricing policy that takes account of the interest of the consumers as well as the interest of the economy in general, and an energy conservation policy which is designed to ensure that a scarce resource is used as efficiently as possible.

The point I really want to make, Sir, is that there is very often the need for a trade-off between the emphases that one places as between production and prices, that a price regime which makes it feasible to have low prices at the pump is also going to be a price regime which may not make it feasible to continue an exploration or a production programme and the point I really want to make, and the specific issue I want to raise for the consideration of the Minister of Finance, is that the production and exploration programme was halted last year in view of an existing price regime which did not make a continuation of that programme feasible. That price regime, however, made it possible for us to lower the price of energy at the pump. Given that prices are now to rise, and have risen to the point where they now make a production and exploration programme feasible again, what changes can we expect in relation to Government's energy pricing policy. Is an increase in the price at the pump imminent? What is going to be the degree of the trade off?

I am asking the question: What is going to be the degree of trade-off involved? I would really be appreciative if the Minister in his reply could recognise that there is a totality to energy policy in this country. He has spoken, to date, of the manner in which an increase in the price of crude now makes it feasible for us to contemplate restarting the exploration and production programme, but I think he would be doing the House a disservice, Sir, if he would not tell us what is imminent where energy prices are concerned.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister may reply.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty whatsoever in responding to what the honourable Member for St. Peter thought would be a loaded question, and I shall do so.

In the first instance, I think that all honourable Members noted the very warm and glowing tributes paid by the Opposition to the energy policy pursued by this Government. It is a question of putting their words together when they recognized that we took the right steps and that the policies which we have pursued to date have been the correct policies.

I think Government's energy policy has been clearly set out in the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party for the 1986 General Elections and on the floor of this House on several occasions. We are committed to a policy which will result in the lowest possible cost of energy to the consumer, bearing in mind that such cost of energy would reflect the prevailing prices of crude oil. That is clearly stated in the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, so there will be no change. I can assure the honourable Members that there will be absolutely no change in policy as far as the Democratic Labour Party is concerned. If I may borrow a copy of the manifesto and I can find the exact page, I will read it out.

Sir, quite frankly, the whole issue centres around a global cost/benefit analysis and this is what it will boil down to. There can be no question that the Oil Company, even when it was fetching very high prices for its crude, was not even able to repay any of its loans. I think only on two occasions did it contribute to the interest charges, but the total capital repayment of the loan, that is the loan of $24 or $26 million, whichever it was, to purchase the oilfield is being serviced out of the Consolidated Fund. I can assure you that all loan repayments are being met from the Consolidated Fund, have been met from the Consolidated Fund and, to the best of my knowledge, based on the information which I requested from the Company some few months ago, it was indicated to me that only on two occasions was the company in a position to contribute towards interest and not even to capital repayments. For example, this year the Government will be meeting the full cost of servicing the loan, and next year, included in the Estimates of Expenditure, will be an amount, I think, of over $6 million to service the loans to the Barbados National Oil Company.

This is already a document of the House, Mr. Speaker. There was a question raised as to the policy of

the Democratic Labour Party and whether there would be any change in policy. I believe it is important to read in the record the stated policy of the Democratic Labour Party, and it goes as follows:

"On assuming office.....

Mr. SPEAKER: On what page?

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Page 6, the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto, General Elections 1986, Pride of Barbados — the winning manifesto! - and this is what it pledged this nation.

Mr. SPEAKER: I still have not heard the page.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Page 6.

"On assuming office, a DLP Government will take immediate action to reduce the price of gasolene and diesel, to a level which is warranted by prevailing..... oil prices"

That is the policy of the Democratic Labour Party.
1.15 p.m.

Asides

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I may .....

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: What do you expect to come down?) • Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Aside

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, within the context of a cost/benefit analysis, it was clearly necessary to reduce the drilling operation and the production of oil when it was done by this Administration. I would hasten to point out that the previous Administration had already been giving consideration as to whether they would reduce the levels of output at the Barbados National Oil Company, but they were afraid to do so before an election. That is a fact!

Asides

Laughter

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In all fairness to the deceased former Prime Minister, I must say that he was not only giving active consideration to it, but if you look at his Budget in April 1984, you would see that there was a statement inside there which indicated that he would be addressing this problem as to whether the oil company could continue exploration and production at the levels that existed in April last year. And, Sir, it was the only sensible thing to do, because although we have imported more, we would have imported more at a lower price, at a price at approximately half what it would have been if we had continued to import this year. So that your foreign exchange cost at that low price had to be balanced against the other losses that you would have incurred domestically. In fact, if we had continued to drill and sell at those prices, the losses this year would have been somewhere in the region of about $23 million, which I would consider to be totally unacceptable for the Barbados National Oil Company.

What we have done is that we have tried to strike a delicate balance on the basis of a cost/benefit analysis of the particular operation. I think we have come out very well. We have managed to contain the losses. We have managed to keep the oil field in a state where we can increase production tomorrow if we want to. In other words, we can go back up to the level of production which existed a year ago without drilling any new wells, and we could maintain that level of production, as I understand it, probably for about a year or a year and a half. But quite clearly, within that context, if you forecast that you are likely to have to be producing at that level over a long period of time, then a wise precaution would be to start to do a little exploration; not necessarily on the scale on which it was done before, but a little cautious exploration. That is why I mentioned that word when I spoke.

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: They are getting very cautious these days.)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It must be understood that we are talking about a gradual programme whilst we keep a firm eye on the oil prices.

I addressed the question of viability. In other words, the investment is not viable in itself. It has to be supported by the Consolidated Fund, or it has to be supported, as hi the past, through the tax component on the price of gasolene and diesel.

If you were to look at either 1983 or 1984 Budget, you would see an amount of $6 million included in that Budget in order to support the current expenditure of the Barbados National Oil Company. It is a fact that it was supported in that way.

On the question of the other aspects of our energy programme, this Government, when it was in Opposition, constantly focussed attention on and tried to push the other Government in a more aggressive programme in relation to the use of alternate energy, the use of wind energy and so on. As a matter of fact, Sir, I distinctly recall a debate way back in 1978 when the present

Administration came in and said they were investigating a programme for saline transfer of energy on the East Coast of Barbados. I was able, because of my scientific background, to point out to them all the hazards and the costs involved in that.

Let me explain what it is: Saline transfer, NA, positive Chlorine, and because of various movements of currents, temperatures and various things like that, a very delicate operation, you could virtually, on a molecular basis, generate energy. It is a very unstable system and a very costly system. After we took a strong position on that particular programme the Government started other areas.

On the question of the Wind Energy Programme, as far as I am aware, there is a structural defect in the experimental windmill that we have here. This is being attended to at the moment. The programme has been halted, but a lot of good scientific research has been done, and, as far as I am aware, it should not involve the Government in too much extra cost. I think the last I heard about it is that similar blades are now being tested in Scotland to see whether or not it is a fundamental defect or whether, with minor corrections, the mill can work again.

These, Sir, are the points which have been made and 'I am very pleased to be able to respond to them. I hope that in due course, perhaps during the upcoming Estimates we can have a full debate and full examination of Government's energy policy.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Question Time be now taken.

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

The question that Question Time be now taken was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. Parliamentary Question No. 54. The Right Honourable Prime Minister's Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 54 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

QUESTION RE OVERSEAS AIRWAYS UNITED KINGDOM LTD.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Parliamentary Question No. 54.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 54, asked by the honourable Member for St. Thomas is as follows:

(a) The DCS aircraft which was used by Carib bean Airways was leased from Overseas Air ways United Kingdom Ltd.

(b) No.

(c) Overseas Airways U.K. Ltd. was registered under the Laws of the United Kingdom.

(d) The information available to Government shows that the principal shareholders of Overseas Airways U.K. Ltd. are, at that time and as far as I know it has not been changed, David Grant of the United Kingdom and John Regan of the United Kingdom.

1.25 p.m.

The registered offices are: —

Davis House, 29 Wilton
Road, Epworth House
(London), London, SWI IJ2,
United Kingdom.

(e) Overseas Airways (UK) Ltd. was in existence since 28th February, 1986.

(f) The D.C. 8 aircraft is eighteen (18) years old.

(g) The D.C. 8 aircraft generally stopped at St. Lucia's (Hewannora) airport on its journey from London to Barbados.

(h) The nationalities of the cockpit and cabin crew who operated the aircraft are Barbadian, British, Belgian, Dutch and American.

(i) The aircraft complies with noise regulations set out in Annex 16 of the Chicago Convention. The aircraft has not been "hush-kitted" and is not required to be.

(j) The limits of liability of air carriers operating international services in the event of death, wounding or other bodily injury to passengers are prescribed by the Warsaw Convention System. Pursuant to this Convention, the limits of liability for passengers carried by Caribbean Airways on its present service from/to Barbados is US$20 000.

Mr. SPEAKER: Any supplementaries?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there is no need for a supplementary.

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The honourable Member has suggested, Mr. Speaker, that Caribbean Airways changed aircraft. In truth and in fact, Sir, the number of passengers which were booked during the time that the Caribbean Airways was operating the DC.8 Stretch 63 aircraft increased from about 400 passengers to 900 passengers every weekend. From the time that they engaged the DC.8 aircraft! Far from a falling off in the number of bookings, the number of passengers increased so that it was necessary for them to lease a 747 from Lux-Air, which is a subsidiary of the Government-owned Luxemburg Airways, which then had a sitting capacity of 500 persons on each trip, in order to accommodate weekend traffic.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is right.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Thomas. I thought you said there were no supplementaries.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He replied to nothing!

Laughter

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Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would now come in, Sir.

QUESTION RE RESTRICTIONS ON DISPOSITION OF LOTS PURCHASED UNDER THE TENANTRIES FREEHOLD PURCHASE ACT CAUSING HARDSHIP

Mr. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 14 asked by the honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. R. P. BYER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Parliamentary Question No. 14.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 14, asked by the honourable Member for St. George South is: (1) Yes, I am aware of the problem.

(2) My Ministry is carrying out a comprehensive review of the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act 1980/53 and every effort will be made to resolve this problem.

Mr. SPEAKER: Any supplementaries? Mr.

R. P. BYER: No supplementary, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a supplementary to that Minister on the answer to that question. I want to know if the Government is pursuing an initiative, which I took when I was Attorney General, to invite Professor Roy Marshall to do a review of all the tenantries legislation. He had agreed. I do not know if the Government has pursued it. Is the Minister aware?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the matter of which the honourable Member is speaking.

QUESTION RE REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION TO SOME RESIDENTS OF ISOLATION ROAD, ST. ANDREW

Mr. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 44, asked by the honourable Member for St. Andrew.

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT: Mr. Speaker, Parliamentary Question No. 44.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The reply to Parliamentary Question No. 44 is: (1) Yes, Sir.

(2) Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Any Supplementaries?

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT: No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: That brings us to the end of Replies to Parliamentary Questions.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that we revert to Government Business, and that Order No. 4 be now taken.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 4.

ABANDONMENT OF LAND ACQUISITION AT SIX MEN'S, ST. PETER

Order No. 4 was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the publication in the Official Gazette of a notification of the abandonment of the acquisition of land at Six Men's, St. Peter.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN (St. Philip South): Mr. Speaker, this Resolution seeks the approval of Parliament

to abandon the acquisition of lands at Six Men's known as Six Men's Tenantry.

The matter of acquiring land at Six Men's Tenantry was looked at by the Ministry of Housing and this Government, and we are of the view that such an acquisition does not fall in with Government's policy and should be abandoned. 1.35 p.m.

This is about the third or fourth acquisition that I have come to this Honourable House to abandon since this present Administration took office in May. This one is a bit different from the others in that the others were abandoned because of ill-advised steps taken by persons in authority at that time. This one is being abandoned for other reasons, and as I have stated before, the main reason is that it does not accord with Government's policy and we consider that it should be abandoned.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, people live at Six Men's, and when decisions pertaining to people and their relationship to their environment are being taken by a Government, I think that, out of respect for people, a Government should come to a House of Assembly and say more than that they are abandoning a course of action merely because it is Government's policy.

Sir, it strikes me as being sheer arrogance on the part of the Minister of Housing and Lands to address this matter, which is of such fundamental significance to a whole community, by just saying blandly that the matter does not conform to Government's policy. I have no doubt that the development at Six Men's does not conform to Government's policy, in the same way that the development of a fishing complex at Speightstown obviously does not conform to Government's policy, but there is a lot to this development that merits serious consideration.

A part of the population at Six Men's faces an immediate threat of encroachment by the sea. When this matter was brought to the, House of Assembly, the intentions of Government in acquiring the land at Six Men's were to resite the persons on the foreshore at Six Men's who are threatened by the encroachment of the sea and to release such lands on the land side at Six Men's for us to be able to undertake a low income housing development in that area. At that time I stressed that for a long period of time the people of Six Men's have lived in a situation of total insecurity in regard to their tenure and in regard to their relationship to their very community.

I must also remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that when this matter was first brought to the House a lot of discussion centred on the fact that there were alternatives that could have been followed in relation to the use of the land at Six Men's. We could have done what the Barbados Labour Party was proposing to do and acquire the land at Six Men's, properly resite the persons affected by the sea, regularise the status of the tenure of the persons now living there and put in a low income housing development to benefit the people not only of Six Men's but of Half Moon Fort, Ashton Hall, Speightstown and so on, treating Six Men's, as we saw it, Sir, as a logical extension of Speightstown, a place that lends itself to housing development given it relative proximity to schools, to a polyclinic, to good infrastructure and its location on the immediate outskirts of a potential industrial site. Six Men's can ideally be seen as a logical extension of Speightstown, and we were approaching the development of Six Men's from that point of view, to regularise the status of the residents there as well as to create low income housing in the area to ease a lot of the problems of congestion in the general Speightstown area.

There was also another option, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Housing and Lands knows that from 1975 a group of persons, headed by a Mr. Broomes and involving a Mr. Quintyne and Mr. Hope, have been talking about a project whereby a church group from the United States of America would come to Six Men's and set up something equivalent, to, if not the same as, a Jim^ Jones commune. It would be housing, agriculture and so forth, the sticking point, however, being, Mr. Speaker, that the Government would have to build a realignment of the Speightstown By-pass Road to run up under the hill, as well as the Government was being called upon to incur expenses in punching a hole at Retreat to create a marina.

We went through the two options: either to develop Six Men's for the benefit of the people of Six Men's or to allow the land at Six Men's to go for the purpose of creating a religious commune involving Government in massive expenditure to realign the Speightstown By-pass Road and involving Government in expenditure to punch a marina up into Retreat: neither project ever being, a part of Government's fiscal policy and neither project ever having, as far as I am aware, been subject to a serious cost benefit appraisal. What we saw, and what the members of the DLP Cabinet saw when they went on a tour of St. Peter on that Saturday morning, were conceptual sketches drawn, without any detail work having been undertaken by the private individuals who initiated the idea as to their feasibility; their likely cost, or anything of that kind. And if by inference, Mr. Speaker, — because the Minister has not given the House the courtesy to say whether this is part of the decision making involved, whether a choice has in effect been exercised between the rights of the residents of Six Men's and the

desires of a speculative investment group from the United States of America - if I am to understand by inference that the Government is seeking to abandon the acquisition of this land and not develop it to allow those persons at Six Men's, who even now are threatened by encroachment of the sea to be safer, if I am to understand that the Government is foregoing the opportunity to develop Six Men's as a preferred location for low income housing development, and it is doing that by saying that that a private group with sketch plan, with no known money, should have access to land at Six Men's, then I say humbly, Mr. Speaker, that this is a total travesty. A total travesty!

A lot of talk was made the last time around about the price that was being suggested by Government for the land, but I suggest to the House, Sir, that that is a matter of negotiation. It may even, if necessary, have to go to the courts, but the question of the price of the land does not reflect upon what should be its best use. There are procedures to reconcile any differences between Government and private owners in relation to the value of property and how a proper price should eventually be arrived at. So let not this debate, Mr. Speaker, be cluttered up with any consideration as to the former Government wanting to expropriate anybody's land. That is not the issue.

I want to say that this whole thing strikes me very much of political victimisation, political victimisation of the worst kind!

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Before we left office, Mr. Speaker, we had started negotiations with the World Bank, as the Minister of Housing knows, to secure a $10 million loan for low income housing in Barbados — the same $20 million that the Minister of Finance speaks so grandly about when he speaks in terms of how much he is going to put into low income housing this year — and there are two areas in Barbados selected as the places where you are going to do pilot development; Six Men's and an area in the Westbury Road environment. We are going to use that United States low income housing loan and treat Six Men's, given its proximity to Speightstown, shopping, poly clinics, schools, churches and whatever else, as a module for low income housing development in this country. I can only say that if this project is to be abandoned on consideration of a Government not being able to sort out values of land, then we are witnessing a travesty in this country. It is the same kind of thinking, Mr. Speaker, which informed the Minister of Agriculture when he undertook a so-called review of the Speightstown fishing harbour, referred to Minutes of a first and casual meeting between the Minister of Agriculture and five vendors at Speightstown in 1984, and took -a decision to abandon that project on the grounds that the people of Speightstown did not want a fishing harbour, as if he was not himself aware that subsequent to that first casual meeting in 1984 we had had a town meeting in Speightstown involving the National Trust, involving all of the people who were involved in the planning of that project, involving all of the vendors, the fishermen, and that there was, in fact, a meeting of minds in Speightstown as to how desirable the project should be. It burns me, Mr. Speaker, when I hear a Government continually abandoning projects in my constituency on the first ground that the people do not want the project, which is totally untrue, and, now, on no more serious of grounds, that it does not conform to Government's policy, as if the people of Six Men's are not people, too. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a total travesty. 1.45 p.m.

I think the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands has done himself a great disservice in the very casual, the very offhand manner in which he is making Government appear as if it is taking a decision to affect people. I do not want to feel that other Members of this House of Assembly on the Government side are impressed with the offhand, casual, arrogant manner in which the Minister of Housing and Lands has introduced this Resolution. I do not believe that if it was Scarborough involved, or any place in St. Philip South involved, or St. Michael West involved, the matter would be dealt with in such offhand, cavalier and arrogant manner. I say, Sir, it is a travesty! It smacks, to me, of political victimisation, and the Government will hear a lot more on this in the future!

I thank you.

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Resolution of the Minister of Housing, and I want to make a few observations.

The honourable Member for St. Peter has made some very strong statements. I was not a member of the Honourable House, but I recall that in this House there were some very heated debates when this land at Six Men's came up for discussion. I think it was said at the time that for beach front land the Government was offering less than two cents per square foot.

(Aside: Less than a cent!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Less than a cent per square foot for the land! Therefore, it would be a little offside to say that the issue of money is not concerned. When a private individual invests money in real estate, it is arrogant and it is vindictive for a Government to go to that individual in Barbados, with beach front land, which is adjoining one of the biggest hotel complexes in this

country, and say to that individual that they are going to offer him less than a cent per square foot for the land. But, you see, the parish of St. Peter seems to be a continual hive of political activity day in and day out, and I understand that there is even more political activity going on in that parish now. I understand there is still campaigning going on in the parish of St. Peter. I do not know what is happening. New campaigning!

There were a few statements made, which, unwittingly, may explain the action taken by the former Administration. The honourable Member for St. Peter said that the people who owned the land were part of a church group, and he intimated that they would set up a Jim Jones complex. If that is the thinking of the honourable Member for St. Peter, one can readily explain, or understand, why the action was taken despite the fact that the persons were Barbadians.

But I want to say something else. When we look at our brothers in this community as setting up Jim Jones complexes, there are people who have walked into this country under that Administration, known as the Mormons, who are completely opposed to people who have the shade of this colour. But they are not Jim Joneses! They have been allowed to come into this country and they lived at the residence of the former Prime Minister. They walked into the residence of the former Prime Minister, and I take strong objections to people whom I know from my boyhood, people who are Christian people, being alluded to as people who would set up Jim Jones' complexes in this country. One can easily see where the victimisation lies and one can easily say where the arrogance is.

The honourable Member for St. Peter in trying to put forward his case, constantly talked about the people of St. Peter being victimised. Listen. The people of St. Peter have been represented by Barbados Labour Party representatives for the last 20 years. The people who live on the Six Men's complex did not start to live in Six Men's in 1976. They were there all the time. You had ten years in which, under Barbados Labour Party representation, if you thought the people were threatened by the ocean, you could have corrected the situation. So if there was victimisation, there was victimisation by their own representatives in the Barbados Labour Party.

I want to say something more about the parish of St. Peter.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am hearing the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, and I am going to ask Members to restrain the cross-talk while the honourable Member is speaking.

Please continue.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I want to say something more about the parish of St. Peter and the representation of the people in St. Peter about *vis-a-vis* the land. I think it was about two years ago that there was a flood in this country when we were in the heat of political activity leading up to a by-election. There were people dispossessed, and I can call the names of the people who were dispossessed in that flood. There were people like Marguerite Edwards, Verna Bourne, Judith Cave, Yvette Lopez, Roger McClean, Clyde Mclntosh, Irvine Hinkson, Ruby Allen, David Worrell, Elsie Broomes, all of whose houses were flooded out.

After the flood, the Barbados Labour Party set up a Committee and voted thousands of dollars in Barbados taxpayers money to relocate the people who were flooded out in the St. Peter flood. What was the outcome of it? Seven houses were built near the Speightstown By-Pass. Of the seven houses that were built, four houses were allocated to people who never had houses at all, including one "Hog Pen." This is the representation from St. Peter! This is the representative, the honourable Member for St. Peter, who talks about the Democratic Labour Party wanting to victimise the people of St. Peter!

Of the seven houses that were built, four were al located to people who never lived in St. Peter, whose houses were never flooded out and one guy never lived in .....

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I can tell you the names. Elsa Squires got a house. Sylvia Collymore from Farm Road got a house. Leonora Edwards from Farm Tenantry got a house. Everton Greene who lived in St. Michael got a house.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are all of these people in Six Men's?

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: The three people whose houses were affected by the flood who got allocations were Walter Lopez, Glenville Best and FitzRoy Pickering. Those were the people whose houses were flooded out. Of the seven, those were the three people who got houses. All the other people did not get houses. 1.55 p.m.

The sad situation is that of the ten people whose houses were flooded out, three of them are now living in Haynesville and have to send their children to school at St. Peter's Boys' School, one is living in Redman's Village, one is living in Kensington Court, one in Black Rock, one in St. Lucy and one in Around-the-Town.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Good God!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: These are the facts. And the honourable Member for St. Peter has the audacity to get up in here and create the impression that the people of St. Peter are being victimized by the Democratic Labour Party!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Shame!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: If there is victimization, it was done by the Barbados Labour Party while the same honourable Member was the representative for the people at this area.

(Aside: Hear, hear!)

Applause.

Aside.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I want the honourable Mem ber for St. Peter to get up and deny these facts. Ihave called the names of the people, I have said where they live and I have said the hardships. Furthermore, some of these people's houses were taken up and put in Fair-field ....

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Spring Hall.)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: .....in Spring Hall sorry ..... and the houses are there still rottening and the people still have no place to live. The Democratic Labour Party is now looking at resiting those very people.

(Aside: Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Not resiting them. All of them have to be rebuilt. All!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: So, Mr. Speaker, I want to set the record straight. When honourable Members come into this Chamber talking about victimization, let them bring their facts. Do not just get up in here and make glib statements.

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to support the Resolution by the honourable Member for St. Philip South, and I want to make sure that when the Members on that side come in here, let them do their homework, because we on this side will be doing ours.

I thank you.

Applause.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is now 2.00 o'clock.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3.00 o'clock today, Sir.

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

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope that the Christmas spirit.....

Laughter.

Mr. SPEAKER: ..... will not be brought into the Chamber on the first day but that a serious attitude will be adopted in the approach to the day's sitting.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 3.00 o'clock was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 2.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West indicated his willingness to speak. If he so desires, he may.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) has reflected very carefully some of the sentiments which I hold on the manner in which the Honourable Minister introduced this Resolution. I do not think it is good enough for a Minister of the Crown to come to Parliament and simply to say that the acquisition will be abandoned because of Government's policy. One is entitled to know, in more detail, what is Government's policy in relation to the land and the reasons which inspire that policy.

I wish, however, before I go further into a criticism on the manner in which the Minister has presented this Resolution before the House, to recap very briefly, for the benefit of the House, the history of this matter before this House. The matter came before the House in a Resolution to acquire approximately 29.6 acres of land, on part of which there is an existing tenantry. At the time of the Resolution, the Opposition raised one point of substance. That point was that an offer had emanated from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing offering approximately $3 906 for the land being acquired.

(Aside: Three thousand and sixty-eight dollars.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Three thousand and sixty-eight dollars, to be correct, Sir.

The Opposition's point was that that price was not a fair price for the land. As I recall the debate, the Government countered by pointing out to the Opposition, first, that it was an offer made along the standard form methods and based on the then current valuation on the tax rolls; secondly, that the procedure which existed where a person disagreed with the offer was for there to be negotiations between the parties, for the matter to go before a special committee, which would then counter offer, and if agreement were not reached, the next step was for the person to litigate the matter. In short, as I understand it, the Government claimed that there was a sufficient mechanism in place to ensure that no unfairness resulted to the landowner whose land was being acquired.

The Government did more, however, Sir. It pointed out the purposes for which the land was being acquired and it pointed out also the development plan which it had in mind for this land. One of the plans had been put into effect already, in that the land had been designated a development area under the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act to permit the Government to go in and put in the necessary infrastructure with a view to improving the overall infrastructural conditions and, finally, the housing conditions. The Government further pointed out that it was also intended to improve the coastal area, because there was, and there still remains to this day, evidence of coastal erosion in the area. The Government also pointed out that this was one of the areas designated under the World Bank Scheme for further housing development. So that the policies of the Government were quite clear.

What I want to know from the Minister is which aspect of those policies this present Government disagrees with. Surely the House is entitled to be told whether this Government has any intention of carrying out work to prevent further soil erosion in the area. Surely we are entitled to know whether it is the intention of this Government still to designate that scheme under the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act. Surely, we are also entitled to know whether these persons are going to benefit under the World Bank Scheme for low income housing improvement. It is not enough for the Minister to say it does not accord with policy. What are the aspects of policy? It is impossible almost to debate a matter if a Minister is going to be so crypt as to leave the House in doubt as to the real reason for the acquisition. That is the point we have been making here, Sir. 3.05 p.m.

We do not know whether the Government is going back on their word. I want to point out a few things, however, Sir. The Six Men's Tenantry is, as the honourable Member for St. Peter has said, a recognized community with their own way of life. Many of the persons living in Six Men's not only live there, but work there. A large proportion of them is in the fishing industry and in agriculture right in that village, and what is more, Sir, if one looks at Six Men's, there are some people who are on the foreshore and there are others on the other side of the road who have the benefit of the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act. What I want to know is, if the Minister has studied it through, what will be the effect of an acquisition and a subsequent abandonment of the acquisition on the rights of these tenants? They will no doubt be advised, regardless of what is Government's position, to claim their right to purchase the lots on which their houses stand — those who are not on the foreshore. There are others on the foreshore who do not have the same protection, and certainly it was the intention of the then Government to make certain that none of the people from Six Men's will be moved out of the area of Six Men's. That was absolutely clear.

When the Minister visited the area a couple of weeks ago, posthaste I understand, they went through the village of Six Men's so fast that they were not able to consult with the people in the area about their views.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: When they went down there with Mr. Hoad, Sir, they were not able to consult with anyone down there about their views. But the Minister would have seen that part of the infrastructure lias already been put in. A road has been put in there. I want to know if the Government is going to complete the infrastructural work which has been carefully laid out for the people of this area.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons), as he is always wont to do, jumped in with both feet, not knowing where he is going to land, Sir, in order to sidetrack the debate in this House, on the question of victimization. But it is very clear that, whatever review is being undertaken for the development of the low cost housing scheme, this Government seems to have abandoned Six Men's.

Sir, I am not accepting for one moment that the Government has any alternative to relocate these people to Golden Mile. Golden Mile has been carefully set out and developed, and I want to follow through from the honourable Member for St. Michael South East. After the flood it was necessary to acquire part of the Golden Mile area. Since then we have put in the necessary infrastructure, and proposals were developed for repairing or replacing the houses of all those persons who have had to be relocated temporarily because of the flood conditions. The honourable Member for St. Michael South East gave a list of persons whom he said had been temporarily

-relocated in Government housing schemes pending the rebuilding of their houses, and if the honourable Member doubts that, he could look at the other developments that have taken place.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Pending the rebuilding of their houses! Within the Ministry of Housing, in the National Housing Corporation, there were proposals for rebuilding their houses.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member from St. Philip South *sotto voce* is asking whether other persons who have been accommodated in that area had houses to be rebuilt. I want to deal with that. If I take Bennetts, when we did a rebuilding and relocating of people there, you will see that the principle was not only to accommodate those people who were directly affected, but other persons were let into the area. Take Simmons Road. I do not know of an area where there are extra spots and extra accommodation that other people have not given a facility. I do not know of one. I do not know if the Minister has had the chance yet to tour any of the developments but if he doubts my facts he can check and see that some of the people who have moved into Simmons Road were not people who were subject to dislocation by the new highway.

**Asides*

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: To throw in the names of persons and say how you could justify any particular person, Sir .....

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot hear the honourable Member for Christ Church West!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Well, the Minister did not give any reasons. He is now making his speech sitting down, Sir, and it is a speech *ad hominem* rather than a speech as to principle, and this is the trouble about a lot of the debate, Sir - it is *ad hominem.* It is towards persons and not towards the principle of the matter.

I have not heard one word from the Minister or any word from the honourable Member for St. Michael South East which has convinced me that there is any case for abandoning this acquisition at all. If it is being abandoned, and I am on the assumption that it is being abandoned because the first price offered was not reasonable, the Government does not have to go to abandonment to correct that situation. That is the point I want to make. The Government is now the Government. All it has to do is direct the people in the Planning Committee to offer a better price if it is not satisfied with it. If it is not satisfied with the price, let it go and talk to the group of civil servants set up in the Ministry who deal with the negotiations and say to them, 'Review the matter with the best technical advice that you have in Land Valuation and come up with a fair price. Have a look at land sales obtaining in the area, have a look at all the *indicia* that will help you determine a fair price and determine a fair price.' So the question of price could not be the predominant reason for the Government abandoning this acquisition, because the question of price is still negotiable between the parties.

What is the reason, Sir? It is being abandoned simply because the Government does not intend to carry out development for the people of Six Men's? That is what I have to ask. Let the Minister state clearly whether he intends to carry out development for the benefit of the 77 houses which are there and the 181 residents who reside there. Let him state that this Government has no intention of undertaking development for them. 3.15 p.m.

Sir, I am speaking against this background, that whatever criticism took place of the proposal for acquisition — and I said that when you read the speeches of the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. 0. Franklin) who spoke.....

(Aside: St. Philip South).

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Philip North spoke on the Resolution for the original acquisition. The honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow) spoke, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) spoke and the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Hon. P. M. Greaves) spoke in the Lower House. In the Other Place the person who spoke was the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. W. W. Hall), the Honourable Minister of Labour. But at the end of the day when the Resolutions were put, both in this Place and in the Upper House there was no division. The Resolutions went through unanimously with all members voting together.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central spoke very strongly concerning the question of price and said that they should not close the door to looking at a fair price. The Right Honourable Member for St. John spoke about the fact that he knew the persons and they had a scheme for a marina. The honourable Member for St. Michael North spoke on the fact that it was not true to say that the Right Honourable Member for St. John was against a clause in the Constitution for fair compensation to be paid immediately. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said that to pay such a price was tantamount to introducing communism. That is summarising the debate. That is the total debate. None of the members who spoke either in

this House or in the Upper House was against the long term proposals for the benefit of the people of Six Men's. There was no criticism of the fact that it was designated as a tenantry under the Tenantries Freehold Act for development. There was no criticism of the objectives to improve the conditions of the people there and to resite the people properly. The only criticism therefore, as I see it, related to the criticism of price.

I say to this House, in the absence of Government giving reasons, the price can be dealt with. Are all of the other reasons advanced at the time not valid? Let the Minister tell me. If the Minister had given a proper- introduction — we would see whether the Government has come up with some fantastic reasons to make us rethink the position. But that has not taken place, and I say it is not right in this House merely to say that a matter does not accord with Government's policy and not to give the reasons therefor.

Sir, I am going to take the opportunity to ask the Minister what other tenantries which were designated as tenantries for development under the Freehold Tenantries Act and to participate in the scheme for low income housing does the Government intend to abandon. Do they also intend to abandon the tenantries in Eastmond Land, in Britton's Hill? Do they also intend to abandon the whole of the Amity Lodge area, between Brewster's Road and Amity Lodge, which has been designated and which is part of the scheme? Do they also intend to abandon the tenantry in Dayrell's Road stretching from Dayrell's Road right up to Britton's Hill? Do they intend to abandon those? I want to know. I am naming three that I know have been designated.

The honourable Member will find that the last Government designated tenantries even within the con stituency of the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) who keeps up a running commentary from his seat in order to put people off from the debate. Even within his constituency tenantries were designated. They also designated Scarborough .....

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: They designated St. Leonard's Church, you don't know?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ..... and other areas.

I want to hear what is the Government's policy on this. Why is Six Men's being singled out? That is the point the honourable Member for St. Peter was making, that it is very significant that within a period of six months the Government has seen it fit to take two actions in the constituency of St. Peter, one for abandoning the continuation of the fishing harbour and, secondly, for abandoning low cost housing and infrastructural development for the people. You can draw whatever conclusions you like, but the conclusion drawn by the honourable Member is not an unfair conclusion in the circumstances, and I want to hear the Minister reassure us on this.

Sir, the point was made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, rather lightheartedly, that the Barbados Labour Party had discriminated against the people of St. Peter. It is a fact that in the last ten years over $200 million in infrastructural development has gone into the north of Barbados under the Barbados Labour Party, including St. Peter. If Members take the infrastructural development of St. Peter and look at when the Labour Party has been in power, over 20 years they say, and compare it with the infrastructural development of the parish in which I now live, St. John, they will see the difference in discrimination. They will realise that in areas like Society — I see the honourable Member for St. George North (Mr. C. V. Walker) is going to laugh, because he knows — Colleton, Cherry Grove, Pool, if I can go through the whole list, there are no basic amenities put in. When you all come in here talking about discrimination and not doing anything, go and look at where the Right Honourable Prime Minister has been representing for 35 years and see the total lack of development that has taken place in roads, in lights, in water, in everything!

(Aside: Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: You could not get a job.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Could not get a job*? The people got jobs when we were there.

The only infrastructural development done in that parish was since we got in, when you look. Why don't you all take time and walk around instead of coming in because you have 24 and believe you can make many more speeches than us? Take a little time now and listen to what the people are saying now. Take a little time, even in the very parish of St. John. Take a little time and walk around and listen, and do not only walk with your heads in the air and come in here and use your numbers. Take a little time and you will hear now a different story. So if the honourable Member believes that by sidetracking us by making those allegations, he is wrong. You got away in the St. Thomas by-election by saying nothing was done for St. Thomas at that time, but next time we will tahe the pictures and show you your own area, if you want to hear what is done.

I do not want to hear that argument. If we could get back to the essential matter before the House, the essential matter before the House is the manner in which the Minister has introduced this Resolution, has failed to give any reasons why this House should vote in favour of the abandonment of the acquisition. When we have

advanced reasons, we have been decried. I say, Sir, that if it is left on the case as advanced by the Government, by the Minister himself, not only has the case failed, but the honourable Member for St. Peter was entitled to suggest why the abandonment of this land is taking place.

In these circumstances, Sir, I am going to urge the House, if the Members have their consciences anywhere, to vote against this Resolution.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Speaker, out of an abundance of caution, I am going to declare an interest in this Resolution before Parliament, since just as the offer was made to the owners, I was consulted then in my capacity in private practice. But I am not going to touch on that issue at all. 3.25 p.m.

The honourable Member for St. Peter got up and very emotively talked about victimisation of St. Peter, and, Mr. Speaker, either knowingly or unknowingly, misled this House in a manner that I took strong objection to. He made a statement that when I spoke in Parliament about my decision about the abandonment of the Speightstown fishing market, I based my assessment on a meeting with five people knowing that they were other people consulted.

I want for the record of this Parliament, and to set the record straight, to read the entire report that I read «on that occasion and hope that in the future, the honourable Member for St. Peter would pay this House the courtesy of being accurate in his statements and do not give the wrong impression or impute improper motives to this member of Parliament.

This is a meeting held on November 23, 1984 at the Speightstown Fish Market.

> "The above meeting was convened by the Deputy P. S., Mr. Austin, Mr. Jones of Fisheries and Mr. Walrond, Senior Superintendent of Markets , to solicit the views of the fishermen at Speightstown on the allocation of proposed fishing terminal.
>
> "There were about 50 fishermen, boat owners and fish vendors who clearly expressed their preference for retaining the present site near the roadside, and taking in the esplanade. The group included the small party of 5 who had accompanied us on the earlier visit with the Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister.
>
> "When asked why they never represented this latter preference to the Ministers on the earlier visit, they said they saw no point then in arguing with the Minister over his selection of the site, based on the technical advice he was given on the spot.
>
> "The group now were clear in their minds that the site at Fort Denmark was out of the way, and would be to their disadvantage. They felt that the market site, with minimal reclamation, will provide the space needed. Furthermore, the property across the canal should be acquired to site the vegetable marketing facilities. They also expressed the view that the esplanade seats should be demolished and the area included in the new market facilities, thereby reducing the amount of reclamation required. The view was also expressed that the esplanade was not being used and should be demolished to accommodate the fish marketing facilities.
>
> "The fishermen stated that while they preferred the marketing facilities sited on the present fish market site, they would continue to haul their * boats at the secluded spot at Fort Denmark.
>
> "Finally, the fishermen, boat owners, fish and vegetable vendors have requested a meeting with the Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister at the Speightstown Community Centre, where they can express the above views directly to them, concerning the site at the market.

"Submitted please for your information and report to the Minister in due course." That was signed on November 23, 1984.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not like honourable Members getting in this Parliament and, either knowingly or unknowingly, misleading and giving wrong motives to my decisions, and imputing dishonourable motives to me in Parliament, and I would like the records to so speak.

Mr. Speaker, when the same Barbados Labour Party Administration decided on Speightstown, knowing that at Skeete's Bay in St. Philip for the last seven years more fish were landed and there was not even a place there for the fishermen to go in and change their clothes compared with the facilities at Speightstown, I did not hear you say anything about political victimisation in St. Philip then on the selection of the site. But that is what was done.

I only wanted to place on record the full record of that meeting to point out to this Parliament that the honourable Member for St. Peter sought to mislead this Parliament when he said that my decision was based on consultation with five persons.

Thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I shall not be long. I am a little concerned with the trend of the debate, because the Minister is accused of not expounding Government's policy while announcing a decision to abandon the site because it does not conform to Government's policy. I do not believe that the House has been entirely fair to the Minister.

The present Minister of Housing has not, in the last seven and a half months, enunciated any policy for housing in Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party, for the last seven and a half months, has not told the country what its policy is for housing. If he does not have one today,- you can only feel sympathy with him; he may need time. But what he did today was totally in consonance with a man who is walking in a vacuum and who has no policy to tell us, so I do not see why we should get involved in all of this confusion.

The Minister's position in the past seven and a half months makes the whole premise upon which he has predicated this abandonment clear. No policy! I am surprised that he has not abandoned everything that the Labour Party was doing before. But the Minister has the last word, and the Minister, I am sure, perhaps will tell us of some plans he has for specific areas without relating them to any formulated policy of a long term nature that housing development in Barbados demands.

I am not going to go over ground already covered by other Members. As I understand it, and I was in the House at the time of the acquisition, the central issue in that debate was the ridiculous price that was offered by Miss Crane-Scott, acting on the advice of the experts in the Land Valuation Department. The mechanics of the Land Acquisition Act were pointed out, that if the owner of the land was dissatisfied with the price he had a number of choices, including, after exhaustion of negotiation, resort to the High Court for the court to fix the price. It was entirely within the competence of the present Government, if it is their opinion that the price was inadequate as they said early in 1986, while voting for the Resolution, to have renegotiated, and if they could not reach agreement with Mr. Broomes and the others, let Mr. Broome go to court.

On the other hand, the Government did not want to pursue any further negotiations and so they have abandoned it. They have, abandoned it at what price? They have abandoned, well knowing that the previous Administration had expended substantial funds to create infrastructural development in the Six Men's area.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You have -a chance to reply. I do not know about Parkinson. Erskine would know about that. That is in his constituency.

As I understand it, a little way up the road, in the Golden Mile area, the former Administration had laid out 112 or 122 lots. I am not sure of the exact figure.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: One hundred and twelve, I am advised. Roads were put in, water mains were laid. I am not sure about the lights, they may not have put down lights. It would not have been a difficult matter for the Government if lights were not installed to complete the development of services by putting in the lights - they have had seven and a half months so that you would have had 112 lots fully serviced, and it is still not a matter of great difficulty if the Minister wants to use that.

If you are going to move the people from Six Men's, 77 households, you could move them up to Golden Mile.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have heard the figure 77 given in here and if there are 77, 11, 66, whatever, you can move them. 3.35 pjn.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I wish the Minister^ since he is suggesting that I may be on the right track with him, that is, that he may have in mind resiting, if not all, some of these people from Six Men's at Golden Mile, to let us know the conditions upon which these people would be resited. For example, when the Barbados Labour Party formed the Government and we resited people, we used to rehabilitate them to standards even better than before, we fenced them in and so on. If that is going to continue, I want to hear about that.

Since the Minister has indicated that he is going to respond, and perhaps respond to some of those things that I have mentioned, I will leave it at that, Sir, as far as the Minister is concerned. But the Minister not having given in his opening an indication of what he had in mind, he deliberately did not give it to provoke the Member for St. Peter into a speech so that he could come back and counter-punch. Well, you would not get that chance with me.

A sides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Member for St. Peter is whispering to me that that is Government by reaction.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are not leading in anything, they are being led.

He could have saved all of this. Perhaps, if he had explained, the debate would have shut down ever since and we would have gone. It is a legitimate debating tactic and one cannot quarrel with the Minister for that. But the Minister would have to know that on future occasions, when he gets set up, he will get cuffed about, too.

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was disappointed that the Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) talked about victimization, alleged victimization on the part of the Barbados Labour Party Government, and talked about the people who were rehabilitated or resited after the floods in 1984, I believe. He called some names, names which I have no doubt he got from Tallon, the shopkeeper in Around-the-Town.

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tallon the shopkeeper in Around-the-Town is my friend, has been for many years. Wait! Tallon is Winfield Cadogan. Tallon is one of the hardest Dems that you could find in Barbados, almost as hard as Nard or Mafton.

(Aside: Who?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am calling names. Hard Dems!

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How, I though'tto accuse somebody of being a hard Dem in these days when the clock stopped at twenty-four minutes to three. You understand now?

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ....would be a term of endearment.

Tallon ought to know.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Don't give Tallon any more lashes.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, I am going to give Tallon lashes.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Is Tallon a tall man or a short man?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tallon is the landlord of the same Sylvia Collymore whose name was mentioned in here by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir ....

Asides

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is on a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: I draw to Your Honour's attention the rule which relates to the calling of names of persons without notice to Your Honour, Sir.

I know that the debate is going well and the honourable Member may possibly feel that he has to respond, but if in a moment a name might have been dropped here and there, there is no need now for a recitation, Sir.

I draw this to Your Honour's attention.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, - let me turn around and face you — I am appealing to you, Sir. Names were not dropped. A veritable list was read out of certain persons. No attempt was made to exclude those names from the record.

All I am saying, Sir, is that three of those persons whose names were read, and whose names you allowed to remain in the record, Sir, Sylvia Collymore, Lenora Edwards and Elsa Squires, were tenants of a man called Tallon.

Mr. SPEAKER: Names were allowed because they were not in any way reflecting on the character of any one, and I allowed the names.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the honourable Member to discontinue calling names as he is doing.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will not call Tallon's name again, Sir^ nor the three ladies. All I would say, Sir, is that the landlord of those three tenants, on an assumption that those three tenants had voted for the Member for St. Peter and the Barbados Labour Party, gave them

notice and evicted them through the court. Good! I have you! Through the court! Evicted them through the court. There you have three persons who are assumed to be supporters of the Barbados Labour Party evicted and rendered homeless, by a supporter of the Dems!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to get the number of the suit in District E and let your know.

(Aside: He had just cause!)

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Evicted them, Sir!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You hear that, Sir? I remember all about the starvation speech. All right. To evict somebody because they voted for the Barbados Labour Party is to do it with just cause. Thank you!

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, no, no.!)

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Thank you!

Mr. SPEAKER: The asides are too loud.

(Aside: You said through the court.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They were evicted through the court.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not listen to the asides. Mr.

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

He put them out. The Member for St. Peter, as the representative, was faced with this dilemma: three ladies who were evicted and rendered homeless. He had to find somewhere to house them!

Asides.

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Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, tell them do not talk to me. I listened to them and I have not said a word today.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have told you not to listen to asides because I am not hearing asides. There are Standing Orders to deal with those who do not comply with the Rules.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the honourable Mem ber for St. Lucy, he wants dealing with. He is so persistently ....

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not listen to him.

Mr, D. A. C. SIMMONS: But I cannot help hearing, Sir. The high-peaked squeak of his voice is piercing through this ear, Sir.

All I am saying is that, faced with that dilemma, the honourable Member for St. Peter had a duty, a political duty, to assist in the provision of shelter for these people. One was about seventy-five years old.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How old was Fire?

A side.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Fire was about sixty some-thing years old.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am coming to him.

I do not think that honourable Members can pretend to be holier than thou, given those particular extenuating circumstances. 3.45 p.m.

A name has also been called in this debate by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, a Mr. H. Pen — Mr. E. Green.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Green, has been assisted. He was homeless. He has been assisted with a house, Sir, and Mr. Green is in no different circumstance from Mr. Eric Sealy. Indeed, they have similar propen-sities and aspirations. Both have faced the polls. Both have kept political meetings. I better not say any more. If Mr. Eric Sealy can have a house under the present Govern-ment in Kensington Lodge, Mr. H. Pen can have one where he was born in St. Peter. It only makes up for the ten years of neglect when he was chief cook, bottle washer and campaign manager for the honourable Member for St. Lucy — for 10 years! — and never got a house.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: On a point of order: Mr. Speaker, I think the record ought to show that the gentle-man mentioned was never my campaign manager, chief cook nor bottle washer.

Laughter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us get back to the substantive Resolution. No more names.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But I am debating within the framework of the debate. I am replying to the honourable Member for St. Michael South East specifically, Sir, because he was allowed latitude.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have given you the opportunity, too, but there must be a limit.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, he was allowed to deal with these persons, and I claim the same rights and privileges to put the record straight as regards the duties performed by Mr. H. Pen as lieutenant for the present representative for St. Lucy. He was his head canvasser. Do not deny it.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: On a point of order: The gentleman referred .to was never my lieutenant neither was he my canvasser.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, he was the personal political yard fowl of the honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Laughter.

. Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are having a good time.

All I wish to do, Sir, is just to wind up by saying that much of the ground surrounding the acquisition and the present situation with tenants down there has been covered. But I hope that the Minister will be able now, since he has won his tactical battle of coming from behind, to give us in a serious way Government's intentions in respect of those people at Six Men's. They deserve to know. The country deserves to know, Sir.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the longer I remain in this venerable Chamber, the more I am satisfied that the best advice is that one must follow one's own conscience. That conscience leads me to express some concern with the debate this afternoon, as a matter, Sir, to express two concerns. One concern has to do with the procedural matter and the other one has to do with the social matter.

My concern with the procedural leads me to want me to remind myself what exactly is the role of Parliament and what is our role this afternoon and any other time. As I understand it, Sir, we are delegates of the nation of Barbados, all of whom cannot be present here >„ or assembled any one place at any one time, and our responsibility, therefore, is to examine the interest of our nation and the residents of our nation in such a way as to legislate in the best possible manner to bring the greatest good to the greatest number of our residents. If we are going to do that, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that we must do that having all of the facts available at our disposal. Consequently, I have some concern for being asked to make a determination (a) if I have not been involved in the discussion, and (b), if I have not been given some policy guidelines as the basis for my decision making.

Secondly, I am concerned about the social well-being of the people mentioned, and consequently I am concerned to discover whether the allegations made by the members of the Opposition, loud statements by few persons, but loud nonetheless, and in some instances ** clear, Sir, have any foundation whatsoever.

Of course; Mr. Speaker, I hasten to say that I have the utmost confidence in the Minister, and it was because I have that confidence that I have sought to address him in this manner even before the first of the Opposition spokesman led in what was a very emotive reply. He gave me certain assurances regarding his intentions for the people in this area. But though satisfying me will satisfy another, that does not mean that I must not in all conscience express my concern with the procedure, and though I am saying to you, Sir, that I have no doubt whatsoever that the Minister, as the Member for St. Thomas has said, used legitimate debating tactics, if the Barbados Labour Party were the Government, as they were unfortunate to be the Government some ten years ago, and had used that tactic, I would have opposed it, and if my own side used it today I will oppose it. I am not satisfied that that is the kind of approach that I would want to see used if I am going to be asked to make a determination regarding my constituents or the people of Barbados.

Applause.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Sir, moving away from the procedural, I have noted that there has been much concern expressed in other areas and I should wish to give vent to my feelings on some of these. As I said, there is no question that there has been an attempt made, no doubt, because the Opposition understood the legitimate debating tactic that was being used by the Minister, to have certain red-herrings put across the trail so that ** perhaps a writer in one of the daily papers can again say, when action is taken by the Government, Sir, that that action was not taken on the initiative of the Government. Some weeks ago, when the honourable Member for St.

Thomas, apparently reading what was going to happen the same day, said that there should be some 500-odd jobs in the area of Housing and Lands, and where the Minister was able to declare on that same day that there were those jobs, the writer in one of our daily papers was able to indicate that the Member for St. Thomas not only was able to give that raea to the Government to impress the Government, but to get the Government to go and write the Cabinet Paper and to agree at Cabinet level, do all that, and come back within 15 minutes and make that determination.

I read the portion, Mr. Speaker, by some Smith. I do not always read garbage, because any man that says that there should not be any respect given to a person of the character of Charles Duncan O'Neal, but, rather, we should put up a cricketer in his place, is a person who obviously has taken leave of his senses. What amazes me is that the Barbados Labour Party allows him to speak on its behalf. I have the greatest respect for the Leader of the Opposition, and it is that respect that leads me to ask him that in the same way that he is so forthright on other occasions, he should forthrightly dissociate himself from the pennings of such maniacs in their writings as that one appears to be. 3.55 pjn.

Mr. Speaker, I think as I told you earlier, that we should be led by our own consciences, and if I may take the time to just make a slight aside, the Member for St. Thomas was very careful to plead with you for your forbearance and ask that you allow him, who never spoke and never interrupted, to speak in peace. I do not mind asides by anybody else, but I think he should be the last one to interrupt me, Sir.

During the discussion, Mr. Speaker, the debate made mention of extra spots and I think that the Leader of the Opposition asked what I considered to be a rhetorical question. His question was whether in a certain part of the country, if there were extra spots, one would not concern oneself with making sure that certain faithfuls were given those extra spots. I think the area was Simmons Road. My view is that that is a very valid observation, but it was made in the context of houses put on the by-pass to Speightstown. I was of the distinct impression that there were no extra house spots being considered in that area, but there was, if you like, a bypassing of those people who were entitled to the spots and the placing in their place of other individuals for whom there may not have been the same strength of argument in respect to the claims that they were making for housing.

When one puts it in the language of the honourable Member for St. Thomas, he said the honourable Member for St. Peter had a duty to house three persons, and for my purposes I refer to them as three special persons. Again, Sir I have no difficulty with that. My difficulty really is that although the Member for St. Peter, or anybody else, has a duty to take care of three special persons, that taking care of should not be to the detriment of other persons who had, or who have, a prior claim, and a claim of much more substance than the three who were given the special attention.

I would have addressed the matter of the fishing harbour in Speightstown, Sir, but the Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) has spoken most eloquently on that. I therefore get the impression that all we need to say is that, in my view, as a person who would wish to look fairly objectively at what is before us, there cannot be considered to be any element of discrimination in the matter of the Speightstown harbour where the Government and the Minister are acting not merely on the advice of the bureaucrats and the technocrats, but on the advice of a large enough number of persons from the immediate area, large enough that they might be called constituent members delegated by the general people in that area to speak in their behalf. Therefore, Sir, when one removes the emotion from the argument I think we have to come down to one fundamental point, that what we have ourselves faced with today is not really any question of discrimination, and certainly not any political victimisation although we might have avoided that criticism by another approach.

Sir, I am of the view that we need to be careful about the language we use, language like political victimisation. When that comes, Mr. Speaker, from the members of the Opposition, I am minded to recall that my job as a trade unionist and a representative of the working people of Barbados had been made very very difficult during the period of 1976 to 1986, made particularly difficult because there was a blatant, unmitigated, vicious series of examples of political victimisation by the Government of that period, the Barbados Labour Party. I refer, Sir, to the example at the BMC where when once the Barbados Labour Party had become the Government of the day, with Independence being the holiday just before, the person who had it within his power to dismiss or to keep people in their employment was prepared to send home 50 workers at the BMC. When I made representation to him he had the temerity to become abusive because, in his view, those people should be dismissed and subsequently others employed in their place. That was political victimisation.

Furthermore, Sir, there was the matter of the National Housing Corporation where there was similar treatment, not only of the staff but treatment of the tenants as well, and it becomes a very serious matter. You see, Mr. Speaker, it is my view that if you go and you take that kind of action against a person.....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order: Since the honourable Member is talking now of the National Housing Corporation between 1976

and 1986, I wish it to be known I was Chairman from 1976 to September 1979. If he is talking of any incidents during my tenure, I would hope he would give the specifics.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for St. Thomas very much for raising that question, because I am sure that he is aware that I have no adverse comments to make about the time during which he served at the National Housing Corporation. My biggest concern relates to the time when he dealt with the people at the Transport Board. It was only at that stage, when he spoke to a meeting of the constituency branch of Christ Church West, that I was forced to ask myself how wise I was in maintaining that same level of thinking regarding his own position. But I am not going to make any references to that in this Chamber this afternoon.

By and large, when the Member for St. Thomas was Chairman of the National Housing Corporation and I had occasion to meet with him, he was able to see the point that I made when I made it, so I did not have to make it too often to him. I give him credit for having the kind of sense to realise that I make the point most of the time. So when I refer to the National Housing Corporation I would like him to be assured that I refer to the National Housing Corporation outside the period during which he served.

I refer, though, to CBC, and again he served at CBC and I refer to CBC throughout the entire period 1976 to 1986*. I am sorry that on this occasion I cannot make any distinction in the period. There are .....

Aside.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not normally listen to asides, but I am very pleased today to hear the Member for St. Thomas admit that Eddie Reid was unfairly dismissed by the CBC during the time that he was Chairman of that Board. 4.05 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir - I have been an old fox too long — I have never made a speech in here referring to any Eddie Reid who was wrongly dismissed, or otherwise harshly dealt with, or wrongfully treated. Not me, Sir, and I would welcome your protection since I have not made a speech, Sir, and the honourable Member for St. Michael Central, who is now sitting, has sought to drag me into the debate.

I would like those words expunged, Sir, because I never said anything about Eddie Reid during the debate, Never, Sir!

Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: While we are on this alleged point of order, I think the debate should confine itself to the Resolution before us. Any other mention of irrelevant ^ matter will not catch my attention and, furthermore, I am likely to ask that it be struck from the record.

I am going to ask the honourable Member to continue his speech on the substance before us.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you have been advising persons who will speak after me, because I am sure you will recognize that I have spoken only to the subject.

Laughter.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I was saying, Sir, that I was very appreciative of the comments made a few moments ago by the honourable Member for St. Thomas. When one thinks of CBC especially, one is forced to hang one's head in shame because the policy became one which was **• so obvious that the question was in Barbados, 'Are you working at CBC? When is the date of your disappointment?' That is-to say, were you appointed, when is the date of your disappointment? Because it was known that as long as the Government of the day remained the Government, you were bound to be terminated unless you were prepared, without question, to accept the directions that were political, whether you were a news reporter, a person playing music or a manager of the corporation.

I think, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that whichever side forms the Government, we have to be covered by one basic accepted position, and that position, Mr. Speaker, is that we always be guided by our conscience. I accept that the the honourable Member for St. Peter, in my view, having y_ some concerns about the people of St. Peter, went, as it were, at the front of the race, without recognizing that somewhere along the road the Minister responsible would know that he would have additional information that he would present and it is quite possible — as a matter of fact, it is my considered view — that he has, in doing so, not recognized that there would have been an ace somewhere at the bottom of the pack. I am satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that what we shall hear at some stage in this debate, perhaps very shortly, will be a statement from the Minister responsible which will put our minds at rest regarding the persons who live in that area of St. Peter. But, having said that, I need still to make my point, whether it may be considered by some that I have pleaded a case for one person or another, that I plead a case for where I stand as a Member of this august body, and I must stand on that position where I speak as I see it.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, this is the third occasion that I had the opportunity to come to this

Honourable House for the abandonment of an acquisition done by the former Administration. On the second occasion, when we were abandoning the acquisition at Fair field House, I spoke for one and a half minutes, and there was no objection from over there, or any quarrel, about my just speaking for one and a half minutes.

As a minister, one has to decide how one handles his portfolio, whether it is in the House of Assembly, or whether it is in the outside field, or not. Obviously there are different ways of doing different things and certain persons might feel aggrieved about the way certain things are done. I deliberately chose the way I chose today because I knew that Six Men's was going to be the emotive issue as far as the honourable Member for St. Peter was concerned and that he would have put all sorts of principles through the window, throw away principles, and that he would go down the line of emotionalism. That is precisely what he did.

The honourable Member for St. Peter is in the habit of going into Six Men's and inciting those persons down there. You heard him sit down here today and said.....

Asides

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I submit to the House, as representative of the constituency of St. Peter, that I am entitled to go into any part of my constituency to speak to my constituents without my motives being coloured by describing my actions as "inciting". I submit that that word is unparliamentary and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will not rule that that is unparliamentary.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will proceed.

I sat in my seat here today and I heard the honourable Member for St. Peter saying that the Cabinet of the Democratic Labour Party could not stop in Six Men's. What conclusion would you draw from a statement like that?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir: Whatever may have been Your Honour's ruling formerly, in my view the Minister has compounded and made it quite clear that he is accusing the honourable Member of improper motives in inciting people to run the Cabinet of Barbados from stopping at Six Men's. That is a clear implication of his allegations, and I am asking, in the circumstances, that Your Honour, in the light of the way he has developed his point, should reconsider the matter, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the honourable Member to withdraw it in light of the explanation he gave. If he had stopped short at "inciting", all right, but when he qualified it.....

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Statement withdrawn, but the point has to be made that we did stop in Six Men's.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue. The first issue here deals with the policy of this Government. I stated at the beginning, when I made my introductory remarks, that this acquisition at Six Men's was against the policy of this Administration. There are many reasons why I made that statement and I will give you a few of them.

This Administration does not believe that decisions, and serious decisions, should be made *in an ad hoc* and haphazard manner. I am going to read how the Six Men's file starts — a letter from Owen Arthur, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Planning, and he addressed it to the Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, M.P.

"Dear Minister,

We spoke briefly in Parliament regarding the urgency of resiting the persons now living on the seaward side of Six Men's".

You see how it started? With that we have no quarrel. I go on.

"Indeed, I attach a higher priority to this than the resumption of work at Maynards."

Are you surprised that Maynards took from 1981 to 1986 to finish? 4.15 pjn.

"Indeed I attach a higher priority to this than the resumption of work at Maynards since the danger is much more real and the likely embarrassment very high."

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: This is the paragraph that is very, very enlightening. Listen!

"I am advised that the Ministry of Transport and Works has started work on the realignment of the road at Retreat, Six Men's, and I do feel that surveying work shall begin at the earliest opportunity."

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The grammar is wrong, but we do not bother about it.

Laughter.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The point that I am making here is that he started off by saying that there is an urgency of resiting the persons now living on the seaward side of Six Men's.

The third paragraph goes on to say:

"Realignment of the road at Retreat, Six Men's and I do feel that surveying work shall begin at the earliest opportunity."

Where should the surveying work go on? You have to state it here. You did not state it. What I am getting at is this: you started off with something that everyone could agree with and then in the third paragraph no person, apart from you and the person you had spoken to that you started out with, knew what you were talking about. I read the file. I went through the file.

I will go further, and let me explain what was happening with the last Administration prior to May, 1986. Every single candidate of the Barbados Labour Party was in desperate straits. Each one! So about eight of them would ask, each one must have a playing field in his area. Check the files! Certain people wanted about ten in their area. Then another five or six of them wanted six or eight recreational centres because they were desperately looking for votes. Those persons who could not see any way of getting recreational centres or playing field?, they ended up begging for tenantries. That is why I say that this is not the policy of the Democratic Labour Party. We do not operate in an *ad hoc* manner. It has to be well thought out when you are going to designate tenantries and when you are going to spend the taxpayers' money in tenantries. This is not what had been taking place. People were looking at election time for projects to catch votes.

Less than half mile up the road from Six Men's Tenantry, at Golden Mile, there were 112 lots available. One hundred and twelve lots are available! There are only 16 houses at Six Men's on the seaward side to be removed. Only 16! Do you see where I am coming from? He said that the urgency is moving the 16 on the seaward side, but he went to purchase 26 acres of land for the 16 people on the seaward side — 26 acres! — when you had 112 lots up at Golden Mile.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the Minister would give way: It is a pity that the Minister has to hide his speech at the end rather than make it where he can be answered. But, Sir, in the speech that was made, it was clearly pointed out — and the Minister has not yet replied, do not mind how he is carrying on, Sir — that the acquisition was for the purpose of - and I made the points in my speech, if he would refer to it: (1) Improving the coastal position because of the urgency of coastal erosion; (2) to resite the persons who were threatened by that coastal erosion; (3) to put in infrastructure; (4) to provide a low income housing development for that area; and (5), to keep the community together. Which of those does he disagree with?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Let me read the first paragraph, Mr. Speaker, from the Cabinet Paper, Cabinet Paper April 9, 1985. This is the first Cabinet Paper that they took to acquire this land:

"It is proposed to acquire an area of approximately 11.19 hectares, 27.66 acres of land at Six Men's St. Peter for the purpose of housing development."

That is what is here - "for the purpose of housing development." Okay.

Asides.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Housing development.)

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Housing development, nothing that we were talking about! You see what is here in the file?

The point that I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that if you have 112 lots further up, you only need to remove 16 families, why go and spend Government's money in acquiring nearly 30 acres when you say that the urgency is moving the 16?

We are going to resite those persons on the seaward side of Six Men's at Golden Mile. We are going also to resite those persons who got flooded out and up to now they are still living in other people's homes, while they could give people who never got flooded out homes that they specifically said were for floods victims. The flood victims are still living all over Barbados.

What is worse, they took the flood victims' houses and dropped them down in Spring Hall, just dropped them on the ground, and not a single one of those houses can be repaired. Not one! So this present Administration has to rebuild 20 new houses for those persons. We had to put in the Estimates this year a sum of $600 000 to replace those 20 houses that you all just dropped on the ground at Spring Hall. I was so ashamed when I went visiting St. Lucy with the honourable representative for St. Lucy that I could not even look at the houses. Could not look at them! You all should be ashamed!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Labour Party has no shame.)

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: That is true.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Let me go further about the position at Six Men's. They were offering the people at Six Men's $1.10 per acre for their land, which is less that half cent a square foot. So the point here is obviously not only that the owners of the land had other things to do with the land, obviously, the owners would object any time you offer that price to people. They will object. But the people had other plans for the area.

I am going to respond quickly to the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), because each time he gets up in this Honourable House, he has been told time and time again that someone of his standing should never do it, but he keeps letting himself down in here every time. He gets up in here on each occasion and says that when a Resolution came up in Parliament, nobody spoke against it.

When you come to Parliament with a Resolution for acquiring land, certain protests come from other people. We did not have them. The Government is the only people who have them so if you come to Parliament to acquire land the Opposition Members are not in control. They do not have in their hands the letters that you will have protesting the acquisition. So it is a simple matter that you will agree with the. acquisition of the land. We pointed out this thing when we dealt with the Fairfield House.

They come to Parliament, they never tell you the number of persons who are protesting against the acquisition of the land, so the point is that you go ahead with the Resolution. Then he gets up in here on each occasion and says that nobody voted against the acquisition. That is no point, because the Opposition is not in receipt of any protests when you go to acquire people's land so, normally, any Opposition agrees with that position. It was pointed out to you with the Fairfield House that whereas Minister Hall was in receipt of certain information, because that is in his constituency, other representatives in the House of Assembly would not have been in receipt of that information. But you say it every time!

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am sorry. The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central.

The point that we are getting at is that we do not believe in emotionalism. I knew that the honourable Member for St. Peter would have been emotional because of a lot of reasons. He has not in the debate sat down and looked at the expenditure of Government's money to see whether it was necessary to spend that large amount of money on 27 or 30 acres when you already had land up the road. 4.25 pjn.

The other point that was made in this Honourable House was the point that Six Men's formed part of the World Bank Low Income Development Scheme. Mr. Speaker, let me ask you a question: if you are a Government, you have taken over office in this country, are you bound or tied to any decision that was made before you took office? The point I am getting at is that there were about ten tenantries designated for this World Bank project. Only one of them, marginally, was in a constituency held by any member of this Administration when we were in Opposition. All the others were selected in constituencies held by that Administration. Are you telling this Administration that we should go along with whatever decision they made, regardless of what reason that they used for doing it? We cannot operate at that level. You all took your own decisions because you all wanted to feather your own nest. You selected your own tenantries, you disregarded all the tenantries in the constituencies of Members on this side, and now you are quarrelling because we have abandoned some of them, left in some, and put in some new ones. What is wrong with that?

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: In the fulness of time you would find out about that. But we cannot be tied to decisions that you all made in your own self-interest. You have to understand.....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir: I said in my speech to the Minister that they "have abandoned the tenantries in the constituencies now held by the Opposition. Surely, the Minister should reply to that, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Further to that point.....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is clear in Hansard. In Hansard you can have a point of order on a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it was not a point of order. He raised a point of explanation.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Let me say this that Stage 2, Thomas Gap, is in the constituency of the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt). We abandoned that because we felt that some of the decisions that you all made were wrong. Some of the decisions were wrong. Let me tell you about one of the other decisions that they made.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: When the Leader of the Opposition gets up in this House and

tells this Honourable Chamber a statement of fact and challenges the Minister, when the Minister gets up and makes it clear that he is mistaken, he should apologize to this House. He challenged the Minister and the Minister gave him information, and he did not have the courage or decency to say that he is sorry.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He is not man enough to doit.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, there has never been any doubt about my manhood.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Oh Lord!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Never fear - it is the former experience, Sir.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There is no doubt about his manhood. The question is whether it is enough of it.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: As the honourable Member knows, it is shown very clearly in this country, Sir. But I will assure the honourable Member I would not prove it on him, Sir.

Laughter

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir: What I said to the Honourable Minister, Sir, was not whether or not he has abandoned one in Thomas Tenantry, Phase 2, although if you read today's Press, Thomas Tenantry, Phase 1, is going on. I am saying to him that I have been informed, and I do not mind if he can contradict me, that the tenantries designated for development in the constituencies of the three Opposition Members have been abandoned. That is what I said, Sir.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: That is not true, Mr. Speaker. All I have to say is that that is not true.

Let me go further about this tenantry scheme with this World Bank low income housing and what the past Administration did. Would you believe that in those .....

Asides

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, would you believe that in this designation they somehow contrived to select three areas for designations in the constituency of the last Prime Minister — and there are three in an area less than about two square miles! Three in that constituency - Scarborough, Oistins, and another one which name I do not remember! So you understand how the decisions were being made by the past Administration. The decisions were made in order to get votes for those people. But he was still beaten by the honourable Member here, and they have now landed us into serious trouble as far as those designations in that constituency are concerned. Let me explain it to you.

Asides

Hon. H. A BLACKMAN: We are riot going to ban nobody. You can be sure about that.

If you say the reason for designating a tenantry is because of the lack of roads and then you foolishly, before you designate the tenantry, go in and put in roads — well, there is no reason to designate the tenantry anymore. That is the problem that we have in Scarborough today and a lot of people do not understand that. Anybody who knows Scarborough knows that Scarborough before the roads were put in, was in a state that nobody could get in or out when rain fell. But when the former Prime Minister went in just before elections and put roads in there, what did the people say? People said, 'We got roads now. There is no way we are going to sell the land anymore.' This was the basic trouble, and this is what the past Administration was doing all the tune. The past Administration was putting in roads in tenantries before designating them. You would remember me mentioning in here on about three occasions that this was done in Long Gap and in Parkinson Field, where over $250 000 was spent in those areas that we cannot get back, because they went in, despite and against the advice of people in the Ministry. They just went in and put in roads, and then you discover that you cannot get back the money anymore. That is the whole situation.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that the past Administration, because of the manner in which they used to make decisions, has put this Administration in the sort of situation where we have to sit down and look at all of the decisions that were made by the previous Government. The stupid ones that we can get rid of, we are getting rid of. The stupid ones that we cannot get rid of, we have to live with. It is as simple as that.

Mr. Speaker, the decision as far as Six Men's is concerned is that the 16 people to the seaward side are going to be relocated at Golden Mile, up by Heywoods, and we are coming here today to abandon the acquisition of those 30 acres down the other side.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause.

4.35 p.m.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon L. E SANDIFORD, Hon. B. M. TAITT, Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN, Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, Hon. W. W. HALL, Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH, Mr. R. L. MORRIS, Dr. E. A. SIMMONS, Mr. P. J. MILLER, Mr. R. P. BYER, Mr. J. J. PAYNE, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, Mr. E. E. BOURNE and Mr. C. A. NEBLETT - 17.

Noes: Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS and Mr. O. S. ARTHUR - 3.

Abstention: Mr. C. L. TROTMAN.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government's Business.

PRIVATE MEMBER'S BUSINESS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that Private Members' Business be now taken.

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

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Order No. 2.

RESOLUTION URGING THE ERECTION OF A STATUE TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE DOCTOR CHARLES DUNCAN O'NEAL

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the lateness of the hour, but I believe that this is a matter of national importance, that we need to debate it within the walls of this august Assembly.

There has been a great deal of talk on this important matter in the public domain, but I am not always satisfied that the treatment meted out to such matters on political platforms or in the streets, or for that matter in the editorial or in the guest columns of the daily newspapers, give us the weight of deliberation that we need when we discuss matters such as these.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are some persons in this Chamber today, whom I may call eminent contemporaries of our own, who will, maybe hundreds of years from now, maybe 100 years from now, 50 years from now, be discussed by those to come who will have to make certain judgments upon them — whether they were Barbadian heroes, whether they were persons who made outstanding contributions to the community - but these will be decisions that will be made in the fullness of time. Unfortunately, Sir, man is not generally gifted with the ability to analyse persons who live and move around them. Being too close to a person, and not necessarily close in the sense that you are intimate with that person's life but living at the same time as a person, often does not give us the objectivity to assess the persons's contribution.

I am of a nature, Sir, to be wary in discussing the merit of a person who is alive, or for that matter a person who passed on just recently, especially in countries like Barbados where we have a tradition of not saying ill of the dead, even though we might have certain opinions, real opinions, about the dead's merits, because Barbadians are a charitable people and they try not to point blame at persons' behaviour and persons' lives. In the case of Dr. Charles Duncan O'Neal, Sir, who passed away over 50 years ago, I think there has been a sufficiency of time for us to evaluate the contribution that he has made to this country of ours.

I would like to suggest that when you are trying to evaluate that type of contribution, there are a number of parameters that have to be established, there are a number of characteristics that one would want to look towards. I think one has to look at the person's personal accomplishments, and although some people think that we are necessarily looking at educational accomplishments — for instance, the type of school attended by the person, whether the person got a degree or not — I am saying that these are not really overriding considerations in personal accomplishments, but they are weighty considerations. The way how we use our lives, given equal opportunities, will determine the types of persons that we are. We are given access to various opportunities, that is where we are equal, but then we have to make use of these opportuAities.

I dare say that in terms of Charles Duncan O'Neal's use of his life in terms of his personal accomplishments, if you put him in the period which he lived, and if you look at his academic and professional qualifications, there is very little you can say negative about the man, because going to Edinburgh at the turn of the century and winning a blue ribbon in surgery was no mean accomplishment. This was no G.P. we are talking about, this was a shining star in terms of surgery — that is his academic and professional qualification — and he went on to build a magnificent practice in Trinidad and returned here to work among the poor. He established a clientele among the poor people of this country.

I have heard no one anywhere point fingers at the academic and intellectual accomplishments of this man. I have heard people making carping criticisms that he could not speak well in public. I never considered that to be a very important characteristic of an eminent person. There are some persons who cannot deliver themselves

well in speech but who can write very well, or who can get across sufficiently to be able to influence people about what they want to see done. I believe in public life it is good that you can speak well, that you can be fluent and eloquent, but few are gifted in that direction, Even in this august Chamber there are very few people who can sway numbers because of their felicity of expression, so I do not see that as any major detraction from the eminent doctor.

One has to look at his contribution to national life. Any great person, I think, who you want to single out for honour such as the honour that my party and I would like to see bestowed on Dr. Charles Duncan O'Neal should make a contribution to national life. There are few persons in the history of this country who could claim a better contribution to the national life of Barbados. 4.45 p.m.

Sir, I make no bones when I say that, as far as I am concerned, national life in Barbados started yesterday in historical terms. Much of the history of the plantocracy and the white people of this country is not my history. I separate myself from that history, to a large extent. I make no bones in saying that. We share only this land mass.

The recorded history of the people of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is basically not my history. It might be the history of Barbados. I am not saying nay to that, but it is not my history. My people were masters of slaves on plantations. There are no records of them. Their individual names did not count. The persons whose pictures are going to be around, the persons whose biographies would have been written, are people whose lives would have impinged on mine to a certain extent, but they are not part of my history in any real sense.

My history started later than that, and my history is now to be written — now and in the future. I am very clear about that. My history started, for instance, when Charles Duncan O'Neal came back here from Trinidad in 1923 and started to look around, and in 1924 formed the Democratic League. There was one coloured person in the House of Assembly, Henry Walter Reece in St. Lucy, the one who could have been acknowledged as being coloured, slightly coloured. He had the little taint in there, but nothing you would recognize by looking. But look at this now. This is part of my history, the persons you see in here on both sides. This is part of my history. The other part is only incidental in the course of actions in Barbados, as far as I am concerned.

I have no problems with stating very clearly that the history of slavery, the history of post-slavery times as it relates to black people, is, as far as I am concerned, the only real history in this country, I have no problem with that whatsoever, because I come from a tradition that I cannot deny, a black tradition, an African tradition, which is now a Barbadian tradition and will move on from that kind of basis.

The man who started the Democratic League, the first attempt at a political party in this country, was Charles Duncan O'Neal. He formed the -Working Men's Association, the first attempt at an organisation that embraced within it the elements of a trade union, a co-operative association and a friend society — the three of them combined started in 1926. That is contribution to national development. You cannot question it.

It is not a matter of how long the organisation lasted. It is not a matter of the virility of that organisation, because you have to put that organisation within the context of the time in which it was started. In other words, I could ask you to look at any other Caribbean country and tell me about similar organisations that lasted longer or did better. Or even further, why do we have to restrict ourselves to the Caribbean? Tell me what was happening in Africa. Tell me what was happening in Australia and certain parts of Europe. Were the kinds of organisations we know now viable at the time when he tried these experiments and did they do any better than he did? There is no real comparison between him and somebody who came later in a different environment and a different time. We have to put the matter within the context of the time in which he lived. He made a massive contribution to national life.

The third criterion is that that person should offer selfless and noble dedication to helping others. From my perspective, those others must necessarily be the deprived and dispossessed in a community, because there are some people who offer dedication to helping persons like themselves, and some of them are people in relatively good standing, looking at the conditions of this society. In other words, there are some who came back from England as lawyers and they felt that the only society that was good enough for them was a society of their own, lawyers. We know some of the persons who would fall into that category.

As to selfless and noble dedication to helping others, I think Charles Duncan O'Neal must easily qualify. He died a poor and broken man in his 50s, a relatively young man. He had nothing to show for him, and we are talking about a surgeon specialist, because he never saw life in terms of accumulating for himself, but when he established his practice in the area of Reed Street and so on, we know exactly to whom he was catering, it is a simple matter. Nobody can question the fact that he dedicated his life to helping other people.

He put his money out of his pockets. He did not borrow from anybody, he could not go to any Develop-

ment Bank or any other bank to get money to start a co-operative in 1926. It came out of his pocket, and when it folded, it was his money that folded it. There is no question about that selfless and noble dedication to helping others.

Exemplary conduct in public life. I have read somebody who suggested that he could not have been a hero, maybe Percy Smith or somebody of that ilk. He was considered to be arrogant.

(Aside: Sir Ronald Mapp.)

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It was Sir Ronald Mapp? I do not know. You might have knowledge that I do not know, but if you say so, it might very well be him, because I know what his own position is on it. I have heard him say that, but I do not know if Percy Smith is Sir Ronald Mapp. I do not know that.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I do not know that. That was an aside. I did not take it seriously.

A charge of arrogance has been pointed at the man. Somebody claimed that Hilton Vaughan said that O'Neal was arrogant, he did not listen to anybody, and that Erskine Ward said that he was arrogant. There is a style in Barbados that if they want to condemn you as a person, you point at somebody who said something about you. I suggest that you have to look at the person who does the pointing first. I am not necessarily saying that one cannot take the word of the late Hilton Vaughan, nor the late Erskine Ward, but I am saying that when certain persons say certain things about you, sometimes when people take it as negative others might interpret it as being positive.

If arrogance meant that he took a particular line in terms of representing workers and he had a particular philosophy which others felt was not suitable or applicable at the time but the person was unflinching in that particular line, that could be considered arrogance, but it could be considered by others to be dedication to political philosophy. It could be considered as self-confidence and a total understanding of yourself and where you wanted to go. The others who criticized you might have wavered from time to time, as those who criticized him wavered so they could call him arrogant because he stuck to his point of view.

He never changed. He was unlike the late Erskine Ward who came out as *audax,* supporting it, and then took a magistracy in 1930 and move to the other side or like Grantley Adams, who tried to get the position of Solicitor General in 1936, and if he had succeeded in getting that he would have gone on, perhaps, to become the Attorney General and Chief Justice of the country and he would never be leading any Labour Party in this country. He tried to get on the ladder, he did not get there and things might have changed, but I am talking about a man who stuck to a particular philosophy and along certain principles, and he suffered in this material life for it. He suffered when he was alive because he stuck to those principles. He did not change.

He displayed another characteristic that I think is very important if you are going to elevate persons to that level for this kind of recognition. He was influential to those who followed him. Your life must not only be good in itself but it must be exemplary and a beacon for others, and there must be, demonstrably, a group of persons who have come after you and who have seen good in your life and want to follow it. I am suggesting that the formation of the Democratic Labour Party is largely based on the example led by Charles Duncan O'Neal and the Democratic League, and he was very, very surely the spiritual forebearer of the Democratic Labour Party. There are several persons who have studied his philosophy and who can identify with him.

I believe, therefore, that he fulfils a number of these criteria which would establish him as one set apart from the many. I believe, last of all, that the, scrutiny of his career, what he did would stand the test of time. I believe the 50 years that have gone by have given enough time to examine what he has done, and I believe that he stands tall in that examination. 4.55 pjn.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, hundreds of thousands of Barbadians would have passed in life across this small island. Hundreds of thousands would have been born, lived and died, and out of all of those, there will only be a few throughout history that we will want to stand up and say they were outstanding Barbadians. It is very difficult to merit that kind of appreciation from our fellow persons. There are some of us here about whom we have some intimations of where they will be going in terms of our esteem for them in future life, who we know will follow these particular criteria. There would not be many, because we would acknowledge that some were good people, some were outstanding people, but very few will be among the select that we can say that they were innovators, that they stood out from among the many.

We are a young country and it might be very early to have been thinking in terms of whom we want to elevate to certain positions. That is true, we are just starting. But I am suggesting that we cannot wait until we are 500 years old as a nation, or 3 000 years old, before we start establishing respect for certain persons. This Resolution talks of Charles Duncan O'Neal, but I am not leaving outside of the purview of the discussions the fact that there are other persons, and there will be consensus on who these persons are, who will be in that small group of persons that we will want to recognize in a similar way. This speaks of Charles Duncan O'Neal for a particular purpose, because it is coming at a particular

time and under certain circumstances. It does not mean that we do not recognize other persons who would fall in this purview.

So the Resolution is not, as I see it, addressed to a person. It is addressed to a principle which I would like to be accepted, which is, that we have to respect persons in Barbados who have made an important contribution. We have to elevate them to certain levels as examples for others to emulate and to follow, because today we find that our children are without heroes, they are without persons to emulate. It is different from America and England and those countries that have long traditions and understand respect, understand how to respect their own persons. There are good things about those countries. You are not a civilization for so many years without developing certain things that will stand the test of time. People talk about the achievements of the Japanese economy. The achievements of the Japanese economy is based on Japanese culture, understanding who they are, respecting their own and having heroes that they can worship and follow. The same thing goes for America.

I want to make the point, generally speaking, we tend to identify our heroes with the realm of politics. We tend to think you have to be a politician to be a hero, an outstanding person. It is not true. There are brilliant lawyers, brilliant doctors, et cetera, but because politics happens to be the realm of activity where people become more known, more popular, let us say, they tended to be bandied as the heroes. The time will come when our her»es will have to include cricketers if they really deserve it, if they can live up to the various criteria, because we might come up to one or two but not all. It might include engineers. I would love to see the day when we have outstanding engineers and architects, et cetera. It just so happens that the society is too young and we have not really started to push these people up. They are not appearing yet to the kind of level that we can have satisfaction that these people will have that kind of national recognition. Part of that problem, of course, is that we do not know who we are.

I looked at Rasta paintings recently and, I tell you, I see some signs of greatness in our Rasta painters that for the last 30, 40 years you could not have seen it in our artists we had. We had competent artists, but I am beginning to see great artists in Barbados, not just competent artists, so that when you look at the paintings you feel something inside you that you did not feel before when you looked at certain paintings. I am starting to see something that is really Barbadian, something that is different and something that is great. Maybe we would never accept them as being great because of their locks and other things, but in terms of their art, I am seeing a different kind of art coming out of this country because of accepting who we are, which is vitally important. It is extremely important that we do that.

Looking to the future, we know that great people will be coming out of various strains, but I want you to recognize that here we have a person who is a Barbadian hero. There is no question about that. I do not see "* how there could be questions about Charles Duncan O'Neal being a Barbadian hero, a person of outstanding qualities and characteristics in this country. We produced Charles Duncan O'Neal. He could not stay out of Barbados. We tend to forget that he was a politician in England, a successful politician in his early stages. He left that to come back to the Caribbean. He just could not leave the Caribbean!

Between 1924 and 1936, when he died, political life was transformed in this country, when he formed the Democratic League in 1924 in the Ivy and he was the first person to push to see Chrissie Brathwaite land in the House of Assembly, and the white people said that we are polluting the holy of holies. A black man coming in here? A shopkeeper? Polluting the holy of holies! He should not be in here! By pushing, by the time he got down to about 1936, there were about six or eight, around that number. People like W. W. Reece came in, F. A. Holder — Sir Frank Holder — J. C. came in later, Lion? You had Elder, Charlie Elder. You had, as I said, Erskine Ward. You had a number of persons moving in in that short period of time because of the influence of one person really.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: There are now how many?

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Twenty-six? Who is the outsider?

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Laughter.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: If it were otherwise, if by some quirk of accident something different might have happened, we might have had a different change in the numbers, because the other side was bringing some people like that. But that is not part of this debate.

The point is that it was very important at that time of our development that certain types of persons were able to get into this House of Assembly, in the 1920s, between 1924 and 1936, when Charles Duncan O'Neal departed this scene. We have to study the programme that he brought to the House of Assembly and we have to study how he fought in order to try to get the programme accepted by those who were in the majority at that time. If his life has been said to be one of lack of achievement, •«* it was not for lack of trying. But when there are six of you, divided among 18 of the other side, united, it would have been extremely difficult for the six to have any

positive achievements in the sense that laws were passed in order to facilitate the programme that he wanted to see carried out. I am saying that when you are assessing that kind of person, you cannot assess the person on what was achieved, you have to assess the person on what was attempted. You have to be very, very understanding about that! Because the same thing is true, for instance, of Sir Grantley Adams. When Sir Grantley went in there in 1934, between then and about 1944 he was doing like what Bolivar said; in political terms, he was ploughing the sea, trying to bring about reforms and progressive changes for the masses of people because of the weight of the Opposition. Knowing the person who carried our fight in 1924 down to 1936, when he died, burnt out in Parliament, and we cannot recognize what he did at that time for us, we have to be an ungrateful people. I say that the time is now to show some form of recognition to that kind of person.

I am not talking about abstract things like putting a statue at St. Barnabas to Bussa, for instance. We can recognize that Bussa is a hero, but you cannot write five lines on Bussa. You do not know five minutes of talk about Bussa. He is an important symbol. But if you are willing to do that for Bussa, and I am not saying something should not have been done for him, and we are not willing to do the same thing for somebody like Charles Duncan O'Neal, then something is wrong. In my judgement, something is extremely wrong. 5.05 p.m.

I suggest we have to think in terms like Jamaica, for instance, of establishing an area for our national heroes. I cannot give any real ideas about what the statue should look like or where it should go. I believe there are professionals and experts who can advise us. But if we can accept the principle that Charles Duncan O'Neal must have something substantial to indicate to Barbadians "of all kinds that this person did a great deal to ensure that Barbados is what it is, as putting it on the correct foundation for future development, I believe that that will be important for the younger persons to come in the society.

Mr. Speaker, I am really concerned about morals. I am not one who is happy to say that I feel that the kind of morals we have today, because most of our morals are coming from the television, and other media and so on — will be worthy of emulation by our youth. I am very concerned about the society in which we live as I examine it from day to day, and I believe, Sir, that people who have stood by their values for a long time must be recognized. All of them will not get the same kind of recognition, but I believe that Charles Duncan O'Neal is one of those persons that we will have to respect, now or later, and I think that it is only fitting that with the 21st anniversary of independence approaching, we should try to do something substantial for him. I believe that, as asked for in the Resolution, a representative statue of Charles Duncan O'Neal will be a fitting way to honour him.

He is one of the persons, I am sure, who, if he were alive and at any time was offered a knighthood, would not have taken it. You see, Mr. Speaker, there is a fundamental contradiction in values. I could not be a labour leader and anybody offered me a knighthood and I take it. I could not take it. It would be at extreme variance for me to take a knighthood anytime in my life as long as I am a labour leader. The two things could not go hand in hand. There were certain honours that he could not have taken in his life, and there are honours that he would not take, I am sure, in his after life. I believe that one has to offer honours not in such a way as to compromise people's principles or otherwise. You know some parties will give an honour to a person and say, That is our Knight,' regardless of whether or not that honour continues to compromise the person in terms of the person's status, dignity, or anything else. I am talking to a persons, I am talking to a principle, Sir.

I believe, Sir, that the kind of honour that we have in mind for Dr. Charles Duncan O'Neal is the right type of honour. I, therefore, hope that this House will support the Resolution and at this stage, Sir, I would like to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Applause.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that Resolution and reserve my right to speak. *

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that further consideration of this Resolution be postponed.

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

The question that further consideration of the Resolution be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, that concludes our business for today's sitting.

I beg to move that this sitting do now adjourn until Tuesday, January 27, 1987 at 12 o'clock noon.

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

The question that the House do now stand adjourned until Tuesday, January 27, 1987 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without dr >sion, and Mr. SPEAKER ad/oumed the House accordingly. 5.15 p.m.

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