THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986-91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, March 16, 1987

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.20 a.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. Weekes, (Speaker)
His Honour J. J. Payne, (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow, Q.C., B.Sc., LL.D. (Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Affairs)
Hon. L. E. Sandiford, B.A., M.A. (Econ.) J.P., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education and Culture and Leader of the House)
Hon. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition)
Hon. B. M. Taitt, B.A. (Hons.), M.A., LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Tourism and Industry)
Hon. P. M. Greaves, Q.C., B.A., (Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications)
Hon. E. E. Greaves, B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Trade and Commerce)
Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P. (Edin.), (Minister of Finance)
Dr. D. G. Blackman, B.A., M.A.
Hon. M. A. King, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)
Hon. W. O. Franklin, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
Hon. N. K. Simmons, (Minister of Health)
Hon. H. A. Blackman, B.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Q.C., LL.M.
Mr, O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.)
Mrs. M. Barker-Welch, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development)
Mr. C. V. Walker, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture)
Mr. L. L. Brathwaite, J.P.
Mr. E. Bourne Dr. E. A. Simmons
Hon. W. W. Hall, (Minister of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development) Mr. C. A. Neblett, B.A. Mr. C. L. Trotman, M.A. Mr. R. L. Morris, B.A., Cert. Ed. Mr. P. J. M. Miller Mr. R. P. Byer, LL.B., L.E.C.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Hare-wood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session. MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, March 10, 1987.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of the meeting of the House of Assembly for March 10, 1987 have been recently circulated.

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

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

PAPERS

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay: The Report of the Task Force Committee on Employment.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the instant order of the day.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43, and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this sitting, subject of course, to the rights of all honourable Members, including those of the Members of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

APPROPRIATION ACT 1987

Order No. 1 was called - To move the second reading of a Bill to grant the sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of Barbados for the year ending 31st March, 1988.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, this is the first occasion that the new Administration would be presenting an Appropriation Bill to this Parliament, and we are seeking the approval of Parliament for the provision of a grant of a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund as is set out in the Schedules to the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, when the final figures relating to the out-turn of the Barbados economy for the fiscal year 1986—87 are presented to this Parliament in the not too distant future after March 31, there is going to be a major public embarrassment for the Opposition and for those who have sought over the past nine months to embark on a programme to destabilize the Administration in its early stages and to mislead the public of Barbados. I am absolutely confident that those out-turn figures will show significant growth in the economy of Barbados for the year 1986, and that such growth would be of a balanced nature.

They will also show that the foreign reserves of Barbados remained at adequate levels, despite massive "increases in debt service payments, both by way of interest and amortisation on foreign debt related strictly to previous loans contracted by the past Administration. Most of these have a moratorium of four years, and 1986 would have been the first year when the people of Barbados and its Government had to face the full burden of amortisation and interest payments on those loans.

The figures will also indicate a significant increase in the number of people at work — and without any major Government spending. They will indicate low rates of inflation. They will demonstrate that, contrary to the predictions of certain persons, there was no dramatic rise in imports into Barbados. They will indicate that there was a surplus on the balance of payments for the year 1986. Indeed, Sir, the one area of concern to me will be — I want to stress this — that whereas there have been significant increases in the service sectors of the export capacity of Barbados, in some other areas there was not the kind of performance which one would like to see, but which one could have not anticipated or could not have expected, and no reasonable person could have expected a turn around in our export performance in those areas in a matter of a few months, since they relate to investment, the increase performance of under-utilized capacity within the economy and market development. Therefore, in those areas, as I perceive it, one has to look towards the medium term rather than in the short term. That is why we have elected to focus very heavily on the services area, and the response has been satisfactory. 10.30 a.m.

Those figures, Sir, will also demonstrate that, contrary to what has been said, the fiscal deficit will be well within the limits of propriety, whatever way you look at it. They will also indicate that it was highly irresponsible for anyone at any time ever to suggest that there would have been an adjustment in the exchange rate of Barbados. Above all, Sir, those who stated that this economy would have collapsed as a result of the fiscal measures introduced in this Parliament by the end of December last year must be very embarrassed today. In short, Sir, they will be proved wrong, and they will be proved to be false prophets on every single point which they made during the past year.

I make no apologies, Sir, for giving this overview, which, of course, will be spelt out in mere detail. The actual figures will be brought before this Parliament at the appropriate time, and will be brought before this Parliament at a time when the people of Barbados will have the opportunity to hear what the Government has to say, totally undoctored by those persons who seem to think that it is their duty to promote the cause of the Opposition outside of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, the summary of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure presented to Parliament for 1987_88, that is the next fiscal year, is as follows: Current Revenue, $698.071 million; Current Expenditure, $711.636 million; the projected Current Account deficit, $13.565 million; Capital Expenditure, $176.202 million; and the overall fiscal deficit, $189.76 million.

Sir, if you were to attempt a comparison at this stage with the projections for 1986-87, you will see that the overall position as approved by Parliament was for a deficit of $1870.53 million. That is last year's Estimates. I will have more to say about that as I go through my speech this morning. As a consequence, the Government will be requesting an appropriation of $527 446 597 from the

Consolidated Fund to finance its non-statutory expenditure. A sum of $352 006 485 will be applied to Current Expenditure and $175 440 112 will be applied to Capital Expenditure.

The estimate of revenue for 1987—88 is approximately 9% higher than the revised estimates for 1986-87. As a consequence of the fiscal measures which were implemented in July 1986, the portion of total revenue attributed to taxes on income and profits has declined, and that was a matter of deliberate policy - it was intended that it should decline in order to take the burden off individuals and the productive sectors of the economy - whilst that section of the revenue attributed to indirect taxes has increased substantially. Indeed, Sir, taxes on income and profits are approximately 24.1% of estimated revenue, whereas they were just around 30% in 1986-87. Indirect taxes, that is taxes on goods and services, international trade and stamp duties are 59.8% in the 1987-88 revenue estimates, compared with the estimates of 1986-87.

A review of these Estimates will show that the major areas of Government's Current Expenditure are Personal Emoluments and the service of Government's debt, both local and foreign. Personal emoluments and the associated charges - National Insurance and Transport Levy - account for as much as 44.7% of the estimated Current Expenditure for 1987-88. Indeed, Sir, when the wages and salaries component of the expenditure of statutory boards which the central Government partially or fully funds is taken into account, Personal Emoluments will be more than half of the Government's expenditure. I want to stress that. Personal Emoluments, the expenditure on salaries and wages in the entire public sector of Barbados today, is more than half of the total expenditure of Government, and it is important that that should be stressed in order to give the lie to anyone who suggests that this Government is not making a significant contribution towards employment in Barbados.

But the Government, Sir, is now faced with a situation, I repeat, where loans raised in prior years are now being amortised. As a result, the debt service has increased, and is estimated to be some 18.7% of Current Expenditure of 1987—88. I wish there to be no doubt whatsoever. This has little or nothing to do with any borrowing by this Administration, since the amortisation payments of those loans would not be due until 1990 and beyond. The only component of that would be small interest charges related to interest due in this year, and this massive increase is due to the major loans made by the past Government between 1981 and 1985.

Mr. Speaker, it is in this context that, during the next fiscal year, the Government will continue its efforts to control current expenditure by increasing its effectiveness and improving the overall level of efficiency in the public sector. In particular, efforts will be made to achieve even higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the major revenue collecting agencies in order to reduce the incidence of tax evasion. 10.40 a.m.

This Government has taken a bold initiative, by its fiscal policies, by relieving the burden of Income Tax upon the people of Barbados. We, therefore, expect everyone to play his or her part and pay the portion of taxes which they should pay. We have tried very hard in the area of Customs this year, and we have seen significant results, but there is still a lot to be done in terms of indirect taxes in Barbados. In terms of direct taxes, particularly in the area of P.A.Y.E., and I shall deal with that later, the Government will be making an effort to make sure it collects money due to it on a current basis and the arrears. Collections from P.A.Y.E. in terms of arrears and paying the portions due in the current fiscal year alone would bring in about $20 million in income in terms of Income Tax in Barbados.

It is not unreasonable, Sir, to ask persons who deduct P.A.Y.E. from workers to hand it over to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, because it is not often known that when that money is withheld and not paid, when the worker makes his return at the end of the year, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue has to give a refund to the person whose taxes he has not received so that the Government loses at both ends. It is not fair to the country as a whole for this kind of thing to be done.

In addition, Sir, I have become increasingly concerned over what is happening in the area of the collection of indirect taxes through the Customs Department. It is not only a question of loss of revenue to Government, it also has the potential for doing serious damage to the commercial life of this country, because it is likely that those people who organize to defraud the Government of revenue are the people who will do better in business and force those people who pay their due taxes to the Government out of business. Therefore, we have a duty as a Government to ensure that appropriate levels of propriety are restored to all areas of Government's revenue collection, particularly in the context when we have made every effort to reduce the burden of taxation on the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the Government will have no difficulty whatsoever in financing the fiscal deficit for 1987—88. The major sources of funds will be the Caribbean Development Bank, $5.95 million; the IDB, $41.176 million; the World Bank, $12.048 million; the Venezuelan Investment Fund for Export, $12.291 million.

The Government already, because of its improved image in the capital markets of the world, has several offers available to it to finance the fiscal deficit for the coming year, so there will be no problem whatsoever in

financing the fiscal deficit. I can also give an assurance that there will be no question whatsoever of the Government being forced to allocate to itself any substantial part of the domestic resources of the country, despite the high liquidity, and thereby compromise the private sector and private sector thrust of its policy. There has been appropriate balance between that share which the Government can effectively utilise in terms of domestic savings and what is left to the private sector of Barbados.

Sir, we have done appropriate calculations in relation to our foreign currency requirements in terms of borrowing for 1987—88, and there can be no question that apart from helping to finance certain capital works during 1987—88, a major factor would have to be the refinancing of our foreign debt. The process was started in 1985, I wish to repeat, it was continued in 1986, it will continue in 1987, and that will be the process right through to 1990 unless we can earn enough money through foreign exchange.

A very disastrous bunching of the debt payments due to bad planning by the previous Administration will create this problem for Barbados between 1986 to 1990., I am now fully aware why the bunching has taken place.

The bunching has taken place because, despite all the talking about the international image of the previous Administration, after 1982 they could not get access to market funds in 1983, and they had grave problems in 1984. That is a fact and, indeed, when they ventured first to the Japanese market, it was because other doors were shut to them. There is a lot to be found on the files of Government.

Fortunately, there has been a very positive response to this Administration and I can give an assurance that, as Minister of Finance in this country, I am in the position today to say that I have three offers in the Euro=dollar market to finance our capital programme. It is a matter of which one we take. That is a very fortunate position that Barbados finds itself in today. In fact, one's problem is going to be how to accept one and not the other and indeed to explain in a courteous manner why we have chosen one option and not the other. That is the problem .which one has to face!

Asides

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sidney Alleyne is your good friend, I know that. He has always been. He speaks of you very lovingly and very caringly. 10.50 ajn.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to our capital expenditure. It will be noticed from the Estimates, Sir, by those on the other side who have taken the trouble to look through them, that the Government's Capital Estimates for 1987—88 are largely influenced by large on-going works programmes. These are programmes which the Government inherited, and for which the Government inherited contractual obligations as well.

The Government did a very thorough assessment of what the cost would be to this country, not only in dollar terms but in terms of its relations with international organisations and so on, if it had brought these projects to an abrupt end. The Government, after the very clearest analysis of the implications to this country, particularly because substantial sums of money, many many millions of dollars, had already been buried in these projects, had no choice but to proceed with them. This means, Sir, that as in the part of 1986-87 when this Administration had responsibility for managing the affairs of this country, equally so in 1987—88 there will be little room for the introduction of new projects. The money is already committed largely to projects which have not come to an end, and therefore these projects have to be completed.

Nevertheless, Sir, despite these constraints, we have tried as far as possible in our Capital Estimates to reflect our own sectoral priorities, bearing in mind that the hard core of expenditure in the Capital Estimates would go to projects which we could not stop; which were already in progress, and in which huge sums of money had already been sunk and would have been wasted. What we decided to do was to allocate some additional money in accordance with priorities of the Government. Therefore, Sir, the key sectors of the economy, agriculture, industry, tourism, housing and other services would have had some allocation within the Capital Estimates of 1987-88. We have placed high priority on providing resources to the housing sector and in continuing to preserve and improve the health services of the country, the environment and upgrading our educational facilities. So informing the general construction of the Capital Estimates for 1987-88 was: honouring our obligations, continuing with the hard core of projects which we could not terminate and which are still continuing into 1987-88, and grafting on to that capital expenditure consistent with the priorities of this Administration in order to bring some immediate benefit to the people of Barbados through our capital expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, this Government has repeatedly said that, with much smaller outlays of capital expenditure, it would have been able to generate more jobs and bring far more immediate benefit to the community. When this Honourable House voted $1 million in December for the debushing and beautification programme and supplemented that by $500 000 last week, for approximately $1.5 million, there are about 500 people in employment. There are not as many employed on the $89 million road. That is what I mean by a restructuring and reallocation of our priorities and so defining and tailoring the resources available under expenditure, both of a capital and current

nature, to enhance the developmental progress of the country whilst bringing maximum benefits to the country.

I will now seek, Sir, to give a few indications, without going into too much detail, of certain areas of capital expenditure. The 1987-88 Capital Estimates provide $24.764 million for the agricultural sector in support of the continuation of Government policy to diversify agricultural production in Barbados, to encourage and expand non-sugar agriculture exports, to expand local livestock output, and to provide improved facilities for those engaged in the fishing industry.

In addition, Sir, this Government will be allocating some $2.7 million for the completion of the Scotland District Conservation Project, which will result in the development of better cost effective and technically appropriate solutions to the soil erosion problems of the Scotland District, which accounts for as much as one-seventh of the land area of Barbados, and the strengthening of the institutional capacity for the Soil Conservation Unit to undertake soil conservation work there.

I should point out that the Right Honourable Prime Minister, the Minister responsible for Economic Affairs, has indicated very strongly that he would like to see additional employment generation in this particular area during the coming year. I think that we will so structure our spending in the area to make sure that, as I said before, maximum benefits come in terms of employment. What is emerging, Sir, is a well-structured, cohesive, well-thought out plan by the present Administration.

Sir, also in the area of agriculture, which has benefited somewhat from the EDF funded Back River project, there will also be increased participation in the National Fruit Orchard Project. The project has been allocated $0.3 million which will involve the establishment of a commercial fruit orchard on about 10 hectares of land at Codrington Agricultural Station. The orchard will serve as a demonstration unit. Provision of a line of credit, to be administered by the Barbados National Bank to be lent to farmers, will also be put in place so that they can use that money for the rehabilitation of private fruit orchards.

Funds to the extent of $1.3 million have been provided for the continuation of the Rural Development Project, even though the international funding agency contribution has been disbursed. In other words, the point I am trying to make is that although all the funds the international organisations contributed have been already disbursed, this Government is yet going to continue to put more money into it. Roads, potable and irrigation water, credit and agricultural equipment will all be made available to assist the small holding sector to improve its contribution to agricultural production and to enhance the living standards of the farmers of this country.

In addition, Sir, the World Bank has approved a loan in the sum of $18 million to help finance the agricultural development project to provide a sounder basis for defining agricultural strategy and further improving production and income from non-sugar agriculture. You will find, Sir, that an allocation of $1.15 million has also been made for live stock development.

11.00a.m.

The Government will also provide some $11.3 million for the continuation of work on the Bridgetown Fishing Project.

In the area of industry, the Government recognizes that the manufacturing sector is one of the key pillars of the economy, and, therefore, will continue to assist it. The Government will continue to channel funds, some $3 million, through the Central Bank-administered Industrial Credit Fund. The Government has also entered into an agreement with the IDB to borrow some $12 million, which will be transferred, as a capital contribution, to the Barbados Development Bank. You will notice also, Sir, in the Ministry of Finance's Capital Estimates, there is provision for an allocation of some $4 million as a capital contribution to the Barbados Development Bank, which will be part of the matching funds.

In terms of financing, you will also see that some $ 15 million has had to be provided to meet Barbados' portion of the guarantee debt for the cement plant for 1987-88. The sum of $15 million! I am sure that later in debate, opportunity will be taken to show how we will be able to stop that input. What needs to be done to stop that drain on the Government's resources will be demonstrated quite clearly.

Mr. Speaker, the housing sector, as I indicated earlier, will receive a not insignificant contribution in these Estimates. But this does not in any way represent the totality of funds that would be available through institutions in Barbados as a result of initiatives which the Government will take in the coming year. So what appears in the Estimates does not by any means represent the totality of what would be raised and made available to housing through existing financial institutions.

The Estimates, as they stand, Sir, provide some $3 million for the Urban Improvement Scheme and the World Bank Low Income Housing Project. The estimated cost of the Low Income Housing Project, over time, as you know, is somewhere in the region of $35.2 million and the World Bank is expected to provide some $17.2 million. This is a general overview in terms of our housing policy as it will evolve over time. The project components would be sites

and services, urban upgrading, home improvement, technical assistance for project implementation and for housing sector agencies.

From a financing point of view, you will note from the allocation available to the National Housing Corporation and you will also note that provision is made for the utilization of the USAID-guaranteed loan by the Housing Credit Fund and that there is a grant from USAID for technical assistance. The proceeds of those loans are deposited with the Housing Credit Fund and is on lent to financial institutions to provide loans to eligible low income families. To date, some $15.5 million has been disbursed - $10.031 million went to home improvement and new house construction accounted for $5.46 million. We expect the Barbados Venezuela Housing Project to come onstream this year to provide construction, I gather, of approximately 496 units.

In the health sector, and I said that this is one of the areas which will not be neglected by the Government, the construction of the extension of the QEH will be continued into 1987—88. As you know, this project has been financed partially by a loan from the IDE. The entire, Casualty Department will have to be rebuilt. This will involve demolition of the existing block. That has come about because of defects found in construction, in an effort to get a Casualty Department to meet the needs of the 20th Century and to meet the programme which the Minister of Health would like to introduce in respect of the Casualty. One of the problems you have in that particular area is because the soil conditions in the surrounding area, as you know, makes it virtually impossible to extend the boundaries of the site. We already know what has happened to a building which was built just next door to the Casualty. So the building will have to be demolished and a new building put up.

Apart from that, Sir, progress will be continued this year in relation to the sewering of the west and south coasts. Appropriate funds have been allocated which would be compatible with the stage at which these projects have reached. I do not think I need to go into them in further detail.

Some time ago, Sir, we came to this Honourable House with a Resolution in relation to a World Bank loan for Education. The details were presented by the Minister responsible for Education. I am pleased to say that the Government will be continuing the upgrading and equipping of schools and our training institutions, and that the World Bank programme will be continuing into 1987—88 and a new programme beginning. The total cost, starting in 1987, is estimated at $74.2 million, of which $6.9 million will be contained in this year's Budget. Further details will be given by the appropriate Minister, but it is important that it should be understood that when Estimates are being presented, the Minister of Finance has a duty to indicate to the country not just numbers, but what the money will be spent for. 11.10 ajn.

I have already, Sir, to the fact that a substantial proportion of this year's Estimates and Capital Expenditure would be allocated to ongoing projects. Many of these projects fall specifically within the area of infrastructure and, indeed, they will take up a considerable portion of Government's capital expenditure. Some $22.2 million has been included in the Estimates this year for the Airport to West Coast Road. I will have more to say about that later. What we are doing this year is making an adequate provision and not trying to disguise what we know in advance will have to be disbursed, as was done in the past, and there will be substantial evidence provided to this Parliament of deliberate underestimates. Some $22.2 million will be provided in the Estimates this year.

Secondly, an allocation of $7.3 million has been included for the Access Road to the Cement Plant.

The Government will also be continuing the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Programme. I wonder, Sir, if Members have noticed that since the Democratic Labour Party has taken over office there are much fewer potholes in Barbados. It is a very interesting observation being made by a lot of people, including myself.

Laughter

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, some $8.8 million has been allocated to the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Programme. In addition to improving and maintaining roads, that project will eventually result in $38.1 million in expenditure and will make provision for the acquisition of equipment by the Ministry of Transport and for the institutional strengthening in the Ministry in terms of planning, accounting, cost control, road maintenance, equipment management and other related technical factors.

Mr. Speaker, so far I have given a relatively fair and a pretty comprehensive assessment or analysis of Government's expenditure programme, but I think, Sir, that there are one or two areas that I will have to look at in order that a fuller picture can be presented to this Parliament. I want to have a look, very briefly, at some fiscal matters. Obviously, at this stage, I would not wish to get into too much detail on this.

For the benefit of those who have been spreading maximum propaganda that the Government was broke, that the Government was borrowing excessively and all that sort of thing, I think these basic figures should be made available to the public at this stage. The facts are, Sir, that at the end of February, Government's Current

Account deficit this year was $54.1 million and last year was $36 million. Despite all the talk, despite all the propaganda, the only difference is a matter of $18 million at the end of February on Government's Current Account, Eighteen million not $80 million! You can believe that or not. What we have not been able to do, so Tar, is to keep under control certain areas of capital expenditure, because of contractual obligations. In fact, Government's Expenditure up to the end of February — I want to make it clear that I am speaking of up to the end of February, not for the entire fiscal year — had increased from $106 million to $141 million.

Aside

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I know it is in the Estimates, but I am going to say it, because I am not going to allow any further distortion of Government's position which is likely to damage the image of this country. I am going to go a bit further in due course.

At the moment, Sir, we are projecting a Current Account deficit of $31 million. If anyone were to look into these Estimates, you will see that last year, despite the high levels of taxation, the Government ran a Current Account deficit of $15 million, and the year before, despite the high levels of taxation, a Current Account deficit of $21 million. We are projecting at this moment, although one cannot be absolutely sure because of the high expenditure patterns in March, that the deficit will be $31 million, despite the tax concessions. I want to stress that. It is about time, and I waited a long time because I did not wish to get into any area of speculation anymore. The facts will be revealed in full next month or thereafter, whenever a Budget is brought, and the whole of Barbados will be able to see exactly what happened in terms of Government's finances.

There can be no question that in the immediate months following the introduction of the fiscal proposals, there was some fiscal imbalance. That was a deliberate step by the Government, part of the stimulating effect in expanding domestic demand in terms of what we have forwarded in our Budget, trying to strengthen the resources of the country, and attracting investment by creating a more favourable investment climate in Barbados. But the fact is that our indirect taxes and other revenues have performed even better than we had anticipated, and I would like to say to the people of Barbados, 'We thank you for your support. You used the money made available to you intelligently, and at the moment it looks as though you, the people of Barbados, are generating the jobs and have made sure that the Government's new programme has come through relatively smoothly.'

I am also very happy with the private sector's initiatives today. They have tried, and I hope they will continue to try. I am pleased that they targeted on the area which is likely to bring the quickest response to Barbados and also make fuller use of existing capacity in Barbados within the export sector, and I refer to contributions which were made by the private sector in relation to tourist effort. I publicly thank them now, on behalf of Cabinet, for the efforts they are making to respond to the new fiscal environment created by this Government.

Mr. Speaker, there is one important point I wish to make. If you were to take Government's projections of Expenditure from their last Estimates, then take the Budget which they introduced in April, and then take the loss of revenue which would have been generated by that Budget, because they would not have had the same increase in indirect taxes — if the money is not there to spend, you are not going to get the taxes. They would have been running a much higher deficit than we would end up with this year. As a matter of fact, the past Administration had intended to bring a mini-Budget around October-November to bridge the gap for the tax give-aways that they gave in April without any compensatory means of closing the gap within that Budget. The facts are there - the give-away was $40.6 million, the proposed increased revenue was $15 million, a gap of $25 million! When you add that on to their projected deficit, you will see that their deficit would not have been less than $230 million, unless they had brought another Budget. The only way you could have closed that is either by a mas--sive programme of cutback on your own expenditure or with a new Budget, and bearing in mind the rate of expenditure and the supplementaries that we had to bring here, you will see why they would have had to bring a new Budget last year. 11.20a.m.

Very quietly, Sir, I sit down, go through the files and unravel the whole lot, and I see exactly what happened. You sit at Estimates Committee and you ask questions and you get answers, and you begin to realise what was happening.

That gap of $25 million could be added on to whatever their projected deficit was last year. I would like them to answer that. How were you going to bridge it? Are you going to say that you would not have followed this Government in trying to control expenditure? That is not your philosophy. Your philosophy is the complete opposite. Would you not have brought the supplementaries for areas where there were considerable under-estimates? What would you have done? You could only finance the gap through borrowing. So it is either you would have brought a Budget to close it, which you would have had to do, or you would have had to borrow even at a greater level than this Government borrowed.

There is nothing, Sir, like detailed examination before you speak, and my silence for a long time was very simply, waiting until that area of uncertainty in those early months had gone through the system and we

could see very clearly the end of the tunnel. And we can see it now very clearly for this fiscal year!

Sir, I have already said what the Capital Expenditure has been and indicated what the increase was. There is another index that I want to give to this House to indicate the extent to which this country was misled by the Opposition and those who supported them. On January 31 — and I am not afraid to bring the facts to the House - net Income Tax collections for 1986-87 was $44.1 million less than for the same period in 1985—86. But at the end of the same January 31, 1987 there were increases in Consumption Tax, import duties and stamp duties, and the combined total of these increased by $37.9 million.

I hope honourable Members appreciate the extent of the feedback and the efficacy of the feedback mechanisms in the Barbados economy consequential on the growth stimulated. When that is seen against no significant increase in imports, and when I know as a matter of fact that there was a significant increase in the domestic consumption taxes in Barbados, I know that we did the right thing and I know that we could not have had any serious balance of payments problems.

Not only, Sir, were the levels of those three indirect taxes $37.9 million, but in addition Corporation Tax had increased by $2.4 million, and the Hotel and Restaurant Sales Tax by $2.5 million. So we have $37.9, $2.4 and $2.5, that is $42.4 million on the one side through indirect taxes and $44.1 million through losses. Just ask yourself what all the fuss was about. Losses from Income Tax $44.1 million at the end of January and almost the same amount on the other side.

We believe that when that is traded off for enhanced growth in Barbados, for more jobs for the people, for lower taxation, the effort was worth it. When it is traded off for the cultivation and the creation of a better investment climate, I think it was worth it. Sometimes I wonder about the numeracy of certain honourable Members of this House.

Another point I want to make is that if you take .the monthly statistics of the Central Bank of Barbados and compare Current Revenue performance 1985—86 — they are kept slightly different from central Government statistics, because amortisation payments would have been netted out of those Current Revenue statistics — you will find that Current Revenue performed better in 1986 than in 1985, and I will give you the exact figure as I go further. If you net out the amortisation, as is done by all international bodies, you will see exactly what we are talking about.

Talking about amortisation, Sir, that deficit of $31 million that we are projecting now includes $23 million for the redemption of debentures, for which adequate sinking fund provision was not provided by the previous Administration. In other words, it is a paper transaction, because what happens is that, on the expenditure side, under Charges of Debt you will pay the $23 million but the inflows would be on the Capital side. Unlike Treasury Bills, which will be handled as a below the line account and only the interest payments or the shortfall on the Treasury Bills will become a charge against the Current Revenue, debentures, from a Constitutional point of view and in respect of provisions within the Financial Administration and Audit Act, are handled differently. So of that $31 million, it is not actual expenditure as such, because the debentures would have been rolled over and fully subscribed, but on the expenditure side would show $23 million where you will see the other side the Capital receipts. In real terms, you can subtract $23 million from that $31 million if you want to get some idea of the actual performance in terms of Current Expenditure, because it will be netted out. It will be netted out in the Central Bank's reports, it will be netted out by the International Monetary Fund and it will be netted out by all those organisations that would treat amortisation payments of this nature differently from others. That is a fact.

We have investigated the matter and we know what needs to be done. In other words, if you have $10 million in debentures in Barbados and, if you take a ridiculous situation, you rolled them over 12 times in a year for one reason or another, if you redeem them twelve times in a year, that will reflect in your Current Account as $100 million in expenditure. It would each time you roll them over. I am not surprised you do not know that. But, of course, the Central Bank would then net out the amortisation component, the Capital component, and it will not reflect in your Current Expenditure. 11.30ajn.

I would like to bring one or two other aspects of these Estimates to public attention. One may notice that with the constitutional changes made by the previous Government in respect of teachers, statutory personal emoluments will now be appropriately increased and, therefore, deductions will occur elsewhere. This is a direct consequence of where they are paid from, rather than under the other area of transfers. That is, what would normally be Grants to Public Institutions has declined by some 23.1%, and this is explained by the transfer of the salaries of the teachers from the older secondary schools to Statutory Personal Emoluments. This is a consequence of the constitutional arrangements in respect of the employment of teachers which this Parliament approved under the previous Administration. So that adjustment could account for that.

I have already indicated that there will be an increase in the Charges of Debt to pay the amortisation and the interest on previous debt. We have to meet our obligations and we cannot run the risk of defaulting at any time on any debt payment contracted by a previous Government. If we do, it reflects on the people of Barbados. The debts have to be paid.

Mr. Speaker, I think we have covered a bit of the fiscal path and I will continue a little further. I pointed out, as you will see, that the Commissioner of Inland Revenue Department will now have a lot more time to go after those people who are not paying the tax they should pay, because a substantial number of people will be removed from the roll by the $15 000 proposal, and adequate expertise and staff, if necessary, will be made available to the department to ensure that we reach our revenue goals in respect of Income Tax collections in the next year.

This Government will not be increasing Income Tax. That is our firm position. What we will be doing is increasing the efficiency of collections and making sure that people pay what their dues are and, in particular, pay the money which they have taken out of other people's wages.

We have already seen some improvement, as I adverted to earlier, in respect of the Customs. You will note that we have had some increase in Stamp Duty. They are not that significant, but nevertheless, there has been some increase, one far higher than the import situation would suggest. That is due to increased efficiency. But we have a long way to go, even in the area of Customs and those areas.

Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me if I did not give this Honourable House an additional idea of the kind of expenditures that we had to cope with while seeking to come home within fiscal propriety and tax cuts. As a result of Resolution No. 45 passed by this Honourable House, there was a sum of $3.2 million. That was a result of a mistake by the previous Administration in the calculation of the amount of money payable to Government pensioners. We paid the bill of $3.2 million. You add the $23 million in debentures to $3.2 million and you get • the $26 million.

There was $8 million for the Transport Board relating to a whole backlog of debt, including debt to the National Insurance. These are supplementaries I am talking about. Resolution No. 61, $2.3 million, assistance to persons. I cannot say much about that at the moment. I am just pointing out that that is additional unbudgeted expenditure. You are talking about a deficit? I say $230 million by them would be a small deficit! The facts are here and they cannot be denied!

On the Capital side, Sir, Resolution No. 46, for the sum of $22.2 million. This is added on. Whatever is the Capital Expenditure for this year, you can take off $22.2 million. Do you know what it was? That was purely a paper transaction. That was some money spent since 1983, and in 1984 and 1985 that had never been brought to book. I decided that, in the interest of fiscal propriety, I would bring them all to book this year, so it was brought to book. It would have come in as a capital expenditure and it will come in as a capital receipt. It does not increase your financing gap but it increases your capital expenditure, so let us get that straight. '

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The honourable Member is having a problem with the financing gap and the deficit. I understand.

There was $1.7 million for the housing programme, Current Account. We faced that within the context of the deficit that we are projecting for last year.

There was another Resolution for $22.5 million. This was a deliberate under-estimate by the previous Administration, because the Administration was informed that they would need far more money than was provided for in the Estimates to meet the cost of the Airport to West Coast Road. They put $12.8 million in the Estimates. We had to find $22 million instead of $12.8 million.

All this is reflected in our Capital Expenditure. No wonder they were talking about deficits of $300 million, $280 million and $260 million! I have the exact figures and exactly what they were saying. It is because they knew what they had done. I have the speeches here, and I will either read from them or wait until I hear you speak later. This Government had to look for $70 million to meet contractual obligations, but we are coming in very close to what our projections were despite that.

The access road to the cement plant again had to be supplemented because of inadequate provision. That was done although they were told by the experts and the public servants that that was the level of money that needed to be voted for. I can go on and on. 11.40 a.m.

Despite that, I spent less on Capital Expenditure, because I reorganised and restructured the capital expenditure in the best interest of this nation, in order to leave room this year and more room next year. When those large projects have gone though the system, I hope, by the end of December or early January, to get back to an appropriate capital programme for this country, to generate jobs and create a better life for the people of this country. That will be possible next year, 1988—89, hopefully, depending on the performance of the revenue

by the end of December this year, when these large projects have gone through the system. We have a clear vision, Mr. Speaker, we can see how we can deal with the problem of Government expenditure, how we can control it and how we can restructure it for the benefit of this country.

Sir, there is another area that I think I must deal with. I have asked my Ministry to get the appropriate information from the Central Bank of Barbados on this particular matter. Not only .in the House of Assembly last week, but also in the Other Place on another occasion, it was said that the Government was borrowing hundreds of millions of dollars by way of Treasury Bills. I have included roll-overs that we took over during the period they were in office and the period that we have been in office for the entire fiscal year up to the end of March, and the total increase, Mr. Speaker, is $18.4 million.

I have cautioned before that it is dangerous for people in Opposition not to try to understand basic financial matters before they speak. Fortunately, the banking community in Barbados knows that it is foolishness they were talking. Our last Treasury Bill issue was oversubscribed by $43 million last week. We had to' reject that amount in Treasury Bills. Luckily for us, people see the Opposition and people making those statements in the correct perspective, because statements like that can be damaging, but the financial community knows better. On only one occasion was there a shortfall on Treasury Bills. That total amount of $18.4 million includes accretions under us and accretions under them. I hope this business of Treasury Bills has been clarified once and for all. It is not fair to the public, it is not fair to the country, to make grossly irresponsible and grossly untruthful statements like that, and opportunities like this must be taken when the truth can be told to this nation.

Sir, a lot of people do not know that we are still paying for the IMF loan. Half of it is on the Government books and half on the Central Bank books. As a matter of fact, in this fiscal year you will see that there is a decline in the compensatory financing facility by something like $18 million, which is paid off.

This Government has also had to face two other serious problems in relation to debt service, not only the-, quantum of the debt. I am going- to be fair and say that whereas we have benefited somewhat from the lower interest rates prevailing abroad and in Barbados, and the lower Treasury Bill rate, that does not compensate for the major expenses that we had to incur in relation to changes in exchange rates. For example, I have had to give instructions to keep in Japanese yen a significant proportion of the last Japanese yen loan, because, on exchange rate alone, Barbados will lose about US$12 million on that first yen loan made by the previous Administration. I do not say that to blame them. Exchange rates change, and it is the duty of a Government to so diversify its portfolio in order to accommodate these changes. But that is only one aspect of it.

Another reason why you would see significant increases, and this is only in Current Revenue, is that as the U.S. dollar has depreciated against the SDKs, similarly adjustments have to be made, and these adjustments reflect in increased amortisation payments on Euroloans from the International Monetary Fund.

So in two major areas, both in respect of payments on the yen and payments in relation to the SDKs, on both of which there were heavy amortisation payments this year, and will be next year, unless there is a significant change in the exchange rate on the yen versus the dollar and the SDR versus the dollar, then it is going to cost Barbados a lot of money. What I have done is that, for the future, without getting into technicalities, some element of provision for insurance and other arrangements against these wide fluctuations in interest rates and exchange rates so that this kind of thing would not happen again.

I say that because I want to point out the kind of obligations that this Government had to meet keep people in employment, pay our bills, pay our debt, cut taxes and come in with a deficit of the order that we are talking about, under $200 million. That is what we have achieved so far, I hope that the next two weeks things do not get out of hand, because it is a bad time of the year. A lot of things can hapen in Government expenditure and Government patterns of expenditure in a very short period of time. I think I know the system.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have spent a fair amount of time in giving some reasonable survey, and in what I have said, I have tried to be as objective as I can be, but on occasions like this, you must speak it as it is otherwise you would not be doing the country any good. That is why, when I mentioned the losses that would occur in relation to the first Japanese loan, I did not mention that as a criticism of the previous Administration, because I will not hope that, someone ten years down the line, they will level a charge against me because of a change in exchange rate. What is important is that, when the Opposition addresses these matters, they recognise that these are the facts of life and not try to distort the situation in relation to the country. 11.50a.m.

I now come, Sir, to one other adjustment in the Estimates on Current Expenditure side, and that relates to the Transport Board. There can be no doubt that ever since the nationalization of the transport fleet in Barbados, it has constituted a major drain on Government revenue. I believe that at least some attempt was made to address the matter by the previous Administration. But

they were unable to solve the problem. It got worse and worse from year to year, and mere and more money went down the drain in terms of the Transport Board.

We are a young Administration and some steps are being taken to try to improve not only the service, but the handling of the finances of the Transport Board. You will note that in the Estimates no provision is made for a subsidy to the Transport Board. This does not mean that the Transport Board will not be getting a subsidy. In fact, during the course of these Estimates, there will be a moving under that particular Head to bridge any gap in the arrangements which will be employed this year.

The deficit of the Transport Board will be financed during this fiscal year — and this fiscal year only, I hope - from the proceeds of the Transport Levy Fund. The policy of the Government is to transfer the proceeds of all these funds into the Consolidated Fund, but it is going to take time, a lot of time, to unravel the serious problems associated with the accounts of the Transport Board. The new board will have to present accounts showing us accounts outstanding, all the liabilities against the Transport Levy Fund, before I can bring this into the Consolidated Fund.

What has been obtaining is that in terms of the subsidy to the Transport Board, it has been receiving subsidies, apparently, from about six different places.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, no! Only one. The rest are not subsidies.)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is a question of how you look at it.

They were receiving money under the Pensioners' Vote for transportation. They were receiving money under Education for transporting pupils. They were receiving money under the Police vote. They were receiving an official subsidy under the head of Subsidy. Those are four areas. In addition, Sir, there was delinquency in relation to payment of NIS, to the National Insurance Fund, in order to fund their current operation and non-payment of PA YE.

How on earth, when you have all these sources of financing, can you ever control what is going on at the Transport Board? It creates difficulty for the Transport Board and it creates a difficult situation for the Minister, and the Minister is committed to making a major effort to getting a reduction in demands of the Transport Board on the public purse of this country.

I want to make it clear that we are not changing our policy in relation to the transfer of those levies to the Consolidated Fund. What we are doing is giving an opportunity for appropriate accounting and getting those accounts brought up-to-date so that we know the totality of the liabilities against the fund.

The Transport Levy yields about $13.7 million per year. In addition, there would be a sufficient carry over frorr^ 1985—86 in order to meet amortization payments, which were initially unlawfully contracted against the Transport Levy Fund by the previous Administration, that is the payment for buses. It had to be corrected by a Resolution in this Parliament.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It had to be corrected by" a Resolution. The original deal was unlawful. That is a fact.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is a fact and it cannoi be denied that that is what took place. And what took place was unlawful.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: We hope to be in a position at the end of fiscal year 1987—88 to give full effect to our policy to transfer these levies into the Consolidated Fund and bring along with them up-to-date accounts and so on.

When I speak of numeracy, I sometimes wonder whether there is a clear understanding of some aspects of Government's accounting. The refunds of Income Tax up to the end of February — and I am giving the House full disclosures, because I believe the people of Barbados deserve this — were in the region of $30 million, not an unusual figure in some respects. But when one hears about these massive refunds in 1987—88, I would caution persons making that statement to bear in mind that since the Statement of July 1986, the overwhelming majority of persons paying $15 000 and under would not have been paying taxes thereafter. Bear in mind, too that in the Budget of April 1986, there was an upward movement somewhere in the region of $10 000, and there was an adjustment made also in that particular area in April. Also bear in mind that many, many people have already adjusted in 1986, that is, when they saw the new tax rates, they made the adjustment for 1986 in 1986, thanks to the advice given by the Leader of the Opposition and two other lawyers to several major companies in Barbados. They took the trouble to call them up and tell them the law is such that nothing can stop them from making the adjustment in 1986. That is a fact.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In order to put pressure on the Government, the Leader of the Opposition gave

advice to people that they can legally make the adjustment in 1986, and so they did. A lot of the major banks in Barbados and a lot of the major companies have already adjusted, and I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to get up and deny that he gave that advice.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member wants to hear my voice before my turn to speak in the debate.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member is issuing challenges. The honourable Member ought to know that, if he were correct that I gave legal advice, it would be improper for me to disclose to whom I gave the advice.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: That is the first point, Sir.

Secondly it would be improper for me not to disclose an interest if I was remunerated for it.

The only person to whom I gave legal advice was the honourable Member — and I thought he would have the decency not to speak about it in the House — to tell him that the law was in such a place that people could not pay taxes if they want to, and he checked it. 12.00 noon

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the honourable Member has not denied anything that I have said. Then he proceeded to say that if he gave advice to a client, he would not talk about it. Then he proceeded to identify me as the client and talk about it. So I can only assume that he is not serious when he said that I was a client. But it is a fact that, fortunately for us, there have been substantial adjustments made already in relation to 1986 refunds which would lessen the burden.

There is one very important point of public finance which I think that Members should take into consideration when they make statements. Lump sum payments of a non-recurrent nature — say, if there were an increase in refunds over the usual flow of $30 million, or back pay or something like that for public servants — have to be in the ultimate amortized against a period of time, like any proper accounting firm would do or any business would do, and therefore, cannot form the basis of an assessment of revenue generation in the short term, and should not properly do so. So all this nonsense I hear about you got all these refunds and you have got to do this does not make any sense. The fundamental thing is that it makes no sense, and it stems, in my view, from an improper understanding of public financing. In other words, if the Government was faced with some catastrophe and they had to pay out $50 million or $100 million this year, what are you going to do? Are you going to use that as a cash flow basis for the next five years? You cannot do it. So that is not a problem.

We have coped with all the problems which we have faced so far in Government. We have -coped with them with efficiency, and we have coped with them in such a manner as have been acceptable to the people of Barbados. We have put an end to the harassment of the public. We have put an end to the fear that was so prevalent in this society. We have brought an element of humanity to Government and to Government's relationship with the people. I am talking about open Government. It is a fact that every Minister of Government is accessible to the public of Barbados, and this is one of the things that is so much appreciated about the present Administration. We have tried to live in the styles to which we were accustomed before we became Ministers of Government. We have tried to ensure that we set an example. We have tried to signal to the people that we do not consider the money that we make to be indicative of the authority which we have as Ministers of Government, because that authority is imbedded not in the pockets of the individual, but in the laws of this country.

We have tried our best, Mr. Speaker, to implement, in detail, all the promises we made to the people of Barbados. We have borne it gracefully when we were attacked again and again by people who do not have the courage to put their names to the letters which they send to the Press. We have tried. We will continue to try, and I will say that, with the help of God, if we can continue to maintain the trends which we see in the economy the path on which we have set this country has clearly been demonstrated to be the correct path, a path that led us away from negative growth on a cumulative basis over a five-year period, a path that led us away from increasing unemployment, a path that led us away from all the negative aspects of financial and economic management, the results of which the Democratic Labour Party rejects.

Mr. Speaker, we have placed this country, through our new fiscal programme and with the co-operation of our people, on the path which we envisaged in our manifesto. We have brought all the appropriate instruments before this Parliament in accordance with the law. We have returned Government to the path of constitutionality. We will succeed, no matter what they say.

Applause

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is against this background that I have the greatest pleasure to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Thank you very much.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, in the early 1970s I was very privileged to witness a performance of an Indian spin bowler by the name of Chandresakar. Chandresakar, was a back-of-the-hand bowler who could trick you with flight, he tried to deceive you with spin and I really must say today that the performance of the Minister of Finance, who has ample time on his hands these days, reminds me very much of a back-of-the-hand bowler, ' who would want to beat us in spin and want to beat us with flight.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I shall not be heckled today. I shall not be heckled today!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, these Estimates are not just a set of numbers. I like to say all the while that Estimates of Revenue and of Expenditure by a Government have to be discussed at a number of levels. They have to be seen in their totality, and by that I mean that we have to see Government's expenditure and revenue in their fullness, and discuss soberly what the deficit will mean in terms of the future of this and future generations and what the deficit will mean in terms of the balance of payments and the impact on credit to the private sector of the country.

But we also have to see, Mr. Speaker, the Estimates in relation to Government policy, and discuss the Estimates from that vantage point with a view to coming to a conclusion at the end of the day as to whether the Estimates, as provided and drafted, are of a character that can give effect to the stated policies of Government. In this presentation, on this set of Estimates, I want to deal with that particular issue. 12.10p.m.

I also say, Mr. Speaker, that there must be a human face to government in this country. We have to address these Estimates today, although the Minister is shying away from it, from the standpoint of the way in which they will affect the people of this society, bearing out the human aspect of the Estimates.

In so far as Government's economic policies have now been enlarged with a draft plan for employment generation, I think it is only appropriate and proper, if these Estimates are to properly fit within the context of the environment within which they are to have their effect, that we must start to discuss these Estimates in relation to the Government's overall strategy where employment generation is concerned.

That is the broad frame within which I propose to deal with the Estimates, as an expression of Government's policy and to deal with the Estimates from the point of view of a set of public accounts that must be put within the context of an evolving economic structure and an evolving social structure.

Before I get to that, Sir, I really must touch on a few points raised by the Minister of Finance in regard to the present state of the economy, the outturn for 1986 and the projected position for 1987. The Minister of Finance was very careful not to go into a profile of the likely economic development of Barbados in 1987. I said that to to say that, whenever I wish to err, I would prefer to err with the Central Bank rather than to err with the Minister of Finance, because he is a finger spinner.

The Minister speaks in terms of strong growth in 1986 and he would have this House believe that such strong growth could be held as an accomplishment of the Democratic Labour Party. I prefer to err with the Central Bank, because if you read the Central Bank's Economic and Financial Review, they were very clear on the point that, in the first six months of 1986, all major economic sectors contributed to the higher economic activity realised in Barbados, that there was balanced growth across all sectors. I am glad that the Minister of Finance has backed off the untenable position, now that he has been contradicted by his Central Bank, that such growth as has been realised was growth related only to a massive boost in pre-election expenditure. All major sectors expanded, and this House must not miss the significance of that, Sir, that the Barbados Labour Party Government left a country on the move.

The Minister likes to regale the country about the impact, for example, of the tax proposals on savings. When will he also tell us that, if you take the increase in savings in 1986, there was an increase in banking systems' savings accounts by $56 million between January and June before the tax proposals came into effect and about $40 million between July and the end of the year? That we left a society, Mr. Speaker, where the Barbadian people were saving per month more in the banking system than has been the case subsequent to the miraculous tax measures on which this Government hangs so much of its economic policies? That is a fact.

Mr. Speaker, why does the Minister of Finance not also tell us, if we must get to the truth of the economic situation in Barbados, about the massive expansion in funding for housing development in this country through the trust companies, the banking systems and the BMFC and so on even prior to July 1986? An interesting statistic for him is that in the three months before the tax proposals, funding for residential housing development increased by more than in the months subsequent to it.

The Minister continues to put the most favourable gloss possible on his reserves position. What the Minister should really do is tell us that in the interval, July to September, considerable pressure was put on our foreign exchange reserves position because of deliberate actions taken by the Ministry of Finance to change the net domestic assets position of the Central Bank; that our reserves position was made to appear favourable in so far as foreign loans incurred earlier in the year was brought to book, and in December, so that you could have all this talk about how wonderful things were in December. Why do you not tell them what happened in January?

The Central Bank's economic statistics — the latest one, February 1987 - state that the reserves of the monetary authority as at December 1986 were $284 million. They rose from $221 million in September, because he brought the loans to book, to December 1986, $284 million, and in January 1987 they went back down to $266 million. Why does the Minister not also tell us, while we are discussing our external position, that in accordance with these statistics, with which I prefer to err, between January and October exports of goods in Barbados fell by $108 million as compared to the corresponding period in 1985?

Mr. Speaker, I say all that to say that this House must not be deceived by the flight and the spin, that we must understand that at the end of 1986 Barbados was in a precarious external position where its reserves were being propped up, notionally so only, not by an underlying strength in our export earnings capability, because the trend is in the opposite direction. We are not earning our way towards reserves accretion, but our reserves were built up purely by the Minister of Finance and Planning bringing certain loans to account at a particular time, and the fragility of the situation is reflected now in what has happened in January of 1987 when, in fact, reserves started to go down.

I am asking the House to take cognisance of these things, because it is a truth that this country has had to indulge in balance of payments support borrowing for at least two years in succession, and there is a limit to the extent to which we can continue to indulge in that particular type of financial expedient. We have to come off the thrills about domestic spending and begin to .understand that Barbados' external position — we have to realise it, Sir — is precarious because the drop in merchandise exports between January and June do not even reflect the effects, for example, of an Intel going, and they do not reflect the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we are expecting a small sugar crop this year as compared to last year, although I will concede that there is a marginal increase in prices. 12.20 p.m.

The Minister trumpets low rates of inflation as a significant accomplishment on the part of the Democratic Labour Party. For the last two or three years inflation has been 3%, *2%.* If we want not to acknowledge that the rate of inflation has been kept at lower rates for the last three years, then we in the House can continue to be deceived with the flight and spin.

He speaks in terms of this significant increase in employment as if there are not seasonal patterns where employment generation in Barbados is concerned, and without saying at the same time that the labour force has been increasing at a faster rate than the expansion of jobs. So the objective situation . which faces us is that we have not been able to generate enough jobs to satisfy those coming in to the labour force, far less to deal with the backlog of unemployment that is to be addressed. If we want to be beguiled in this House with flight and spin, drawn from casual seasonal trends, then we can allow the Chandresakar on the other side to beguile us with flight and spin.

He speaks in terms of a balance of payments surplus. I want to stress again that the most distressing thing about the Barbados economy is that we have to face the problem of access to markets, and that our balance of payments surplus in 1986 must be viewed within the context of the situation of falling export earnings as compared to the previous year. That is a matter of fact.

The most significant aspect of the Minister of Finance's contribution to the House this day is not so much what he said, but what he did not say. Ordinarily, Sir, if you are going to construct Estimates of Expenditure and Estimates of Revenue, you can only have an economic meaning if they are put within the context of the economic-situation as it is likely to evolve. I listened carefully for the i Minister of Finance to give us his scenario as to the likely economic situation which faces this country, because things like revenue trends and the balance of payments are air caught up not only with what happened in 1986, but with 1987.

Again I say, without saying too much, that when I have to err, I prefer to err with the Central Bank, because you know what your Central Bank is telling you. You know

that the Central Bank is telling you not to expect any growth this year, and that your success as a Minister of Finance is dependent on the hard work of your friend and colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), and I am sure that the only possible area of encouragement this year is likely to be in tourism. So you have him in the palms of your hands!

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And Lewis has both of them!)

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: It is generally acknowledged by every informed — and when I say "informed", I am not speaking now about the economic guru, the "big mout [v]Lou", of the local economic profession who advises the Minister - I am speaking about informed analysts.....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The economic guru, the "Lick .ivlout Lou" of the local economic profession, you know him better than all of us.

All informed analysts, including the Prime Minister's advisors at the Central Bank, are telling him that 1987 is going to be a tough economic year from all points of view, that we cannot in manufacturing contemplate of growth in activity to compensate for that which we have lost because of the going away of Intel and others, and because of the continuing difficulties that we are facing where even holding our market share in CARICOM is concerned; that in relation to agriculture, the situation is equally dim, and that it is left to tourism and the honourable Member for St. Michael West to make sure that the dreams of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) are realized. I wish him the happiest possible working relationship because the future of Barbados depends upon it.

Mr. Speaker, I am even disappointed in him that he did not try to put these Estimates in the context in which they would work out. You should always, if you want your Estimates to have a meaning, tell us what are the economic conditions that will prevail, and within which they will work themselves out. I want to deal with the Estimates, now, from the stand point now of public finances. The Minister has made a lot of charges, not financial infelicities but certain malpractices where accounting is concerned in the Ministry of Finance. I will not, on this occasion, but in due course, and coming soon, deal with them.

At issue, Sir, since April 1986 has been the question of deficit — what kind of deficit can one anticipate, the implications of having a larger rather than a smaller deficit, and the relationship between such deficit as will arise and the tax proposals that have been put in place. The Minister of Finance, in presenting the best estimate of the financial situation likely to prevail as of March 1986 to the end of 1987, told us that we can anticipate a deficit in the order of $198 million, which deficit would compare to the $184 million deficit that was projected by the Barbados Labour Party. I want to establish that first of all, and to the extent that a larger deficit is more troublesome where the economy is concerned, there is a *prima facie* case to even start saying now that your tax proposals have put us in a position where rather than trying to bring our deficit within reason, as we did, the deficit is growing. You mentioned our not having gone to the financial markets in 1982, 1983 and 1984. The reason simply was, Mr. Speaker, that we were not willing to run large deficits in 1982, 1983, 1984 and beyond, because we had just gone through a process of borrowing on the Euromarket to finance the cement plant. It would have been irresponsible of the Barbados Labour Party to borrow in those years, given high interest rates in the markets, and you forgot that when you said that the markets had no confidence in us. There were high interest rates, we had just borrowed on the Euromarket to finance the Arawak Cement Plant, and he is now criticising us for the fact that we did not enjoy easy access on the international market at a time when we took a deliberate policy decision that we should restrain the deficit to reduce the extent to which, at a time where we were having to deal with investments already financed through the market, we would carry on Central Government expensive loans, 21% and so on they were at that time. You should give • credit to the Barbados Labour Party rather than come here today and try to embarrass them for pursuing a policy that took account of the long run interest of Barbados. .12.30 p.m.

The deficit, Sir. I deal, first of all, Mr. Speaker, with expenditures. The Minister of Finance is projecting an overall deficit to March of $198 million, comprised of a $31 million deficit on Current Account and Capital expenditure of $166 million. But if you were to take the Minister's expenditure pattern, particularly since November, you will notice, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a draconian reduction in Government cash expenditures, which are reflected in the Accountant General's Report which can be as much related to financial control as to a refusal to pay Government's bills. We in Barbados, on average, have a fairly steady stream of recurrent expenditure. Capital expenditures vary, but you have a steady stream of current expenditure. Current expenditures on a month-to-months basis could average about $50 million, and significantly Mr. Speaker, you will notice that current expenditure normally goes up in March by a significant degree, because Governments do try to bring most things to account by March to end the financial year with a clean slate. But our pattern of expenditure for last year on the current side except for months like October, where it went up to $60 million, has always been in the vicinity of over $50 million a month. When you see expenditures

dropping as low as $41 million in a month like December - and it was in the month of December, when you had, obviously, to reflect provision for the advances to civil servants — when you see current expenditures dropping as far as $41 million in any month, particularly in a month when the Minister of Finance has taken on an extraordinary charge, something is wrong!

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order: The honourable Member is suggesting an element of impropriety by his remark. I should like to point out to him that the advances to public servants, now as always, has been handled as a below the line account. That is the first point I want to make. You are talking foolishness! The second point is that our expenditures in January and February of this year were higher than in January or February last year.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, he speaks about financial improprieties. I know one financial rule, Sir, that any item which registers itself as a charge against the Consolidated Fund must be shown as a current expenditure. In 1982, and let me give you a little financial history, the Barbados Labour Party ran its largest ever Current Account deficit, and that Current Account deficit was $31 million. If you would check the numbers, you will see that the Current Account deficit in 1982-83 was largely due to an extraordinary situation that year, where loans and advances amounted on Current Account to some $26 million.

Mr. Speaker, the point I am at pains to make is that I would want to know what is the accounts payable position of the Government in light of the situation, Mr. Speaker, where in a month like December, where you make an extraordinary charge on the Consolidated Fund, you can have current expenses some $10 million below a normal pattern for the year as a whole. What are your accounts payable? Why, in light of the fact that in a month like March, when you normally try to bring things to account - and take last year as a basis for examining the situation, take the year before, take any other year in our financial history — Minister of Finance have tried to bring as many things to book in March as possible — in March of this year the Minister is speaking in terms of only $52 million of expenditures in the midst of a total expenditure for the year of $641 million. The month in which you bring things to account is below the average for the year. I want to hear about your accounts payable. I have to ask about that as I turn to the situation for the next year.

The situation for next year is quite simple. Next year, we are going to have, the Minister says, in April to pay the back pay, and, if I can remember correctly, the Minister of Finance did indicate that the 2% increase that you carry forward will manifest itself in terms of expenditure of $7.7 million for next year. I want the Minister of Finance and Planning to answer the question, have the Estimates of Expenditure for this year been prepared to include the $26 million that have to be paid in the form of public service wage increases? Mr. Speaker, I feel so strongly about it that I believe that this House will be irresponsible today to have a situation where the Prime Minister tells us that as far back as January 30, he signed orders in relation to the increased wage rates, they were laid in the House, Mr. Speaker .....

Hon. Dr. R. C, HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I believe that this matter is virtually bordering on contempt of this House. It is a serious matter. The honourable Member has in his hands the Schedule of Personal Emoluments. In that Schedule of Personal Emoluments, the statutory emoluments are listed according to the law, and there is no way that you can include statutory personal emoluments until they have been passed by the House of Assembly. These Estimates were laid before those increases went through the House, and unless you assume that I must print these on Friday and give them to you on Tuesday, you must not make allegations of that kind. Look at the Constitution of this country and the proprieties of Parliament that is what, you are attacking now! It is a contempt of Parliament, Sir!

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to make one point, Sir, because the flight and the spin can deceive us. I made the point earlier that the Minister should discuss the Estimates in relation to the real situation that will face the Government. The real situation that will face Government, to begin with, is that its expenditure for the financial year 1987-88 must be increased by the amount of the wages increases that we have already approved in Parliament. 12.40 pm

The Minister made a big song and dance about how these things would be so difficult. I want to remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that the wage increases were laid on the Table of this House on February 3. Unless the Government did not believe that it would have successfully brought the wage increases to the House and have them voted, then all this requires for you to do is an afternoon's work at the Ministry of Finance and Planning, because they have them on computer, and they are approved at the end of January.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Man, go on to something sensible!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have to stay on the point because the question as to how much expenditure will be incurred is fundamental to how large the deficit will be.

(Aside: That is a long haul.)

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: That is not long at all.

Laughter.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: The Estimates of Expenditure that we are being called upon to approve today, and during the course of this week, do not reflect the amount of money already approved by Parliament. Therefore, Sir, it is only appropriate for me to say that the Government is bringing to Parliament a set of Estimates of Expenditure which we will have to supplement even as the ink is drying on them. Twenty-six million dollars more!

A side.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: But the total expenditure for the year will not be what he says it is. It will be increased by an amount of $26 million or more.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Always!)

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have you all aroused. I like this kind of interchange.

The finger spinning coming from last year is that the Minister of Finance is trying as best as he can to put the best possible complexion on Government's expendi ture. But let him admit that we will have to make provision for the additional $26 million. We might even have to make provision as well for one or two little items. For example in the course of this year, the Capital Expenditures say that the Ministry of Health will equip the Glebe Polyclinic, but you will never find a provision in these Estimates to staff it and operate it. So by making allowance for the additional $26 million in expenditures that has to be found to pay those wage increases, we have to start to scale up these Estimates and the deficit, not to $190 million but $216 million. The total borrowing requirements of the Government, when once we take account of the wage increases, which have not been provided for .....

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Who said that? The Civil Establishment Order is the law.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am saying that the increases are not reflected in here.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It is simple commonsense. You are not talking common sense!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If you do not want to accept that every.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): There are two points of order: First, the honourable Member is reflecting on a vote of the House. In the passage of this Bill, we could not add the Civil Establishment Order, because when the Order is approved by the House, that becomes the law of the land. The salary increases are already law. He was present when it was passed, and that is what I do not understand.

The honourable Member will see that in the Estimates which are before us, matters which are already the law of the land are not part of the Appropriation Bill. What you are speaking on is the Appropriation Bill. You cannot reflect on a vote of the House now by talking about salary increases, because they are no part of the Appropriation Bill. Look at the Resolution on the Appropriation Bill.

What the Honourable Member is telling us, which amounts to his other doubtful attainments, is that he has simple arithmetic. You better get some common sense, with all due respect. The Appropriation Bill, Sir, does not include Civil Service salaries, cannot include Civil Service salaries, because they are fixed by law. We fixed the law here last week!

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Look at that column there. Just show them.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You should really reserve your fire for when the Honourable Minister comes with the Budget to show how he is going to meet the expenses of Government. If he leaves out Civil Service salaries, you can then level all your strictures against him.

I do not want to come in here and listen to simple arithmetic. I do not want to come in here and reflect on a vote of the House. Civil Establishment Orders are fixed by law. We cannot vote that money again.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not let him get away with it.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The honourable Member is telling you, do not let me get away with it. Let him get up and speak for you then. If he is your solicitor, let him get up and speak for you. "Do not let him get away with it!" Up to now, you do not understand the Rules of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have taken the Right Honourable Member's point of order, and I would like the honourable Member speaking to continue the debate at a much more understandable level.

Laughter

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, with respect, I do not understand what you mean by "understandable level."

Mr. SPEAKER: It is very simple. The Rules of this House make provision for certain conditions to apply with regard to speeches. Maybe if you understood them, you would understand the point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: As you wish, Sir. I am discussing the Estimates of Expenditure and the likely overall deficit that the Minister of Finance has discussed, and I am saying simply to the House of Assembly that if we take account of the realities of the wage increases, the likely overall deficit facing the Minister of Finance, what he has to find loan financing for, is not $190 million, as he imagines, but $216 million. That is the point I want to make, and I will make the point, believing that doing the arithmetic is also part and parcel of this game.

On the revenue side, we come down to a question of judgement. Last year, our revenue outturn was affected by the fact that, in essence, the country operated for the financial year under two alternative tax systems.

Aside

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. If he can say that, why can he not say that he left out $26 million.)

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Can I hear the honourable Member?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am obliged to you, Sir.

We come down, Mr. Speaker, to a question of judgement where making estimates of revenue are concerned. Economics is an inexact science, and one gives judgement, based upon trends and based upon good reasoning. 12.50 p.m.

The Minister of course, commends the Democratic Labour Party for the tremendous increase in revenues from imports and so on realised during the course of the year. He speaks about tax on goods and services. The pattern for the financial year is this — and here are the facts: March — tax on goods and services realized $18 million; April, $15 million; May, $14 million; June, $16 million; July, $17 million; August, $14 million; October, $13 million; November, $15 million-j December, $15 million. Where has that massive buoyancy in the receipts from tax on goods and services that the Minister wants us to believe can take the place of the Income Tax adjustments which, he has said, have been realized?

In relation to Income Tax, we have to realise that during the course of the last financial year, the country, in effect, operated under two different Income Tax systems. The numbers that are being presented to us in the House say that the Government expects over the course of the financial year to realize $80 million from Income Tax as compared to $159 million, which was projected by the Barbados Labour Party. The Government is reflecting in these Estimates a net change of $79 million. You can even begin to determine who is right and who is wrong.

In the first three months of this financial year, we collected $41 million from Income Tax, which means that we were on trend to collect the $159 million. If $80 million has been realised from Income Tax for the financial year ending, and $41 million were realised in the first three months of the financial year, it follows, again from simple arithmetic, that $39 million were realized in the nine months. This thing comes down to a question of judgment, it comes down to making the best possible projection against trends, but the numbers are already* telling you that in the last financial year from the difference between the taxes projected, on which we were on stream to achieve because we did $43 million in three months, one-quarter of the year, and I am not even taking March — would have yielded more than we projected. The point I am making, it is a question of judgment now?is that if the new taxation system yields you $39 million in nine months, you have to be very circumspect how you go ahead and project Income Tax receipts for the full financial year by as much as $100 million. Because that $100 million bear a reasonable relationship to the $80 million collected over the whole financial year, but remember that part of that financial year included those first three months in which you had a different taxation regime.

The Minister says that he understands that most of the adjustments have been made. I know, for sure, that there have been some big companies which have done it, but go back to financial history. In 1980, there was a tax-free month in Barbados, when people were allowed to make adjustments against taxes that were incurred in that financial year. The fact of the matter is, Sir, that if you were to get the numbers on Income Tax refunds, you will see that it did not make a substantial difference to the amount of Income Tax refunds for the financial year.

The Minister must also understand, Sir, that some of the allowances given in your July Budget had instant effect.

Asides

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, can I be heard in silence, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member has appealed to me because of the unnecessary interruptions, and I ask Members to observe the Standing Orders of the House.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point I am coming to, Sir, is that there are two aspects to the DLP tax proposals were Income tax is concerned. There are some which will have instantaneous effect.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is misleading the House. A great song and dance was made in 1980 that the country was being given a tax-free month. In truth and in fact, for Pay As You Earn purposes, the computers could not produce the necessary adjustments. But at the end of the financial year, every single citizen had to submit a return to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue for all the money that he had worked for. What tax-free month are you talking about?.If there was a tax-free month, I want back my money, because I did not have a tax-free month. Anybody the Commissioner or you or anybody else gave a tax-free month to. should pay back your money to the Treasury because they would be robbing the finances of this country.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that there was a month in which people were not allowed to pay taxes, but we had the same level of tax refund occurring at the end of the year.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: You all are going to talk when your time comes. I heard the man in silence, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You are hurting them!)

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I want to remind the Minister, Sir, of the nature of his tax adjustments, that they are of a two-fold nature, that there are some which take effect instantly but there are others which are triggered by acts of personal expenditure, that one can make a tax adjustment instantly by changing one's personal allowance. But the Minister must remember that he did not only give allowances that could be changed instantly. He also gave certain unlimited allowances to which one became entitled as a result of becoming involved in an act of expenditure, and as I said, it is a matter of judgement - you could not realistically expect that the effects, for example, of your building allowances would be reflected instantaneously, and if you are exercising good judgement, you would recognize that those are precisely the types of tax shelters that people in the middle and upper income level will want to make the most use of.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I respectfully heard you in silence and I said this comes down to a matter of judgment.

You have, therefore, Mr. Speaker, given the nature of the allowances that you have provided, not to believe that all the allowance adjustments have been made and that there will not be some carried to 1987. The point I am making is that if the taxation system yielded $39 million in taxes in nine months, it seems to me, Sir, as a matter of judgment, that it is rather heroic .....

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I really think that....

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

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir: I think the honourable Member is misleading the House because of the numeracy problem that he has.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Standing Orders prevent that.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I said "numeracy," and I want to indicate how he is misleading the House, Sir.
1.00 p.m.

In the first three months of the year the Income Tax intake of about $40 million he is talking about is virtually net intake. The Income Tax intake for the rest of the year would involve $30 million in refunds. So what is he talking about? He is not comparing like with like. You cannot say $40 million during three months when there are no refunds and $39 million during a period when there are $30 million in refunds. It does not make sense. He is really comparing 39 with 40 and he has to make the adjustment for the period.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir....

Aside

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the honourable Member finished his speech?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I think the Leader of the House wants to move an adjournment or something like that.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2 o'clock today.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2 p.m was *put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.* 1.02 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the honourable Member for St. Peter was speaking. He may continue.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, before the break for lunch I was trying to work towards a reasonable estimate based on an examination of the patterns of expenditure to which Government is committed, expenditures already set out in the document before the House, and a judicious examination of the revenue expenditures, to work towards the definition of what must be of concern to us as Members of Parliament, that being the likely overall borrowing requirements of Government that will issue from the pattern of revenue expenditure contained in these Estimates.

I stand on the point that the statutory expenditures on the Personal Emoluments side contained in the Estimates do not include provision for the wage increases, recognising, out of respect for Parliament, that those. matters have already been approved by Parliament, but the statutory expenditures for Personal Emoluments in these Estimates this year are based on the rates prevailing as of the financial year 1986—87. I am saying, therefore, and I stand on the point, that in arriving at a realistic estimate of the likely borrowing requirements of Government, that such expenditure as will be occasioned by the recently approved wage increases will have to be added to the deficit of $190 million, which is the estimate of borrowing requirements arrived at before consideration of the amount of new expenditure Government will have to get involved in, because this Parliament has approved the wage increases.

The point that I am at pains to make is that if the Estimates of Expenditure and Revenue as presently stand commit Government to a likely deficit, and hence a likely borrowing requirement, of $190 million, then, with respect to common sense and simple arithmetic, we must understand that those borrowing requirements now have to be increased, and we are speaking in terms of adding $216 million to the public debt as a result of these Estimates as they are presently constructed, and having regard to the commitments of the Ministry of Finance against the Consolidated Fund already approved by Parliament. I stand on that point, Sir.

I was trying to make the additional point that the revenue intake of Government, particularly on the Income Tax side, has to take cognisance of the fact that over the last financial year. The country has in effect operated under two different Income Tax systems. The point I want the House to exercise a judgment on — because we are not dealing with an exact science, we have to deal with a judgment - is that last year, as I said, we projected $159 million from Income Tax and we realised $41 million in income tax in the first three months of the financial year, which would imply, if you apply a judicious analysis of the situation, that the $159 million could have been realised. The fact that the Minister of Finance now tells us that $80 million only was realised substantiates the assertion -- I am putting this to the , Minister of Finance - that the Income Tax adjustments have already cost the public purse $79 million without having been fully executed in a full financial year, and without the full effects of the expenditure related allow-'ances started to take a bite out of the public purse.

I go further. It is a dangerous thing, judgmental wise, for the Minister of Finance to project likely Income Tax revenues for the next financial year against that which was realised in the last financial year, for the very reason that he will not be comparing like with like. The last Income Tax year was one in which we operated under two different systems, and, more appropriately, we should be seeking to pick up the trend from that period of the year when the new tax proposals took effect, because what we know, and what the Minister of Finance has said, is that those are the same taxes that will apply in the financial year against which we need to forecast revenues.

My point, Sir, is that if we collected $41 million in revenue out of $80 million in three months, it would mean, by simple arithmetic, that we are looking to collect $39 million in nine. What I am asking the House to exercise a judgement on is a simple question, can an Income Tax regime which yields $39 million in nine months likely to yield $100 million in a full year, because that is the basis upon which the Minister of Finance has estimated Income Tax revenue for the year to come?

He got himself in a tangle in relation to the question as to whether the persons entitled to the benefits of the* then tax allowances have already taken full advantage of those benefits, because I am conceding the point that in the months, September, October and partly into November, there were offsetting amounts against Income Tax, partly explainable by persons having access to the Income Tax to which they were entitled from income year 1985, and partly explainable by reference to the fact as well, Sir, that where certain businesses were concerned, people immediately made the adjustment, particularly in relation to persons who were earning $15 000 or less, and in some cases, also in relation to persons above that level of income. My point to the Minister of Finance is that just as there 'were offsets against nominal Income Tax in those three

months — September, October, November — you really should have expect that you will have again to offset some of the income tax received by Income Tax refunds payable, if only because everybody has not yet taken advantage of the instant allowances, but more pertinently, Mr. Speaker, because the structure of the Income Tax amendments brought before this House and approved is such that some do not become of effect where Income Tax receipts are concerned at the instant — most people have got themselves involved in expenditure which triggered the Income Tax concessions.

The Minister will need to hear this statement repeated. I am speaking in relation to things like the unlimited house repair allowances which, I am warning you, will be generously used by persons in the upper middle income bracket as a very, very attractive tax shelter. I am speaking as well, Mr. Speaker, if you allow me to, in relation to the unlimited mortgage allowance, where you may have patterns evolving in this country of people with different properties consolidating their mortgages and writing that mortgage against their own residence and running a horse and carriage through the Income Tax system.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I really listened in perfect silence, respectful silence, to the Minister of Finance, and I can only ask that I be accorded the same treatment.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are perfectly right, because the Rules of the House say that I give permission only to the person who should speak, so other honourable Members should be silent. Furthermore, the Rules prevent constant interruptions. You need not appeal to me any more. I will take care of them.

Laughter.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I am obliged to you, Sir, and ashamed that I was interrupted by the honourable Member for St. Michael West, in whose hands this morning I committed the destiny of this country, and who I assured that he has the fortunes of the Minister of Finance in his hands for the first time.

But I come back to the point, Sir, because I am posing before the House an issue of judgment. Having regard to the structure of the taxation regime, can we realistically expect a yield of $100 million a year? 2.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Income Tax measures might well be inflated, all things considered, on the basis of a reasonable judgement, by as much as $25 million to $30 million, and if we were to exercise that ju^ge^ent, we would be talking most probably about borrowing requirements on the part of the Government not $190 million, but anywhere in the vicinity of $250 million. The Minister might have heard the number 247 before. I am not going to get into that.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member will give way.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On what point do you rise?

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I did not at all interrupt you this morning.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of explanation, Sir.

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

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Member does not wish to observe the usual courtesies of Parliament, it is up to him.

The honourable Member may recall that I was at particular pains to point out that we expect to improve[1] collections of an additional $20 million to $25 million in Income Tax, because we estimate that the amount not collected because of the over-working of the Income Tax Department is of that order. You may recall I did say that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, it comes down to a question of judgement, say 39 in nine could hardly yield you 100 in 12, improved collection or not, and bearing one thing in mind, that even if you were to have increased employment, particularly among the present unemployed, the large bulk who are unskilled people, it is quite possible to have increased unemployment without any tangible effect on the public purse.

The estimate of $100 million makes sense only compared with the $80 million for the year before, but we cannot use the $80 million before, we have to use that part of that which applied under the Income Tax regime of the Democratic Labour Party, and I stand on the point that we might be facing that level of borrowing. I go further - the level of borrowing on the part of Government, as the Minister now knows, does not only ensue from the deficit on the fiscal side. Public borrowing could also be occasioned, Mr. Speaker, by the need to protect the balance of payments, and again, we must, for the benefit of full discussion in this House, set the facts correct. Last year, the balance of payments were propped up in part by the Central Banks generous use of short term lines of credit.

Asides

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You admit it, though, but you did not say so this morning.

Thirty million dollars in Central Bank short term lines of credit were used to help prop up the balance of payments last year, together with the very generous amounts that the Minister borrowed abroad on the guise of wishing to borrow to finance the capital programmes. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, if we were to sum the full amount of foreign exchange borrowed last year, include the foreign exchange borrowed for project financing from multilateral institutions, the $137 million that you borrowed from commercial banks, and also take account of the use of Central Bank short term lines of credit, we would be speaking in terms of last year of total foreign borrowings of as much as $230 million. When I add to that, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we are carrying into the next financial year a weakening in our export earnings capabilities, Barbados faces a stark possibility next year of having to commit itself again to borrow for balance of payment support purposes. If the borrowing requirements on the fiscal side amount to as much as" $250 million, it is for the Minister to start to take us into his confidence by telling us by how much will we have to augment that to take account of such borrowing strains that may arise purely from trends on the export side, without any regard whatsoever to what is being set out in the Estimates of Expenditure.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir: I can tell him now that we have to pay $220 million in debt in 1987 that you left there.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You are going to have the chance to respond to me, and I will not have the chance to respond to you when you respond to me. Give me my day in court.

I want the Minister of Finance and Planning to deny that at least two missions have already gone from the Central Bank, one in January and one in February, to raise some foreign funds. I will not call the bank that you might be proposing to borrow $60 million from in August next year. We face, Mr. Speaker, a stark borrowing situation next year.

Dealing with other issues of taxes, Sir, the Minister makes a big issue of the buoyancy of taxes that arises because of the growth in revenues accruing from import duties, stamp duties and the like. He does not seem to appreciate the box of bricks in which he is putting him,-self in, and putting the country at the same point in time.

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, in 1976, when the Democratic Labour Party left office, when we used to derive at least 48% of our total revenue requirements from Income Tax. That has changed, to the point where the Minister is now telling us that virtually 50% and more of Government's revenues can be traceable to taxes on trade. This is the dilemma that the Minister of Finance might well find himself in, that because of -the radical adjustment in our taxation system, we are now in a position where we have to depend very heavily on taxes on trade but, at the same time, our export position is weakening. If the Minister, therefore, is forced into a position to defend our external position, he does so now knowing that the measures that he took to curb imports are the same measures which are going to, even more, put pressure on the revneue position of Government.

I am amused when my good friend, the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves), speaks grandly about cutting back on imports. The dilemma is that the Minister of Finance now knows that he must maintain a high level of imports to maintain his tax yield, and even if the balance of payments were to beg him to cut back on imports, he does so now knowing that he will improve one by worsening the next. It is a box of bricks. 2.25 p.m.

You ask the question, Mr. Speaker, what would happen if he decides to solve both by varying taxes on trade, because he has been very careful, Mr. Speaker, this morning to tell us he is not going to adjust his income taxes but he was wonderfully silent on taxes on trade. He knows that a tax on imported goods will have the same effect as a devaluation of the Barbados dollar, a development which he finds abhorrent. If he is resisting the notion of devaluing, because the principal effect of devaluation will be on the price level, he will find that variations in tax on trade with a view to protect the balance of payments and increase Government revenues will have the same effect in Barbados on the price level as a devaluation. So there is no real advantage accruing where policy flexibility is concerned in a small economy, in skewering our taxation system in a direction which does not allow us to make serious adjustments to imports if our external position were to warrant it. So the Minister must not come and boast. There was a time when he used to say that an indirect taxation system was repressive, that it bore most heavily on the poor people, and in 1987 you are now trumpeting a move from a direct taxation to an indirect taxation system as a major triumph on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, if I may turn to other aspects of the Jbstimates, I really think, as I said, that Estimates only make sense if they embody and reflect an economic policy. These are not just a set of numbers — through

these Estimates, Government is trying to guide the economy of Barbados along certain directions. The Minister had a lot this morning to say about the composition of expenditure, and I trust that I will be allowed the same latitude to respond in kind.

This country recognises that export development is absolutely critical to the generation of employment and the maintenance of a sound balance of payments position in this country. I would have thought, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that after a consensus had been reached on all sides of the House, and that after the Minister of Finance and other spokesmen on behalf of the Government have stressed that we have to put more emphasis on export development, these estimates of expenditure would reflect that commitment. What do we find? We find, Mr. Speaker, that the subvention to the Export Promotion Corporation, the principal agency in Barbados responsible for the promotion of exports, in a year when we have said that we must export or beg, has moved from $2.5 million to $1.95 million. In the next financial year, the Export Promotion Corporation is to get less money than provided in the Estimates prepared by the Barbados Labour Party in 1986-87!

It is a very interesting scenario that has unfolded where Government's identification of its priorities for spending is concerned. The Minister was innovative this year in one respect. He included, as an appendix, a profile of the projected expenditures by boards and corporations, their deficits and how much they have been granted, and it makes very interesting reading. The Defence Board asked for $16.9 million and they got $16.9 million. I want to stress that. It is all contained here, they asked for $16.9 million and they got $16.9 million. The EPC asked for $2.5 million and they got $1.9 million. The Board of Tourism asked for $16.6 million and they got $15.4 million. The IDC asked for $4.5 million and they got $3.9 million. The National Housing Corporation, which is supposed to be spearheading a building drive on our behalf, asked for $5.9 million and they got $3 million.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: The person who wrote that must be making sport!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We agree that he is making sport. Let the records, of the House reflect the fact that the honourable Member for St. Michael West has said that the person who put these things in the Estimates is making sport, and I agree. This is Appendix G. We must be making sport!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, since he is calling on me: if the honourable Member said that the honourable Member for St. Michael West said something, I was speaking to the format of the Estimates.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have not spoken in this debate yet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. This is a point of order. Very well; as Your Honour wishes.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I must agree with the honourable Member for St. Michael West that they must be making sport. The Government must be making sport when it can tell us that we must export or die and cut the expenditures under Export Promotion Corporation beyond what they got in 1986—87, and below what they asked for, at a time when the Defence Force asked for $16 million and got $16 million!

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you addressing the Chair?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am trying to address the Chair, Sir.

Can we be serious, Mr. Speaker, to be talking about export promotion as the drive forward, and you are cutting expenditure under export promotion? Can we be serious about the housing thrust and the subvention to the National Housing Corporation has been cut? 2.35p.m.

Mr. Speaker, let me do it systematically for you. In relation to agriculture, the Minister of Agriculture told us • about this wonderful explosion in Government support for agricultural diversification. But, Mr. Speaker, the Capital budget for agriculture, as you know, has not been increased. It has been cut by $2.87 million. Principal cuts are in areas like Crop Research, Agronomy and Extension where, Mr. Speaker, you would expect that research would be done at the primary level to provide the basis for diversification of the country. Livestock Development has been cut. Soil Conservation has been cut. Agricultural Research, in general, has been cut, at a time when the Government is talking about supporting agricultural diversification!

If you were to read the Estimates, Mr. Speaker, read them carefully, we provided $400000 for the National Fruit Orchard Project in the last year's Estimates. The Minister has trumpetted as a major accomplishment the fact that this year he will be planning to spend $341 000, a reduction!

You should remember that the National Fruit Orchard programme used to be reflected in the Estimates under the Special Assignments Vote of the Ministry of Agriculture, reflecting the intention of the Barbados Labour Party to effect economies in the manner in which all of our various projects in the Scotland District were handled. We gave the same Special Assignments Division that was doing work towards orchard development on the Back River Project the responsibility to manage that project as well as all the work in the Scotland District. This year now - it may seem like a small point to you, Sir - that

project has been taken from either the Special Assignments Division and put under the control of the central machinery of the Ministry of Agriculture, defeating the entire purpose of our having an integrated approach brought to bear, with resulting economies, in the way in which that substantial investment by the public in the Scotland District was to be handled. Is this sound Government, Sir?

In relation to Education, the Minister of Finance would not tell you that the subsidy to School Children's Bus Fares of $2.5 million have been taken out of the Estimates. We would not hear from the Minister of Finance that the $2.5 million that used to be put in the Ministry of Education's budget to subsidize the bus fares of school children has been removed.

I think the Minister and the Government need to give the fullest possible account of what it intends to do with the Transport Board. They have removed the $10 million for the Transport Board from the Estimates. We are told this morning that it is to be financed through the Transport Levy. But you have said already that the deficit to be faced is $26 million. You said this morning that the Transport Levy will yield $13 million. The question that' arises, Mr. Speaker, is,what price in terms of unemployment will we now pay at the Transport Board by adopting this particular mechanism? What happens on April 1, Mr. Speaker, when there is no longer a provision in the Ministry of Education's vote to finance the subsidization of bus fares for school children?

Let there be no doubt that, if you were to compare like with Like, effectively, there has been a cut in Government's expenditure this year on Education. I mentioned this morning that the Minister of Finance will try to beat us with flight and spin. You cannot, Mr. Speaker, compare this year's Estimates on Education without recognizing that the National Training Board used to be financed in large part off-budget. That is a fact. You have brought the Training Levy now into the Consolidated Fund, and you have to bring the expenditures associated with the National Training Board into the Consolidated Fund as well. So that the marginal increase that may appear to be attributable to Education is only an increase that arises when we do not compare like with like, when we do not take cognizance of the fact that last year, items which were not financed through the central Government budget are now being done so. In fact, overall there has been a cut in the allocation for Education, the subsidy for school fares has been removed from the budget, and there has even been a little cut as well in school uniforms.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to the Ministry of Housing, the recurrent budget of the National Housing Corporation has been cut by half a million dollars, at a time when we are supposed to have this massive launch forward in housing, and the Capital budget of the National Housing Corporation has been reduced by $2 million.

The Minister of Finance, earlier in the year, at a seminar, made the grand statement that, come what may he is going to have $20 million injected and budgetted into Housing for low income housing. I have searched in vain, Mr. Speaker, to find it.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. I have never said $20 million on budget.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I do not have the article from the newspaper, but when we come to Housing I will come to it, because it is time that we find out who is right and who is wrong.

Aside.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I have looked in vain for it, Sir. All that I am seeing is $3 million of the amounts that the Barbados Labour Party negotiated with the World Bank to undertake' an Urban improvement Scheme.

We were told that the Government will, this year, be putting tremendous emphasis on beautification and landscaping as part of its employment generation programme for Barbados. But do the numbers reflect this, Sir? The numbers reflect that the subvention for the National Conservation Commission, not taking account of the supplementaries which have gone through the House, have been cut by $900 000. It has gone from $5.9 million last year to $5 million this year.

In the area of Welfare, last year the Barbados Labour Party Government voted $6.57 million in the form of National Assistance grants. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in the Budget of April, 1986, the Minister of Finance at the time provided additional benefits which were scheduled to cost $2.3 million, so the total provision that we provided in the course of the financial year for assistance in kind was $8.9 million.

I said, Mr. Speaker, that these Estimates must have a human face to them. As compared to the $8.9 million that we provided for assistance in kind to the old people, who need to have their electricity bills paid, their water bills paid, the fatherless, the handicapped, you are now providing $1.2 million less. What is the Minister of Finance going to tell this old lady who comes to him to get assistance with paying her electricity bill and her water bill? That he is like old Mother Hubbard, Sir? He went to the cupboard, but the cupboard was bare! That he is cutting expenditures? 2.45 p.m.

The Government is proposing to cut expenditure on National Assistance Grants by $ 1.2 million this year, and we must re focus this issue, Sir, because one of the arguments that we have always carried on this side, is that the Democratic Labour Party would have never been able to implement its tax proposals unless people in the society were forced to pay a price for them in the form of a reduction in the degree of social services provided by this country. The Minister does not want to get into these issues at all — he talked about the notional accounts he has created for debentures and so - but these Estimates must have a human face.

The National Assistance Board's budget has been cut marginally by $150 000, but significantly, Sir, Housing Welfare for old people will this year also feel the knife of the Minister of Finance. That provision, not including supplementaries, during the course of the financial year 1986-87, Sir, amounted to $2.1 million. They are now going to get $1.3 million.

Youth and Community Development. The Government likes to profess, Mr. Speaker, how enlighten is its programme where youth and community development is concerned. The subvention for Youth and Community Development has been cut by more than 15%! And Grants, Mr. Speaker, to Non-Profit Agencies, including the Barbados Youth Council have also been cut.

I am telling the Government that you have to put your money where your mouth is. You cannot ask the old people of Barbados, the young people of Barbados, the exporters of Barbados, the manufacturers and the farmers of this country to pay for the tax concessions in the form of either reduced services or in the form of reduced support by Government and continue their activities. The price is not now only being paid in financial terms, but also in terms of a projected cut in the services of this country. I really feel that during this debate, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have to talk about the Transport Board, because it would be very unsatisfactory for us to leave this debate without the Government indicating its position in relation to the subsidization of the bus fares for children and how it intends to meet the full deficit of the Transport Board.

These Estimates, Mr. Speaker, are interesting not only in relation to what they include, but what they do not include. We have, the most peculiar situation that will amuse the honourable Member for St. George North (Mr. C. V. Walker) - that a beautiful new polyclinic has been built at the Glebe and we have provision in the Capital Estimates to equip it, but no provision in the Estimates to staff it! At the end of the year, you had an empty building. Next year we are going to have a building that includes some equipment but no people whatsoever! Any good Minister of Finance and Planning would know that you always have to make provision for the recurrent expenditure that ensue upon the completion of a capital project, and it is entirely unsatisfactory, it really is, that the Glebe Polyclinic could have been completed over six months ago and that it will not become operational this year by reason of the failure of the Minister of Finance to provide for its staffing and operation even though he is making a provision for equipment.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: There is nothing here.

I also want the Government to clarify the position where the St. Joseph's Hospital is concerned. We heard last year that the St. Joseph's Hospital would have been bought by the Government and opened in December, and then we heard that it will be opened in March. December has come and gone, March is about to go, but there is not even a notional provision in the Estimates this year about that. The Minister of Finance could have done what he did to you. The Minister of Finance has given you $1.00 in a vote to purchase equity in companies. If the Government was serious about the St. Joseph's Hospital, in the same way that they gave a notional amount of $1.00 - you have $1.00 this year to spend on Purchase of Equity in Companies - they could have shown good faith by opening a vote for the St. Joseph's Hospital. What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that you must either put up or shut up. If you are not making provision to buy it, stop pretending week after week in the Press that it will be bought and run.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: You will have a chance to speak, man.

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member address the Chair and close his ears to asides?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I would love to shut my ears to asides, Sir, but they are like the Tower of Babel.

The point I am working towards, Sir, is that there is a tremendous contrast between Government's statement of policy and the allocation of Government's projected expenditures to give effect to that policy. We cannot be serious about promoting exports and do not provide funds for it. We cannot be serious about maintaining the standard of living of Barbadian people, in the form of improved services, and do not provide estimates for them. These Estimates of Expenditure reflect the fact that they have not been prepared with a sensitivity for the human

face that Government must show in this country. The Government is walking away from its responsibilities. On the economic side, they know they cannot run the country, so they want to call in Kirpalani.

Asides

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Every economic solution, Sir, the private sector will do it. As Chalkdust says, if they cannot run the country, they will have to call in Kirpalani. But you cannot walk away from your obligations on the social side, because the private sector cannot do that for you.

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: I will ask the honourable Member to desist from interrupting the honourable Member. If he does not .... I say no more on this.
2.55p.m.

Laughter

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the only real entity that has benefited from the composition of this year's Estimates is the Ministry of the Public Service. We now have two new spanking divisions in the Ministry of the Public Service, and the full expenditure projected for this year on the Ministry of the Public Service is more than the expenditure projected on Export Promotion and Industrial Development combined, and I am amused when I hear the Minister of Finance speaking about how he wants to reduce waste and inefficiency in the Public Service.

When I was in the Ministry of Finance, the Management and Accounting Division of the Ministry of Finance was responsible for matters pertaining to state enterprises. The Minister would know that it started there, and that unit has carried the bulk of the work in relation to state enterprises. What are we to have this year, Sir? The Minister of Finance, who has been yielding ground, needs to protect his turf, so he has held on to a Management and Accounting Unit to manage and operate state enterprises, and a State Enterprises Unit has also been created in the office of the Prime Minister. So we now have two units of Government, one in the Ministry of Finance and one in the office of the Prime Minister, responsible for doing the same thing, which is to create conditions under which wastage and inefficiency in the Public Service can be reduced.

I must ask the question, Sir, is the Government serious? It is the question that has been asked on the floor of this House today by the honourable Member for St. Michael West. Can we really be serious not only in incurring the expenditures for it, but can we be serious in splitting the responsibility for dealing with state enterprises if we have one part of it beating to the drums of the Minister of Finance and another part of that responsibility marching to the drums of the Office of the Prime Minister, whoever that entity may be?

If you want to reduce inefficiency and waste, you ought to have started by setting an example, and there can be no justification whatsoever to have both a Management and Accounting Unit in the Ministry of Finance responsible for dealing with state enterprises and have one in-the Office of the Prime Minister. I cannot understand how that can be justified. I can understand it in terms of the politics of the bureaucracy whereby the Minister of Finance feels that he must hang on to something. Since he is the person who initiated it on behalf of the DLP, all the debate about state enterprises, I can understand why he would want to hang on to part of the action, but what will it mean operationally in terms of the formulation and the execution of serious policies to deal with state enterprises?

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I am saying all this to plead a case on behalf of the Minister of Finance. When we got into state enterprises as a special area, we too saw it as one of the principal ways by which the growth in the deficits of the state boards would be controlled. We started it, and we did a lot of work. It was started in .1985, and the Minister would have benefited from the honest surveys that that unit undertook, when I was in charge of it, so we are all of one mind in regard to state enterprises and how they should be dealt with. It obviously is going to be one of the chief instruments by which a Minister of Finance will be able to exercise financial control at source, and I truly cannot understand how the functions can now be split, and I cannot truly understand how a Government, serious about controlling expenditures on state enterprises, can incur two different sets of expenditures to deal with the same function. You must set the example yourself.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates also have to be considered, in my view, seriously so, in regard to what we know represents the thrust of Government strategy and employment generation. The Task Force Report has now been laid before the House, and the Task Force Report indicates that the tax proposals are not going to have any impact on employment generation in the first 18 months — contrary to what you have been saying all along, your tax proposals will be of no effect where employment is concerned — and it proposes, Mr. Speaker, that the burden of employment generation should be borne on the shoulders of the Government. It speaks in terms of the creation of jobs through playing fields, afforestation, beautification and so on.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You read that today?)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Yes, I read it today.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, if there is to be any relief on the employment scene, the Task Force is recommend-

ing to Government that the Government should lead, and in leading, obviously, Sir, we will have to make provision for the expenditures that would ensue.

I have already indicated to the House, indeed been at great pains to indicate to the House, that rather than increasing the allocations for the areas prescribed by the Task Force, this year's Estimates of Expenditure are designed to cut them, that you are cutting expenditures on the National Conservation Commission, you are cutting on the National Sports Council, Soil Conservation, and that you could therefore end up with the most peculiar situation, that to the extent that these Estimates do not capture the thrust of the Task Force recommendations, the Task Force recommendations will most probably therefore be of no effect even before the ink has dried on them.

The Minister says this is quite true. We cannot laugh at these things because we have excited in the minds of the public the expectation and the anticipation that the Task Force recommendations will lead to something substantial It is quite out of order for the Minister *sotto voce* to say that the Task Force recommendations might be of no use whatsoever even before the ink is dried on them. We cannot toy in Barbados with the problem of unemployment, and in a sense, therefore, if we are to accept these Estimates, the Government will have to reject the recommendations of the Task Force, or if we accept the recommendations of the Task Force, we will have to come and supplement expenditures. It will therefore be important for us to have some inclination of those precise things which the Task Force did not seriously address — how many people you are talking about, and what level of expenditures should we commit this year — in order to ensure that in those first critical 18 months, when they claim your things can have no effect on employment, at least there is some relief in the land. That issue is sufficiently important that we should not leave this debate today and this week without bringing it into the forefront of our considerations. 3.05 p.m.

In regard to the long term recommendation of the Task Force, the feeling that the tax proposals will have the effect in the medium and long term, of course, is a conceptual issue that we can also seek to discuss in this House as part of our general financial policies. There are two likely effects of the tax proposals: as the increased spending, and we have already seen how the tax measures gave rise to increased spending at Christmas without any particular change in employment, and that the increase in disposable personal income would not have to lag for 18 months before it has an effect on the economy. So you could, in principle, even now begin to determine the extent to which it will have any substantial 'effect on employment generation, the increased spending part of it, and I subscribe to the view of some of my colleagues at the University of the West Indies, that the increase spending part of it will have an effect on employment generation.

The Government is banking as well, Mr. Speaker, that the concessions against profits and the build-up in profits will stimulate investment, that the supply of funds will create even more demand for funds. I must tell you, Sir, that I have a difficulty with that as well, because there is no shortage of funds in Barbados right now for investment. There has not been for a few years. The banking system is awash with liquidity. The limiting factor is not the supply of funds or potential savings — and savings have increased in the last financial year by $100 million — the problem is not the supply of savings, but the lack of markets, and hence opportunities, that would justify those savings being translated into investments. Merely to create tax proposals that expand the supply of potential funds for investment does not really seriously address the fundamental problem that stands in the way of employment generation in Barbados because there has been excess savings, excess liquidity, in the system even before the tax proposals. What is short, Mr. Speaker, is not funds for investment, what is short are markets to justify the investments, and I have no doubt that to the extent that the tax proposals do not seriously address that market issue, and to the extent — and that is why I want to link these Estimates not only to the short term but to the long term — that Government is signalling that it is cutting its own expenditure on export promotion, it will make the medium and long term recommendations of the Task Force even more difficult. We must talk about these things in the House of Assembly because they are all implied by the distribution of expenditures that are set out in the Estimates of Expenditure.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to come home and conclude:

The Minister of Finance has been careful to look backwards rather than to look forward where putting these Estimates and Expenditure into context are concerned.

We have been told that 1986 was a good year, but we lay claim to part of that success. The Central Bank has told you that we left a situation of balanced growth, a society in which all the economic sectors were on the move.

We did not need massive changes in taxes to stimulate the savings in Barbados. Indeed, as I pointed out earlier this morning, savings increased in the first six months of the year at a faster rate than they increased in the second half of the year under the Democratic Labour Party.

We are faced with the situation where our external position is weakening. It has been propped up by borrowings and that the Minister of Finance has, by bringing certain loans to book at certain points in time, disguised the true external position of the country. Reserves would appear to have increased between September last year and December of the year, but the information that we have now, indicates that, the Minister, having been served to give a good year-end report, the natural trend that must always show itself when you have a weakening export position is now re-appearing, because between December and January, the reserves of the monetary authority fell by $16 million.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker despite the fact that there was a seasonal expansion in employment, the overall rate of employment has not been reduced, indicating quite startling and bluntly that the rate at which the economy might be creating jobs is not at a rate sufficient to accommodate new entrants to the labour force, far less begin to address the backlog which was there to begin with.

We face in 1987 formidable difficulties in regard to manufacturing, in regard to the expansion of our exports, whether within the Caribbean region, Puerto Rico, or to extra-regional countries of the world. These factors must form part of our consideration when we set out to put these Estimates in context.

I stand on the point that, to the extent that the wage increases have not been reflected in this year's Estimates, the Minister will face larger borrowing requirements than he is here willing to suggest to the House of Assembly.

Grave uncertainty exists in regard to the future of the Transport Board and its employees, and we must go into the implications as well of the removal of the subsidies of the school children's busfares from the Estimates of Expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, the policy flexibility of the Ministry of Finance and Planning is reduced by the extent to which his tax yield has come to depend on trade and at a time when our export position is weakening, and if he is forced to take measures to control imports so as to protect the balance of payments, he will pay a price for it in terms of a further weakening in the Government's financial position. I make that point. 3.15 p.m.

There is now an imbalance in our overall taxation system where, if you do, you are damned, and if you do not, you are damned. Contrary to what the Minister of Finance would want us to believe, that the Income Tax proposals in themselves reflect a change of $79 million between two financial years, and that he may be less than judicious in believing that an Income Tax system which has yielded him $39 million in nine months will yield him $100 million in 12 months.

He might face the distinct possibility this year of having to incur additional balance to payments support borrowing to put on top of borrowings arising because of fiscal deficit, and that, in so doing we will be exposing Barbados to a degree that provides cause for grave concern.

The mixture of Government expenditure does not suggest that Government is serious about export promotion.

It is blowing hot about housing, but it is not reflecting it in its Estimates of Expenditure.

This set of Estimates, Sir, shows a Government that is entirely lacking in a human face, a Government which is proposing to reduce virtually every social service in Barbados. It needs saying, because we did not hear it from the Minister of Finance. You have a Minister of Finance who cannot put his Estimates in a social context when that is the context within which any set of Estimates must be discussed. The old, the young, the fatherless, the handicapped, the school children, the exporters, the fathers must suffer, so that . we can make an adjustment for fiscal irresponsibility.

The Opposition does not have any confidence in these Estimates either as a set of accounts or as a reflection of Government's economic and social policy. During the course of the debate to come, we will be going into greater detail to indicate that on its present course, and having regard to all the circumstances of the situation, this set of Estimates will carry backwards Barbados rather than carry us forward.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, we have had a long speech interrupted only.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Just for the record, the honourable Member is making the final reply.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir... interrupted only by the pleasant lunch.

It is very difficult, Sir, to respond to a speech I which was rambling all over the place and quite clearly
did not seek to deal with the main issues involved in the
[1] Estimates. I was very careful in the presentation of these Estimates to spell out the main areas of Government

expenditure and to deal in particular with all the relevant matters relating to revenue wherever there have been specific changes.

The honourable Member spent about 45 minutes trying to induce me to break the laws of Barbados. Last week this House debated the increases in salaries and emoluments for the public servants of this country. The matter went to the Senate, I believe, on Wednesday. I do not even know whether or not that piece of legislation has had the assent as yet. In fact, I do not even know if it is law as yet as I speak, and for the first time in the history of this country, it is being suggested that we should include in the Estimates statutory personal emoluments. I say it is unconstitutional, it is unlawful and it has never happened in Barbados. What we have done in the past under Other Emoluments, is that if there were changes made in this House during the debate on the Estimates, we would move in other personal emoluments.

Statutory emoluments cannot be included in the Estimates until they become the law of the land, and that is a fact. Last year, you were negotiating with the National Union of Public Workers. You did not include them in the Estimates. If those negotiations had been settled a week before you came to Parliament with the Estimates, you would not have included them in the Estimates, nor could you lawfully include them.

On top of that, Sir, I intend to run the finances of this country in a manner that is at all times consistent with the law. If you look at Statutory Personal Emoluments, you will see that for every single item of statutory emoluments, it is stated inside there what legal instrument justifies that expenditure. The personal emoluments paid to Government workers are not included in the Bill which is being debated today because it is authorised by a separate statute of Parliament, and whether or not that pay increase was authorised by Parliament in March, June, November or any time during the year, it will have to be paid at a time determined by Parliament.

So for the entire 45 minutes of the pre-lunch speech, the honourable Member was trying to make capital by inviting the Minister of Finance to breach the laws, the Constitution of the country, the Financial Rules-and the traditions of this country. I am not doing it. When this becomes the law of the country, it will be incorporated in the Estimates next year and will go on and on under Statutory Personal Emoluments.

The honourable Member for St. Peter does not even understand what is happening in the Parliamentary pro-, cess. He does not understand that the Resolutions passed last week will constitute the authority to pay the money, but under a completely different heading. It is not part of the Appropriation Bill, it is not part of the matter before us, and at no time have statutory emoluments ever been debated in relation to an Appropriation Bill or the Estimates, and the Estimates simply form a schedule to the Appropriation Bill. 3.25 p.m.

The honourable Member talked about we are reducing social services. I say this is not true. He talked about reducing money to National Assistance and various other areas. What we are doing is stopping the stealing and the wastage of Government money — and more money would be available to the people of Barbados. At NAB we are stopping the losses and the stealing, and we are making sure that every cent that is spent goes to the old people of Barbados. That is what we are doing!

(Aside: Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: And at NHC.)

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What stealing?)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In other words, we will be spending less money and more old and poor people would be benefltting from the services. We are restoring integrity in these areas and making sure that every cent in Government money goes to the poor people and the older people of this country. That is what we are doing.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order. I cannot hear the honourable Member.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: When someone comes to you and tells you we cut back National Insurance by $250 000, or whatever it is, and cut back here by so and so and we do not have a social face, I will tell you that we have a social face — and an honest face. All the dishonesty in those areas will be dealt with, and there will be a tremendous saving of money to the Government of Barbados. Let it be clearly understood that we will get more houses done, more homes will be repaired and that more old age pensioners will get their electricity and their water bills paid and other services rendered to them with less money than in 1986, because we are cutting out all the corruption and what not that has been involved in these areas.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is right. Corruption and wastage is what we are cutting out, and you will get an improved service! You asked for it, you are going to get it! I am going to tell you! Gone are the days when the Trotmans of this world can take up Government money and spend it the way it was spent last time before

the elections. Those days are gone. So it' is not a question, Mr. Speaker, of reduced services. It is a matter of restoring integrity in the allocation of Government expenditure and making sure that every dollar voted by this Parliament is used for the poor and the elderly.

I think that we have dealt with the question of personal emoluments, because, as I say, what the honourable Member was asking me to do is clearly unlawful and represents a fundamental ignorance in relation to the difference between Statutory Emoluments and Other Emoluments. He does not understand that in the Appropriation Bill, Statutory Emoluments, under which the established staff are paid in this country, comes under separate legislation. That simple fact he does not understand. It led him to speak for 45 minutes on an erroneous point.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It would be valid if you had made the point ....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He made the point!)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: ..... let me finish ... that because of the Resolutions passed, which would apply to the next fiscal year, it would increase Government expenditure....

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: - just one second - ... and therefore you would like to know how that would be met. That would be a legitimate question. To go the next step to accuse us of impropriety because we refuse to break the law and include them in the Estimates is a different matter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order: I did not accuse the Government of impropriety. I was seeking to make one simple point - that we have already in this House approved the wage increases. The Ministry of Finance says that the wage increases were not approved by Parliament in sufficient time for them to be reflected in the Estimates. I take that point, Sir. But the reality is that the Government will have to find the money for them which has not been reflected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your point has been taken.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: So I am not trying to accuse the Government of any impropriety. I was trying to find out what was going to be the likely level of Government's borrowing requirements occasioned by what Government proposes to spend here and also by what we know Government is committed to.

Asides.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, the matter was not put that way. I recall that when the Right Honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow) intervened in the debate and tried to bring balance in relation to the legal obligations of the Government, that was not being put across. What was being put across is that we brought Estimates to the House and did not include a matter relating to Statutory Personal Emoluments. I say that that is a very wicked thing to do, because if that were the intention, it would be inviting me to breach the Constitution of Barbados and the Financial Rules. I am not going to do so under any conditions.

If there are any matters arising in the Estimates relating to Other Emoluments, that is, non-statutory emoluments, by the usual process of a move-in during the Estimates that would be done. That is Other Emoluments, not emoluments fixed by legislation. But I want it to be clear that I will not be breaking the law, and it is a matter of great regret that the chief spokesman for the Opposition on Finance should not have appreciated that point early today. It is a very serious error to make. No one is going to bring any pressure on me to breach the Laws of Barbados.

The honourable Member repeated himself, by my count when I was here, 21 times during his speech on the business of Income Tax. Look, it is a simple matter. Get this in your head. Income Tax cuts have been made and that is that. Full stop.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: And the people like it!)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: And the people like it!

On a matter of arithmetic, everybody knows that the Income Tax that you collect during January, February and March are virtually net collections. In other words, if you collect $30 million in the first three months of the year, January, February and March, they are net collections. If later in the year you collect the same $30 million in a three-month period, you may pay out $30 million in refunds and collect zero. That is a fact. There are some months when the net take of Income Tax in Barbados is negative because of the amount of money that you pay out in refunds. So it is utterly foolish to take a period of four months or three months, when there are no refunds being made when the total figure is a net figure, and compare that with a period during which there have been substantial refunds of Income Tax.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order: The honourable Member is seeking to mislead the House. I never compared Income Tax collected in the

first three months with Income Tax collected in the months in which the refunds are made. Every year Income Tax refunds are made, and there are some months when you can have not necessarily negative income taxes, but you will have a lessening of the amount of income tax taken in in that month.

My point, which the Minister of Finance obviously has not grasped, is that he took in $80 million in Income Tax in the last year, of which $41 million occurred in the first four months and $39 million in the last nine. So I was comparing, in a sense, Sir, the effects of Income Tax receipts between two different periods, when the country was operating under two different taxing systems, and making the additional point, Sir, that in the same way that you have to calculate last year for Income Tax refunds attributable to the income year 1986, he should also judiciously expect that in the course of September, October, or whatever next year, there will also be some Income Tax refunds that will be triggered by income accruing in 1986. 3.35 p.m.

The difference between myself and him is in regard Sir, to whether the full extent of the Income Tax adjustments have been realised already or not. That is all.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am very glad to allow the honourable Member to speak at length, because the more he speaks, the more he reveals his lack of appreciation of numbers. I did not say that you were comparing one period with another period. I did not say you were comparing a period where you had net Income Tax with one in which you had Income Tax minus the refunds. But what you just got up and did — and you cannot get the point — is take four months in the first par.t of the year, then take a further period, in which there have been substantial tax refunds, and project . forward from the early period without taking into account the tax losses in the second period. It does not make any sense. All I am saying to you is that you are treading on very dangerous ground, because there is no way that you can be sure about what you are saying.

I tried to indicate to this House at the very beginning that several factors came into play last year. First of all, the impact on the new measures in July, the refunds from income year 1985, and, the third factor that people had adjusted in 1986 for 1986. Therefore, I will be relying - and this is the third time I am saying it during the House today — on the incremental gains on Income Tax by better collections this year, because I know that we in the Ministry are faced with three things going on in relation to the Income Tax situation in 1986.

On the question of export promotion, this is purely a question of streamlining and making sure that your expenditure is more efficient, plus, in a matter of a few weeks, there are going to be additional efforts being made in respect to our export efforts in Barbados. So what has happened with the slight diminution in the vote of the EPC would relate to other areas that we will be announcing in the not too distant future in relation to exports. If you had asked the question, you would have got the answer. The way the Estimates are conducted is that you get up, ask a question, get an answer, and then if the answer is not satisfactory, you pelt your lashes. That is how we used to operate. Most times when I was on that side, the answers were never satisfactory anyhow, so we always had to pelt lashes.

Speculation in relation to the levels of borrowings is purely speculation. There is no question about it. The fact is that in the 1987 calendar year, we have to face the fact that we have $220 million in debt to pay. That is up on last year.

Asides

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am talking about foreign debt, $220 million in foreign debt.

The honourable Member does not even realize what he is looking at there does not include a lot of the Central Bank's debt. And when he starts talking about lines, the Central Bank has been extending lines for donkey years. In 1981, for the first time, the Central Bank started using lines of credit, and that is reflected in the decreasing profitability of the Central Bank. It is nothing invented by us, it is what has been going on for sometime, and to suggest that we were not making provision in these Estimates for interest paid on lines of credit again is a failure to understand how Central Banks operate. Interests on lines of credit do not pass through the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, again on a point of order: I never made reference to any interest paid on lines of credit by the Central Bank. I really made the point that last year, part of the foreign financing to which we had access to help to protect the balance of payments was foreign lines of credit to which the Central Bank itself had access. I did not make any reference at all to the interest on this.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I do not know whether it is a big revelation that missions from the Central Bank have been around the world in the process of dealing with our debt management. The Central Bank is charged by law with certain aspects of the debt management of this country. That is a constant process where the Central Bank is in the markets for Barbados. They have been there for the past ten years. What is new about that? There is nothing new. You can mention any bank, because there is no problem. If you have to come to

Parliament for money, you come to Parliament for money, so there is nothing very significant about the fact that the Central Bank has been in the market and talking to commercial banks. I have been talking to them too. There is nothing new about that. It is an ongoing process. I do not see the point that is being made here.

The suggestion that there might be an increase in bus fares for school children is out of the question. There will be no increase in bus fares in Barbados, either for school children or for adults or for anybody.

I do not know how to deal with this one. The honourable Member sets out to place our indirect tax regime in the context of having the effect of a devaluation on the economy. That is what you said.

Asides.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You said that, in terms of the economy of Barbados, an increase in stamp duties and Consumption taxes will have the same effect in Barbados as a devaluation. Let me tell you something. You increased .stamp duties in Barbados from zero per cent.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Who?

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: My apology, Sir.

The Barbados Labour Party increased stamp duties in Barbados from zero per cent to 12% in a short period of time, and during part of that time the rate of inflation fell. You increased consumption taxes ranging from *5%* to 50% in Barbados. At that time, you were not making that statement, and now you come with this foolishness, trying to link indirect taxes with exchange rate adjustments! You ought to know better!

I have already dealt with the question of the National Assistance Board and with those social agencies. There has been no decrease in terms of the amount that will go to the people. There has been a decrease in terms of the amount that went into the pockets of the Barbados Labour Party when they were running those institutions. That is what has been taken out and the same applies all around. He raised the point of the fall in our foreign reserves between June and September. Between June and September last year, the foreign reserves in this country fell because of the pay out of $79 million in debt out of our reserves In fact, between January last year right through until around October/November, there has been a gradual decline in the reserves of Barbados, and more than 90% of it was due to debt payment. 3.45 p.m.

It is a fact that last calendar year we paid out $176 million in amortisation and interest payments and only brought in $104 million — not $130 million, as you say — in commercial loans. In other words, if we had done as they had planned to do — they had planned after the election to go to Japan, borrow U.S. $60 million in yen and put it in the Central Bank — in June you would have seen no fall in the reserves. All that happened was that the Government changed, and by the time we were able to get our borrowings organised, the sippage had taken place in that period. But the money would still have been paid out.

There has been no significant change in the domestic assets of the Central Bank. That is untrue. The implication of that to a technically-minded person is that there could be any element of printing of money. There was no printing of money in Barbados in 1986, and that can be found in all the international reviews on the Barbados economy. I am very worried about your limited range of numbers. I will deal with that one later.

Sir, the honourable Member spent a long time talking about a fall off in our exports. If we had lost $60 million in sugar exports in a given year, that would be a very severe blow to Barbados. When Intel, for example, closed down, people thought that Barbados might have lost $60 million in foreign exchange. When the final figures were worked out, the ultimate loss was only $16 million. The point to make is that even when you see a fall in your exports, you have to remember that when this occurs in the electronic industry, there is a corresponding reduction in your imports as well — the two have to be netted out. You just cannot get up and say there is a fall in exports without looking to see how the thing is netted out. You cannot use those gross figures in that way. If, for example, Intel exported $60 million in electronic components, you say that Barbados lost $60 million. But if Intel had imported $44 million to export that $60 million, all the country has lost is $16 million. Again, that is a matter of arithmetic which the honourable Member does not understand.

He talked about employment. The honourable Member ought to be ashamed to come in this House and talk about unemployment. Between 1981 and 1985 the levels of unemployment rose in Barbados steadily year after year, with thousands upon thousands of people being thrown out of work. I do not have the correct figure here, but almost 16000 people were thrown out of work over that period. Every year there was an increase. During that same period, every year there was a massive increase in Government spending — yet, the unemployment rate was rising in Barbados. Nineteen eighty six is the first time since 1980 that we have seen a stabilisation in terms of the incremental percentage rate in unemployment, and you will find that with an expansion of the labour force, several thousand jobs would have been created in Barbados last year without any massive intervention on the part of the public sector. That is a

fact, the facts are there! Look and see the number of people who were in work in 1981, look and see the numbers who were out of work in 1985, look and see the number of people in work in 1986!

The last figure that I saw indicated, I think, that some 3 100 more people were working in 1986 than in 1985. I have seen finer statistical analysis since then, and it would appear that it will be more than 3 100. I do not want to make any firm commitment on that, all I am saying is that the figures I am seeing now look a bit better than that. Okay? This is on a year-to-year basis, not a year-to-day, from what I am seeing. So you will find that, without any major public sector expenditure, there was some improvement in our unemployment situation last year with a few thousand jobs being created.

The honourable Member also spent about 15 minutes of his speech at one point, repeating himself again and again, on the question of addressing the Estimates to our exports position. The truth of the matter is that the Estimates contain the same Heads relating to areas of export. There has been no removal of those Heads. There has been an effort to streamline expenditure. For example, I know that both the Tourist Board and the IDC are having a far more sophisticated approach to the question of marketing of Barbados that might be considerably cost effective in terms of what they can deliver to this country. So you cannot simply say that because a Head is reduced by a couple of hundred thousand dollars or by $50 000, that is a signal that you are not putting any kind of effort behind that. You can spent a lot less money and, very often, be far more effective.

When I judge the quality of the presentation, it is really not much more I can reply to. I think the honourable Member was much more at home when he started talking about seeing the Estimates in a social context, but I recall that when the honourable Member was on the other side, he always used to complain that it was a matter of regret that Members of Parliament saw the Estimates only in social terms and did not see them in economic and financial terms. That is a fact. Now this evening he tells us that we must be seeing the Estimates strictly in social terms.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The honourable Member knows that I do not tell those things.

Mr. Speaker, to be really honest when I have analysed the honourable Member's speech, I am seriously disturbed that he has not done any preparation, I recall that in the days when I used to reply to the Appropriation Bill, I would have my speech well prepared well in advance and only to fill in the numbers when I get the Estimates. .1 formed the further impression that the honourable Member was jumping from place to place, and that there was no cohesion in this presentation, except in his general perspective when he said that the Estimates should be seen in terms of the economic performance in 1987. But having made that statement, which is the kind of statement that any technician would make, then what flowed from there was just a kind of hodge-podge of disparate statements without any continuity and, often, without any connection

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

3.55 p.m.

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

On motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply on the Bill, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY Mr.

CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

HEAD 10 - GOVERNOR-GENERAL - $369 021

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $369 021 under Head 10 - Governor-General stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 10 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 11 - JUDICIARY - $17 664

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $17 664 under judiciary stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, Sir, what I am going to try to elicit from the Prime Minister under this Head is the Government's current position on the establishment of an ultimate Court of Appeal for the Caribbean.

From time to time, we have heard statements *ex cathedra* from various Ministers of both the past and the present Government on the necessity for us to look towards having our own final Court of Appeal in the Caribbean. As you know, the Constitution of Barbados provides an easy mechanism for Barbados to join either a Court of Appeal in the Caribbean at the secondary stage

of appeal, or, indeed, to have an ultimate Court of Appeal other than in the Privy Council.

I have seen a copy of the Prime Minister's speech, which he made at the Hugh Wooding Law School some time last year, and I wonder how far Government has advanced, if advanced at all, in its negotiations with the other territories of the Caribbean for an ultimate Court of Appeal for the region.

The Prime Minister would know that there is on the Statute Book of Barbados legislation which would provide for, to a large extent, a separate Court of Appeal at the secondary level for Barbados. I wonder now whether any consideration is being given to increasing the number of judges to reflect the need for the Court of Appeal, perhaps, to be a separate court, eventually looking towards the ultimate Court of Appeal being not the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council but a West Indies Court of Appeal.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) is preaching to the converted, but I should like to make it clear that any remarks which I made at' St. Augustine in delivering the graduating address last year to the graduating class were entirely my own sentiments. I have not consulted with the Cabinet on the necessity for the establishment of a West Indian Court of Appeal, but I think that it is the general feeling amongst members of the legal profession on both sides of the House that there is need for such a court.

I was at first, for personal reasons, opposed to the removal of appeals from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England because on one occasion I had to take a case from the Federal Court in Port-of-Spain to the Judicial Committee. I would not worry to repeat what happened. It is now a matter of history, one of the standing episodes of the annals of the legal profession in Barbados, when I was told by one of the Appeal Judges that I could talk until Christmas but it would not make any difference. When the case was returned from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the people in Antigua made up a calypso called "Mr. Barrow talked til Christmas".

In discussion with Sir Hugh Wooding, the late Chief Justice of Trinidad and Tobago, who was as much a West Indian nationalist as any of us here, and an equally distinguished member of the English Bar as any of the Lords of Appeal and ordinary members of the Judicial Committee, he persuaded me that, statistically, the recourse to the Privy Council, as we call it, in England did not prove much, because out of 33 appeals only two were reversed — and one was one in which I was concerned — and that would be a good average for any court in any part of the world.

Quite apart from that, I remember that when I first started practising, one had to file things like petitions of right and then apply for leave to appeal in the form of paupers because most of our clients did not have the wherewithal to go through the costly procedure of appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. In Barbados, only people who are poor appear to be the objects of the decisions in the courts of law in this country, and I frequently tell people that rich people do not go to court. They do not take one another to court. It is only poor people who seem to be able to think that they can afford that luxury. The result is that when there is a real outstanding issue of law involved, the people who are the victims of the decision, apart from the victors of the decisions, will be advised that they have good grounds on which the decision, whatever it may have been — whether it is in a case of homicide, capital punishment or a matter of civil law — and then they find that the expense of retaining solicitors in London, and the expense of their own barristers going to assist counsel retained at that level, is prohibitive.

If justice is going to be done, therefore, all the institutions of the administration of justice should be available to all the citizens of the country, not only the rich ones like the late Mr. C. H. Kinch, who liked litigation so much that he was known as "Mr. Court House Kinch." He lived at Worthing View House or Morecombe, I think the name of the house was. The former Prime Minister immediately before me said of the Prime Minister before him that the law of libel was his friend. He said that in the Court. There is another person who enjoyed litigation, it would appear. But how many of us really, even lawyers, really enjoy litigation? I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition will tell you that we enjoy settling cases when we are in private practice because it spares us the pain, but we did not settle cases to the detriment of our clients, and I think it is better for members of the legal profession to get together and settle cases than to take the risk, like taking a lottery, and going before the court to let a Judge settle these matters for you. Those are my personal views. 4.05 p.m.

There is no doubt that we should join with the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Prime Minister of St. Lucia in strenuous effort to see that a final Court of Appeal is established here in the Caribbean, as soon as the other people are ready. We cannot establish it by ourselves. I think that the court ought to be a permanent court and not have the judges travelling around .from place to place, because we are not so far separated by distance in these parts of the Caribbean that it would be inconvenient for lawyers, if not the litigants themselves, to travel to wherever the location of the court may be. I am not suggesting it should be necessarily in Barbados, I want to make my position clear.

I should like to assure honourable Members that it is my belief, I can't put it higher than that, that my colleagues in the Cabinet would support such a move.

The question that the sum of $17 664 under Head 11 - Judiciary - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 12 - PARLIAMENT

Head 12 - Parliament - was called.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $1 373 350 under Head 12 - Parliament — stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, it is now nearly ten months or so that we have been in this Chamber. I would have thought the Honourable Prime Minister would have taken this opportunity to give us some indication as to when we can expect to move back to the House of Assembly Chamber. I would have thought that Government has had long enough in office now to have examined the schedule of work and the programme of work and be able to tell Members, and indeed the general public, what is the position. There are people outside who ask us all the time when the House is going to be opened so that they can come, because you only have limited accommodation in here. That is the first point I would like an answer to. Is Government apprised from the experts who are working on the reconstruction as to a date when we can expect to go back?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I should just draw to the honourable Member's attention that this would be under Special Assignments in the Ministry of Transport and Works. Any details on the question of the repairs to the House of Assembly would be accommodated under that Head.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If the Prime Minister does not have the answer and the Minister responsible for Transport and Works has some information, perhaps the Minister can tell us, and if we deal with it now, with all respect to your point, then we would not have to deal with it then.

Some time last year, I believe it was in October or November, I asked the question of the Prime Minister, and the Leader of the House replied, about the lack of a secretary for the Leader of the Opposition. I cannot find anything in the Estimates this year. We do not have a secretary. The Honourable Prime Minister gave us his understanding that it would be no problem. He was very surprised that we did not get any secretarial assistance, and the Leader of the House was equally surprised. But each time I enquired, through the Leader of the Opposition, I was told that we are being fogged off and told to wait until April, there was some Resolution that was to come. The Resolution has not come. It has been very unsatisfactory, because it places undue strain on my Chamber's secretarial staff and that of the Leader of the Opposition, who have to type political material.

I really would like a firm assurance from the Government as to whether we can expect, let us say, from April 1, that the Leader of the Opposition can almost be presumptuous to employ a secretary. If it is in the Estimates, we cannot find it. I understand the sympathy being expressed by honourable Members on the other side, but we cannot employ unless we are going to pay out of our own pockets. Honourable Members on the other side understand the point.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): While the Leader of the House is looking for the relevant entry, I am very surprised. I think that the problem is with the officers of the House - I should like to say these things — because I have just been informed that sometimes he does not get paid, but he is here, so he must be getting paid some time.

The provision for the office of the Opposition is an Executive Officer, a Secretary, a Messenger, a copying machine, a typewriter and few filing cabinets. One of the big mysteries is why the secretary has not been provided. Under Parliament and General Administration, there were two in the establishment under Head 12 in 1986-87 and one in the establishment in 1987-88. I still do not understand it.

The Leader of the House says that he does not understand, but he will give you an explanation. 4.15 p.m.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Thomas is asking for an assurance that the Leader of the Opposition would be provided with a Stenographer of similar post to carry out his typing and other secretarial duties. We have given, and repeat, the assurance that that particular post will be provided. Under the Schedule of Personal Emoluments, there is one Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition and there is also one post, on page 3 of the Schedule to the Personal Emoluments, which is in these Estimates referred to or designated as a Typist/Clerk, and the salary is in here at $23 892. Both in terms of the designation and the salary scale provided, there is some error which we will seek to correct in due course. But provision is being made for the provision of the two posts.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) referred to the renovations to this building and enquired when the honourable Members would be able to move back to the Chamber to which they properly belong.

I cannot give him a timetable as to when that might happen. I have been advised that the physical part of the work in that Chamber has been substantially completed. The work is being done on contract by M. and M. Construction Ltd. The stained glass windows have been completed. Work on the bay windows has been completed. The repairs to the ceiling have been completed. The petitions, I understand, are about 95% completed. The platforms are completed. The Gallery stairs and the window sill tiling have all been completed. The interior walls are 98% completed. The shutters and casement windows are painted and in place. The fan coil units are 90% in place. The aircondition pipe is 70% completed. Work on the chiller is 90% completed. Metal frames are all on site and 80% in position. The first part of electrical work is 95% completed and the second part is 25% completed. The audio visual work is 50% completed. Mahogany doors are on site and the mahogany panelling in front the Gallery is in position. The supplier has not yet been able to supply all the panels as are required.

Although it was at one time envisaged that the building would be in a state in which we could have moved in by the end of April, that is now doubtful. To me, that was always doubtful, but that was what the experts say. My own estimation is that it will not be ready until about July of this year. I am told that we can move back in probably in the next couple of weeks but we would be without any sound system, and there is no point moving in until we have that and the important things in place.

I have given the information that I have. I hope it satisfies the honourable Member.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Before we leave Parliament, I wonder whether the Leader of the House or the Prime Minister could tell us what is the position on the arrangements for the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the Parliament of Barbados.

Nineteen eighty-nine is obviously going to be a very important occasion in the history of the development of the parliamentary democracy in our country. We are always told that we should follow other persons' models, but, in many respects, Barbados has developed its own conventions and its own traditions, and certainly those of us who have come after 1930, in particular, are deeply conscious of our own special traditions, conventions and indeed the contribution which this Parliament and country can make to the development of democracy and freedom in our own hemisphere and elsewhere.

I should like to think that very early we give a serious consideration to the planning of this event. I believe it will be a non-partisan occasion when all sides of the House would obviously rise to the occasion of recognizing that Barbados and its traditions come ahead of whatever political differences there may be ahead of us.

I recognize that the renovation of this Parliament is one of the structural parts of the overall planning for this anniversary, but there will be a lot more that has to be done. Obviously these Estimates this year cannot reflect the extra cost to the Government which will be expended in the next financial year, starting April 1988, but there may well be some initial costs this year. I wonder how far the Prime Minister, with responsibility overall for this part of the Government's affairs, has started making plans in this area.

I am much indebted to the honourable Member for raising the question of a secretary to the Leader of the Opposition. I think part of the problem I have, and I hope honourable Members do not see this as a plea for myself now I am holding the post of Leader of the Opposition, or indeed a question of looking backwards, and say that, now we are in Opposition; we demand more than other persons have had.

The role of the Leader of the Opposition is at any time an enviable one. The very term "Opposition" suggests that you are there opposing the Government at all ends and trying to bring down the Government willy-nilly because you are only hell-bent on power. People very frequently forget that, because of the constitutional forms and traditions we have inherited, it is recognized that there is always in waiting another alternative party which at some time or the other may become attractive to the population to form the Government if the electorate is dissatisfied. Therefore, within our constitutional framework, the post of Leader of the Opposition and the role which an Opposition must play is extremely important, if we believe in democracy.

I think that what has happened is that this post has developed almost spasmodically, and I regret to say that perhaps we have not yet recognized that the office must be properly provided with staff. When the Right Honourable Member had the job and I turned up very often, as part of the Public Accounts Committee, at his office, I realized that there was not adequate space there even if you wanted to hold a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee. In fact, I became conscious of the fact that both he and the former Leader of the Opposition provided part of their own furniture. Even now, some of the things in the office over there are personal things, and whilst none of the three of us will cavil at making some contribution, it seems to me that we ought in seriously looking at our constitutional forms to recognize that this is an important post.

I understand what went wrong in the former Estimates. It was last year that money was provided for the post of Secretary — I am using the term Secretary in the sense of a person who is a typist and so on — something like $45 276, but there seemed to have been a Resolution or something which only provided one post. This year there seems to be a post of a Typist/Clerk, although to whom the Typist/Clerk is being attributed is not shown in the Schedules of Personal Emoluments. 4.25 pjn.

It seems to me, having held the post for a few months, that if one expects the machinery of Government to function, and function properly, you have to make staff available so to do. On my visits on Parliamentary exchanges to places like Ontario and elsewhere, I have noticed that not only the Leader of the Opposition but Members as a whole in Parliament are really given adequate staff to do the sort of research that must be seriously done if we are really to contribute to improving the debates and to making constructive criticism of Government's policies from time to time.

An Opposition — I suppose it happened to the honourable Members, and it happened to us before them — might well come into a Parliament on a day and be faced with governmental supplementaries which, because of Government's urgent business, calls for a discussion on those days. You have to determine if you are going to be truculent and say no and hope that Mr. Speaker will rule in your favour, despite the urgency of Government's business, or have a divide to get the feeling of the House. But one forgets that you need time if you are really to make a contribution to research these matters. If you are an Opposition of three, which we are now — we are not quarrelling with that, we have to accept the fact there are only three - it means that you are even more limited in the opportunities that are provided for you to do the research. You either have to do it yourself or you have to depend on the sole help which is given in the person designated Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition. And I am talking not only of looking at matters that are strictly political, but matters of the House.

I am sure that the 350th anniversary is going to provide us with an opportunity perhaps to look at our very Constitution. I was the other day, the House will be interested to know, looking at the position if the Leader of the Opposition has to be out of the island, let us say, on business, even attending a CPA delegation. The Constitution itself does not make any provision for him or his members to designate someone to act. So you could conceivably have a position where, if he cannot be reached and there is a matter under the Constitution on which the Prime Minister needs to consult with him before making a recommendation to His Excellency the Governor-General, the Government business can be delayed. That is perhaps a hiatus in our Constitutional arrangements. There is a provision, of course, where the Prime Minister has to be absent or where the Prime Minister is ill for changes to be made. There is a provision if there is no Leader of the Opposition for the Governor-General to act in his own deliberate discretion, after necessary consultations with whomever he wants. It seems to me that time is really soon going to come — we will be 21 years shortly — when we have to look at the whole Constitutional forms, not with a view to scoring points on one another, but recognizing what has gone wrong, if so, in'the forms, what omissions may have escaped our notice, and improving those forms.

Another matter that really concerns me, and I hope that the improved facilities now providing in the House will answer some of those needs, is the position of backbenchers, because the same problem that confronts an Opposition, which has not got the Civil Service to provide them with information confronts very much Members on the back bench. I have had the benefit of sitting in Government and in Opposition, on the back bench and on the front bench, and have, therefore, been able to recognize some of these problems forcibly, so if I speak on them, it is really with a view to deepening and improving our Parliamentary democracy rather than really scoring points in this debate.

I think that we have to seriously look at how we[1] are going to make Members more effective. It is all right for the public frequently to complain that the debates reach a low standard, although, Mr. Chairman, I believe that we in this new Session have all striven to raise the standard of the debate and quite a bit of thought and research is going in to what is being said. But I am conscious of the fact that, unlike some other Parliaments, Members on the back bench would not have the research facilities available to them. Again, when I do parliamentary exchanges with other countries, I notice that these facilities are provided. Maybe we ought to say to the public that if the public really wishes good government, and this is not good government only in the sense of who forms the Administration of the day, but good government in the sense in which we think the quality of life of Barbados now demands — successive Administrations have raised the quality of life in this country and I think that we can look forward to the quality being raised — then I think Parliamentarians must also get some facility.

I recognize that in the last few years a constituency allowance has been given and again is being provided under this Head. But that is only part of the problem. We have the problem of the actual facilities here — the library facilities, people who can look up things for you, who can provide you with information, making sure that the documents are here and are available and there is easy access to them. Whilst I realize that some improvement has come recently in the library services, they are not as adequate as they ought to be. I realize for instance, that

although we make provision for Committees, we have not been able to meet in Committee as often. I can understand that Ministers are busy, but the Committees themselves do not seem to have the wherewithal and the . facilities to improve the Committee system that is called for. I think that, eventually, we will have to take a long look at ourselves going into our 350th anniversary and see how we can improve these services.

I believe that downstairs, it is intended to improve the facilities that will be there for the Prime Minister and the Leader of the House. The Leader of the House has not even got a facility down here. In other countries, the Leader of the House has his own room. I think they used to have the Prime Minister up in the attic rather than in a room that you could go to see him. I have gone to other Parliaments where you can meet with a Member in the House without inconvenience, whoever he or she may be. Those facilities are there not for the aggrandisement of the men who occupy the office, but for public use, and I hope that we can move to that stage. I would not like to think that the west wing of Parliament is given up to other agencies and not really properly used first for parliamentary business.

I believe that in the long run, to the extent that we can preserve and improve our parliamentary instruments and institutions, we are leaving a legacy well worthwhile for this country. A lot has happened in Barbados since 1930. Lots more have happened since we have become independent. We cannot blame anybody but ourselves if we fail. There is no external force to whom we can look, or to whom we should look for these things, and I think that we have the capacity here within this Parliament and within this nation to make the improvements as I see them.

I hope, Sir, that I have not delayed the Committee with these thoughts that have come to me as I sit in the Chair of the Leader of the Opposition. I hope that one of these days, if the Right Honourable Member does not get the time to implement them, I might have the opportunity to implement them for the nation. If he manages to implement them before the opportunity is given to me. I will make sure that I preserve them and improve on them after. "4.35 p.m.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I think this country is well satisfied with the role being played by the Leader of the Opposition as Leader of the Opposition, and long may he continue in that particular role.

In terms of the provision, we have already given the assurance that the necessary support staff will be available for the Leader of the Opposition and funds are being provided in the Estimates. As I pointed out, there is a post now designated as Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition, and we are proposing that that designation be changed to Executive Assistant to the Leader of the Opposition. There is such a post already on the Establishment, Executive Assistant to the Governor-General, and it is in the salary scale Z.I6 to Z.ll. Then the post now designated as Typist/Clerk would be designated as Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition, which is the stenographic secretary, and that is Z.23-14. We will take the necessary legislative steps to see that those changes are in place. So we will be providing an Executive Assistant as well as a Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition.

As far as the celebrations or the noting the 350th anniversary of the establishment of Parliament in Barbados is concerned, I would like to tell this Honourable Chamber that we intend to bring a Resolution to Parliament in relation to this particular matter. We have been doing the necessary groundwork for that. At succeeding meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, we have already had assurances that a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in the year 1989 will be held here in Barbados. Indeed, at the last meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in London I moved that particular proposal, and it was adopted by acclamation. So we have that coming up and there are other arrangements which have to be put in place, but, as I have indicated, we will be coming with the necessary Resolution to Parliament in respect of that.

As far as the convenience of Members is concerned, I would like to say that we have — that is, members of the appropriate Committees of the House — been giving ongoing consideration to this matter and we are in the process of implementing the plans for the renovations of Parliament. There are certain Members of Parliament who have not been allocated, to date, the appropriate offices from which they may do business. I see the Deputy Speaker is listening very attentively to this and I know he is one of the Officers of Parliament without any offices allocated. We are hoping that in spite of the movements into the other side of the premises here we will be able to provide offices and office space for purposes of Parliament. When we finish our renovations there, we will also be able to provide some accommodation over in the other wing — the west wing I think it is called - of Parliament so that Members would be able to have a space where they may deal with their parliamentary business, or business arising out of their position as Members of Parliament.

I think I have referred to the main problems raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I do not wish to detain this Committee any longer.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I wish to amend Head 12. Item 2, Subhead 8, instead of "Secretary to the

Leader of the Opposition", should read in the 1987—88 Estimates one position, and it should be Executive Assistant relating to the same post with the Governor-General, who has an Executive Assistant in the salary scale Z.I6 to Z.ll The salary there proposed in the existing Estimates is within the salary range. I think there is one more increment.

Under Item 2 Sub-Item 15 - Typist/Clerk should be Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition. It is the same page, Appendix B of the Schedules of Personal Emoluments, page 9. The salary scale there is Z.23 - Z.I4, and that salary scale is from $17 736 to $23016. So it does not go into the salary scale of the Executive Assistant. We wish to delete the words "Typist/Clerk" and substitute the appropriate salary scale so that the Leader of the Opposition will be able to recruit a Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition within the salary scale Z.23 — Z.I4, and this will be obtainable from April 1, this year. I hope that meets his satisfaction. I do not think there is any problem there at all.

There is a lack of communication between the Leader of the Opposition and Parliament - Parliament as here assembled. The Leader of the House is preparing, he hopes in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition, certain guidelines as to the administration of Parliament, generally speaking. These Estimates, as far as I know, never went to the Debates Committee. At that level the anomalies which we are now confronted with would have been resolved. We will have to lay down some very firm rules.

I am not going to tell you about my personal tribulations, but I am just going to warn the Leader of the Opposition that I will come to him at some time and get him to sign the Report on the Committee of Public Accounts which I have been trying to get completed for the past 20 to 21 months, unsuccessfully, because of the lack of material being provided. I do not want to put it any higher than that, but he will understand what I mean. Consistently every two weeks, I have been appealing to one person or another. 4.45 p.m.

I think the Leader of the Opposition ought to rely more, now that we are supplying him with a secretary and the administrative assistant, on his own resources, because relying on the resources available to Parliament, I have not been successful in getting information with the promptness that I would like. In trying to get the reports up-to-date, we hope that he will be able to start off with a clean sheet from 1985-1986. That is as far as I was able to get. I had to go back nearly 15 or 18 years to get these reports ready for Parliament.

I think the Leader of the House has dealt with the question of accommodation. I hope that we will not see any encroachment by statutory bodies or Government departments on the precincts of Parliament. About the only person I think we should be accommodating either in the east wing or the west wing is the Ombudsman's office. He is more or less an officer of Parliament, and I do not think any of us would object to the location of the Ombudsman's office in part of these buildings. But I do not want to see any special project offices, although some admirable officers work in there, or any MTW spill-overs, like at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which they use as a parking apron for all the disused MTW trucks and so on. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was opened in 1964 and the temporary sheds have not been moved, and this is 1987. That is 23 years that they had those disreputable shacks outside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I hope that when they finish Parliament, they would not consider the west wing as some kind of dumping ground for all the worm-eaten furniture that MTW does not know what to do with. I have an admirable plan for it. It involves the employment of Puff the Fiery Dragon in getting rid of all that worm-eaten furniture. We do not wish to see it over there or in here.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, I should like to make a brief comment regarding the constituency Parliamentary Assistants, especially as it relates to their office and their allowances.

During the time of the last Administration, as a representative of some of the assistants, I had a very difficult task in trying to get straightened out and regularised the matter of their status, that is to say, whether they were fish or fowl, or indeed, red herring, and I was involved in several protracted discussions with the Speaker of the day, who had given certain assurances that certain correspondence had gone to the Establishments Division. Regrettably, when I checked with Establishments, they were not able to find that correspondence. So the matter still remains unresolved up to today, although I have been given certain assurances by the Prime Minister in this regard.

I am referring especially to the fact that the constituency parliamentary assistants draw a stipend from the Treasury and must be seen to be employed by the Government. Yet, we have a situation where they do not have National Insurance deductions made from their wage or their salary. That will pose a problem for them now, and it will pose a problem for them in the future. There will be a problem like sick leave, in the event that they take ill. There will be a problem of maternity benefits if anyone of them have occasion to go on maternity leave provided they are entitled to it. But given the fact that men will also now be able to get maternity benefits, they may be that kind of consideration if the assistants are males. And, of course, there will be the problem that will arise down the road if those persons

are no longer employed after some time, owing to no fault of their own. Therefore, it seems to me very important that the matter of their status be regularized as a matter of speed.

It seems to me that we have to recognize that at $700 a month they are going to have a peculiar problem. Perhaps, when the position first came into being we were trying to find our feet and we were trying to put the workers concerned — and they are workers — in a kind of a half-way house. I think it is fair to say that anyone who works as a constituency parliamentary assistant, however well-intentioned the aim may have been, is really in full time employment. We may want to call it part time employment, but if that person is going to do a good job, it is going to be full time employment. In any event, in the circumstances of our employment situation today, chances are that that person will not be able, in the foreseeable future, to be able to hold more than one job and do it properly. So the matter of $700 a month should be reviewed at the same time that we are looking at the status of this National Insurance Act.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that we would properly deal with this matter if we brought those persons to the bottom of the Z scale, which is now Z.39 and which would be Z.38 in the not too distant future. Then we would be able to start making appropriate deductions for National Insurance considerations for those persons so that we could really bring justice to bear for persons of this sort. I am assured that it will be looked at, but I think it necessary that the point be made at this stage, and I hope that we will be able to do it before there are any problems either because of illness or other National Insurance considerations involved.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) has made a very important point, although I heard some words of self-adulation coming from the Government's benches saying that he always does.

I believe there may be some anomalies in this whole matter. Let me get my own position out of the way first. I have always had one person as constituency secretary. It is the first time I know that no National Insurance is • deducted, as I had nothing to do with the payment of that person. When I asked at first about it, I was told by a member of the staff of Parliament that Parliament looks after that — all I was supposed to do was submit a name and an address, which I did, so I do not even know how much the lady gets.

What concerns me, arising out of the observations of the honourable Member, is that I have heard that since there are no guidelines, some Members, in fact, let the money be shared among two persons.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Leader of the House is telling me, "or more". I do not know. I have never really enquired, I have only heard the rumours.

It seems to me that there would be some difficulty in implementing the submission of the honourable Member for St. Michael Central, if you are going to have a Z scale, Z.39, or Z.38 as it will be, if you are going to have two people holding the same job. I really think that if there are anomalies, and I believe that there are, it is a matter that is properly referrable to the Debates Committee, where the Debates Committee, perhaps, should investigate it and set down certain parameters, or guidelines, or principles that should govern the employment of these persons. 4.55 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, we ought to be able to regulate our own business and we do not do it very well. This is one of the perennial defects of Parliament. I am aware that persons who are under this particular designation do not pay National Insurance. I have protested about this and I have been told that they are independent contractors. I do not entirely agree, because money is being voted by Parliament for the payment of specific persons who draw their salaries direct from the Clerk of Parliament. It is not an allowance given to the Member of Parliament to do what he likes with it, if it were an allowance given to a Member of Parliament to do what he likes with it, it would be quite in order for him to spread his largesse through the constituency and have ten people each benefiting on a part time basis for services, or for no services at all, from the benefaction. I do not agree that this is an allowance paid to Members of Parliament to distribute as they like. Therefore, if the persons for whom this allowance is voted are persons who are supposed to assist the MP in his Parliamentary duties, it is appropriate that Parliament should pay the part of the National Insurance contribution that an employer is supposed to pay, and that the person who is holding the office from time to time should bring along his National Insurance card and pay his part of the contribution.

I do not have to give any reasons why from time to time I take over certain departments of Government and play like Jack, bat and bowl and field all at the same time, but one of the main reasons why I have been concerned over the operation of the National Insurance is that vast sums of money are owed by employers who are well off, who regard the National Insurance contributions withheld from their workers as part of their cash flow fund, and I have heard responsible Members of Parliament say it is unreasonable to call upon them to pay because small businessmen have cash flow problems, and since there is such a wide variety of feeling over a matter, which is strictly a financial matter, I have decided to take the bull by the horns and straighten it out. It is not a welfare matter at all. Whoever wants to have it when I

straighten it back out can have it. I am not looking for work, but there is too much money owed to the National Insurance Fund, which, as far as I am concerned, constitute embezzlement, — I am using strict legal language — on the part of an employer to take workers' money and put that money in his pocket and not pay it to the National Insurance Board, to whom it shall be paid, as far as I know, within 15 days or 30 days, or something like that.

There are large companies which have gone into receivership and have not been paying their National Insurance contributions, and this is very very bad, and 1 regret to say that Parliament has been breaking the law. This is also due to the fact that there is a lack of control by the Department of Parliament, which, as far as I am concerned, is the Debates Committee. That should be more strictly invigilating, because I regard the Debates Committee as the Board of Management of Parliament, and I do not think it should be left to any Officer of Parliament to say that he does not feel like deducting national insurance contributions. I hope that whichever officer says that is paying his National Insurance contributions, because this is another thing we have to look into. He may find it hard to deduct National Insurance contributions from the Ministers' "secretaries", using the word in a very loose not pejorative sense, because he may not be paying his own, and I wonder if the Debates Committee is aware of that. What is the true position?

As far as I understand the law, anyone who is working for someone else is liable to pay National Insurance. If he is working for himself on a sessional basis and he or she is telling the Member of Parliament "I will work for you at a rate of $8.00 on hour for as many hours I feel like working or I have time for," then he is an independent contractor, because he is offering services on his own initiative, not only telling himself what to do but telling himself how to do it, too. He is an independent contractor. I think the difference is in the relationship between the master and servant as an independent contractor.

But these people are not independent contractors — they are drawing statutory salaries - and I think Parliament should not set a bad example, because I will be calling upon Parliament to pay up all the contributions in respect of salaries which Parliament has paid when I do my check to make sure that the few million dollars — when I say a few million dollars, I do not mean double figures, $20 or $30 million - owed now to the National Insurance Board on this particular account are paid. We are not going to be able to service the National Insurance funds if we allow people to be delinquent in this respect.

I should like the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable Member for St. Thomas to consult with the Leader of the House when he is framing very shortly, I understand, his guidelines for the performance of the duties of this House and the Other Place. Right now it is a free for all, everybody doing just what they like.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I should just like to give the House a little background to this. The whole programme of these constituency assistants was introduced in 1979 by the then Government. It was a step in the right direction, although we did not believe that it went far enough at that time, nor is it far enough for the present circumstances. I believe the programme has been going for long enough that we have been able to assess it and that we can make the services more suitable to the needs and requirements of Members of Parliament, and that is what we are proposing to do, and I would like to give the House that assurance.

In 1986, before the change of Government, when the then Debates Committee did ask for a review of the position, the reply came back that the present or existing arrangement should have continued. I think we have passed that stage now and it is agreed on all sides that changes are desirable and required, and I think we can work this out under a bi-partisan approach. We have to look at severance payment, maternity benefits and national insurance contributions, the whole range, because it is employment, and it is employment related, to the performance of the functions of Members as Members of Parliament.

I support entirely the point made by the Prime Minister. It is not largesse. It is in relation to public duties and should be so considered.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, I wish to say for the record that I do not accept this business of the post being any independent contractor, because if they were independent contractors, when the question of increases for persons employed in the public service comes up, then they would' not have been so considered.

It is within my knowledge that when the Government gave increases in the past^ these persons got whatever percentage increase there was, and since I am one of the parliamentarians who has had a person from 1979 to the present, I say that Parliament cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time, and Parliament should not be in a position where it has such employees, because they are employees of Parliament, they are paid from a cheque drawn on the same place that my check was drawn on when I was a Member of Parliament. 5.05 p.m.

I do not understand how they can have them working like beggars, like people who can be like a knocked-off hoe handle, where they got no travelling allowance,

no maternity benefits, no vacation, no anything, no severance, unless one went and spoke to somebody, as if they were begging for something. This Parliament cannot rest until the matter is settled, and settled in an efficacious manner.

What parliamentarians maybe able to do is that if a particular parliamentarian wishes to engage his assistants on a particular basis, he can so do. But those who employ people as assistants, or aides, or secretaries, or whatever they call them, should have the matter treated in a particular way. It cannot be a half measure. It has to be a proper measure.

Furthermore, Sir, the wages which they are paid are abominable. They are doing it out of love and part interest. If you examine the emoluments, neither the National Union of Public Workers, the Barbados Workers Union nor any other institution that represents workers would be satisfied with the way in which they are treated. I wish to record that I am very grateful to the one I have had who has worked for me and assisted me before then and continues to assist me now.

I am speaking as a parliamentarian, not as any Minister. I am saying as a parliamentarian that it is not fair for Parliament to be making speeches about how we should treat people, our own assistants, since 1979 — and it is nearly 1989 — and they are still being treated like if they are coming begging for salt.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We do not want to delay the Committee, because I think both the Prime Minister, the Leader of the House and the other Members who have spoken made some very telling points on this matter.

I am much indebted to the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) for raising the issue, because although I was certainly in the House as a Minister when the money was moved in for this purpose, I believe that, like a lot of things connected with Members of Parliament, it has been an *ad hoc* arrangement and nobody has really thought out the implications of it. In fact, I can see some difficulties which we will have to solve in relation to the employment relationship between the . Member of Parliament and the person employed, because I would expect that at some stage, just as the Leader of the Opposition or whoever has a discretion as to the person working close to them, the Member of Parliament would have to have some discretion in that purpose.

I am really concerned, Sir, because the Prime Minister has made the point that it could be that most of us who have been in Parliament since 1979, including those who have come in recently, may well be in breach of the National Insurance and Severance Payments provisions, I certainly have not been paying National Insurance contributions. My understanding was — I believe I was misled as to this if that is the correct position — was that the information reaching me from Parliament and elsewhere was that all you had to do was to send the name of the person or the names, since you were entitled to have one or more, and the matter would be taken care of.

In fact, in relation to my own salary as a parliamentarian, I have known very little about it from the time I came into Parliament. Even when I was a Minister the Cabinet Secretary normally looked after all that and merely gave you a cheque at the end of the month and a statement finally telling you how much tax was deducted. There is an almost laxity — I think the Prime Minister is right about this — in the way we really treat ourselves and treat those people who are probably most helpful to us and closest to us. Now that the matter has arisen, I think it is a matter that concerns the whole House. I am glad it is going to the Debates Committee. I trust we can really come up with a formula which would be satisfactory both, obviously, to the sensitive nature of the job as well, of course, as to take fully into account the rights of these employees. I am really concerned that we have a category of employees who are not getting the full benefits for which they are entitled.

I can see a problem occurring when a Member loses his seat. The problem is that if the relationship is terminated, which it probably will be, and the person has served for more than two years, there is a severance payment liability. Matters of that nature would have to be provided for. The position is that if Members of Parliament have served for a period of time, although they do not get severance payment when they lose, they at least get their contributions back. I believe that the Honourable Leader of the House is telling me that in the UK, when a Member of Parliament loses his seat, he could very well get a severance payment.

Sir, we are a little bit hesitant as Members of Parliament particularly because there has been a great divide between the parties, let us face it, depending on whether we sit over there or sit over here, about how we approach matters of the assistance we should have, the salaries we pay ourselves and that sort of thing. I believe that, to some extent, it is now going to be probably much easier for us to take these matters in and I think both of us have been in Government and Opposition, we have seen both sides now, and I think we are in a very clear position in our mind, certainly I am in a very clear position in my mind, as to what are the important issues that should be contentious in this country and what are basic issues on which there should be a basic agreement if the framework of Government must be conducted in any manner.

I hope that in this House we have enough precedents in the Commonwealth to guide us. I gave the Leader of the House my firm undertaking from the position of the

Opposition, we are fully prepared to co-operate with making sure that the business of the Parliament is so organized that it functions as effectively as possible. That means that if the Government wishes to consult us on any matter in relation to matters of the staff of Parliament, whether we are members of the Debates Committee, however it will be, we are quite prepared to bring a seriousness about this matter. I think that we have to be serious about it.

I am probably one of the people in default. I am sure almost all of us must have been in default. If it means making back payments, I am quite prepared to do that if Parliament has not made it. It really ought to be made, because if one of these ladies or gentlemen fall ill, at the moment there is no provision for them to benefit from the National Insurance Fund. That is really not fair, and, in addition, we are not being fair to the Fund.

I am not going to speak on the Prime Minister's issue of the National Insurance funds. I think there is going to be a lot of debate on this issue when it comes up a little later, Sir, in the debate.

The question that Head 12, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

LEA VETO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to his Honour the SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 5.15p.m.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.30 p.m. today.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the House was suspended, the House was in Committee. To that we shall now revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 13 — PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE — $2 691 891

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, Under Head 13, Subhead 1, there are some amendments to this Head, and we are going to move them in.

I should like to take these explanatory notes and amendments as read. If there are any questions, I will be very pleased to answer them.

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Under Subhead 3 is the Tourism Investment Corporation. I believe that only recently, March 1, in fact, the Prime Minister has assumed responsibility for the Tourism Investment Corporation. This corporation manages or has re-[1] sponsibility for Heywoods and the Hilton, apart from anything else that it does. It was Government's stated policy last year, prior to and during the elections, that Government intended to divest itself of a number of enterprises, including Heywoods and the Hilton Hotel. I note that this year there is nothing for Caribbean Airways, consistent with the decision of Government to close the flying operating aspect of Caribbean Airways from March 31.

(Asides: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is International Transport).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am only saying that I noticed that there is no money for that. But in regard to Heywoods and the Hilton, there has been a lot of specula tion within the country, a lot of rumour, and obviously a lot of misinformation as a result of rumour .....

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Apart from Percy Smith?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Percy Smith is only *unus ex multis.*

I do not believe that it is good for the country to be left in a state of speculation for so long as to what is happening. Recently, I read a correspondent from New York who seem to have information about the likely sale of the Heywoods complex. All the Opposition is asking is

that Government should let the country know, without prejudice to any negotiations that may be going on — I do not expect that if you are seeing potential buyers, you should come and talk the price that is being offered — as a matter of principle whether it is still going to sell the Hilton Hotel or whether it has revised its policy — it is . entitled to change its mind — whether it is going to sell Heywoods Hotel, and whether it is likely, put it no higher in the event that there are negotiations, that those sales would be completed during the fiscal year 1987—88.

I believe that the country is entitled to have some statement of policy or principle from a ministerial level, because one of the consequences of all of the talk and all the misinformation is that there is great uncertainty among the workers in these enterprises. Every time something appears in the newspapers, the workers are taking the position — 'Well, we do not know how much longer we are going to be here,' and one cannot expect the same level of productivity. It has been put to me that the workers are saying that, in the event of a sale to private enterprise, they are fearful for the security of their jobs, because they, as so many people do, see Government as a kind of milch cow which is prepared to subsidize losses and, indeed, low productivity, whereas the private sector is not concerned with altruism, but is more concerned with the profit element, and if there is any fat in the system in terms of overstaffing, they are fearful that a private employer will not be loath to chop some of the jobs. I appeal to the' Government on the question of Heywoods and the Hilton in particular to, if it is at all possible, allay some of the fears that are now in existence among the employees.

Perhaps the Prime Minister will also be able to tell us what sort of winter Heywoods and the Hilton experienced, the levels of occupancy and whether there have been any significant inroads made into the loss position of Heywoods by reason of improved tourist receipts this winter, and similarly in respect to the Hilton.

I think I am right in saying that it was the last Government, within the last two years, which had agreed that a certain amount of refurbishment and renovation should be done to the Hilton Hotel. I believe somewhere in the Estimates I saw a figure of $2 milion for the Hilton, under Capital. In the light of an announced intention, reflected in Capital, that Government intends to spend $2 million on the upgrading of the hotel, is that still consistent with a decision to sell it? It may not necessarily be inconsistent, because a sale would have to take account of the improved facility if it is sold after the improvements have been done, but all of these are matters which we are left to speculate about in the absence of any definite statement. 5.45p.m.

Sir, I move to the Government Information Service. One of the problems that I have been aware of in regard to the relationship between the Government Information Service and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is that, in the past, CBC was not able to extract from the GIS money to cover the cost of putting out programmes on CBC for GIS. This is Subhead 8. It had been assumed that this was money going from one pocket to the other, but it ignored the fact that CBC was a separate statutory organisation, a separate legal entity, and it had its own legal obligations apart from Government.

The reality of the situation was that for years GIS was able to freeload — if that is a word — free reel or whatever — and get their material put out free by CBC. I remember that promises were made several times by the central Government to refund CBC the cost of putting out the programmes. I do not believe CBC ever received any money from GIS, and it was a real problem, compounded, of course, by the fact that the Permanent Secretary responsible for Information was a Board member of CBC, and, worse yet, the Minister responsible for Information was also the Minister responsible for GIS and CBC. I think that in terms of proper accounting some decision should be taken as to what is going to happen in future with the CBC accounts in terms of receipts that are due to CBC from GIS.

I know the Prime Minister has only recently taken over responsibility for this and I would not expect him to be *au fait* with all the matters of detail. Is there any policy residing in Government's breast for a change in the format of GIS? It had been the wont of the present Government, when they were in Opposition, to accuse the former Government of using GIS as a propaganda organisation.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: As an arm? I think that criticism, which may not have been serious, but which nevertheless used to be said, ignores the responsibility that is due by the Government to the people at large to inform the community as to what is happening in Government departments. Opposition as well as back benchers would have our knowledge greatly enhanced by a GIS programme that was keeping one abreast of what was happening in Government. Of course, one recognises the dangers in a Government Information Service if the slant is not so much by way of realistic information, but towards the brainwashing or propagandising on the basis of impression — the Honourable Minister of Finance knows what I am talking about — and not on the basis of observable fact. I say from the ranks of the Opposition, well aware of what I am saying, the nature and the extent of what I am saying and the consequence, that it is a Government's responsibility to inform the population regularly and accurately as to what is happening in Government.

I know indeed, having said that, that there has been a change in the management responsible for Information Services, because some of these organisations can be used for promoting self, and that would be a misuse of the broadcasting service. I have not accused anybody of doing it, but the smiles I am getting on the other side tell me that I have struck a responsive chord.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: David, I am always smiling).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is true. More so when you were on television every week. I was watching your effusions that were grounded in optimism of an unreal kind. If we get to Tourism, you will hear about that later on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could the honourable member wind up in another minute or so?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, I will come back.

I understand that at the Government Information Service there have been a couple of dismissals. I wish to know whether Government intends to fill the vacancies and whether there is any plan for the expansion of the Government Information Service.

There are other things that I will come back to.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I think that this is perhaps the first opportunity since the change of Government that we have really had the occasion to discuss one of the major changes in Government policy in this country, and that is the change relating to state enterprises. In the election last year, the Government came out very strongly in favour of privatisation of Government enterprises, and although the statement was made in general, I believe that it was made in a political atmosphere, in which, perhaps, an objective assessment was not possible, despite the fact that I have on various occasions listened to the Honourable Minister of Finance stating that he expects to get a gold haul from the divestiture of some of the Government's enterprises. I believe very strongly as a Barbadian who has an equity in some of the Government's enterprises that this is a matter that calls for very serious and sober reflection. 5.55p.m.

The periods of the 50s and 60s were periods in which most Governments, particularly Governments in the LDCs, felt they had to go into what are referred to as para-statals. It has now become fashionable, particularly with the inspiration of actions in some of the more industrialised countries, notably Great Britain, for even the most convinced democratic socialist of years ago, or some of the most convinced, to believe that privatisation of state enterprises is the answer to all of our problems.

We are the reasons that inspire some persons? I want to see if these reasons are present here. Usually, you hear from the Thatcherites that the reason is that state enterprises are inefficiently run because heading them are persons who are not well qualified. Another reason is that there is a scarcity of skilled manpower. I certainly do not accept that argument in relation to the Hilton Hotel, for instance, where the top management of the Hilton Hotel has largely been centred in the hands of a leading private sector person who has had years of experience in the management of hotels. If, therefore, we have failed at the Hilton to get a reasonable rate of return, it cannot be blamed on any of the Barbadian workers who have been there, and certainly cannot be blamed on any of the governmental administrations. It either has to be in the nature of the lease arrangements we have been operating or there has been some other cause to be laid at the doors of Hilton.

One of the other reasons one always hears is that there is political pressure on para-statals. I do not know of any political pressure in employment policies that has been brought to bear either at the Hilton, the Arawak Cement Plant, or at Heywoods.

We are told that some of these para-statals go on their own free-wheeling exercises in borrowing money. The control of the borrowing power of the Government's[1] state enterprises in Barbados, certainly, has been well balanced, in my view. In fact, I think the Hilton was built at a cost of less than $10 million, although we have never had the exact figure in those days, and the commitments that we have had in relation to the other Government state enterprises have never included a commitment for them to go on a borrowing exercise. The only state enterprise that really at one stage was in the borrowing market, perhaps, to which it is now being returned by the Minister in a great way, was the Transport Board.

Sometimes we hear the reason that .if you sell off state enterprises, there is less of a drain on Government's resources and there is more money that the Government has available. This assumes that the Government has given large subsidies to these enterprises. I could think of other Government enterprises other than those I have mentioned that have probably caused the taxpayers a lot more money down during the years. I can refer to the ADC, for instance. It does not seem to me, with respect, that in relation particularly to the tourism plant in this country, a case has been made out for divestiture in the manner in which this Government is approaching the matter.

The Government's intention, unless there is a change in policy, is to sell these enterprises to foreign persons. At the same time, I see some contradiction in Government's policy, because the Government in the next breath is going to allow the Barbados National Bank to go

into major purchase of real estate on Broad Street, and the Government itself is going to be taking a share, as it has taken increasingly, in some of the major telecommunication enterprises in our country. I am not satisfied that even if there is a case for divestiture, divestiture by the sale of the public assets at this time outside Barbadian interest is justified. I am not going to go much further. I am only going to say that it is not justified to sell outside of Barbadian interests. Government must be conscious that the sale of equity and changing the ownership from Barbadian to whatever country you want cannot be the cure to the problems of these enterprises. Both the Hilton and Heywoods, if other measures are taken, have the possibility of generating enough income to give a satisfactory rate of return, and the same, in my view, in the long term goes for the Arawak Cement Plant.

I want to say a bit about what was foreshadowed for the Arawak Cement Plant, having been one of the people in on the negotiations with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. It was always the vision, certainly of Dr. Williams and late Prime Minister Adams, that, in due course, other East Caribbean Countries would have been asked to take an equity in the cement plant. You will recall that those negotiations went on at the time when we had' problems in CARICOM, particularly when the Jamaica/ Guyana access for a joint smelter plant broke down. We .envisaged that when the difficulties in CARICOM were sorted out, we should be developing more and more a wider Caribbean-based, joint venture arrangement than a limited arrangement with Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. In fact, the course being planned was not only governmental ownership, but one to ensure, at the appropriate time, that there was local ownership, by Caribbean nationals, in an enterprise that was largely dependent on local resources. I really cannot believe that the Government intends instead, as it says, to find foreign buyers to own some of these resources.

We have to bear in mind that we are creating in Barbados a local capital market. When enterprises are brought to a stage that they are being viable, it should be easy to market their shares. I do not believe for one moment that the considerations that inspires Mrs. Thatcher should inspire us in approaching our state enterprises. '6.05p.m.

I note here in these Estimates that it is now intended to renovate the Hilton Hotel — $2 million is being provided for this purpose. Like the honourable Member for St. Thomas, I have to ask of the Prime Minister, are we going to spend $2 million this year and then sell the enterprise afterwards? I hope that, if we are going to do so, the sale price would reflect the amount that we are spending. But it seems to me a bit contradictory for us to be talking of disposing of an asset such as this and at the same time spending money in its renovation at this type of level.

I am aware that unless state enterprises have accountability, and on this I think the Government and ourselves are at one with, sometimes they are liable to run away with the national resources. But I think it is possible to control sufficiently, without too much political interference, a state enterprise and yet show a profit.

I am not for one moment, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) seems to be so convinced without any reservations, that because matters are handed over to private enterprise, that is the end of all of our answers. I can show in private enterprise within the last 10 to 20 years in Barbados sufficient significant failures that had nothing to do with the state of the economy and had to do with bad management at some of these enterprises. I do not accept for a moment that the private enterprise sector is, by virtue of being private enterprise, in all respects more efficient than public enterprise.

We can show areas of well run public enterprise. Let me state a few. The public enterprise of the airport, even if it was under its own statutory corporation, you would find that it had a satisfactory rate of return on the Government investment. The public enterprise of the Port; that, too, has shown a proper rate of return. The Insurance Corporation has shown, from its first year, a satisfactory rate of return. The National Petroleum Corporation, although it has had limited difficulties during both Administrations, has by and large performed well. The joint enterprise, in which I believe Government is the major shareholder, of Barbados Feeds has likewise done well.

I find it pretty strange that a Government which is thinking of using 936 funds from Puerto Rico to think of a joint enterprise in cotton ginnery and is now inviting joint ventures, would wish to find an answer to the state enterprises in a sale of the assets to overseas contractors and persons. I will tell the Government that is not the Labour Party's policy. We really could not condone that policy. We believe that the public in some areas must set the lead, and there are areas in which we have to come in and set the lead. If they want to sell them, sell them. 1 do not, however, want to give the assurance to the buyers that when there is a change of Government, they would not be taken back from them. I want them to know that whenever there is a change of Government, we will look very carefully at any sale of the Government public enterprise that has taken place and determine at that time the Government's interest. We want to make that absolutely clear.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member says it sounds heavy. It is not that it sounds heavy, it is a conviction, because it is fashionable nowadays, you can read it in many books, for everybody to join on the private

enterprise. Bangladesh and Chile are cited as examples of countries that have gone to privatisation in a great measure; they are two leading examples in the LDCs.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member's time has expired.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: My time has expired and I will come back to this.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, the organisation that I have the honour to be engaged by has written copiously on the subject of Government's ownership, management and control of state enterprises. I do not propose here to touch that subject, but a chord was struck which has led, very properly, into what I would like to address, and that is the question of accountability raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. In that respect, I would wish to look to page 4, to State Enterprises, Subhead 3, and I am particularly interested in raising the matter of the Arawak Cement Plant.

I have the impression that when the original company was conceived, we were looking at a plant to produce up to 100 000 metric tonnes per annum; that by the time the Democratic Labour Party was going out of office, the plant that was being envisaged was one which would handle about 250 000 metric tonnes of cement; but that quickly after the change of Government in 1976, a new plant was thought of, and this one was one which conceived of producing in excess of 315 000 metric tonnes. I gathered as well that by that time, the cost had escalated considerably, and that may be one of the problems which we would have had to be faced with.

Of equal importance, Sir, is what happens after the commissioning stage of expatriates, who, as I understand it, were supposed to train locals to make them fully able to take over the management of the plant in time. I wonder whether the previous Administration was as careful in accounting for the public finances as they might have been, and whether they took any steps to discover whether, in fact, any training took place, or if it is true that those persons loved the country so much that they ensured that whenever there was work to be done, it had to be done by expatriates, and no locals were trained, or properly trained. I wonder whether any attempt was taken to discover what was the arrangement in the event that there was a breakdown in machinery, whether there was the possibility of our being able to order that machinery, or if there was any problem relating to the machinery which would result in our being forever forced to go back to those said expatriates to have them fix that said machinery. Out of this one gets the impression that, because there does not seem to have been proper accountability, there have been significant losses at the same plant. The report that one finds oneself getting suggests that these losses may be in the region of $100 million, and it might be useful if we were able to establish what is the true status of those losses and, indeed, what the situation has been over the three years or so of losses and misfortune that have befallen the cement plant. 6.15p.m.

It would seem from this distance that the manage ment over the years have left very much to be desired. I wonder the extent to which there has been a dereliction of duty by the previous Administration in this regard. One gets the impression that those management errors have had to do with certain sales transactions that have taken place and for which there might not be adequate records to support the transactions. It may have to do as well, one gets the impression, to do with the purchase of certain cranes to be used at the site of the jetty. One gets the impression, for example, ...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I just want to ask — I am getting into the crane business now —

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I just want to advise the honourable Member — in fact, the whole House — in respect of some crane.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. I know about it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that a speech you are making?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, Sir. On a point of order: I have an action filed in the Supreme Court against the Arawak Cement Company for not paying rent for one of those cranes, US$12 000 a month since September. So I would not like any discussion to prejudice my action.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You know about it?

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Proceed.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am indebted, to the honourable Member for St. Thomas. I do not know whether I am speaking about the same crane, Mr. Chairman.

Laughter.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I have no way of knowing. Perhaps the previous Administration may be in a position

to advise me how many cranes there may have been, and whether it is possible that a crane was purchased and sold back to itself, I have no way of knowing. I do recall there were similar reports that somebody at one of the oil companies — state-owned, again — who may have purchased a vehicle and sold it to the state-owned enterprise, which then proceeded to give him to drive.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ADC?)

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Was it ADC or was it the oil company?

Aside.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: No, no! That was some years ago. You would have to go back about three years or so to be able to establish that.

Aside,

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: No. The Chairman of the Board lost his position because he was not happy with that.

Aside.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: If, Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Thomas is concerned about cars, then he might be able to explain how another state-owned corporation, CBC, was able to have a fairly new car and within a matter of months of ownership was paying $1 800 a month for maintenance. They may be able to explain how that was able to happen three years ago. I do not know the people, but the previous Administration might be able to help us.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: You were chairman then.)

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am not too sure who was the chairman.

I would also need to be made aware, Mr. Chairman, of the report of a purchase of a certain barge or other vessel to take clinker and/or cement, where this comes in 'the matter of the viability of the Arawak Cement Company, who purchased it, for what purpose, and, perhaps, what cost was involved. I am not referring to the North Point. That was purchased long before and sold. I am referring to rather recent times which may have been within the tenure of office of the more recent manager.

There is the question of lack of documentation that one is hearing about from time to time in support of these various transactions. We would need to discover the extent to which we have, either by commission or omission, dealt with this matter of the Arawak Cement Plant.

We would need to find out, as well, how it is and why it is that we got the impression initially that we were going to have a cement plant with Guyana involved, and then we ended up with a cement plant with Trinidad involved, and now one hears or gets the impression that Trinidad is into its own cement production, and the extent to which we have a problem and how we are going to be able to overcome that problem. We may wish to be advised of the situation regarding Puerto Rico as a place to which we could export our cement. As, I said before, we got the impression that the policy of the Democratic Labour Party was — as, indeed, it still is — that when expatriate managements are put in place, they would manage for a while, while they proceeded to have locals trained in such a manner that they would be able to take over the management of certain establishments. One has been able to find over the years, even after the Democratic Labour Party went out of office, that in the management of several enterprises around Barbados, not necessarily public enterprises, that approach was one that was seen. In relation to the Arawak Cement Plant, one has to discover now what is the current status of the General Manager of 1986. If he is still employed, where is he and what is he?

It seems that, overall, when one looks at the problems associated with this plant, the only logical conclusion to which one can arrive is that there should be an enquiry into the running and the operating of the Arawak Cement Plant. The Democratic Labour Party as a Government have got to make it absolutely clear that, whatever the problems are of the moment, those problems have had nothing whatsoever to do with this particular Administration, and clearly they would give the Barbados Labour Party Administration the opportunity to prove that they have had nothing whatever to do with the problems.

Underlying that enquiry, there should be the understanding that the Director of Public Prosecutions would be instructed to act in any way based on findings that fall within his specific terms of reference, for if there are problems, persons have to be associated with the problems. It is absolutely necessary to deal fully with the matter, because in the event that the problem is perceived to relate to one individual, it would seem to me that we would be making an error, and we would need, therefore, to be fully apprised of where the problems are and what underlies those problems — and get to the root cause of the problems and root out the causes of the problems.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. FORDE) said that his party is against the Thatcherite philosophy and is committed to the

promotion of public enterprise. I thought as I sat here that the honourable Member must have been suffering from amnesia, because, leading up to the 1976 election, when the then Democratic Labour Party had on its drawing board projects like the North Point, International Seafoods, Golden Mile, Carib West and Bath Plantation, the then Barbados Labour Party did not only accuse the Democratic Labour Party of corruption, but they called a Commission of Enquiry into these projects and spent a considerable amount of money in paying an investigator to carry out the enquiries. Therefore, I find it strange that, ten years hence, I can sit in this honourable Chamber and listen to a Member, who called for a Government that was pursuing a policy of public investigation in this country to be investigated, say that his party is opposed to privatisation. The Democratic Labour Party was then embarking on a programme in which Government got progressively involved in Government-promoted enterprise within this country. So I find it strange to hear him make that kind of statement. They called the enquiry. Of course, in the enquiry which is now a document of the House, it was concluded that the efforts then were plausible efforts.

The concept on which Heywoods was designed was that it was to be owned by local Barbadians. It was then called Golden Mile. When they came to run this country and eventually built Heywoods, they brought in foreigners to run it, they did not allow Barbadians to run it. How come now, all of a sudden, they are for local people running enterprise in Barbados, when we had a model project in the hotel industry set up and designed for our local people to run, and they came along, went against all the principles and brought in foreign people to run it, and now can stand in this Honourable Chamber and say that they are against privatisation? 6.25p.m.

The records of this country are clear. Those of us who want to read the records of Golden Mile and the concepts of Golden Mile will know what the Democratic Labour Party has always stood for. But times change, and when times change, wise political people will change their philosophies. Nothing stands forever, and if the climate of the times say that there are particular enterprises which you should privatise, then you do that. No one is so rigid. If the honourable Member for Christ Church West wants to come in here and say that his party has reversed its position, I will accept that, because that is what he is saying, because they are on record and have demonstrated that all along they were for privatisation. Now, all of a sudden, they come to oppose it!

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make the point that their record is one in which they have always supported privatisation, but now, for convenient political mileage, they want to change their tune. But the records still stand.

I thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): The honourable Member who just spoke was confused about the difference between foreign private and local private. Simple concepts — but confused! <£

This debate brings into $sharp_A$ the philosophical divide between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party. The last honourable Member who spoke wants us now to accept that nothing ever stands forever and wise politicians will change. That is what he said. Am I therefore to understand that the philosophy which first informed, indeed the formation of the Democratic Labour Party has changed? No longer can members or supporters of the Democratic Labour Party hark back to the first principles which founded the Democratic Labour Party. I find that a startling admission for a serious political party. That is the logic in what he said. I quoted his own words.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is the conclusion based on the words that you used.

I cannot believe that the British Labour Party would move so radically away from its founding principles, or the Peoples' National Party in Jamaica. The Barbados Labour Party has not moved, so the question does not arise. The conservative party in this country is now the Democratic Labour Party. There is no doubt about that. It is being seen as such in Barbados and in the Caribbean.

The proposals set out in the manifesto of 1986 show a total shift to the right.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Have you ever read anything about Democratic Socialism? Do you know the first principles?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You have gone totally to the right and are now in bed with the Conservative Party in England.

I went to the same university as the Right Honourable Prime Minister. He was not there when I went. You had Lord Robins in your time and I had Miftie=Band in my time. /7/cc'6#

*

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not let us talk about

that in here. That would be self-adulation!

The basic principles always suggested that the state should seek, in pursuance of socialism .....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order, Sir: I just wish to get the record clear. We are in Committee, Sir, as I understand it, and there are certain guidelines that we operate under when we are in Committee.

The honourable Member is discussing the philosophies now of all the labour parties the world has seen. I wish to know if we are opening up the debate to a discussion. My understanding of the Rules of this House is that we had a second reading speech, and while honourable Members will be given some latitude, and lassitude, we would try to stick to the Rules, as we under stand them.

I just wish to draw to Your Honour's attention that honourable Members are beginning to get into a political discussion, which, I submit, Sir, would be contrary to the Rules, as I understand them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My understanding is that the Honourable Member was dealing with state enterprises. I' woujld hope that if he has strayed a bit, he would be back on track in a short while.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am most obliged to you, Sir! I had not strayed at all. I was going to put the Arawak Cement Plant, the Hilton and the rest within a philosophical context, and I was leading to the point where I was submitting to the House that the best principles of socialism dictated that the state should control what used to be called "the commanding heights of the economy." Even though that theory has been attacked and has come under criticism, it still holds for those who accept the basic principles of socialism that the state should have an involvement in certain areas of the economy. We agree that tourism is the most important sector of our economy. If one were following that philosophy through, then the philosophy would dictate that at some stage Government take an interest, on behalf of the people, in that industry, which is the largest provider of foreign exchange in this country. I am sure that in 1963 or 1964 — I was not in Barbados at the time, "but whenever the Hilton was built — it is that kind of concept and philosophy that then informed the decision to build the Hilton.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know about that. I was not in Barbados. I am talking about now.

What I am submitting now is that, at the time when tourism means so much to this economy, it may be a backward step for Government to persist in divesting itself of assets in that industry which it holds on behalf of the public of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Man, who said what? Who is "you all?" Was I in Barbados in those days? Nuisance!

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tell him to let me speak in silence, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Keep quiet!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You can ignore the asides.

6.35p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:,The Hilton Hotel, I believe, if used by Tourism Investment Corporation and the Tourist Board as a pace setter, could have provided a lot of the examples that the Government wishes the general industry to follow. I will take one. I think we are all aware that complaints are made by visitors to Barbados that there is not enough local food on the menus. I think foreigners come here and they want genuinely to sample the culinary fare of Barbados. They will soon have the Prime Minister's book to assist them back home.....

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: They will have to pay for it!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, they will have to buy it! You are not going to give something, you are going to sell it. Here we have the Prime Minister projecting all that is best in the culinary arts of Barbados, and I would have thought the Hilton would have been an ideal operation to put into effect by way of example what we say, that we want to encourage people to come and taste local food. Let the Hilton on their menus, on the instruction of Govern ment, on the instruction of the Minister of Tourism.....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Who? You might lose coconuts? I do not know about Coconut Court. Worthing Court? Worthing Court is there, fair to middling.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not implying that Worthing Court is a subsidiary of Hilton.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, Sir! Worthing Court is only a family enterprise, about which I declare an interest. It is not a State enterprise.

I am trying to make a serious point, Sir, that I would have thought that Government would have used the Hilton to set an example to the other hotels as to what component of your menus should be local, and I want to caution against Government selling it.

As to the Arawak Cement Plant, the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman), in the rhetorical questions that he raised, for which he is seeking some ministerial answers, made an implied attack on the Board of the Arawak Cement Plant. Government did not run it, it is a separate company. I believe the Chairman of the Board of the Arawak was the Director of Finance and Planning. I believe that next to him in the hierarchy of the Board was Mr. Frank Barsotti, a very senior Permanent Secretary in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. I believe that Mr. Freddie Clarke was a member of the Board and Mr. Oliver Browne was Legal Adviser to the Board. There was an implied attack on the competence and the integrity of these persons who had to administer the operations of the Arawak Cement Plant at Board level. One would not expect them to be involved in the day-to-day management, so if there was someone down there who walked with his hand behind his back, they would not necessarily know, although I believe that the operations of certain personnel at that plant were drawn to the attention of members of the Board. What happened as a result of that information going to the Board is another matter.

I agree - I am not forced to agree, I agree willingly - that the operations at the Arawak Cement Plant call for a careful investigation. I have not said that the-Board has not been running it properly, because I exempted the Board from certain day-to-day matters. The Board could only be concerned with broad policy, and indeed a Board is in an awkward position. It can get misled by the type of information that is fed to it by management.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I had it, nobody gave it to me. I know about it. He knows, too, he and I talked.

If management is crooked, management could feed the wrong kind of information to the Board. In other words, matters which are not meant for the purview of the Board could be hidden from the Board, and the Board is asked to take decisions in the absence of all the material and is misled. So one has to be careful about the kinds of strictures that are levelled against the Board.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could the honourable Member wind up in another minute and a half? I will give you a half minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I know, by reason of a case that I had to bring against the Arawak Cement Plant in 1984, which was settled, of a Barbadian who won an Exhibition years ago, who was trained in Europe and brought back to work at the Arawak Cement Plant, who, I believe because he was black and bright and Barbadian, was forced out of the job.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: He had too many Bs.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you know his name was Bell too? I was able to get damages for wrongful dismissal for him.

Sir, my minute has run out. I will come back.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make it absolutely clear that the suggestion in the comment of the honourable Member for St. Thomas is not one that I accept. At no stage did I suggest that the Board, either as a board or individually, was guilty of any malfeasance, and I still do not suggest that. I have said that I am in need of having some questions answered, because I am very much in doubt as to exactly what transpired.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, my first point relates to the question of a concern for a change in the philosophy by the Democratic Labour Party. I think there is some confusion about a change in philosophy as against a concern for efficiency. I do not think there is any change in philosophy on the part of the Democratic Labour Party. Barbados has never been a country like Trinidad or Guyana. I think that in the case of Guyana, you are talking about 90% of your GNP owned by the state, and in the case of Trinidad, I was surprised to hear Trevor Parrel quoting figures that state enterprises in Trinidad account for some 80% of the GNP. We have never reached that kind of situation under either Administration. In fact, I think both Administrations would have taken a position that the state had to intervene and set the lead in certain financial areas, and I think that anybody can say that the Democratic Labour Party took the lead in this particular area.

We have to look at the whole area of privatisation or divestment as being pursued by the present Administration in terms of whether we are looking at privatising service operations or commercial operations, and it seems to me that we are looking at privatising commercial operations and that we are only looking at privatising these operations when there is any indication that, perhaps, they are not being run efficiently or are causing a drain on the national economy. I have not heard any

discussion really about privatising any of the service operations that are controlled by Government, and, even then, it seems to me that in respect of some of those that we might have privatised, like the Hilton, a second thought is being given to that one. We will, of course, hear what the final decision is. 6.45 p.m.

It seems to me that the Hilton can be seen as a special case. I think that it was very proper at the time when we decided that we would go ahead and build the Hilton. At that particular time, we took the lead in an area where the private sector persons in Barbados refused to get involved in an operation of that size.

We talk about the private sector taking a lead, and we talk about divesting some of these operations back to the private sector interest in Barbados. I have not seen any particular eagerness by the private sector in Barbados to come forward and make an offer about some of these things. That would be good. I have heard the discussion on the Hilton and I have not seen any offers by the private sector in Barbados to suggest that they want to buy it. Sometimes when you go outside for purchases, it is because the private sector here has not shown the kind of progressive attitude that they want to get involved.

I am not at all supporting that, when we have to divest enterprises in Barbados, we should look, as a first resort, to outsiders, because, clearly, those of us who are democratic socialists and of nationalist persuasion would want to ensure that these resources are owned locally. But I am saying that our private sector will have to take that kind of lead and show that kind of initiative. Perhaps, with the operation of the Stock Exchange this matter might become simplified and the Government could easily think in terms of divesting to local operations.

Do not let us get into any discussion in this Honourable House about the relative socialist attitude of the two Administrations. Do not give the impression, like the honourable Member for St. Thomas, that the BLP is more socialist than the DLP. The people know different from that. I just want to put that to rest.

The people who are on the directorships of the private operations in Barbados are not members of the Democratic Labour Party. They are the members of the Barbados Labour Party. In over-locking directorates, interlocking directorates — into, over and under-locking directorates — they are not the members of the Democratic Labour Party, not the people who sit on the directorship of the big corporations in this country. Do not let us get confused about that.

The major point I wanted to raise is the fact that I see provision in the Estimates for one person at the level of Chief Accountant Finance Officer for the Unit of State Enterprise. I happen to know the person who holds that position at present, a young Barbadian who was educated at the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, and who went to Canada and did specialised training in Accounting, and it is a good sign that we have that type of person operating in those areas. But it seems to me that the seriousness of this particular unit, the importance that we attach to this unit will call for a full-fledged staff, and I am a bit surprised to see that there is room only for one person here in the Estimates. I am quite sure that some explanation will be given for this. I have no doubt, for instance, that he will be sharing common services with other areas and with other functions, perhaps, in the Ministries in the Prime Minister's control.

It seems to me that we have an opportunity to build up this unit with some of the finest Barbadian brains that we can find. It is not an area now where expatriates will be in. This will be in an area for Barbadians who are trained in the relevant areas, and I believe that we need not only accountants, but we would need engineers and a whole number of specialists. If we are going to be monitoring and auditing functions as diverse, for instance, as the Tourism Investment Corporatipn, and the Arawak Cement Plant, it would seem that we need people of a wide area of training, people with very different but complementary specialities, if we are going to give a good account of what is happening. It seems to me that one of the first things we have to do is to make sure that our recruitment in this area is done very early and at the best level, that we can bring in some of the best persons possible, who would be able to monitor and audit these various areas that fall under the Unit of State Enterprises.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that with the change of Government in 1976, there was some concern by the Barbados Labour Party, which had won the Government at that stage, about state enterprises, and they went about alarming the inhabitants of this country that the Democratic Labour Party had embarked upon a number of things that they needed to investigate.

It is surprising, Sir, when one reflects, that ICA, the North Point, Golden Mile and International Seafoods were investigated by the Barbados Labour Party Government. Out of that investigation, the North Point, which very seriously relates to the concept of the cement plant as demonstrated by the Democratic Labour Party, was sold for less than was paid for it. It is also significant that International Seafoods became a nonentity and the shrimp fleet was left almost to waste in the inner basin of the harbour. While they have held to the idea of a tourist resort of some kind in the Golden Mile setting, they changed the plans, and today we have a situation where it is not as viable as it ought to be. They also changed the concept of the cement plant, having sold the North Point, a very viable means of transport if they had any

intention at all of continuing with the plans of building a cement plant, and they also changed the concept of the viable amount of cement that was required in this country to make the plant a success. One wonders, therefore, when the honourable Members of the Opposition talk about the ideas of the Democratic Labour Party to sell some of the state enterprises, which are clearly giving some trouble financially, how new it is.

Given the kind of story and record that there is about the Arawak Cement Plant, it calls for very serious investigation. Except for the very brief comment by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), it does not appear to me that the members of the Opposition are very concerned about what is happening at the Arawak Cement Plant. It is a sort of very callous approach to the expenditure of public funds, and in some regard one wonders whether they care very much about the source of the funds which are taken to meet these expenses. 6.55 p.m.

I heard the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. Arthur) making mention of the success of Barbados Mills. It seems to me, if my memory serves me correctly, that it is only in this year that we have been able to see the effects of the success of Barbados Mills where there was a reduction in the price of feed, and, subsequent to that, a reduction in the price of chicken meat. If I am to pay a compliment, I would have to pay it to the present Minister who is responsible for this particular matter, and to say that we look forward, as conditions improve, to see the effectiveness of the Barbados Mills finding its way in savings for the people of this country.

I close by repeating my call for a very serious investigation into the running of the Arawak Cement Plant, because everybody seems to be of the opinion, and everybody seems to know, that all is not well.

Thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): I thank the honourable Member for Christ Church West for giving way.

Mr. Chairman, I have listened very carefully to the contributions of honourable Members here on this debate in relation to state enterprises, and I wonder if the honourable Members of the Opposition who have spoken have given very careful consideration to these issues at all.

We came back into Government last year at the end of May, thank God correctly, and we found a number of state enterprises: Caribbean Airways, a money loser; the Transport Board, a money loser; the Arawak Cement Plant, a sponge as far as money is concerned; Heywoods, also losing money. If we were to examine quite honestly the financial statements of these respective enterprises, we would be shocked to discover the amount of money that we are depriving the people of this country of in terms of services, because the amount of money that we put in in subsidy or whatever to keep these things afloat, if we had transferred that to providing services for the people of this country, I do not believe that you would hear the kinds of statements I have been hearing this afternoon from the honourable Member for Christ Church West, the honourable Member for St. Thomas or, possibly, from the honourable Member for St. Peter.

There is no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that these enterprises deprive the people of this country on an annual basis of something in excess of $100 million. What kind of country are we, what kind of country are they claiming that we are, that we can afford to throw out $100 million each year to keep certain enterprises afloat? Why should we not make an attempt to do something about these enterprises?

We have a record, Mr. Chairman, about which we are very proud, as a Democratic Labour Party in Government. We have taken the initiative in agriculture, and we formed the ADC. That, too, loses money, but it is agriculture, it is the backbone, the bedrock of feeding the people of this country, therefore, what can we do with it? We cannot throw it away. We have the BMC, also serving a purpose, but I am not so sure that it is also a viable enterprise. Even if you want to call CBC, that is not a viable enterprise with the amount of money we are putting into it. I am not so sure about that one. It made money at some point in time, but I am not sure it is making money today.

We primed the pump in tourism and we got involved in the Hilton Hotel. Today the Hilton Hotel needs to be refurnished and refurbished. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition says it will cost $8 million, but that is no big thing. We do not believe it would take. that much to refurbish it, but it will take a lot to refurbish it. The fact of the matter is that we as a party, from the very beginning, and will do it again, took the first step in enterprises perhaps in areas where the private sector will not trod.

I am not quite sure why the honourable Member for Christ Church West will want to broadcast to the world that he would re-examine any enterprises that this Government divests itself of. I do not know about sabotage, but he wants those persons to know who arc pn-chasers of the enterprises that may be on sale now to .ay, that when they get back into power, they cannot guarantee that they will not repossess - by whatever means, I do not know - these enterprises. Those were the words of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I do not know wK h hou!d say it at this time, before a sale goes throughout *i* •vr-v-se he has his own good reason for saying these th'r-:s

Mr. Chairman, I am positive that the Honourable Prime Minister will reply in terms of Heywoods and probably in terms of the Hilton. We have to look very carefully at how we get ourselves involved in these enterprises. We will talk about the Transport Board when the time comes. I am not going to deal with the Transport Board at this time, because, although it is a state enterprise, it has its own place in the Heads of Estimates, and at that time I will really want to get into the Transport Board. I will not be advocating that we divest ourselves of the Transport Board. That will have to be an option, but I will not be advocating it. We have to be very careful how we get ourselves involved in these enterprises that will drain us of the little resources that we have merely for the sake of saying that we as a Government have got ourselves involved in these things.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to reply to one or two points made by the honourable Member who has just sat down. I think he is anticipating his role to come.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I never see the gallery except at home.

I would like to clarify our position very clearly on this.

It has never been part of the philosophy of the BLP or the Democratic Labour Party that you should go into an investment to lose money. I am fully aware that several state enterprises, and I cited the ADC as a classic example, have lost money consistently. One of the reasons why we set up the State Enterprises Unit was to begin to monitor the enterprises which Government has gone in, whether on its own as the principal and sole shareholder or in joint venture, whether it goes in with a local investor, a governmental investor like Trinidad and Tobago or an overseas private investor. 7.05 p.m.

I do not believe that either of the two parties adverted at the beginning to the necessary institutional framework which would allow Government as a shareholder to go for the full measure of accountability. I recognize that the Public Investment Unit, as it is now called — it began under the Democratic Labour Party and continued under us - is the unit that examines whether Government should put money in a particular enterprise. What we never had as a follow-up to that was a section of that unit which would monitor how well the enterprise performs in future. As Members know, the most the Cabinet does is get a report from a statutory enterprise, and in this case, occasionally get a monthly report from the Board of Directors on the performance of Government state enterprises in the economic sphere.

There are, of course, some state enterprises like the Airport Authority, although it is not a separate statutory body, in which the Government is the sole shareholder, and it is unlikely that the Government will follow the example of Malaysia and sell off either the airport or the seaport. I believe that in lesser developed countries such as ours, Government will more and more give the spurt to development by getting into joint ventures in economic activity as shareholders. We must therefore not believe that the answer, where you have got failures, is to go in and dispose of the enterprise before we have looked at the possibility of improving its viability in all respects. On this ground, I do not differ from the position of the Barbados Workers Union as expressed through its column, "THE UNION SPEAKS". The views which the Labour Party is expressing have been . expressed by the union.

I think the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) is quite concerned as the new leader of the philosophy of his party, to see the position as saying that one is attacking the philosophy for which the founder of the Democratic Labour Party is well known. In these debates, I always have to listen to some reference that may have personal connotations. I do not get put off by that.

The point remains that I honestly believe that in a country such as Barbados, there must be a proper mix of Government intervention in private enterprise. I favour Government investment in some of the major enterprises in Barbados. It is not that I am against private enterprise *per se*. The honourable Member is mistaken if he believes so. But I am sensible enough to recognize that private enterprise does not always have the answer, or the initiative, or the management skill. Whatever we say for them, one must recognize, regardless to whether you like it or not, that the major impetus for development of this country since the Fifties has come from the public sector, whether they are managed by the Prime Minister or other Prime Ministers. The major enterprises have come from ourselves, and I think we are beginning to sell ourselves short as politicians who have managed the country by giving the public the impression that we are failures and people outside, who have benefitted most, are the success stories of this country.

I want to make the position clear. I do not have to put the Government's position, but, as a Barbadian, I believe, and I say it over and over, that this country has made in the last 30 or 40 years more progress than it has made at any time in its history of 350 years. And it has made it under us! I am not going to one moment give up an inch of ground to any private sector person to believe that they have shown any more management than we the political directorate have shown in this country, whatever may be the disagreements between ourselves. Surely we have made mistakes. It is only usual for people to make some mistakes. I believe that if, on the other hand, you look at some of the private sector failures in this country, you would see that, in many instances, their mistakes have been worse than ours.

I have sat at the feet of Gamaliels who have espoused the causes that I strongly believe in. When I came in this House, I heard a former honourable Member for St. Peter, the General-Secretary of the Union, the President of the Other Place, on this point. I have heard the Right Honourable Prime Minister on it.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Tom Adams disagreed with all of them.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Never mind it is current to run down the former Prime Minister, I say that within my own party we have consistently been on this point. So I agree that we have to tighten up on the areas where there may be bad management. I believe that having state enterprises under the overall control of where the Public Investment Unit is, is a proper step. Former Prime Minister St. John in one of his Budgets - I am not sure which one - set out the reasons why this was set up.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has made a valid point. I hope the Prime Minister is satisfied that he has enough personnel to manage this department,"[5] because Government, the more it becomes shareholders, whether it is in the Telephone Company, BET or the Light and Power, must be able to monitor its investments. It is not going to go in to pry out shareholders' business, that is another fear that they have, nor is the Government going in to stand against them in favour of the union or anything. The Government is going in because it has an interest in running the country, and the Government must have the management there to see that the Government's money is properly invested, and what better place to have it than in the Ministry with the overall responsibility for Planning and Economic Affairs.

I do not believe that the experience of the Arawak or . the experience of the Hilton so far, or Heywoods, is sufficient immediately for us to turn our backs on those investments. When the Arawak Cement Plant came, there was a boom in the oil industry, and the Trinidadians were satisfied that they would have been able to take a large measure of the output from the cement plant. External economic events have proved this wrong, because the two Governments at the time had been offered an opportunity by Voest Alpine that Voest Alpine would have taken over and bought all of the cement - the papers would reflect this -for the period of time that the government had any liability to repay money on this purchase. That was turned down because it was genuinely felt then by the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and ourselves that market conditions in the Caribbean were such that it was possible, without giving up part of the money to be made, for the enterprise to do its own marketing. 7.15p.m.

I still believe, Sir, and I will finish off on this point, that, within a few years, what now looks like a dismal situation at the Arawak Cement Plant will turn itself around. I am aware that there have been persons in the Caribbean who have said this to the Government, who have looked at the possibilities that exist, particularly if the economy of Guyana turns around, if they take the proper medicine and some discipline, the discipline that we have had to show here in the management of our affairs, and if the honourable Minister of Trade and Commerce is able to persuade his colleagues in CARICOM to do what is only fair.

Barbados has been more than fair in CARICOM. We are beyond May 28 now. We have carried our share. Sometimes, because of our political divide, we have not nationally told the CARICOM people that we expect them to treat us as we treat them — properly — because cement should now be on the Negative List, as the honourable Member knows, within the whole CARICOM area, and rather than buying cement from Colombia and the other countries, including Venezuela, they should be buying it from right here.

I do not want to go outside of the scope of this Head, but I want to tell the Minister that if he is negotiating with the Venezuelan Fund for housing, he should stipulate that whatever houses are going to come in here should have an Arawak Cement content, that for part of the $6 million that we are going to have to repay them, we must have a benefit at Arawak. Those are the areas that we must look at. We must not write it off because it is public enterprise, lock, stock, and barrel. We have to look at alternative ways of making sure that this enterprise will pay for itself.

Rt. Fon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I do not really know where to begin. There have been so many questions, so many meanderings, so many trackless records, and so many attempts to get back on track.

We were treated earlier today to an ideological dissertation by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), whose erudiction, he has confessed, had its origins in the London School of Economics. Some of us emerged and some submerged! I do not know to which class the honourable Member belongs. All I can say is that you probably submerged to the top!

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: We have about 12 minutes. That is the time that has been left to me, not because of the Rules of the House, but because of the trade union practices, which stipulate that the spread-over, or the hours over which the Members should work, should not be more than 10, and the actual hours of work should be eight hours. It is also enshrined in the Rules of this Chamber.

But I wish to go back because we have to put this right — there is so much disinformation inseminated in

the columns of the local media that I should like to invite honourable Members to read a very incisive article written by our Dr. Neville Duncan in Caribbean Contact quite recently on the role of the Press in a developing country such as ours.

I think that nobody can lecture me on socialism. I say this with a great deal of conceit, because I regard myself as the apostolic successor from the late 19th century in the British Trade Union movement through Ramsey McDonald and Kerr Hardy and H. N. Brainsford, and I will go back to the Preathelite Brotherhood, to William Morris, a gentleman rejoicing in the same name as the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, and say that I can trace my indoctrination all the way back there, to the early members of the British Labour Party, not like some members of the people on the other side, who joined the Conservative Party and came back here as Labourites. I am not calling any names. Not you — you did not join anything!

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:. With who? Who is Jeffers? I do not know him.

I am speaking about the socialist movement. I am steeped in socialism, but I recognize its limitations, because we have to work with people. We have a lot of ideas about what should be done, but we cannot do all the things necessary, and when we put people who do not understand what the main thrust of your philosophy is, it is likely to become debased and debauched. That has happened in every country which has experimented with a socialist form of social organization.

I came in here in 1951, that is 35 years ago, and I came in here because there was no other party which professed to be working in the interest of the masses of the people of Barbados at the time, and I could not and will not and cannot join a Conservative Party. I do not have the agility of mind and flexibility of moral outlook as the honourable Member for Christ Church West that will allow me to support conservatism while preaching socialism.

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: If I am for you, I am for you, and if I am against you, I am against you. I am not prepared to suffer for it because, with one notable exception, none of the business in Barbados gave me any work, and I never asked them for any. I remember calling up the Shippers Association, something to do with that claiming insurance for two fishing boats, and I started off by saying to the gentleman ^ who answered the phone, 'Are you the director of the association?' He said, "yes". I said, 'I wrote you two letters on behalf of these fishermen and you have not replied.' He said, "Man, I do not have to reply to you." That was the kind of manners exhibited by the mercantile community in Barbados. All of us around this table know that they are extremely limited in their capacity to absorb anything, far less to do anything for the country. I do not want to get angry on this point. All of us have had the experience of slogging-through to 5th and 6th Form, and we get out into the wide world of business to find that the fellows that we left behind in 1A are the big bosses.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Which second? Those are the bright ones that reach 2nd Form!

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You come out in the wide world and find that they are dispensing jobs and are Managing Directors. I will not worry to go into that. We all know it. That is the social history of Barbados. I am a socialist — okay.

I joined a party in 1951, after much blandishment from my old family friend, Dr. Cummins, a former Premier of Barbados, because I was not really interested in all this talk. I am a man of action, but eventually I came in here. I did not have to try as many times as Dr. Cummins to get in here. I only tried once and was successful, and, apart from a short sabbatical which the people of St. George gave me in 1955, I have been back in here ever since.

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: In 1961, we formulated a policy in which we set out our principles, and our principles were based on the question of equality of opportunity for the people of Barbados. We felt that you could not have equality of opportunity unless you had educational opportunities, which we implemented within four weeks of the election and we could not have equality of opportunity if, as was told to a school friend of mine, who is still alive, thank God, when he went to apply for a job to a gentleman — I do not want to call his name, I will tell you outside privately — I am not going to embarrass anybody, because he has children who are fairly decent — this gentleman in Roebuck Street was renting a property making money from my friend's grandmother, and when my friend sav a job advertised for a clerk officer, having received a good education at Combermere, he went to this Roebuck Street merchant, and the merchant said — 'Well, you know, young man, your grandmother has been very good to me, because all these years she rented me the premises and she never raised the rent. But, to tell you the truth, I

have got to give this job to one of my own.' So in order to provide equality of opportunity for people, we had to see that the instruments of economic development in this country were in the hands of the Government so that the Government had some kind of control. 7.25 p.m.

In 1961, 1962, 1963, there was one single hotel built, apart from the Marine, which was going out of business, for the purpose of a hotel, and that was Sandy Lane Hotel, which was an up market hotel for all the snobs from Great Britain, high capital investment, still the most highly priced hotel probably in the whole Caribbean. That was not our concept for the development of tourism in Barbados, so the Government of Barbados decided that we would invest in a hotel at Needham's Point on Government land, and we built the Hilton Hotel. It was opened at the time of Independence in 1966.

The interesting thing about the Hilton Hotel is that we did not borrow any money to build it. As the bills came in month by month, at an average of $600 000 a month, I paid them. The total Government revenue was only about $35 million or $40 million a year, but we were economical enough that we could build the Hilton Hotel. So when the Hilton Hotel was completed in 1966, we did not owe anybody any money for it, and the Hilton Hotel made money from 1966 until comparatively recently.

When the hotel was finished, my predecessor in office who exited on May 28, 1986, 20 years later, he said that it should either be bulldozed or turned into a maternity home. He was expecting a population explosion in Barbados at the time, because he said that 160 room hotel should be turned into a maternity home. He did not see the economic benefits of having an hotel designed by first class architects *ab initio* - or since I have to speak in the English language, which is my mother tongue, as well, Sir, from the beginning - and advertised all over the world in all the first class hotels. It brought Barbados tourism from 54 000 a year to nearly half million people now who come into Barbados, as a direct result of our priming the pump and building the Hilton Hotel.

I do not believe in public ownership for the sake of public ownership, but, as the honourable Member for Christ Church West has admitted, there are areas in which the blinker-minded private investors in Barbados do not wish to go or take the risk. One organisation in this country alone, on last year's profits could have built the Hilton Hotel in 1966. But they would never think that those extra profits should be taken and invested in Barbados, they would go and buy British Government securities or speculate on some other stock exchange somewhere or the other, or buy sugar plantations.

If you just give me a little indulgence, Sir, I will finish. I do not want to come back here on this thing, when I am speaking on it I want to speak on it.

The honourable Member asked, since I am on the Hilton Hotel, whether we intend to sell it. We were confronted with a formidable bill of deficits from these state enterprises when we came into office. I think that one honourable Member has stated it is in the region of $100 million. A hundred million dollars means that the taxpayers were being asked to subsidise the luxury of Canadians and Americans coming here, to subsidise the Puerto Rican building industry, to subsidise people who want to live in the most luxurious hotel in the island, to subsidise transportation for tourists coming from Europe in Caribbean Airways and subsidise various other state enterprises.

Apart from the indirect benefits of employment, $100 million is too high a price to pay for the privilege of having people who are not Barbadians enjoy the facilities which we have created for their comfort. That puts the whole thing in its right perspective. So we said at a very early stage that we will try to relieve the taxpayers of this burden, as it was very well put by a Member who spoke before me.

It is not a question of being for privatisation. I do not believe — I am like the honourable Member for Christ. Church West, in this limited respect at least — that those people are so bright anyhow. I think that the collective wisdom of the people around here on both sides is much greater. We all went to the same schools, we all went to the same universities. Some of us got misled on the way and joined the wrong political party, but the basic foundation is there, whether it came from the Parry School, Combermere, Harrison College, London University, Oxford or Cambridge or any other enlightened university in the United Kingdom of that era; or the United States — Rutgers and Howard and McGill cannot be omitted from our list of desirable institutions — or the Inns of Court.

When the World Bank people come down here and tell us all this nonsense that they tell us from time to time, and the IMF people, go and read my speech to them in 1973. What makes them so wise? They did not go anywhere that we did not go. That is right, they put on a Birch Brothers suit and dress up, like a car jacked up on blocks and the wheels spinning in high gear and come to give us advice on how to run our country. That is where we have fallen down. I did not invite the World Bank to get involved in the Arawak Cement Plant, they sent a lady called Miss Hogg down to Guyana and said they would like piece of the action. We did not invite them to come into the Holiday Village, but they said they wanted to make this a model for the rest of the developing countries, and the concept then was that that holiday village was going to be built for $30 million.

What happened? Instead of continuing with the plans the enlightened Administration that succeeded us in: 1976 delayed everything, delayed the cement plant, the price went up from $100 million — which was the World Bank figure — our figure was below that and we had consultants from Milwaukee, from China, all over the place — and it went up to $217 million by the time it was finished in 1984, because, having gone throughout the length and the breadth of the country saying how incompetent and corrupt the Democratic Labour Party regime had been, they had to set up a Commission of Enquiry which exploded in their faces like a touch balm in a defective tin tot. I do not know if you all know what a touch balm is, you make it with carbide.

The real problem with these state enterprises is that they should have been gone into at the time when they were on stream. They waited until after the fuel crisis, when prices were escalating, and the whole economics of the projects changed, because whereas we could show a profit at $3.00 a bag on cement with a capital cost of $50 million, you are now confronted with a situation where Barbadians are asked to pay close to $11 a bag on a project that cost $217 million. And you are selling, cement to Puerto Rico, which the United States courts are being asked to investigate, at $3.00. You are paying the freight and landing it at Puerto Rico at $3.00 a bag, and you are asking us here in Barbados to pay $11 a bag for it. That is what has gone wrong! It is no change in our philosophy, it is a change in the whole structure and the debauching and the devitalisation, or whatever you call it, and the whole destruction of the economic base for these projects by the Barbados Labour Party. I am not a person to get up in here, and talk about the former DLP regime, like the honourable Member does and then have one of my friends on this side jump up and tell him that you are responsible for this and the other. I am not like that, but let us face facts. 7.35 p.m.

We were going to get 100 000 tonnes sold to Guyana, and we signed an agreement with Guyana. We bought the North Point for US$53 000 and they sold it for $1.8 million, and they said that I was making a - deal with my friends, and when Mr. Duffus examined it, the agreement was signed between me and the Treasurer of the United States of America, who, up to today, I have never met, and I thank him very much for selling us the ship. Since then, two Micky Mouse boats have gone down. A boat that we had that could go right up the Demerara River or land cement on the beach in Canowan was destroyed, was got rid of by the Barbados Labour Party Government, and instead of that, they are paying out large contracts to people now in unsuitable shipping. They transport cement subsidised by the Barbados taxpayer to places like Puerto Rico. Columbia is dumping cement in St. Lucia at $1 a bag and Barbadians are being asked to pay $11 a bag.

The reason why I said all of that very, very briefly is to try to explain that we do not think it is fair to ask our people to subsidise all that sort of thing. When you are criticising us about Budget deficit, when you are telling us that we did not have any right giving any tax concessions to the taxpayers, that we only did it for political purposes, I am trying to stop the taxpayers of Barbados having to subsidise these unprofitable enterprises. I have already stopped Caribbean Airways.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I will finish shortly, Sir, because we are finishing for the night anyhow.

In so far as the Hilton and the other hotels are concerned, the trouble is that they are so much in the red that you cannot get anybody to put up a reasonable offer for them. When you have something profitable, they want to buy it. When you do not have something profitable, nobody wants to buy it.

There is one other thing. In so far as the Hilton is concerned, it is much better to sell it in a good condition than in a bad condition, and I have instructed the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation that they will go to the bank, despite the fact that it is $2 million. The first expansion done to the IDC was by a loan from a commercial bank, and they will do the same thing.

I think the Hilton could be turned around. I do not see any prospect of paying the $7 million or $8 million in amortisation charges on behalf of the Heywood's Holiday Village in a way that you can get enough revenue from the sale of rooms, food and beverages to make it a profitable enterprise.

To be quite honest with you, Mr. Chairman, at the moment, the prospects of those two hotels being sold to the benefit of the Government of Barbados, are very remote. We are trying, but we are not going to give them away.

Anybody who buys the Arawak Cement Plant is either a philanthropist or needs his head examining. That is my personal view, but we still will try to sell it, because there are some foolish people born every day. Every minute, all over the world they are people being born, so we are making a try. We may get somebody who has so much money that he does not know what to do with it who may relieve us of the burden.

You cannot criticize us for trying to relieve the taxpayers of the burden of supporting these enterprises

when the money could be more profitably employed, as far as we are concerned, in supplying houses for the 18 000 people or so in Barbados who are looking for somewhere to live and a roof to put over their heads.

The question that Head 13 stand pan was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow March 17, 1987.

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

The question that the House be suspended until Tuesday, March 17 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.
7.43 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it shall revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 69 - CAPITAL - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - $3 900 002

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 69, Capital, stand part.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, under Subhead 5 there is provision for a token vote for the development of the Durants Golf Course. I am aware of the fact that the Barbados Labour Party Government had been looking at the prospect of reconstituting the Durants Golf Course, and I wonder whether the Government has made any further plans on that project. The vote is only a token provision, although it does not say how much of the $2% million under this Head is token, so that perhaps the Prime Minister could bring the Committee more up to date with the development of the plans as were being formulated then. Is it intended that the Government will acquire the golf course outright? Is it intended to go into the development as part of a joint venture with other persons in the tourism sector? What are the proposals that Government has in this respect?

Perhaps, too, the Prime Minister will, if he cares to, explain part of the thinking for the policy change of the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation being shifted in the manner that it has been, always recognising that it is within the Prime Minister's sole responsibility to allocate portfolios. It seems that what we are particularly witnessing is that some portfolios are now being centralised under Prime Minister, others under Finance, and I wonder what are the arrangements for a co-ordination of these different services.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I feel that the House is entitled to some information from Government as to the precise nature and extent of some of the capital development planned under this Head. Starting at the top, Subhead 1, the interior, and exterior of Ilaro Court were to be redecorated and minor repair work done. Perhaps the Prime Minister will tell us what he intends to do in regard to the interior and exterior, if it is a complete repaint job or whatever. I am not too familiar with the place, I have been there about twice.

Under Subhead 2 - Feasibility Studies, (c) merely says "Fish Landing Sites". I would really be obliged to know from Government what they intend in regard to these fish landing sites. There is no more on the page except "Fish Landing Sites." As I understand the policy of the Barbados Labour Party before May 28, we had decided that, having developed Oistins, a similar type of development would take place at Speightstown, which has now been abandoned by the present Government. Tent Bay has been on-going and I believe there was some development planned for Skeetes Bay and Conset Bay. Sites had been identified and work was on-going and some work was in the planning stage. I would like to know what is this Government's conception of the fish landing sites.

The improvement of the Government Information Service, Subhead 3. There is a token vote for the improvement of the Government Information Service and, always recognising that it is only a token vote, I wonder if Government has formulated any plans for the development of the Government Information Service and if the Minister would be so kind as to share them with us. To

what extent are you planning to have an integrated service, for example, with CBC? Are you going to expand the Government Information Service, give it a different slant? I think we are entitled to know, since this is the area which really deals with the planning of the expansion of various Government departments.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, let me deal first with the question of decorating Ilaro Court. I am not aware that Ilaro Court is in need of any decoration at the moment, but, as a result of several comments made by members of the general public, and including I believe some members of the Opposition as now constituted, that the lighting outside of Ilaro Court is deplorable and people have to stand up in the dark on grass, with the ladies' high heeled shoes sinking into the grass, when receptions are held there, I have asked the Government Electrical Services to look at the whole question of providing adequate lighting, and lighting which is separated from the meter services to Ilaro Court itself so that we can estimate how much money is being spent there.

The only interior work which I think should be done on Ilaro court is that the person who has borrowed the television - I am kindly asking - should try and return it. That is the only deficiency that I know in Ilaro Court. When we took over the Government there was a television set and a video, and the television set is no longer in evidence.

The general public is not, generally speaking, allowed into that part of the residence, because that television set was upstairs in a back sitting room to the south east of the property. When receptions are held, like by the Red Cross or the National Trust, even if the general public enter the house, they are only allowed in lower level public rooms.

I am not aware that Ilaro Court needs any painting at all, and certainly in a year when we have financial strictures on unnecessary expenditure, they will only be allowed to paint it if a case is made out. I am not aware and no other member of the Cabinet is aware of any problem. I suppose that was put in there as a token vote. The amount of money saved, if we look at the last Estimates of Current Expenditure, on Ilaro Court is approximately $300 000 a year. Even for the skeleton staff which is there, from April 1 the salary given to the Housekeeper, because of the calls made on the Housekeeper's time and energies, will be reduced by 50%. A new person has been nominated. The Housekeeper has been compensated and paid all necessary leave and so on. I do not think that you will find any painting being done up there in a hurry. 11.10a.m.

The amount of money for Plant and Furniture is $21 000. I think that some of this money will have to be spent on getting chairs for public functions, for reasons which are fairly obvious. I do not think that we should have to be borrowing chairs from the Schools Meals Service, Public Works and places like that, because there are enought functions held there now by national bodies. I have mentioned the Red Cross and the Cancer Society. The last function was held, I think, by the Challenor School, and they informed me that on one day they made $57 000. So I think that this is serving a useful purpose.

I take this opportunity to say that we have received many requests. Let me give you an example, without in any way reflecting on the Ministry of Education. I received a request from my old school, Wesley Hall School, to hold a function at Ilaro Court to raise money^ for the headmaster's study. I feel that the headmaster's study is for the Ministry of Education to look after, and I directed — I did not write the letter myself, that would be too embarrassing — a letter to be written to them saying that although Wesley Hall was nationally prominent, having produced a Governor-General, the President of the Senate, the Prime Minister and scores of others, including the Minister of Tourism, and the Member for St. Thomas, so many that it is almost invidious to mention them, I could not sanction that. I directed them to the Minister of Education, because there are over 100 primary schools in this island, and if you allow it to Wesley Hall, they will say that you only allowed it to Wesley Hall because you went to school there, and then you find that you would have to allow every primary school, every time they want to buy a vase for the headteacher or something like that, or paper for the lavatories, like I gave some money to Queen's College during the last Christmas season, because they were holding a ball to raise money for the children to get soap and other requisites for the lavatories in the school. I thought it was a disgrace that schools should not have those things provided by the Ministry.

People also applied for the use of Ilaro Court to hold weddings. It is not a dance hall. We have a few thousand members of the DLP, and once we start holding weddings there, the Opposition is entitled to apply to hold weddings. So you have to draw the line there. Even the Democratic Labour Party has a commodious headquarters, and if they want to hold a function, they have to hold it there. I do not want to hear anybody saying that we are selecting people. Any national body, like the National Trust, the Canc^ Society and the Challenor School, which we regard as national, because it is relieving the Government of the necessity to provide fully for its requirements, would be entitled to use it.

I think that premises like that should be used for the national purpose and not for a Prime Minister's

residence. I found no fault with Culloden Farm which, cost the Government $101 000. So far as I can make out, Ilaro Court has cost $3 million, at least..The recurrent expenditure has been substantially reduced. I hope that the people of Barbados will be able to enjoy it since a large amount of their tax has been spent on it.

Coming now to Fish Landing Sites, the Minister of Agriculture can deal with it although it is in my Vote Book. I will say that I am becoming more and more suspicious of these international organisations which encourage Governments to spend large sums of money usually because the funds are coming from North American Banks, directly or indirectly, and which do not have a clue as to the social or economic requirements of the countries to which they are giving advice.

The people described the fish landing site at the bottom of the wharf, behind the DaCosta Building, as a glorified swimming pool. When I spoke to the fishermen in Speightstown, they told me that they would not be bringing their boats on any 700 ft. jetty over a shoal. So before that work was started, I decided that we should not proceed with that, but look at the feasibility of providing either improving its present location or going further to the north, around the Six Men's/Sherman's area, and doing something there, where fishermen, traditionally, are accustomed to mooring their boats.

I did not know at the time that before the Cabinet had made the decision to have improved fishing harbour, they call it, at Speightstown, the fishermen themselves had told the Government that they did not want it there, or at all. The Minister of Agriculture will be able to give you particulars. I made that decision, and the Minister made the recommendation to Cabinet, completely independent of the knowledge that the fishermen had previously told the Government that they did not want it down there.

You will find that North Americans will do a lot of pretty things on paper. I do not want to criticise the Ministry of Education, because it was not the Minister's fault, but the Member for St. George North (Mr. C. V. Walker) paid a site visit to Mount Tabor with, I believe, the Minister of Education, because I had made a comment that I did not know where they were going to build this school. So they went up there with their engineers and surveyors, and when the honourable Member for St. George North looked at the plan, he said, "But you all have gone and bought the people's cemetery!"

I, as the former representative for that area, could not imagine where they were going to put this big enormous school that they claimed, stopping the young people from Cherry Grove, Pool, Carters and all around and making them walk all the way to Mount Tabor, because they would be building a more commodious school. Then the Minister discovered, after being so instructed by the Member for St. George North; that the ground that they were buying is the cemetery that the people used up to last Saturday. That is what your Government did! And that is why Ministers have to be so very careful.

I am warning my Ministers all the time to get up early in the morning and go and check out'things for themselves, because that is what happens if you sit down and listen to these technocrats advising you. They look at a piece of paper and draw a few pretty lines on it and say, 'Oh, you have an open area that we do not see any houses on.' It was a cemetery, and you all went and bought a cemetery!

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: None of my schools is going there — the Moravian Cemetery at Mount Tabor! That is a fact.

I made the comment, because all these years I have been representing St. John I did not see any place to build a school, even if you knocked down the old one. The land around there is land to the North-East, belonging to Wakefield Plantation, which the owner, I believe- is willing to donate for a playing field. But since we are not going to put the school there, if I have anything to do with it, we will have to use that land as a playing field. They did not go and check. They just said let us put the school over here — and they paid the Moravian church for the cemetery. How do you figure that one? 10.20 ajn.

This is not a cemetery like the old cholera gounds down in St. Peter and in Dover. That playing field is an old cholera ground, but this was over 100 years ago, and no further burials are allowed to take place in cholera grounds. And the people were dying so fast that there were not even tombstones, so you are not doing any violence to family traditions. Cholera ground is one thing, but you go and buy a cemetery in which we are burying people, every week, unfortunately, in St. John, and make the taxpayers' money pay for a cemetery. That is the kind of advice you get from some of the people we have to work with.

I do not blame the Ministers, although I feel that the Minister of Education, with the Permanent Secretary, should have gone up there and talked to the headmaster and say, "We have a plan for building a school, you would not lose your job, it is the lady at Cherry Grove who is going to lose her job" and generally pacify people and take the advice from people on the spot. They do not do that. They sit down in an office, issue edicts, pay out money for things that they should not pay out for

and that kind of thing. Let me leave that alone. Investigate that. That is a pretty one!

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, but you took her, because if you had left it to her, she would not have gone anywhere near St. Thomas. You know that, too!

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: So what are we going to do? If anybody wants a cemetery to buy, we have one to sell.

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Let me go on, Sir, to the next thing. When we first took over the Government in 1961, we had one Government Information Officer. As far as I remember, it was Mr. Oliver Jackman. He probably had a staff of two or three persons. All of a sudden, the Government Information Service burgeoned to an establishment of 37, 19 of whom are Information Officers. As far as I can remember, we only have twelve' Ministries. So you have an Information Officer for every Ministry, and then you have some spare tyres as well.

I do not know what the token vote — the one that is in here for $1 for the improvement of Government Information Services, — is for, but my idea of improving the Government Information Service would be reducing the staff, so it should not cost any money. Do not worry about that vote. I would like to cut the staff down to about three Information Officers and send all the rest of them somewhere else, — not necessarily send them home, because you would be creating unemployment, but I do not see what they are doing.

Take the Minister of Industry. Do you think he needs an Information Service? He is his own information service.

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: And he does a more effective job than all of them put together.

Laughter.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He did not need it.

Laughter.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Everybody knows what is going on in his Ministry, so at the time he does not need them.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He makes sure that the public knows where the money spent in his -Ministry is going. That is how it should be. You do not need all these information people. It seems to me that the Labour Party had a lot of people who were looking for jobs and decided to have 37 people in the Information Services. It is just like the National Cultural Foundation, but I am not dealing with that, somebody else will have to deal with that.

When the Minister of Finance came last year in his Budget and you were saying it is going to cost $109 million, I was not worried, because I could see where I could save $200 million without troubling to make anybody unemployed. You take the parastatal, or whatever you call them, organizations. I mean it is absolutely ridiculous that people want jobs in this country and they are spending money on foreigners.

We do not have to make obeisance to the almighty dollar. We will get tourism, because Barbados has natural advantages, but we have got to control the hotel proprietors and the hotel managers. We are suffering very badly now, there are very bad staff relations. They are sending a lot of third rate people down here to manage hotels. There was a time when every Barbadian hotel had Barbadian managers. We could not control the overseas-owned operations, because of the very nature of their investment, but at least we were getting them around to the point of view that we had people in Barbados capable of running any hotel of any size or any quality in this island. What do we see now? An influx of people who come down here throwing their weight and bringing in their friends and that kind of thing. When it comes to the hotel industry, all the Members around here have got complaints from their constituents.

I have been accused once of saying that if all the capitalists in Barbados went out to sea — I did not say anything about drowning — and never came back, you could have gone to North America or the Falkland Islands, and, as far as I am concerned, Barbados would still be there, and the people who do the work. If they could take the first plane out to wherever they 'came from, the hotel industry in Barbados Would be a lot better off, and at least our young people would have some prospect of becoming managers. I do not see why we need all these people from outside to come and run an industry, when we are the oldest tourism destination in the whole of the western hemisphere. The very first President of the United States, George Washington, and his brother, left the United States and came to Barbados,

and if you go through history, you will see the same thing. I do not want to say any more about that, other Members would have to say something.

When we come to the Tourism Investment Corporation, as far as the renovation on the Hilton Hotel is concerned, whether we sell it or not, those renovations have to be carried out. I can assure you that none of the money, the $2 million in this vote, is for the renovation of the Hilton Hotel. When the Hilton Hotel was controlled by the IDC, I told them to go to one of the commercial banks and borrow the money for the renovations. They borrowed the money and they paid it back. As a matter of fact, all the commercial banks were competing to give the loan to the Hilton, through the IDC, and some of them were very annoyed that they did not get it. That is what banks are for, that is why banks are established.

I am satisfied that the Hilton will become again a viable commercial operation. But the management, again- from outside of Barbados, was deplorable, and what the Hilton Hotel was rapidly becoming was a rundown garCjOnerie. If you do not know what a garc^onerie is, go and figure it out. You may not even find it in the dictionary. It was not a hotel for visitors at all. I do not want to say any more, because I might say things which are unparliamentary.

I have told the Directors of Hilton - I can speak to them, because I was the bestman at the wedding of Mr. Menendez, who was Manager of the Havana Hilton — "Do not send those half so and so people to us again. Send proper people or try to recruit some Barbadians." I assured them that we would make it possible for the hotel to be brought up to the standard that it enjoyed before. I am not surprised, though, because when you get a Minister of Finance telling the Senate — he was in the Senate then - that the Hilton Hotel should either be bulldozed or turned into a maternity home, you cannot expect that person to have any feeling for the property owned by Barbadians.

The $2 million is not for refurbishing the Hilton Hotel. I suppose it is put in there as a kind of bridging for the refurbishing. We get that money from the commercial banks. I do not mean the Barbados National Bank, because I do not regard that as a commercial bank. I regard that as an abortion. As stated in the 1976 manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, they knew so little about banking that they were going to amalgamate all the banking activities, whether it was the Agricultural Credit Bank, the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank, the Barbados Savings Bank, which should have been left to its own devices, and the Central Bank of Barbados into one bank. The first opportunity I get - because we have so many contaminated portfolios in the Barbados National Bank - I am going to unscramble that bank, because there were sufficient lending institutions in Barbados, which were activated by Government at different levels, whether it be for mortgages, or for industry, because we had the Barbados Development Bank. The result today is that all of them are losing money all over the place. 10.30 a.m.

We had no right with them anyway. Barbados is well served with commercial banks, and where the commercial banks were reluctant to make loans to small business people, we had the Barbados Development Bank; where they were reluctant to make loans to small farmers, we had the Agricultural Credit Bank, with interest rates of about 2%; where they were reluctant to lend money to the sugar industry, they had their own bank, which the Government in some aspects controlled, out of the money which was given by the British Government over 70 or 80 years ago, and it was never in debt. But then you put a lot of people, for want of a more generous term, in charge of the bank who knew nothing about the sugar industry, nothing about peasant farming, and you expect that bank to be successful. Then, to add insult to injury, the Minister of Finance said he was going to amalgamate the Central Bank with all of those banks — it is in the manifesto, if you want to know where it is; let me send and get it for you if you do not have a copy of your own manifesto — all of these contaminated portfolios, when the Central Bank- should be controlling the operations of all the commercial banks, including the BNB. So what do you expect but chaos?

The second Minister of Finance after the Democratic Labour Party went out of office opposed the establishment of the Central Bank when we were discussing it in the Senate. He was being briefed by Barclays Bank. Let me tell you about them - they are another terrible institution. They felt we should not have a Central Bank because they were the bankers for the Government of Barbados. At one time they had $50 million in deposits, and that was the occasion on which the manager sent and told me that I had an overdraft of $139, and that was the occasion when I took the $139 in pennies and cents and dumped them on his desk and told him to close my account, because I said Barclays Bank was robbing the Government of Barbados by having $50 million in deposits and they were saying it was their policy to pay interest only on $48 000. You did not know about that. So I parted company with them then. I only keep my clients' accounts in Roebuck Street, but not me and them | anymore. Barclays Bank is the biggest instrument of jp espionage and imperialism throughout the world. They are * dealing with South Africa day and night. I did not come here to talk about them, because I can write a book on Barclays Bank. This is the kind of iniquitous thing you get under colonialism, that you could have a bank here telling the Government that they are only going to give

them interest on $48 000. Go and check it out. I can tell you aD the funds that were in there. I got in the House of Assembly and said that it was wicked for them to hold on to Government's money. So when we were establishing the Central Bank of Barbados, they briefed your second Minister of Finance and told him that the Central Bank was going to take over all the commercial banks, and he made a speech here saying that it was the function of the Central Bank to take over the commercial banks, and, as far as I know, speaking under correction, he voted against the establishment of the Central Bank.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You did not divide? Were you in the Senate then? I am talking about the Senate. He had a big brief from Barclays Bank. He pranced up. We did not divide in the House on it.

That is the kind of abysmal ignorance that you have about elementary matters in this country, matters not only of politics, but economics as well. These things must come out at some time. So when they were pretending that they had this expert, that this Minister is this expert and that Minister is that expert, I wonder where their expertise came from. It must have been a rapid conversion overnight.

As far as this Head is concerned, the rehabilitation of the Hilton Hotel, I am saying that the Tourism Investment Corporation, in whom we are making arrangements for the properties to be properly vested, should go to the commercial banks and borrow the money and not expect the Government to provide the money.

Yesterday some query was raised about, if you are going to sell the hotel, why refurbish it? I am saying that if we are going to get the hotel sold nobody would buy it in the present state and condition. You have to refurbish it and that would be money well spent.

I would like to be straightforward and say that, the way things are looking now, nobody would want to pay us the price either for Heywoods or the Hilton Hotel, so we will have to make plans for making them profitable. .But we are still open to offers, provided the offers are reasonable offers.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Prime Minister has wound up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I did not understand the Prime Minister was winding up. I thought he was responding to some query.

The question that Head 69 - Prime Minister's Office - Capital - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14 - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT DIVISION - $& 074 862

Head 14 - International Transport Division - was called.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, the International Transport Division looks after the Barbados Port Authority, the Airport, Caribbean Airways our shares in CARICARGO and I suppose what interest we have in the Regional Shipping Service.

I have already explained that we are discontinuing the service of Caribbean Airways from Europe, from London and Frankfurt particularly. I did not wish to make any disclosure at this stage about British Airways' involvement, but since it has appeared in the Press, due to some unauthorised member of Caribbean Airways making the disclosure, I might as well get the facts straight.

Caribbean Airways was costing the Government some $9 million a year to bring a maximum uplift of 25 000 passengers, if they had a full uplift every week to Barbados. Caribbean Airways was paralleling a service which was being operated by British Airways and twice a week by West Indian Airways as well, legally known as Trinidad and Tobago Air Services.

Up to the time that we controlled the Government, the service which we established to Europe cost us nothing, it did not cost the Government of Barbados anything at all. We negotiated the routes with the British Ministry of Aviation, and Mr. Freddie Laker operated the service, because he had the equipment to operate the service. What you must understand about the air transport business is that you cannot afford to buy an expensive jet aircraft, which would cost up to US$40 million to US$50 million to operate a service on Saturdays and Sundays only. By entering into the arrangement with Sir Freddie Laker, he was able to use his surplus equipment on weekends, recruit Barbadian crews from pilots down to cabin stewards, and so give us some employment. Without costing the Government of Barbados anything at all! 10.40 a.m.

As soon as that Government came in, they started saying that members of the Government had shares. The shareholders were Major Norman Ricketts, Freddie Laker and Lady Sassoon through a company registered, as far as I can remember, in Bermuda. The Barbados Government

because of the requirements of the international convention, the Chicago Convention, had to have a majority shareholding which we did, a token shareholding, of 51% of the shares, for which we did not pay anything. Because in order to be able to negotiate with foreign Governments, you must have substantial ownership, and the expression used in the international convention was "substantial ownership and effective control." It was only on that basis that we were able to negotiate routes into and out of the United Kingdom, because for a long time British Airways had resisted the idea of any West Indian island, any former colony having air rights, over which they had what can only be described as monopolistic control.

Many people do not know that the United States Government does not own any airlines. The Central Intelligence Agency, from time to time, unknown, it would appear, even to the President of the United States, does buy airplanes for their nefarious operations, what we call covert operations. Southern Air was owned by them. Funny enough, I did not know that, and I travelled once on this Southern Air because my travel agent put me to travel from Boston to somewhere on Southern Air. They have concentrated more lately on covert operations like shipping arms to people like the Iranians and what they call the Contras. But the United States Government has never owned an airline.

What has happened is that Pan American Airways, under Mr. Wantrip, was the first airline to pioneer overseas routes, in the same way that Imperial Airways had pioneered air routes for Great Britain, and Pan American always advertised as if they were a United States airline. Up to this day, when they are in trouble, they are still a private airline, because the United States Government .does not own any airlines at all. The only airplanes owned by the United States Government officially are the ones in the Army Air Force and the Navy Air Force, which are combatant and transport aircrafts. In none of the passenger carrying operations, whether it be National, TWA, Continental or Pan American, does the United States Government even have a minority interest.

When the British and the Americans got together at the end of the war in Bermuda, they drew up an agreement which carved up the air transport world between those two countries. You will understand that France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Holland and China and all the other countries did not have the capability, so they carved up the whole world between themselves, and they decided that these were routes, which they called the grandfather routes, which would belong to them and to them alone.

There was a battle fought here in the House of Assembly for Pan American to land in Barbados. They have now departed. The battle was spearheaded by Mr. Ernest Deighton Mottley - all his children are E.D., even the girls — which we supported, because we did not see that the British Government should hamper our tourism by saying that we could not have an American airline flying into Barbados. The British resisted any intrusion of any other airline, other than British South American Airways and British Imperial Airways, into Barbados. After a long struggle, we won that battle, and we got the first airline which was a non-British carrier to come into Barbados. Our tourist industry took off from that point.

When I realised that British Overseas Aircraft Corporation was only concerned with the wealthy people who would come to Barbados for two and three months during the winter, and were charging fares which precluded travel by many of our immigrants who had settled in the United Kingdom, the first thing I did was to go to British West Indian Airways. They are flying today, but a lot of ignorant people, like some of the present Ministers in the Trinidad Government, who should be nameless, do not understand this business. We have to negotiate with the gentleman, so I am not going to say anything indiscreet about him. But before he saw the light, he was attacking Barbados all the time that we did not like British West Indian Airways, and they were joined, of course, by the Opposition. But anybody in BWIA who knows about BWIA will tell you the only reason why they are flying today. Do you know how much money they took out of Barbados? I bet you cannot tell me.

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: They are not doing anything that they were not doing before. We are now going to sign an agreement, and that is why I am making the disclosure I am making today, because already details of that agreement have been leaked to the Press.

British West Indian Airways are uplifting $45 million a year out of Barbados alone. This is their major source of revenue. You would be surprised to know, that with destinations to New York, Miami, Toronto and London, and hypothetically, to Boston, which is no route at all, and to one or two islands in the Caribbean, BWIA is making $45 million out of the Barbadians, nothing to do with what they collect in New York for people to come down here.

This is what is going to surprise you now. We projected that in this financial year, Caribbean Airways will be collecting, if they collected the money that was owed to them on an annual basis, $31 million, with only one destination, and it is still losing money - $9 million a year. Do you think it is fair that Barbadian taxpayers, for a two flight a week operation, grossing Barbados $31 million a year, should be called upon to give them another $9 million to do things that British

Airways and Trinidad and Tobago Air Services are now doing. They were on a route which is competitive, but they could not reduce the fares below what we got them down to during Freddie Laker's time. But they were still making $31 million a year, and how they managed to lose money is beyond my comprehension. I really cannot go into those astronomical figures.

We have decided to discontinue the service under the auspices of Caribbean Airways. We are keeping a staff there because there are certain functions which I consider they can profitably perform. We have signed an agreement with British Airways, which has recently been privatised, or is in the process of being privatised, that they will pick up all the passengers that come from Europe, Brussels particularly, and bring them down to Barbados on an increasing frequency of from four to five flights a week. And instead of us losing money, they will pay us part of the revenue, which I have calculated to be an amount of about $3 million a year. 10.50 a.m.

Having concluded that agreement, I went to Trinidad about three times during the past six weeks. You may not have known that, because when I want to get anything done, I do not ask the Government for any money, I pay my own way, go down there and get the job done, and I do not want to be reimbursed. I went to Trinidad three times, spoke with the Prime Minister and the Minister in charge of International Transport, and we have come to an agreement which we hope will be signed around about April 3, in my ancestral home and the home of the Prime Minister — we decided that is the best meeting ground — Tobago — where Trinidad will be paying us probably another $3 million a year for the route to London.

We have negotiated compensation, let me put it that way — I will tell you privately with counsel — because if we said it in public the other Caribbean islands — the Lesser Antilles as I call them — will be clamouring for the same arrangement, and since it was not their invention, they will have to pay for inventions if they want a similar arrangement whereby the Barbados Government will get certain advantages from the North American .routes but not on the same direct basis as we are negotiating for the London route. So from a loss of $9 million, we will be moving immediately in this year, from April 1, to a position where the Consolidated Fund will benefit to the tune of $6 million plus.

I want to tell you something and I want to tell you as Barbadians. You should tell the people in Trinidad, who write all this nonsense, that I went and I got from British United Airways, a Super VC-10 for BWIA to run to London. They were not running to London, they were not running to Toronto — all they were doing was up and down to New York and up and down to Miami. They never had a route to London and I went and negotiated the route with the British Government and then told Sir Patrick Hobson, 'I will get the aircraft for you,' and I got the Super VC-10, because I knew the manager of British United Airways. Sir Patrick told me that the flight was going to start on November 11, in the tourist season, whatever year it was — I cannot remember the precise year — and when November came and December came and I did not see the Super VC-10, which already had the Trinidad and the BWIA deckle on it, the Sunjet deckle, waiting for them in London at Gatwick, I called Sir Patrick Hobson, who was Chairman of BWIA, and asked him why the flight did not run. He said he was too embarrassed to tell me on the telephone but he would fly out to Barbados the next day and talk to me. When Sir Patrick arrived, he almost had tears in his eyes. He said that an embargo was put on the flight by the Trinidad Government and he discovered that they had sold the route to British Overseas Airways for £132000; and why I could not have any respect for those people, it was not even their route they were selling, it was our route that I had given to them.

They got into" Toronto because I called Sir Ellis Clarke in Washington, told him that Air Canada was on strike, and that if he would put on a service to Canada, I would make the application to the Canadian Government for the service from Bridgetown, Port-of-Spain to Bridgetown and straight on to Toronto. He got that in 48 hours, because I called the Minister of Transport in Canada and I told him they had to give this route to BWIA, but it would be a Barbados route.

I went to Washington shortly after. Sir Ellis Clarke, who was recently the President — at that time he was Ambassador to Washington and Chairman of BWIA — told me that he was very glad I had got the route for them. BWIA is flying because of me, not because of anybody else, and the sooner they realise that, the better, or I will bring them to Christian understanding. He said that the Canadian Government had given them the route for the duration of the strike plus 30 days, and I told him, 'This is a Barbados route, and there is no question of any strike plus 30 days. This is a permanent air services agreement.' And I went back to the Minister of Transport and the President of Air Canada and told them that they had to live with BWIA being on that route until we were ready to take it over ourselves. They then wrote to Dr. Williams and told him to amend the previous provision of the strike plus 30 days, and it was the strike until the Barbados Government decided to take over the route itself.

When we decided to go to Canada with Caribbean Airways, we asked for Montreal, because if we had asked for Toronto, BWIA would have had to cease their operations to Canada altogether. Because they only had

Toronto, and it was the understanding of the Canadian Government and the Canadian Air Transport Authorities that the moment Barbados went into Toronto, BWIA would have to come off.

So 1 do not understand all this talk - I heard it in the Other Place too, in our Chamber - about we cannot get any agreement with Trinidad and Tobago. Everything that they have now, Barbados has given them. The only thing that we have not given them is Piarco to Crown Point - that is an internal route - and Piarco to some West Indian islands and Miami. All the other routes are Barbadian routes that they are flying, and the minute that Barbados says that they cannot fly on these routes, $45 million gone, and instead of losing $100 million a year, they would lose $145 million a year or more, because they would have to get rid of some of the aircraft. So let us get this record straight. I have now got them to Christian understanding, and I will be going to Tobago to sign on the dotted line.

I did not intend to say anything until that agreement was signed. I am not saying that we cannot rely on Trinidadians, but I am saying I prefer to see their signature, their what the Americans call "John Hancock" on a document, before I get in public and say we are doing this and we are doing that. I hope that we will leave it there until I come back from Tobago at the end of the first week in April.

I must say that we will be signing, hopefully, other agreements relating to trade and matters of that kind, because I understand that the market for carrots, for instance, in Trinidad and Tobago is something like $10 million a year. Due to the nature of their soil, they cannot produce carrots, so we are hoping that the Ministry of Agriculture will be able to encourage large scale growing of vegetables like carrots in the near future.

As far as Europe is concerned, round about April 14, West Indian - that is what the air traffic controllers and pilots call the airline - they do not say British West Indian or Trinidad and Tobago - they say West Indian 402 or West Indian 425, as the case may be - will be taking all passengers out of Frankfurt and the Ministry of Tourism, I believe, is negotiating for charter flights. I think the Minister has already disclosed that we are going to have 27 flights during the off season out of Manchester in England, and we are hoping to get other arrangements out of Canada and parts of the United States, independent of Caribbean Airways, but flying the Caribbean Airways flag without any expense to us.

Caribbean Airways, I hope, is going to go in for things like ground handling, passenger ticketing and so on for which we will be paid by the other airlines, which at the present moment I prefer to remain anonymous. I can assure you that there will be a function for Caribbean Airways, although its wings will be clipped. They can spread their wings on the ground, but not in the air. It is costing us too much money.

11.00a.m.

Our policy in so far as air transport is concerned is to get people into Barbados, but not necessarily to own the airlines to do it. Whosoever will, may come. We do not exactly have an open sky policy, but as a tourist destination, we feel that we should encourage anybody who, at no cost to the taxpayers of Barbados, is willing to come into Barbados, whether by charters, or by scheduled service, and bring people here to fill our hotels. That is our policy in a nutshell.

We do not have to own an airline to bring people here. Our airline was flying on a route on which two other well-established airlines were already flying, so it ended up by everybody losing money. I hope the whole pictufe would change. But, as from April 1, apart from paying off the back debts which they owe to the National Bank and other people, the taxpayers will not be called upon to subsidise Caribbean Airways. I give you that undertaking.

Under Head 14, Sir, Maintenance and Development Unit, under the description column delete the words "of the new Terminal Building of. It will be the maintenance of "the Grantley Adams International Airport" and not only the Terminal Building. It is general maintenance. It is page 10 on the Note page.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Sir, like the Prime Minister I advert to the question of Caribbean Airways. I am glad to see that he has now probably brought to a conclusion some of the discussions that had been going on under the Barbados Labour Party Government. The revelation which he has made is probably new to some honourable Members, but it is certainly not new in this House, because the former Minister in charge of Aviation spoke at length, although he spoke very discreetly, of the state of negotiations which he had been having with Trinidad and Tohn-o and other Governments concerning either making Caribbean Airways viable by taking over the whole of the London route, or negotiating a joint venture arrangement with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

As far back as 1979, we have been trying to negotiate with Trinidad and Tobago, particularly concerning the London routes. As the Minister knows, we designated BWIA as the major carrier for Barbados under the Air Services Agreement which we had, and still has, with the United States of America. We had been discussing with that Government of Trinidad and Tobago the possibility

of designating BWIA on the European route, provided we could be satisfied that the air rights of Barbados would be safeguarded and that the air needs of Barbados would be catered to.

Part of the difficulty arose from the fact that the Government of Barbados as then constituted and the Trinidad authorities differed on the nature of the carrier which would bring passengers from Germany, specifically from Frankfurt, through London and then on here to Barbados. As I understand it, BWIA wishes to use a small aircraft to transport the passengers first to London, where they would be offloaded, and change aircrafts before flying on to Barbados. That was not satisfactory to us. At one stage in the negotiations a suggestion had been made to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago that Barbados may be able to share with them either the leasing or the purchase of an aircraft to service this route. The Minister has said that passengers coming to Barbados from Frankfurt will now be provided for from April 15 by British West Indian Airways. I wonder whether there is any improvement in the sort of service that will be given and whether the difficulty over the views expressed formally by British West Indian Airways of a two-tier service has been got over, because at the time that the Government changed, that was one of the problems that existed towards the arrangement.

Before going to British Airways, because of our commitment to Caribbean unity, we felt it as part of our duty to go to British West Indian Airways and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. We offered the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, through BWIA, the exact routes on the European route, provided that Barbados' interests were safeguarded. I do not want the Minister to believe that the negotiations have sprung up all of a sudden. These negotiations were going on. I think I am correct in saying that in the area of air routes, perhaps two most knowledgeable persons that the House has had on this subject have been the present Prime Minister and the former Prime Minister, Mr. St. John, and in the negotiations that have gone on, every effort was being made to preserve the interest of Barbados in relation to its air needs and its air routes.

We also had an offer from British Airways. British 'Airways had offered $600 000 to have the exclusive right to operate a service. I believe that works out to about $1.8 million. But we had to be first satisfied that when we had sold our right as such, it was not going to be a part-time arrangement.

I think the honourable Member is aware that although British Airways is increasing the flights by one per week, it is not an exclusive service here to Barbados — .it is going to be shared with Antigua and St. Lucia, and I believe at some stage with Grenada. Therefore, we have to be fully satisfied in the long run that the people who really want to come to Barbados, those 25 000 people — Caribbean Airways brought here each year, who have contributed some $78 million to the economy of Barbados, are going to still come and have the facility to get here.

The honourable Member spoke about the subsidy to Caribbean Airways, and he put the subsidy as though it worked out every year to a figure of $9 million. I believe my figures show that the subsidy in 1982—83 was about $3 million, 1983-84 about $3 million, 1984-85 $8 million, 1985-86 about $6 million and 1986-87 $5 million. I believe that those added would be the total subsidy to Caribbean Airways. 11.10a.m.

One has to bring in, on the other side, the benefits which accrued to the country by the number of tourists which came here, and by the fact that, from the tabulation available to the Ministry, some $78 million were being spent by these tourists and being contributed to the economy of Barbados. It seemed to me that, when one looked at the figure, that $3 million was a direct subsidy to the tourist plant, and that one has to recognise that it was another way of contributing to tourism development as a whole. So it is not simply a question of saying that one is looking at a loss. One has to look at the overall contribution which is made in air transportation to bring people into Barbados.

On Caribbean Airways, I want to go back historically a bit, because from the Minister's speech you may get the impression that when the Government in 1982 went into Caribbean Airways, it did so almost on the spur of the moment. The position, as the Minister well knows, is that Laker Airways found itself being pressurised by the major airlines plying the North American route in particular, and there was a conspiracy between American Airlines and the very British Airways to run Laker off the route. As a result, Barbados found itself in a position where Laker was closing down and no arrangements were being made to provide for the Laker service which was coming into Barbados. In addition to that, one found that Barbadian hostesses, pilots and other crew personnel were suddenly confronted with being thrown out of work. It was in that context and against that background that the Government had to make a decision to safeguard, for the time being, the interests of Barbados as a whole.

I still believe that the decision made then was a correct decision. It did not prevent us from seeking to negotiate in the long term. The Prime Minister will have available to him in his Ministry a study done by Aer Lingus for the Government of Barbados. That study shows that Caribbean Airways could have been very viable. In fact, it shows that if it was given the London route, excluding the other airlines, Caribbean Airways would have been highly viable. The study is there. If

honourable Members have not read it, then they may have the benefit now of reading the study. If they like, they could make it available to the whole House.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, not Caribbean Airways alone as such, but its routes must be safeguarded unless we are trading equal routes with the other countries, as you very well know.

So it was not that the Government was not doing anything to look at the total viability of Caribbean Airways. The Minister has said it was generating income of some $31 million a year. In fact, before the decision to close it was taken by this Government, in the last few months of its operation traffic being brought to the island by Caribbean Airways showed a 40% increase. The statistics are there, if honourable Members want to see what was being done and where we were going. What I am saying is that whatever arrangements must be entered, and being entered now, I want to see that in the long run, we safeguard our basic rights in relation to these treaty arrangements.

Sir, when we speak here from the Opposition, we speak as people who, historical records will show, are as West Indian if not more West Indian than a lot of other persons. We have always consistently backed the promotion of the concept of West Indian unity and West Indian enterprises wherever possible, and, ideally what would be needed in the Caribbean would be a Caribbean Airline. But despite whatever we say rhetorically in politics in the Caribbean, no matter how high sounding our speeches may be at CARICOM Ministers' meetings and otherwise, the reality is that when it comes to difficult negotiations such as this, answers are slow in coming. I want to know whether the Government is still going to pursue not merely abandoning a Barbados presence in the air, but pursue what is really needed eventually, an airline in which all of the Caribbean countries can pool their various rights and safeguard the overall interest of the Caribbean as a whole. We are signing various bilateral agreements with Trinidad and we have signed one with Jamaica, but, in the long run, safeguarding all of the air rights of these countries will depend on the ability of its leaders to forge a viable airline industry which has as its hallmark the promotion of the interests of the Caribbean as a whole.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to talk on other sections of this Head, so I have to give way now, but I would not wish the Minister to wind up before I have so spoken.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition sought to minimise the losses attributed to Caribbean Airways over the past five years of its existence, and in doing so, he evidently did not recognise what was being done by the previous Administration to conceal the true losses of the airline from the public of Barbados. In fact, what appeared in the Estimates as a subsidy to the airline over the years only represents what was transferred from the Consolidated Fund to the airline. It did not in any way represent loans made by the Barbados National Bank which the airline was never in a position to service, and millions of dollars owed to creditors on a prolonged basis.

The outstanding debts to the Barbados National Bank at the end of this month will be well in excess of $20 million. I do not have the file here, but I am quite sure that it will be more in the region of $23 million to $24 million, which would include a major debt to Ghana Airways, which was being rolled over and never being paid off. I do not have the exact figure, but I believe over US$2.5 million is outstanding to Ghana Airways. Apart from that, there was a demand loan at the National Bank for $12 million that was never serviced. Never serviced! In addition to that, there was an overdraft facility. On top of that, there were sundry trade creditors, including the suppliers of fuel to the airline. 11.20 a.m.

We were faced with the very embarrassing position when we came into office of the Prime Minister having to write a letter to one of the creditors to assure them that the Government would honour the debt of Caribbean Airways, and the Minister of Finance, myself, having to give a letter of comfort to the Barbados National Bank that when the demand loan was called by them, it would be met by the taxpayers of this country. So what he said is totally misleading. I think that an appropriate financial statement should be made when the airline has been closed down and all the creditors have been paid out, so we know how much money was lost by the airline. I think you are going to find it is in the region of $44 million to $45 million over the five year period. That is a fact. There is no question about it. There is no point arguing about it.

You can always conceal transfers from the public purse to a losing venture by passing some through Parliament as a subsidy and passing some through the National Bank by way of loans and so on. That is what has been happening. So do not come in here and say that it was $3 million in 1982-83; $3 million in this year, $6 million here, and that is the extent of the public contribution. You should not do that!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir: If the honourable Member does not understand what I have said, I will repeat it, because he must learn to compare like with like. I talked about the subsidies which the Government made. I have given the exact figures. The Honourable Member has those in his Ministry. Those are only subsidies the Government has made. If the honourable Member now tells me that he is asking the House to give a guarantee about debts, that is a different matter.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the assets and the liabilities of the Barbados National Bank are guaranteed by the Government of Barbados, and when a Government gives a directive to the Barbados National Bank to give a Government-owned airline a loan of $12 ' million, which the airline cannot repay, I say that that is bypassing Parliament and concealing the subsidy elsewhere. The airline could never repay it and the loan was guaranteed. All the assets and liabilities of the Barbados National Bank are guaranteed by the taxpayers of this country ultimately, so it is just out of which pocket it has come. And that is what has happened, there was just a shift in the pocket - some coming from this pocket of the taxpayers, some from the other pocket of the taxpayers!

I tell you that the outstanding amount to the National Bank will be well over $20 million. When all the debts are settled, the total amount would be about $45 million. I give this House a firm undertaking that we will bring all this information before the House in due course.

Apart from salaries and wages of those employees paid in Barbados and resident in Barbados, then these were almost total foreign exchange losses. That is important to remember that these were foreign exchange losses, . not just losses in terms of Barbados dollars. When you talk about $78 million in expenditures, I wonder what would be the net figure out of that in Barbados. When you balance that against the foreign exchange losses in relation to the airline, when you exclude salaries, it is probably about $6 million to $7 million, those paid in Barbados over this five year period. We have done a very careful analysis of the drain of resources of this country not only in terms of the Treasury but the foreign exchange losses by the airline, and there was no other reasonable decision that the Government could have arrived at.

The other point to notice about those losses is that the losses have escalated from year to year. They started off with about $3 million, with an overdraft of about $1 million or so at the National Bank, in the first year, and each year, they were just escalating and escalating.

When you look at all the outstandings that have to be paid off, you will find it will be about $45 million. That is what it is going to be about. I do not have the exact figures here. We will try and get the file if we can get it here on time. But that is the kind of situation with which we are faced.

I hope that the people of Barbados will understand that this is not a decision which was taken capriciously. It was not a decision that was taken without due care and consideration. It was not a decision that was taken without making alternative arrangements to ensure that we could obtain the same flow of tourist traffic to Barbados from Europe, including the United Kingdom, and turn around a situation where from making losses/which have averaged about $9 million a year over a five year period, we will now have the benefits of the same tourist expenditures in Barbados along with other monies into the Consolidated Fund.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, the saga of Caribbean Airways under the present Government is a story of mismanagement and bad planning.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not blaming the present Government for taking the decision to close the airline. If their conviction was that the losses were too high and they had to cut their losses, I can understand. But what I do not understand is that, for the first time in the history of the airline, in five months it lost $6 million, up to March this year. It lost $1.5 million in March and $1.2 million in February, just to give the figures for the last two months. And I will show, if I start at the beginning, why I say it is a story of bad management and shoddy planning.

We all knew that Caribbean Airways had been losing money over the years, but the assumption that the previous Administration made was that it was a losj that we could take, having regard to the development of the European tourist market, which was seen as a critical area for tourist expansion. But the present Government came to power at a time when Caribbean Airways was leasing a DC 10 from Ghana Airways. Consistent with the policy as enunciated by the Minister this morning, that we feel that "whosoever will, may come^' Caribbean Airways was approached by two brokers Vandenbrook and Mallerts. The first DCS through these brokers was to come from African Safari. It was a DCS 16 years-old. 11.30a.m.

The Chairman of Caribbean Airways, not necessarily renown for his expertise in the management of a commercial airline - it is true he has a LLM in Air Law - was advised in August 1986, during the tenure of the present Government, that the DCS could not fly full pay load non-stop from Frankfurt to Barbados. It was represented to him that, of necessity, there would have to be a stop at the Azores which would interfere with the market. Somebody leaving Frankfurt would want to get

to Barbados in a hurry, eight or nine hours — not have to stop in the Azores and then come. All the operational advantages of the DCS were pointed out, including the seat pitch — the distance between the seats, which is only 12 to 15 inches — to the Chairman of Caribbean Airways. He ignored the expert advice!

A decision was taken on August 28 not to go with the DCS. If anybody wants to challenge me, I got it all in here. A decision was taken not to go with the DCS on August 28, but the Minister was of the view that the DCS should fly, despite the recommendations of the experts and the people concerned with the day to day management of the airline. So on September 8, a decision was taken to go with the DCS — that the DCS must go, without the trade and the market being informed that the DCS was to fly and without knowing what would be the reaction of the trade.

One would have thought that the market would have been tested first to get the reaction to this different type of aircraft. It is an old aircraft. No, the decision was taken the other way around! We are going to fly with this old aircraft, which is uncomfortable, and then see what the trade and the market feels about it.

The DCS was to be delivered by October, but it was not. Even the manager in Frankfurt, Mr. Schmitt, informed Caribbean Airways, under the present board, that it was unworkable to fly the DCS.

In the meantime, — we are now getting on to October — there were no satisfactory preparations made for training of the staff, and I think all honourable Members are aware that a number of the cabin crew did not wish to fly on the aircraft. I will come to the first flight later on. Representations were made, and the two brokers were unable to put together a proper training scheme for the crew. The crew had objections to the air worthiness of the aircraft because it was so old and because, to get 241 people down here on a DCS, they would have to take out galleys and all of that. So the crew was objecting.

There were some errors in this Government's operations of Caribbean Airways between May 1986 and now, I will excuse the Government, because it was a new one and offers may have appeared attractive to it, but I will advise certainly the Minister of Finance — the Prime Minister is an old hand at this aid he will know — that the Government will get all kinds o[c] pie-in-the sky offers, everyday. You must open a file and cu'1 it "Santa Claus"!

Vandenbrook and Mallerts, the twc lookers, came to Barbados and tried to fool Barbadians. Cne of the things they did was to go and stay at Sandy Lant Hotel, pretending that they had money, trying to make the Government believe that they were men of repute «,id worth. In fact, they had no money, and less repute! Nobody in the trade pays any attention to Vandenbrook or Mallerts! But they were offering to bring tourists from Europe, and I cannot blame the Government if they may have been taken in by them at first. Praise God, the Government seem to have realised that they were not the most honourable characters.

Vandenbrook, of course, was one of the people who had tried to fleece and had succeeded in getting some money off of George Bachelor and Capital Airways. He had a bad name in the trade, and the result was that the aircraft from African Safari, which he had promised to bring to Barbados, was not delivered, because African Safari refused to deal with Vandenbrook and Mallerts.

After that Bachelor intervened. Bachelor had an old aircraft about 18 years old with some corrosion, down in Venezuela, and negotiations were made for that aircraft, which had not been registered, to operate the Caribbean Airways run.

When this aircraft came, the first thing that went wrong with it was that on the flight from Venezuela to Barbados, it broke down. It came and it made its first flight. Outside of Brussels it lost compass and was 250 miles off course, and things started to malfunction. But thank God! That was the problem that you were bound to have in renting an old aircraft in moth balls.

I hope you now understand why I say that the Board of Caribbean Airways did not properly plan for this DCS arrangement. Mallerts and Vandenbrook were leasing from Bachelor, and then leasing to Caribbean Airways. The aircraft markings were 8P PLC I do not know what PLC meant. Vandenbrook and Mallerts were Pierre and Luke, so I do not know if the 'P' in PLC was Pierre and the 'L' Luke.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh, Public Limited Company. It is not like Barclays Bank with the small pic. It was called 8P -PLC.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We will not get into that.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, but it is written "pic". I am giving the House some information about which a lot of them are trying to appear as though they are hearing it for the first time. 11.40 a.m.

One of the conditions that was laid down by Bachelor was that Bachelor wanted a letter of credit done, but the brokers, Mallerts and the other fellow, Vandenbrook, did not have any money. Hear what Caribbean Airways does in that circumstance! Caribbean Airways puts up the letter of credit for US$290 000, and at the same time deposits another US$2°0 000 -

US$580000 virtually $1 million - to satisfy Bachelor. I do not know where you will get it back from. That has gone in the losses. That is why I say it was a question of careless planning.

The arrangement Bachelor wanted was that you pay him on the 20th; the chairman varied that to paying him weekly! He had no right doing that; that is carelessness! And do you know that decision of the chairman was taken against the advice?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one more minute to wind up.

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

What I am submitting is that I do not believe that the new Board of Caribbean Airways really paid enough attention to the ramifications of operating the DC-8 otherwise it could not have made those errors of judgment and errors of planning which have resulted in substantial losses - about $6 million in the last five months.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is a joke.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not saying that they . did not lose money under us. I would not seek to deny that. What I am saying is that the Government was conscious of the losses and the Board of Caribbean Airways ought to have been more conscious. But the Government probably intended the demise of Caribbean Airways. One of the Board members you put on was an undertaker!

Thank you, Sir. I am coming back.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I said I wanted to move on to discuss another Head, and this is the other areas of Port Administration, whether it be the airport or seaport, and transportation as a whole. I want in particular to look at some of the problems and some of the developments that have been occurring at our major ports.

One of the benefits which the Barbados Labour Party left to this country, and which it is still enjoying, is the Bridgetown Port. I remember its construction was always a matter of some controversy on the political platforms, but I think that history will show that it has been extremely beneficial. During our second term in office we completed the expansion, part of the Port "expansion that was conceived under the DLP, and we went a bit further and started putting in arrangements for the expansion of cruise ship facilities at the Port. I was very pleased the other day to hear this being lauded to the sky by the other side, and the outstanding work of LeRoy Sisnett in promoting the expansion of the cruise ship industry recognised by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt). I know that we . had other proposals there, and what I want to ask the Minister is, what further proposals does the Government has for developing still further the cruise ship facilities which we have established at the Bridgetown Port?

I want as well to deal with one area of port administration which has not really attracted either much debate or much consideration in this House, and that is the area of port security. There is no doubt in my mind that a large amount of the trade in illegal drugs in Barbados has taken place because of lax security at the two major points of entry into Barbados.

When this present Government was in Opposition, the issue of drugs became a highly partisan matter. Obviously, it was the easiest thing to say that there were always big people, and in the minds of people it was being made to appear that they were politicians. There has been a change of Government, but let us face it, the influx of drugs has not in any way decreased. In fact, I was amused to see in this morning's paper, a statement that cocaine has taken over from marijuana.

I am not in this debate, since I am not as reckless as some other persons like to be, going to be attributing the drug trade to the door of any particular person or any particular political party. I recognise that it is a problem in this country and I recognise that steps will have to be taken wherever possible to eradicate this particular evil, and it is a fact that at our main ports drugs that come in do not go through Customs checks. I think there will have to be a greater security check on airline personnel. I believe that there must be a greater security check on persons working at the main ports.

I have promised to make available to the Customs information, with the consent of my clients, which came to hand in a recent case, in which it can be shown that it is a regular practice for some airlines' personnel to bring parcels into Barbados, not to pass them through Customs at all, take them into their offices and they are collected by personnel, ostensibly on the basis that they are merely bringing fruit into this country. That is a fact, we have the evidence. It is amazing that we got it without the co-operation of the police, despite the fact that the police were told — and I mentioned this in a casual conversation with the Attorney General - that we would have made available to them all the evidence. How was this information obtained? By the services of a private , detective operating in St. Vincent and with some little co-operation from the St. Vincent police. We have, therefore, to be sure that we tighten up the services at our ports.

We recognised before we went out of Government that port security was going to be a problem. Port intelligence is the problem. I believe the Minister, the former Attorney General, would talk about what steps were being taken. I am aware that the United States Government, in particular, has been co-operating in this area. If there are those instances with the airlines, the position is the same at the Bridgetown Port. 11.50a.m.

I want to talk about private enterprise, because in our anxiety on both sides of the House to win votes, we

believe that our only task is that of being the best public relations people. It is easy then to persuade persons to vote for you, except you are like the Prime Minister, in the days of 35 years in the House and can speak as bluntly as you want to, or like me. I speak bluntly anyhow, regardless to whether they vote for me or otherwise. That is not self-adulation!

Instead of the politicians having been turning the heat on ourselves, we should have been turning the heat on some of the private sector people who have been bringing in drugs in containers.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: When I said that, you all cursed me.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, Sir. That was not said by the honourable Member in the House in that way.

The easiest thing for us politicians to do, and we have been doing it, is to attack one another as politicians for every evil in the society and give the impression that we are the biggest culprits, forgetting that there are people out there who are using that as an excuse to hide.

What we need to get in Barbados — and, perhaps, there is enough room down at the Port next to Barbados Mills — is an area where every container is left there, rather than taken to persons' premises where they can be off-loaded.

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You bet it will generate employment, and it would prevent some of the very things I heard the Minister of Finance talking about in here yesterday, the losing of Customs dues and duties that should be paid.

But in our anxiety, and this is one of the things that has been bothering me very much in this society because of the system of Government, a politician is there as a target for everybody, whereas we forget those persons in the society who can sometimes be working the worst damage while laughing at us taking pot shots at each other. I want to know how a container containing so much marijuana could be placed on Whitepark Road, consigned to someone, never opened at all, and then I am going to be told that the Customs and Police on a tip-off took it back into the Port. I want to know about that. I do not believe that in this day and age it is good enough, and I would ask the Minister to make sure that more money is being spent on security at these areas, because I have for some time been hearing that this containerisation has a problem the potential to escape all of the nets. I recognize that the Customs officials sometimes work into late hours at night doing spot checks, but I want a bit more done.

I know that we lost the election, and therefore anything we say the other side sometimes do not want to pay too much regard to. But you will find a section in the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto dealing with increase security and intelligence at the ports. In my view, it is a very important point. We cannot continue to talk about the man who is smoking a joint of marijuana and catch him. We cannot continue to talk about a few of the little street peddlers — not that I am condoning those. We are not looking at the people who have been bringing in in containers in this country, tonnes and tonnes of drugs undetected. A lot of them are private enterprise so they are the new sacred cows, they are the untouchables, they are not untouchables to me. I want them to vote for me, too , but only under condition that this country clearly understands that we have to ferret out the people who are the people really destroying Barbados.

I want to know, Sir, whether the Prime Minister has given consideration to an independent port security system. Certainly, when I was Attorney General — I do not know if it has been followed up, it could have been under the honourable Member for St. Thomas — we were looking at the whole cost of policing at the seaport with a view to determining whether it was not economically feasible to train a special cadre of port security police who would devote their time exclusively to looking at the implications of port security.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can the honourable Member wind up? You have one minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The other aspect I want to emphasize is that Barbados must be conscious of the fact that it only takes one stupid terrorist act to ruin the main industry in this country today, tourism. No matter how partisan any of us can be, we are Barbadians first and foremost, and, therefore, it is very, very important at this time that the Government spends more money on intelligence and security in these areas. I say no r^ore.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): I had not intended to speak to this matter, but I have been, to use the Leader of the Opposition's words, inspired by his final comments to speak on this matter of port security.

I am particularly concerned with addressing the subject of containers and the suggestion being made that all containers should be kept at a place at the harbour and checked. I make the observation that the Barbados Workers Union, the honourable institution with which I have been somewhat closely associated for some time now, has had a very great concern for a long time regarding the number of containers that have been leaving the port.

When the containers first came in, we thought that they were being limited within certain levels. Then, towards the end of the decade of the 70s. we had ihe

problem of the very meteoric escalation, if you like, in the number of containers that were leaving the port. We recognized then, regardless of any submission that we made, that there was one major concern that the Government had, and I am referring to the previous Administration, and that was the concern for "development and progress" and the price that one is supposed to have to pay for progress. Consequently, we understood the arguments that containers leaving the port represented a reduction in cost to the business community and, by their argument, would result in a reduction of price to the consumer. So the Barbados Workers Union had imposed upon it a position from two angles, which was made out to be in the interest of all, althoqgh it is true that we have not yet been shown that there has been a reduction in the cost. 12.00 noon.

We were concerned, first of all, Mr. Chairman, with the matter of illegal imports, because if the containers are not opened at the port, and if the containers are allowed to go directly out to the consignees, notwithstanding the understanding that there ought to be a Customs person present when the container is opened, there could be pro,-blems which there ought not to be if the container is checked at the point of opening and then those items of goods that are leaving the port are subject to further search.

We were concerned, secondly, with the situation with drugs. We are not going to suggest that drugs are going to be the special province of a particular political party. It is a disease hi our country which needs to be routed out, and routed out very vigorously, and it would seem to me as though the attorneys, when they are not in the House, will have to help us work in that direction. The matter of the containers and illegal drugs must be recognised as being one of very grave concern for all of us. It is large containers and small containers, seaport and airport, and we have to be very conscious of the particular need that there is for us to deal swiftly and ruthlessly with that particular problem.

We may have the situation where it will still be said, to us that there is a concern about a cost. We recognise . that a number of business persons would be happy to have us continue to feel that way, because when they can have a container placed beside the street — and I expect shortly that we might see some on Broad Street parked up at night — and we can have the problem of having sometimes little boys or close to little boys opening these containers and being paid little or nothing for the opening, then we can understand why the business person will say that it is cheaper for him. But I have not yet been made aware that there is any reduction in cost or a passing on of the cost to the consumer, and, therefore, many of us can understand why it would be very desirable.

Unfortunately, the claims in that direction of the Barbados Workers Union fell on deaf ears, and rather than the number of containers becoming less in the late 1970s, we have moved to a situation now where 60% of those goods coming to Barbados come via the containers, and pressure is being put to make it more like 80%, and we are advised that if we try to put back the clock that in fact we would be preventing Barbados from being a great port and a great pivotal point from which shipping in the Caribbean can take off. I do not know the extent to which that is going to be a very serious and a very real consideration, but we know that it is being put forward as such.

I should like just to go back to the point I made earlier of the containers being placed at the side of the street, and to remind you, Mr. Chairman, that this is a situation which again the Barbados Workers Union has spoken about over and over again. It is not only unsightly, it is not only difficult for traffic, but there is going to be a problem one day that it is going to be the cause of some fatal accident, or some more fatal accidents in our country, and perhaps we will start taking it more seriously when that accident is an accident which relates to some person of some greater sophistication than the poor people who are the ones who normally lose their lives on these occasions.

We have to be aware further that because the containers are taken off and taken to the consignees, we have consequential problems. We have the problem of large containers, 40 foot containers, being taken along our main and more well used streets in peak hours, causing problems to people of all sorts at all times. We have the further problem of these large containers being used on our roads and causing very great strain on the road surfaces themselves. As a matter of fact, some of us have been of the view that because of these large containers and other large vehicles, when we started talking about transport levies we should be levying to a greater extent, or levying in the first place, those kinds of organisations and institutions rather than those persons who sometimes only walk, and that is why I think the term "foot tax" became very popular.

We need to recognise that there are several problems associated with having containers move straight from the port to the consignee. It is a very easy thing to allow that to be increased and to go on to reach a situation where it has now become part of the establishment of our society for ten years and then at this stage to call for its removal. So although we appreciate the assistance of the Leader of the Opposition in making that plea, I wonder if he could not have helped us very much more if he had done so in 1976, or even before. I am making the point, Mr. Chairman, that when once one sees a problem and recognises how it makes itself cemented

with time, one has to recognise that progress sometimes makes it very difficult for it to be corrected. Nonetheless, we are going to look forward to a situation where there is a greater security and where we might be able to have improvement based on what has been said.

In relation to airport security, we have been looking for the implementation of the BLP's suggestion of this special security force. We had asked to be brought up to date on it, but again it was put to rest. We do not quite understand why it was suddenly put to rest, because it seemed,, as though there was in fact some special person brought[0] down to Barbados who gave advice, a paper was prepared and was submitted, was examined and ought to have been the subject of discussion between the Port Authority and the Barbados Workers Union. We do not understand what has happened to it, and perhaps we might be able to discover what has happened in that direction.

I think one of the factors that we need to remind ourselves of and to recognise is that whereas the workers in those areas, at the seaport and airport, have been calling continually for training to assist them to do their jobs more efficiently, there have been occasions when their calls for training have been completely rejected by the powers that obtained. I know of examples, because of the representation we have to give to the workers, that at the airport, customs guards, for the sake of argument, during the last Administration are on record as writing letters to their superiors and complaining of situations that were unpleasant, that were, in their view sometimes unlawful and that they were sometimes prevented from performing their duties satisfactorily. I know of situations like those where such customs guards have complained and where for their pains, for their efforts, they have been banished to certain parts of Barbados not being the airport nor the seaport. I would venture to say that if there were Customs at Crab Hill, they would have been sent to Crab Hill. 12.10 p.m.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: That is not such a bad place.)

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am not saying that it is a bad place. I am saying that it is far out.

Laughter.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I pull that back.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are saying that Crab Hill is as good a place as any.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: 1 pull that back, Mr. Chairman. Instead, they would have sent him to Bathsheba.

Laughter.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am from there, so my colleague on my left would not say anything about that.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Siberia.)

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: There is no Siberia in Barbados, Mr. Chairman, so I do not want to use fancy language like that.

Part of the problem has been, Sir, that political big wigs - and I do not want to knock politicians, I do not ever do that — have been known to go to the airport and insist, over and above the direction and the advice of Customs officials and other officials, that particular individuals and particular packages must be brought through the airport without being subject to Customs inspections. We know of several situations, and I suppose that all of us have seen it ourselves, or have heard of it, where because of the behaviour of some people — and I do not mean small politicians, sometimes too big — the Customs officials have thrown up their hands in despair and say, well, 'Look, all of you go through, I do not see the sense of searching the little ones when the big ones in their short pants and their shirt tails outside bring their friends through the Customs.'

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is this

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am not referring to any thing that has happened.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: ..... a recent happening?

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Not at all, Mr. Chairman. I would be free to say that if it had happened recently.

Asides.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am referring, Mr. Chairman, to occasions and situations before deliverance day of May 28, 1986. I thought I Isad made that perfectly clear.

What I am saying is that what we have had has been a situation where because persons in positions of influence were able either to use their office or to abuse their office to allow small packages, big packages and containers to be treated with a certain degree of favour, and' as a direct consequence of that, we have the problems that we have today. I am saying that a stitch in time still saves nine. Unfortunately, we have had too many stitches already, and we are now going to have to work very, very hard and very vigorously towards removing that threat which has been occasioned both at the seaport and the airport.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): I am heartened to hear the Honourable Leader of the Opposition call for strict security at the airport and seaport. He has identified these areas, all of a sudden, as areas where drugs move very easily. I am rather surprised by that revelation by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, because it seems as though, now that they are on that side, they have been able to discover that we have a very serious drug problem.

I have somewhat of a vested interest in this area, because I represent the constituency of St. Michael South East, and in that constituency, way back in 1978 a young man lost his life, and along with other people in this country who died, the then Government, the Barbados Labour Party, called an enquiry into unsolved murders. I think it is correct to say that when that enquiry went on, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was the Attorney General. On page 170 of that document, which is "The Commission of Enquiry Into Unsolved Murders", because I think that we are aware of the fact that the kind of drug trafficking that we have in Barbados has to involve some rather big people, this is what Mr. Malone had to say:

> "What was the nature of that association we cannot say, but as it would involve both civilians and some members of the Police Force who were willing to pervert the course of public justice, it probably would be an association for illegal purposes - for example, an association arising out of drug trafficking."

This is a public document which was passed on to the Government when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was Attorney General, in which the Commission said that that youngster, who was a member of my constituency and was murdered, was probably killed because of drug trafficking. I find it therefore rather strange ....

(Aside: What was his name?)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: - Victor Pele Parris - .... that now all of a sudden after six months in Opposition, they could discover that drug trafficking is a problem. Malone told us so back in 1978. Malone went on to say this in the report:

> "the motive or the motives that bind the conspirators together, might be resolved by initiating a prosecution for conspiracy as we have advised the Director of Public Prosecutions on the 3rd March."

He went on to say this in conclusion:

> "As regards that investigation, what we considered is most wanted now, to excise from the body of the community the abscess caused by the death of Victor Parris is a well-conducted prosecution by a *pp*osecutor of ability who has made it his business to absorb the multitude of fact in this case and is willing to do so.'

I do not want to call the Tiames of people involved but in this document that the Barbados Labour Party instigated, the Commission identified the people who were the conspirators, and under that Administration, it is a fact, every person who was considered a conspirator was promoted. Every policeman who was considered a conspirator in this public document was promoted under that Administration.

(Aside: Shame!)

(Aside: One, three times in one year!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: One policeman got three promotions in one year as a conspirator. Therefore, I find it very difficult to understand how, now after six months in Opposition, we can hear the Leader of the Opposition, who was Attorney General, come in and ask that security measures be set up. *He had in his hand a public document identifying drug trafficking as the cause of a murder in this country, and between 1978 and 1986 the security measures that they are talking about were not implemented, but they expect them to be implemented since May 28.

When we come into this Honourable Chamber, we must be appraised of the situation, but not only as happened since May 28. Barbados did not start on May 28. It has been here for a long time. We must not suffer from amnesia. We must remember what happened way back.

There is a programme called "Doctor On Call." I listen to it sometimes.

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: On that programme they have been highlighting the problem of drugs in this country for the last four years. When that programme was highlighting drugs, members of the then Government said it was a political ploy, and steps were taken to try to get that programme off the air. Therefore, I find it rather strange now that we could hear these strident calls for the implementation of stricter security measures.

I am confident that this party is going to put in place strict security at the ports. But as you know, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, those implementations cannot come overnight, because when you select people you have to select them with a fine tooth comb or else you are going to put the same drug people back in charge

of the operation. But I just want to set the record straight because I find it strange that you can get up in this Honourable Chamber and call for strict enforcement at the airport and seaport when you had in your hand, since 1980, a public document stating that a death was due to drug trafficking. The Commission selected gave firm instructions about what should have been done. 12.20 pjn.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition in speaking on this topic ....

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Gentleman, gentleman, I am hear- the Member for Christ Church East Central. Honourable Members, can I hear the Member for Christ Church East Central?

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

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that the Bridgetown Port was established under the Barbados Labour Party. I think it is true to say that the massive expansion in the port came in the 1960s, especially after 1961, when the Democratic Labour Party became the Government in this country and there was a massive increase in the standard of riving of the people of Barbados, which necessitated a great deal of economic activity in the realm of trade, both regional and international trade.

If one looks at the statistics in terms of the growth and expansion of the harbour in the period of the 1960s, and right through the 1970s, on would have seen the massive use which would have been put to this very important facility — so much so that in the 1970s, the Democratic Labour Party had already established plans to expand that port to a great extent. The plans included, for instance, the building of a headquarters, the changing around of the transit sheds, the establishment of a container park and the purchase of large scale equipment such as cranes and other heavy handling equipment to deal with the massive amount of cargo that would have been handled in the Bridgetown Port at that time. We also looked at the fact that the careenage was no longer adequate to provide the kind of trade in the region which was necessary, and we made some room for the provision of a shallow draft facility in the actual port. I think these were signs of planning, definite signs that there was an attempt to contain the harbour within one particular facility, which would have, I think, contributed also to the better security arrangements at the Bridgetown port.

It was because of the change under the Democratic Labour Party in terms of the standard of living of people that we found that the amount of cargo that was dealt with increased tremendously, and this had certain repercussions certainly for labour at the port. I think that before we took over the Bridgetown Port, over 3 000 persons would have been engaged in port labour. After 1961, this would have been cut down, until it reached a point of just over 400 persons engaged in the port activities.

We have a situation now where the container traffic, as the Member for St. Michael Central(Mr. C. L. Trotman) has said, is now moving towards 80% of the cargo that is being dealt with in the Bridgetown Port. At one time it was merely break bulk, then it moved from break bulk into break bulk and containers, and also, of course, there has been some bulk cargo — sugar and feeds. But the tendency now is towards containerization, and that has its own problems. The Barbados Workers Union had negotiated an arrangement where 40% of the containers that come to Barbados is unstuffed at the port while 60% is unstuffed ex-wharf. This was a matter of some concern, because it meant that although we realised the difficulties in allowing a large number of containers to leave the port and not be unstuffed in the port, I think it was merely a matter of cost efficiencies that would have been considered. If 100% of the containers were being unstuffed at the port, without a large increase in labour — of course, we would be supportive of labour in the port to help with the unstuffmg of these containers[1] — there might have been a bottleneck in terms of getting cargo out of the port, so there was an arrangement that these containers will be sent out of the Bridgetown Port.

We come to a problem which has been recognized, I think, in many of our discussions. The Leader of the Opposition is looking at the attitude that we politicians have towards the private sector. Apparently, he is suggesting that we put too much trust both in their intelligence and their integrity. I am not necessarily going to comment on his comment, but it seems to me that one of the problems in the Bridgetown Port is that there is still in some ways a legacy of pre-colonial times coming through from the area of the port contractors.

People who were bordering on the shipping and mercantile class, and the stevedoring elements in Bridgetown, are still very much a rule to themselves, and I think that what we found under the last Administration was that there was a community of interest between that merchant and the commercial class, and they were quite adequately represented on the Board of the Port Authority, and I think that interest merged with the management at Port Authority also. I think that, when you have that merger of interest, it is very difficult to ensure that the kinds of programmes and policies which one wants to see established in an area as important as the port can be carried on, following the policies that one particular party would want to establish. Unless the Barbados Labour Party, for instance, had a real policy

towards the port, where it would call for some control of the port board and port management in the interest of the country as a whole, then it would be an area where certain difficulties could develop.

One of the difficulties being adverted to is the difficulty of security of drugs, but there are several other difficulties that would have been associated with the port. I believe that the port management is an area in which there is a certain element of amorality not immorality. I think the people are fairly moral down there. It seems to me that the management at the Port Authority have their fingers in so many different pies that it is very difficult for them to act with the utmost probity in terms of conducting the business of the public. Almost everybody at the level of management at the Port Authority has some kind of private interest that is associated with the same Port Authority, and that is from the level of the General Manager.

I was surprised to learn that a new stevedoring firm had been started at the Bridgetown Port. The firm is being controlled by the son-in-law and the brother of the General Manager. There are cases of officers of the Bridgetown Port, on the management staff, who had companies repairing containers and were pursuing that work under last owned by the Port Authority. There are several other cases that we can talk about where the persons involved in Port Authority administration are operating in a way that can only be said to be a conflict of interest. That is a very serious matter in this country, because the port is too important a public institution for those kinds of policies to continue as they did under the last Administration, without taking measures to redress that kind of situation.

Some matters were raised about the cruise ships business operating here. While I believe there is some benefit to be derived from this, we also have to be careful in looking at that kind of operation. I think that already some of our significant hoteliers have been raising certain problems in terms of the fact that the persons who come on the crew ships are usually part of a package deal, and when they leave the ships they come to use the facilities at the hotels and there is a serious problem of over-. crowding. The persons who have paid to remain at the hotel find that they are competing for space with a number of tourists who just come for a day or so. They do not spend anything significant at these hotels but they make it very difficult for the persons who are long stay visitors at the hotels to be comfortable. I think that is one of the difficulties that we have to look at. 12.30 pjn.

The other difficulty — I think this would probably be better expressed by the representative of the National Union of Seamen — is that a lot of these cruise ship operations are areas of exploitation for the seamen on •board the vessels. Many of them do not subscribe to any international collective agreement, such as may be signed by the International Transport Federation, and they try to pay very meagre wages to the seamen who operate on them. Additionally, they refuse also to hire ratings from the areas where they carry out most of their operations, so we will find that a number of these cruise ships operate between Miami and the Caribbean, but although we have a serious problem of unemployment among our seamen in the Caribbean, they cannot get employment on these vessels. I believe that that is a matter of serious concern, because we must not allow shippers to believe that because they control the vast resources which are part of the whole shipping enterprise, the vessels themselves, we who provide labour can have no say in the way how these vessels are manned. I believe it is very important that we should try to get some labour, and labour paid at the kind of rates that would be acceptable in Europe for similar ratings, on some of these cruise lines.

One of the problems in relation to security at the Bridgetown Harbour,is a certain laxity, I think, that has been encouraged in physical access to this very important place. It is really sometimes shocking to realise that persons who want to go on board vessels like the Jolly Roger and the Bajan Queen have easy access to the port. As soon as you allow these popular types of activities to be operating from an area that should be extremely security oriented, as the port, then you are asking for problems. Almost anybody can go into the Bridgetown Port. Many times people go into the shallow draught. They should not be there. But there is no strict security seeing that these are excluded areas.

That leads to another problem, the whole problem of passes. My impression is that under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, almost anybody could get a pass either to the airport or to the seaport.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I may be wrong, but you Jiave a chance to put your side of it.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: If I lay blame on you and then the Democratic Labour Party follows the same policy, you will be free to criticise when the time comes. The thing is that if you find that there has been a difficulty in allocating passes to everybody, that they can come and go in these areas of strict security, when problems develop then we know at least where the problems are coming from. Once we can identify these problems early, then we can deal with the problems.

It seems to me that there was too easy access to these areas that should be high priority areas of security, and there is no sense in allowing people to come into these areas and then think in terms of a new port security police to deal the question. It is a matter of prevention rather than cure. Cure is necessary, but you have to start making sure that certain groups of people cannot have access to these areas that are high security areas.

I think that there is nothing wrong in having a port security police, but the question always will be to whom will they be accountable, to whom will they be responsible? Right now I believe the Port Authority pays a great deal of money to the Royal Barbados Police Force, and if you believe that establishing a new port police will be an advantage, that is something that will have to be studied very carefully, because if you are going to put these people answerable to, let us say, the Board of Directors at the Port Authority, then you might not at all be solving the problem unless you have very tight control over the Board at the Port Authority. It is a question, I think, that could be answered more by training than necessarily establishing a new institution. I believe that the persons in charge of security at both the airport and the seaport need specialised training. I believe that it is possible that we can get technical assistance in this area, to bring persons from areas where specialised training can be had to Barbados for some time, and that this can be done over a period of time so that the persons in these areas can be exposed through training at various levels.

I believe - and I share the concern expressed here today - that the problem of drugs can best be addressed by tackling the security at the airport and the seaport. We in the Democratic Labour Party are very, very concerned with the menace of drugs. I believe that much of the drugs is coming in through the system of containerisation, especially those that are unstuffed ex-wharf. It means that we have to devise schemes to look at this very carefully. We have to ensure that when persons want their containers unstuffed, they cannot call and determine who are the particular persons they want to be there, they cannot call Customs and say they want Mr. X to come and witness the unstuffmg, because they might know that Mr. X has a particular weakness or partiality to the person who would put in a request, but that the person who will be sent cannot be determined by any person other than the public officer who is in control of the Customs area.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the whole question of the administration of our Bridgetown Port is a very important one and it should certainly, I think, engage the interest of the Democratic Labour Party.

Thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get into all the problems associated with drugs in this debate, because I think we will have ample time when we debate Legal Affairs and Police, which are fairly early Heads, but I would not like the debate to close in the absence of the record showing that, before the Barbados Labour Party went out of office, positive steps were taken to enhance security, certainly at the airport. I will confess that, as far as the seaport is concerned, during the year that I was Attorney General I never visited the sea port in any official capacity. I think I was invited on some cruise ship which came in and had an inaugural voyage. Indeed, in all the years I have been in Barbados, I have been in the port about three times and never had a pass. I only had a pass for the airport when I became Attorney General.

One of the things which concerned me, in an. 'area for which I had direct responsibility., was the whole business of tightening security to keep drugs out of Barbados, and, about halfway through my tenure, I paid a visit to the airport with a view to looking at the establishment of a new police station at the airport. I think the present station up there is really unserviceable. Apart from the fact, I believe, that it has an asbestos roof, it is an old chattel building that was there from the days of the Admiralty and would be in need of constant repair. It is not a modern building, it does not harmonise with the airport development, and we need to build a separate police station at the airport to enhance security generally at the airport and to have the presence there.

A decision was taken that such a station would be built. Obviously, that will have to wait on this Government's rescheduling of its priorities. But more importantly, and of a more tangible nature, was that I was shown an area near where I think the customs officers park their cars, what I call below. If you come out of the airport and you turn left, at the end of the building going west, there was an open area where the public can have free and unrestricted view into the back of the airport, and I had been aware that all kinds of transactions used to go on between airline personnel and members of the general public, drugs were brought in and passed outside, people could look and see what was going on and deals could be made. From policemen to line crewmen were charged for attempting to bring drugs into the airport. When I delved, as Attorney General, I was able to find out a lot of what was going on. The long and short of it was that we paid a visit, and I believe the Buildings Officer — I see him in here this morning — or Security Officer .....

12.40p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I saw the person in the precincts of Parliament today — you cannot catch me!

I must say that person turned out to be the most responsive and dynamic public servant that 1 have ever

come across. A decision was taken that day. I said I want the wall raised both areas enclosed. A decision was taken that day that it would be done. I believe that by the time we were leaving from the visit, the gentleman had a sketch as to what was necessary, and within a matter of weeks the airport was enclosed. I pay public tribute to that gentleman. He had some athletic prowess which manifested itself in football, so he was able to do things quickly.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You will find out. I cannot call his name, apparently. I would love to put that in the records of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, I call Mr. Barrow's name. If I cannot call it, do not mind. Leave it, Sir. He is Mr. Keith Barrow. He rendered a wonderful job to the public of Barbados by the speed with which he was able to enclose the airport.

Having enclosed the airport on its western side, to prevent the public from having access through the wire or over the wire, we took another decision — and the sketch for this was also done there and then that morning - that outside the Arrivals Hall, where your baggage is brought on the trolleys, we would put up a screen. I can talk about it now. At first we kept it a secret, because we did not want the general public to know, but in the passage of time they have found out, because the airport workers talked about it. Where the trolleys come with your baggage, w« erected a screen in the yard so that there can be a pre-examination of bags. The idea was that bags could be sniffed by the dogs out there while you are awaiting inside. I believe that has been working. When you are inside assuming that your dope is coming through, it would already have been sniffed and the police would be inside waiting. That was designed to enhance the detection faculties at the airport.

We had to make a decision, because I thought it was a matter of urgency and we had to do something and •put something in place there and then. But to get it fully operational required the purchase of a number of dogs additional to what we had. We took the decision, therefore, last year to buy five — the Honourable Attorney General can correct me if I have given the wrong figure — additional dogs, two to be used at the airport, to supplement the others that we had, and the other three to be used at the port. The Commissioner of Police expressed one reservation about the dog situation, that, apparently, the dogs would have had to go into quarantine for* a six months period, so there was going to be a consequential delay because of the quarantine regulations. I think we had, subject to correction, some promises from the United States of gifts and we were to purchase some from England, or vice versa.

(Aside; Hon. B. M. TAITT: How about pigs?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Pigs? I did not know you could use pigs.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister of Tourism is recommending that the Attorney General consults with Mr. Benn of BAS to get some pigs.

I want it to be clear that some action was started in 1985 into 1986 to tighten security at the airport. As I said, I did not have direct responsibility for the port -that was under another Minister — and I was never able to address my attention to the port. All the Honourable •-» Leader of the Opposition was saying, not being holier than you was that a start having been made and the Government being aware of the magnitude of the problem, it ought to continue to put its own stamp on the development of the security at the airport and the seaport. It is an areas where we can develop, progress and enhance the security to an acceptable level. I think realism would suggest that we will not be able to totally stamp out the drug menace and I will deal with that when we come to Legal Affairs — but our attempt must surely be to reduce its incidents as much as possible to ensure that the youth of this island are protected from this menace.

I was very happy to hear the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) speak ^^ about the problems in the port. There is, at the moment, a simmering problem which, if left unchecked, is going to result in a lot of unpleasantness. There is evidence -I have it -- that the police at the port who have to organize the order of business for taximen are encouraging bribery and corruption. I am told that it has been going on for a long time. I am not aware of that, it has come to me in the last three to four weeks. They are granting favours to certain taximen who will pass their hand back. It would have been going on in our time, because I hear it is a long time. We need to stamp it out, because where a taximan does not play ball, he is now banned from going into the port. He is banned on the most frivolous and flimsy pretext from operating in the port.

That is nothing for which I blame a Government. I am not so silly as some people who want to accuse a past Government of everything. All that would be necessary, and I know the Honourable Prime Minister will look into it, is to ask the authorities to investigate and make sure

that that kind of impropriety is stopped. He cannot go down there and supervise what is going on. It is not to be expected. 12.50p.m.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I want to ask one question about the submarine, the Atlantis I believe it is called. When that submarine came into Barbados, did it have to pay any form of duty for the privilege of operating under the waters of Barbados? I believe the Jolly Roger and the Bajan Queen and all those kinds of vessels have to pay, and I do not believe that the Atlantis should be exempt from duty, which I believe, if collected, would be in the vicinity of about $500000, according to information reaching me. If it has not paid, we need the money; collect it. Start there in the efficiency and add on some to the figures you gave yesterday.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, in the few minutes that are left remaining, I want to underscore a number of points which have been raised during the course of the debate and to make a few comments on Government's position in relation to them.

The point has been made that illegal drugs come into Barbados through the port and the airport. I believe it was the honourable Member fur Sc. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) who made the point that this is nothing new. This has been happening in Barbados for quite some time now, and our problem as a Government is to ensure that the security at the seaport and the airport is of such a high quality that we move towards dealing effectively with the menace of illegal drugs coming in through the seaport and airport.

Security at the seaport and airport is not something that can be dealt with in a spasmodic and piecemeal manner. It has to be planned in a total package. We are getting a lot of advice and assistance in this matter from a number of Governments who are as equally concerned as we are with the problem of security at the airport and seaport, because illegal drugs is not a problem which we in Barbados alone face. The world is faced with the problem of illegal dings, and the United States is as much concerned about the passage of illegal drugs coming from South America, through Barbados, into the United States as we are concerned about it coming into Barbados and some of it finding us way into our system and corrupting and destroying ihe young people and the people of our society. We are in contact and in discussion with friendly Governments who have equal concerns with us in the area of illegal drugs, terrorism and airport and seaport security, generally. We are trying to put together a complete package for the total security of the port and airport.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) made reference to the use of dogs at the airport sniffing any illegal drugs. We have had some offers from the United States for the provision of dogs through the United Kingdom, and I believe that these dogs will be here shortly. We are also getting some assistance with one or two boats to help in surveillance in the in-shore area of the waters of Barbados.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas made the point late in his address about problems at the seaport. He made allegations about police officers and bribery. I do not have any direct information on that, but if the honourable Member could supply definitive information on that, we could have it and deal with it. One of the problems which we have to deal with in societies like ours, in all societies, is when your law enforcement agencies and agencies of Government in any way become corrupted, because the moment incipient corruption starts to affect your law enforcement agencies and your principal agencies for service in the country, then the country begins to have problems. So the sooner we begin to root out the problems whatever they are which tend to corrupt and demoralise the agencies, the better for our* societies.

I want to assure this Honourable House that this Government is taking the whole problem of security at the port and the airport very seriously, we mean to lock horns with the problem of illegal drugs in the country, and we will spare no effort whatsoever in trying to eradicate the menace from our society.

The question that Head 14 - International Transport Division - $8 074 862 - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

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

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, this is an appropriate time for us to take our luncheon break, and 1 beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2 o'clock today.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 1.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 70 - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT DIVISION - CAPITAL - (AS AMENDED) - $1 658 000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $1 658 000 for Head 70 - International Transport Division — stand part of the Schedule.

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

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): I have to respond to a question asked earlier in relation to the Atlantis submarine. This has been a matter of some dispute between competitors in the field. The Atlantis submarine is registered under the Shipping Act and therefore comes under a different regime. I think it is the Venessa Ann that the honourable Member probably referred to.

(Aside: He said Atlantis.)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Atlantis, yes.

It comes under the International Shipping Act. The submarine is just the beginning of it.

(Aside: You still have not answered the question).

The question that Head 70 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE - $22 848 876

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $22 848 876 for Head 15- Cabinet Office — stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, under this Head, I want to draw attention to Subhead 2, first of all, dealing with Government Hospitality. One understands and appreciates that Government from time to time will have to spend public funds on entertaining — it is page 13 — visitors from overseas, and it is but proper that this should happen.

Earlier today I had occasion to warn the Government about its contacts with persons who may not be of good repute, and I refer to the two men who were brokers for the DCS aircraft, who posed as men with means but, in fact, are well-known international vagabonds. Now I was a little concerned last year, probably about October/November, when I read that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs put on a party at Government's expense, I believe at Ilaro Court, for a man who claims Barbadian parentage, but who has lived for a number of years in England. He is a well known friend of Senator. Tudor. This man has the sobriquet, "Guineaman". He is a kind of fish, an oversized flying fish. He also has arrogated to himself a doctorate.

(Aside: Dr: Guineaman!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is not "Dr. Guineaman," he is Dr. Ashton Gibson. He came down here and pretended that he was representing Barbadians and West

Indians in London, I think they bought a property in St. James, a property formerly owned by the Juman family, Westford Hotel, and called it Caribbean House, and it was to be the counterpart facility to a similar facility in London. Why I was concerned about the expenditure of Government money on this fish....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the honourable Member is still on Dr. Gibson.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Dr. Ashton Gibson.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I just got a little confused. I heard of doctor, then I heard of fish.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well Guineaman, Sir. You are from St. Andrew.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You would know, Sir, that guineaman is a large flying fish, and this fellow was flying from Hackney over the water to Barbados.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is indeed very fishy - the gentleman's sobriquet is well chosen — because I have with me a copy of the "Daily Mail" of London. I will make it a document of the House. He poses as a black community leader, but he is at the centre of a row over the alleged misuse of community money and £500 000, $1.5 million is being investigated as a result of his manipulations as the patriarch of Caribbean House in London. What is interesting in the report by Mr. Tim Miles is that he said there are these enquiries of money:

> "The inquiry is also examining household bills at Dr. Gibson's £140000 home in Marchmont Road, Wallington, Surrey, including two telephone bills totalling nearly £1 000 and a gas bill for £635.
>
> "Rent, rates and other payments are being looked at involving a refuge for the homeless in Amhurst Road, Hackney, and another property in Albion Road, Stoke Newington, now housing offices of the Sickle Cell Anaemk Society.
>
> "Finally, there is a bill for £5307, paid to the publishers, Unwins, for 3 500 copies of Dr. Gibson's autobiography, 'A Light In a Dark Tunnel.'"

Those of us who recall the event will recall that the function put on by the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs was to assist in the launching of the book.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Not that one, another one.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister seems to know a lot about Dr. Gibson. He is telling me it is another book.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I know he does not wish me to interrupt. I was pointing out to him the article carried in the local newspapers referred to another.book. I am trying to assist the honourable Member in not misleading the House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am grateful for the information from the Honourable Member which portrays the Doctor as being a very prolific writer:

> "Dr. Gibson - he calls himself the Right Reverend becatise of his association with the small Tabernacle of God Church — admits that since arriving in Britain in 19$2, he has had ten convictions, for assault, burglary.....
>
> *(Aside:* Hon. B. M. TAITT: What?)
>
> Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ".... and
>
> theft from churches.
>
> "He said God had helped him pull through his long period of darkness."

I do not know if that means darkness incarcerated. In 12 years of work he has proved himself. 2.10 p.m.

> "Dr. Gibson said that the hotel in Barbados, also called Caribbean House and containing 42 furnished apartments, was designed to enable elderly West Indians in Britain to enjoy low cost off peak holidays through his own company, Caribbean House Travel. But he admitted that none had been, because it is not running properly. The council has refused to respond to the scheme and there has been a complaint to the Commission for Racial Equality that only West Indians could benefit.
>
> "The council does not like us because we are entrepreneurs and not slaves to them," he said. "They want to municipalise the whole voluntary sector. They see me as the fat cat living off the working class of Hackney."

As I said, I will make this extract from the Daily Mail, entitled "House Of Rising Debts", a document of the House so other Members can be brought up to date.

The point of my intervention is that we have to be very careful. It is a fact. You will find similar references

in the *Times* of London to the fact that the British police are carrying out investigation as to the disappearance of County Council funds from the Hackney Borough Council, and the man is under investigation. I am not making any other allegation at all except that he is under investigation. I am concerned that Government money should have been expended to host a party for a man who admits to ten criminal convictions, including burglary and stealing from churches.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was going to sit down, but the Honourable Minister of Tourism is prompting me a little further to say that the present Minister of Foreign Affairs is a personal friend of Dr. Ashton Gibson and knew him very well when he, the present Minister of Foreign Affairs, was High Commissioner in London, that this man is also a friend of the nominee to the post of Deputy High Commissioner in London - I do not think that the person has been accredited, so I am calling him "nominee" - and that an organization to which the nominated Deputy High Commissioner is accredited, a Barbadian organization, has an office in Caribbean House,, which is run by Dr. Ashton Gibson. I did not want to say all those things but the Honourable Minister of Tourism has prompted me to link the association of Gibson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his nominee to be Deputy High Commissioner in London.

I am not going to say any more. A word to the wise is enough. I said the Government and the Minister are new, and they will be prompted to offer hospitality and will be befriended by all types. It behoves us to be very careful about who we associate with. You can be sure that I read the article properly.

Hon. L E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, what has been placed before this Committee is a report from one of the newspapers in the United Kingdom. I do not think that this Committee or this House can really go into the business of trial by newspaper. There are allegations in a newspaper article, there is no defence in that particular newspaper, and I do not think that it is the business of this Committee to get involved in those kinds of allegations.

I take it that what the honourable Member is saying is that he is warning the Government, according to him, to be careful of associates. If he leaves it at that, we will hope that when he was in the Government, he took a special care that his Government did not associate with any shady characters. I wonder if he could get up and give that assurance.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. As far as in me lies, and during the year that I was a member of Cabinet, ...

(*Aside:* How long was that?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ..... one year! The one year that the people allowed me — I took very, very great care about whom I ever spent money on. I think that you will see that, as Attorney General, there was money spent from my Ministry to host a party for a number of criminologists and police — criminologists not criminals - from the United States who were brought here by the Commissioner of Police. There was a party at Grand Bay. There was one for Professor John Llewellyn J. Edwards, who has written a number of books on the office of the Attorney General, to which the Honourable Prime Minister was invited but it clashed with another appointment. I choose very carefully.

There was no party held for Sydney Burnett Alleyne, whom I know, and have known since 1960, when he tried to confuse me as a student in London that he was a nuclear physicist, then hot from Cambridge!

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know him. I would not deny it.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I merely say that if it comes into the knowledge of this Government that there are Barbadians, reportedly and reputedly, who make contributions in various fields, either in Barbados or outside of Barbados, either to the world of learning or knowledge or to the advancement of the cause of people anywhere, including black people, we think it is right and appropriate that hospitality might be attributed to them on the basis of the information available to us. I do not think there is anything more I need to say at this stage.

Thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I want to say something, because the former Attorney General, the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), suggested while making his presentation that I might have provoked him into speaking. I wish to say that, without prejudice, it really does not matter that a person may be identified in a newspaper as having had some convictions because the kinds of revelations which come out of officialdom in a number of places suggest that there are a number of prominent people in the world who have made sterling contributions to the movement of ordinary people forward — and some have come to Barbados — but if one had to rely on official reports put out about them then, they would have been deemed to be unworthy, according to the criteria which the honourable Member seem to be establishing for the determination of who shall or shall not be a beneficiary of Government's hospitality.

Government hospitality is not something that is handed like largesse. Government hospitality, as far as I know, is not something that is determined on the basis of friendship, and because the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs is not in this Honourable House, I wish to say that I doubt very much that a man of his sagacity and his vast experience in the field of international relations, and in his capacity as a Foreign Minister, would even consider, far less do, such a thing as to dispense Government hospitality on the basis of personal aggrandisement or personal friendship. 2.20 p.m.

I think that Barbadians who go to all parts of the world and come back to Barbados have been lionised either by the Press or by other people on the basis of information submitted about what they have done. If one, for example, looked at the kinds of stories which Edgar Hoover put out about Martin Luther King, then one would have to deem Martin Luther King to be unworthy of association, and yet he is considered to be the greatest black man to have walked this earth in this century. If one looked at some of the information which passes in reputable newspapers as information having been put out about individuals, if one assesses that information one has to come to the conclusion that it is what a man has done rather than who he is, to a large extent, which should guide our decisions on how we are going to regard him.

All of the African leaders that we know today are, according to the best definition, criminals, because they have spent some time in prison. Menachem Begin, who is considered to be one of the 20th century leaders in trie State of Israel, was considered to be one of the greatest terrorists in the world of his day, and he went to prison. You cannot name a leader of any repute outside of the West Indies who has not spent some time in prison in pursuit of some cause.

I am not going to ever find myself in a position where I am defending a criminal, but the honourable Member also knows that if a man had a conviction and went to prison, he is supposed to have paid his debt and is able to go on. So I do not think that it is any way of indicting this Government if you are able to say that hospitality was given. I just wish to make my position clear.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): I do not know, Mr. Chairman, how in the course of Government hospitality people's names could be called in here and documents produced without getting the permission of His Honour the Speaker. That is the first irregularity.

Secondly, no member of the legal profession should find it competent to come in here and make misstatements of fact about hospitality being extended to somebody at Ilaro Court. No one, since it is the official residence of the Prime Minister, can extend any hospitality at Ilaro Court, and I have laid down the ground rules here earlier today, which everybody knows. Not even my old school was allowed to have hospitality there.

As far as I know, the person whose name they are illegally discussing today published a book and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was asked if they would object to using the entrance to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the launching of a book by a Barbadian, full stop. There were many eminent Barbadian writers at that function, the normal number of people that I saw would have amounted to 30 to 32 persons — when I passed through there that is what I saw — and as far as I know, as far as I can recollect, the Minister of Foreign Affairs never came to the Cabinet for any sums of money out of this vote to entertain anyone, not even your humble servant. Full stop!

There is a book written by George Lamming, it is called "In the Castle of my Skin", and the character in that book, operating out of Carringtons Village, was a gentleman called Mr. Slime, and it is popularly believed — I am not referring to anybody in this House — that that gentleman, Mr. Slime, was a person rejoicing in the same name as the honourable Member for St. Thomas. That is all I say.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Prime Minister was not in here when I spoke. The first point I made was that a party was held and I was not sure whether it was at Ilaro Court.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Then you should not have called Ilaro Court).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, if it was not Ilaro Court, you said it was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was held on Government property and Government funds were used to host the party. If the Ministry of Foreign Affairs paid for it out of their funds, those were Government funds. If you want to debate this under Foreign Affairs, good. All I did was to say in your absence, the one whom Carol Fields introduced to Chapman. You called me swine and I will tell you what Carol Fields told me. If you want to lock horns with me, we will lock horns.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I never called the honourable Member swine. I said George Lamming wrote a book, Sir, on a point of order, and the character in that book was a Mr. Swine. I do not mean Swine that knocks about the courtyard out there, and he was a person popularly believed by all the persons who read the book to be rejoicing in the same name as the honourable Member for St. Thomas. You see now he is shouting and he is getting disturbed. If you come in here to smear other people, I will know how to set you up and get you more disturbed before I give you what the honourable Member for St. James used to call the cou-cou punch.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was speaking, Sir. Set up who and get who annoyed?

Let us get this straight, Sir. I began by saying that the Daily Mail of London had published an article in which a man admits to having ten convictions, including burglary and stealing from churches, and I warned the members of the Government to be careful about whom they were associating with.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the Prime Minister said, and I accept his word, that there was no reception held at Ilaro Court. Let the record reflect that. I also accept that he said that a reception was held at the entrance to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is Government property, who paid for the reception then?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am being told now the publishers paid for it. It does not derogate from the point I made earlier, that Government must be careful of its , associates. No one is seeking to be slimy, because the Honourable Prime Minister should know better than anybody else the slimy people in his party who gave us the checks in 1976 to prove corruption in his party. Do not let us get into that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I hope the honourable member is still on Head 15.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am replying to the invective of the Honourable Prime Minister in similar terms.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I heard of a Mr. Slime, not "slimy" in reference to a Member of this House. I have heard of a Mr. Slime.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, I will call him slimy then, Sir, the one who spoke of Mr. Slime.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think the honourable •Member for St. John had expanded on the subject that far for us to assume whether Mr. Slime was slimy or not.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The others say come off. Okay, that is the end of the matter, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, this Head has several subheads on which obviously we would like to hear a bit more from the Government. The Prime Minister while attending an event in his own constituency, a most unfortunate event — I am not sure .....

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Paid for by the government?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: That really does not bother me. 2.30p.m.

Apparently the Prime Minister did not have lunch or something, because he is jumping before he has even heard anybody talk. He was very pleasant this morning, but if he wants to be unpleasant this afternoon, we have no objection to dealing with him. He must not believe that he has the Young Democrats or his Ministers in here, so he really must not challenge us. Let us try and get the debate in position.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: As for you, you will get yours in due course.

I was beginning to talk, not under Hospitality for the benefit of the Prime Minister, but the Head of the Central Emergency Organisation, (CERO), and I was saying that the Prime Minister in his constituency made reference to the number of fires and the number of disasters that occurred in such circumstances, and he talked about the need to have a stock of houses available in order to deal with these events.

Only last Saturday, in my own constituency there was a fire which rendered homeless two people, a man of 92 and a lady of 84. The man taken to the General Hospital because of illnesses, eventually he was in the District Hospital, and it looks as though the lady will have to go there as well, the one in the constituency of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Estimates do not seem to reflect this, and I wonder if the Government is still of the mind that it needs a stock of 400 houses for eventualities such as this. Was the figure of 400 picked out of the hat, or was it arrived at after consideration of all of the disasters which may give rise to such preparations? I want to know how far the Government has gone on the plan, because I do not see it reflected in the vote of the Prime Minister's Ministry under this Head, nor under the Capital estimates dealing with this subject. If it is not reflected, has the Minister changed his mind about the urgency for such a provision?

I also want to deal with the Defence Force. We have from time to time had some debate in this Parliament on the role and function of a Defence Force within Barbados and we have heard the Government *ex cathedra* and *in cathedra* making pronouncements on the role which the Force should play.

In last year's Estimates, under Current Expenditure* a figure of $17 500 000 was provided. This Committee at this stage has no facts or figures to show us what has been spent of that provision up to now. The Estimates, however, this year are providing $16 920 000 for the recurrent cost of the Defence Force, and the Estimates reflect in Appendix G, at the back of the Estimates, that that is the amount requested by the Defence Board, and the amount which has been granted, for paying for the cost of maintaining various components comprising the Force.

I have heard a lot of talk about the build-up of defence services in Barbados through the years, but if one had to look at the statement of Current Expenditure for the ten year period, you would find that the fluctuation was not very significant down through the years, and that having regard to the establishment of a Coast Guard wing of the Defence Force and the purchase of boats to service that wing, the .amount of money which has been spent on Defence as a percentage of the national budget has not been really very significant.

At one stage we heard from the Prime Minister that the Defence Force was going to be cut drastically. At another stage we heard that nobody is going to go home. It depends on the mood in which he is. I wonder, now that he has had time for reflection to look at the necessity for security of some nature, if he could let us know what is Government's real policy? Does he intend to reduce the establishment of the Defence Force? If so, to what numbers?

I recall the Prime Minister in this House stating that to get the numbers of the Defence Force he had to ask a foreign country. He did not know what were the true numbers, but he is now sitting as the Chairman of the Defence Board, he is now Minister with responsibility for Defence. I know that no matter whatever the change in the Estimates, quite properly the Personal Emoluments Schedule will not reflect, as far as I can find, the numbers of the Defence Force. I am not even going to ask the Prime Minister to tell me what they are in here, because having shared some responsibility for Defence during the time I was in the Cabinet, I recognise that, in some areas of this country's affairs, it is not always that we can publicly talk about the details of every event. But is the Prime Minister now satisfied about the numbers? If he is not satisfied, why not, because, from my information, there has been no change in the numbers of persons who now compose the Force from what it was a year ago?

We have heard quite a lot about Barbados' role in the Regional Security System. I must ask the Prime Minister, what is the change, if any, in Government's policy? As far as I am aware, Barbados is still part of the Regional Security System, the RSS. It is still participating in the exercises that they were participating in before. We are still sharing certain regional training facilities and, I believe, we are co-operating in certain areas of national defence.

The only real objection that I have ever heard the Prime Minister talking about, and which seems to give him some difficulty, is the concept of a formal treaty. I have always understood, an international lawyer, that the word "treaty" is a generic term. It does not signify one single document at all. It applies to various arrangements between Governments, some of them formal and some not so formal. I believe that the best international opinion would say that the Memorandum of Understanding that has been signed between the Governments of the Eastern Caribbean constitutes a treaty in international, although not of the formal legalistic nature that you may find in what is sometimes referred to as "a treaty *stricto sensu.* " 2.40p.m.

If, however, the Prime Minister's real difficulty with regional defence is who should control the military, that is not a difficulty for most western democracies, although it has become a difficulty for some of the developing countries. I can understand that there has been a fear among some developing countries that if the military is ' allowed to have too much discretion, or too much power as somebody puts it, at some time or other you can anticipate that there is likely to be a challenge to the civilian authority. But it has not been beyond the capabilities of Governments to ensure that the military side of the personnel respond to civilian direction and control, and even in the most formal of treaties — I have heard the Prime Minister on a part of this, although he did not go into it fully — it is possible to so control the military that you can have co-operation in defence matters without having the ultimate authority being the military people making the decision.

I think the Prime Minister will now have had access to all of the files in his Ministry dealing with the genesis of the Regional Security System. He would see how it began and between whom it began, that the discussions really started between the Government of Barbados and the Governments of St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and that, in the first place, it began because of the need for joint coastal protection. Events in the Caribbean have meant that it has developed a little further since then, but I think we have to recognise, and we would have had to recognise it if we had gone into a federal situation, that there will be need for continual defence presence in these Caribbean islands. We do not have the British Government to turn to, as we had prior to independence, and I would expect that we should now be looking in the Caribbean at an arrangement that would be most suitable

for the small territories of the Caribbean and that could protect their interests in so far as they have the capacity within them to do so.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not want the debate to be closed off. According to the Rules, we are all limited in our first interventions to 15 minutes, but I want to respond and develop some of the points that I have not finished at this stage.

I would just like the Committee to know that the system of the RSS which was being developed here within the Caribbean has been cited as a model by those of us who sat at the request of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers to look at the security needs of small states. I have not seen that document around in our own library here. I must make sure that I lay a copy on the table of the House for the benefit of Members who may well be interested in the subject of the security needs of the small states of the world.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a short observation, but not like the Grenada intervention, following on what the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. FORDE) has said. He has tried to put the point that the Honourable Prime Minister, and indeed the Democratic Labour Party, is ambivalent about the role of the Defence Force. I want to take him back through some historical facts, and I want to take him, first of all, to the Barbados Labour Party's manifesto of 1976 at page 22. Under Defence and Security, this is what it says:

> "Barbados should have no territorial ambitions. While recognising its critical geographical significance to the North American and Latin American continents, there is no reason why Barbados should attract foreign invasion or intervention. The Party will not commit our country to any foreign defence pacts. Internally the defence force will be limited to such as are adequate to maintain law and order. There will be no need to maintain any standing army or other defence force."

That was the position of the Barbados Labour Party in their campaign during the 1976 General Election. It was the Democratic Labour Party which promoted the idea of a defence force. Indeed, during that 1976 campaign the Barbados Labour Party went the length and breadth of this country telling the people of Barbados not only that we were going to set up a defence force, but that we would use it not to have elections any more. So when the Barbados Labour Party comes in here and talks about ambivalence about the defence force and who is against the defence force, it is in their document, their manifesto promise of 1976, that they would not set up a defence force in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, by 1981, under their heading of Defence and Security, this is what they had to say about the Defence Force, page 28:

> "Events within Barbados, the Caribbean and elsewhere have provided the need for Barbados to have a limited defence force with a capacity to withstand a minimum assault of potential marauders, terrorists and mercenaries. Except among the most purblind, it is accepted the Sydney Alleynes and the John Banks of this world are not to be dismissed as mere jokers."

Their explanation for setting up the Defence Force in Barbados was to fight off Sydney Burnett-Alleyne. Indeed, when we started these Estimates one of the first things that the Leader of the Opposition started to talk about was Sydney Burnett-Alleyne. Every time the Barbados Labour Party is in trouble, Sydney Burnett-Alleyne is coming.

I hear about all of these grandiose theories — to fight off drugs, a regional defence security — but they spelt out in their two manifestos what their position on the defence force was. First of all, in 1976 they would have no defence force, and then in 1981 a defence force was to fight off Sydney Burnett-Alleyne. If there is ambivalence about the Defence Force, the ambivalence rests with the Opposition Barbados Labour Party. And when the honourable Member for Christ Church West talks about when he sat in the Cabinet and these things were discussed, he was in the Cabinet before 1981. From 1976 —-1981 he was a Cabinet member, and I imagine that he would have known that it was in the manifesto that the defence force was to fight off Sydney Burnett-Alleyne. If they had all these grandiose theories then, they should have been incorporated in their 1981 manifesto. I just wanted to put the historical development of the Defence Force with respect to the Barbados Labour Party in its correct perspective. 2.50p.m.

If there were foreign elements urging them on to set up a defence force for any other reason, maybe, when he comes back again, he could give us chapter and verse of that. But that is not what they told the people of Barbados. The historical documents will explain to our children and our grandchildren what the Barbados Labour Party thought about a defence force in 1976 and why they did set it up in 1981. If they want to write new books explaining why there was a defence force, they are at liberty to do that. But do not come in here and attribute your self-mirrored ambivalence to another political party. That is something that the Barbados Labour Party has been doing for a long time and getting

away with it. They have been reflecting their guilty consciences on to other people.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You can speak whenever you want. If you want to speak before me, I can sit down and let you speak.

Sir, the honourable Member sees himself as a new Don Quixote whose job is to get up and tilt at windmills. The problem is that he never takes the time to do his research and follow through matters, because he would have recognised, by reading into the debate, the position of the Barbados Labour Party on defence in 1976. He would not have said anything new. It was a policy we enunciated, and enunciated in the context of the situation that existed then. He has been kind enough to read part of what was said on defence in 1981. He did not read the whole of the party's position on defence. He stops at a position that is convenient to him. But if he would take the care to read the speeches made in here on defence, not only by the principal spokesman for the Barbados Labour Party Government on defence by me, he would find the total reasons stated.

The honourable Member said that we have Sydney Alleyne as a patron saint. He is absolutely mistaken. We had to face Sydney Alleyne as a reality. The same Sydney Alleyne who boasts, and your party conference would reflect it, that he was the person who sponsored, and he always says this, the resolution for Independence.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I heard the Prime Minister *saysotto voce* that he broke into the conference.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: That he stormed right up to the platform!

The point is that Sydney Alleyne makes the point that he was a member of your party and was in a position to get on the platform and move the resolution for the Independence of Barbados. We are talking about the same Sydney Alleyne who received a banking licence to conduct banking business here in Barbados, signed by the then Minister of Finance, the Honourable Prime Minister. That is the Sydney Alleyne we are talking about!

(Aside: Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: That is not a security threat.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He said he complied with all of the provisions. A man who is in the Mid-Atlantic Bank, who says that he is a total gun runner and who history shows, if the honourable Member does not know it .....

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, would you ask the Honourable Minister of Health to wait until he is called upon to see if he can make a contribution rather than speaking *sotto voce.*

This is a man who history shows as taking steps to overthrow a Government .....

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Laugh at it, keep laughing at it! You now have access to all of the intelligence reports. You did not have it before. You now have access now you have got back into Government.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You are not going to read it, but, if you do, you will find that the reality of mercenaries is a reality that has faced the Caribbean countries and other countries. If you are following any development in security, whether it be the Seychelles, Dominica, Barbados, even today in the United Nations, the reality of. mercenaries attacking small states is a well recognized phenomenon, so much so that Barbados has been in the forefront, both under us and now under you, in promoting the UN convention to deal with mercenaries. The Honourable Member must know that. He must not dismiss that as a factor of note in the planning of any defence policy. The trouble with the honourable Member is that he speaks as though he knows everything and does not take the time to research it. If he would begin to read he will see that those events which he tries to dismiss are realities in planning for any defence policy.

We also had the spectacle of acts of terrorism within the Caribbean. We have discussed only in this Committee this morning the problems that are occurring internationally, as the Attorney General recognizes, as organized crime takes its whole toll on the world. The measures called to counteract them are not dealt with only at the level of the Police Forces of the world. One has to realistically, in planning for a Government and planning for the protection of the people, take into account all of these matters.

If the Honourable Member did not understand what the debate was about, all he should have done was to have kept quiet. He exercised his right as a Member to speak, but he must recognize that other people understand what they are talking about when they talk on this area.

I promise the honourable Member to make available to the Committee the study done by the Commonwealth experts on the security needs of small states. He will see that when the position taken by the Barbados Labour Party Government moved .....

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ....the one I wrote, Sir..... towards having an upgraded defence mechanism in this country, it was justified both by events and by reality.

And as much as the Government is going to talk, I do not see the Government with any prospect of scaling down the Defence Force needs of Barbados either.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You do not hear anything!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am going to wait and hear what you have to say.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You do not see anything.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to wait and hear what you have to say.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Well why do you not sit down and let me talk?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Why did you not abolish them when you came in? Why did you make two contradictory statements? You said that you were going to get rid of all of them then you said that you were not getting rid of them.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Oh, you are going to get rid of them.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, there are only three of .us, you know. All of them are afraid of the three of us and what we have to say.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Why do you not shut up and let us conduct the business then?

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member addressing the Chair?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No. Sir. The Chair should never shut up, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, the honourable Member is complaining he has not spoken yet. All the honourable Member had to do when he introduced the Head is to speak, if it were necessary. If the honourable Member chooses to introduce Heads, or whoever is holding for him, and does not make a speech, that is their problem. He was not here when the Head was first introduced.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Probably you were absent because I never introduced any Head.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am saying that if the honourable Member, or whoever speaks in his place when a Head is introduced, chooses not to make a statement, and we have to begin the debate on it, we will do so. The committee Rules allow us to speak three times. I sat down, the honourable Member could have got up and spoken.

Aside.

3.00p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member is in a truculent mood this afternoon. He really comes in here as though he wants to fight this afternoon. All I want the honourable Member to do is address the questions I have asked him. If necessary, I will speak again.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: First, Mr. Chairman, I think that the record will show that I did not introduce the Resolution, so I allowed the honourable Member to speak as many times as he wanted to speak.

I made a statement while I was in my chair that Sydney Alleyne is the patron saint of the Barbados Labour Party. The honourable Member for St. Philip entertained, I think it was in his office .....

(Aside: St. Thomas.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I beg your pardon, the honourable Member for St. Thomas. He knows what I am speaking about. The meeting to overthrow the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party, sponsored by Mr. Sydney Alleyne, was held in your office. You were his legal adviser.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. I know you said earlier today that you would try and set me up. But you are not going to set me up.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Earlier today.....

Certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) at this stage were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is totally and absolutely untrue for the Honourable Prime Minister to say that I had any meeting with Sydney Alleyne about overthrowing the leadership of the Labour Party.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It was in your office.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No man, you must not make these little asides. You want to give me some little pokes and things, but come with some facts. I do not mind if you cuff me about a little bit and I cuff you about — that is all part of the thing — but be truthful. Be truthful!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member for St. John.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Let me read out what the honourable Member said I was not telling the truth on. Page 3 of a document, which is described on the cover as the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party General Elections, 1976, Sir:

> "FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS — Government has several financial institutions. At the apex is the Central Bank of Barbados which performs the regulatory function. There are also the Government Savings Bank and a number of development banking institutions such as the Barbados Development Bank, the Sugar Industry Development Bank, the Agricultural Credit Bank, and the National Housing Corporation which performs limited functions. A BLP Government will consolidate these institutions and establish a national bank of Barbados with divisions for savings, agricultural financing, development banking and a commercial division. The savings effected will be at the expense of the top heavy management structures of existing institutions and not at the expense of the present staff."

When I challenged the then Minister of Finance on this, and the newspapers challenged him, he said that he had decided to take the Central Bank out of the amalgamation after he got in Government because he was then advised that it would not be practicable. That is what I am accused of not telling the truth on.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: I would never — and the honourable Members on that side know — say an untruth about him, Sir. This morning the Honourable Prime Minister accused the last Prime Minister, Mr. St. John, of having voted against the Central Bank Bill when it was in the Senate in 1972 .....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:.....wait, I am just replying to the point he has made .....saying that the Central Banking was no good for Barbados and all of them were to be in one, as the manifesto tried to say. It was not St. John who said it. It is untrue to say that.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Who said it?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know who said it, but you gave that interpretation out of your consideration of the manifesto.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Now I am hearing something different. I do not know, Mr. Chairman, where I am with these people. I am saying that in the Senate, the past Minister of Finance, the most recent one, opposed the whole idea of a Central Bank on the grounds that it was going to subsume all the operations of all the commercial banks in Barbados, and I went so far as to say that he received his brief from Barclays. I am not trying to quote him, but that was the impression which the members in the Senate and me, on reading the debates,' got at the time.

He was being set up to that by Barclays Bank, because Barclays Bank was handling all the deposits for the Barbados Government and they had instructions from London to oppose. They probably will come in the newspaper and say they did not oppose it, but I know. When I pointed out that they were paying interest of $48 000 on deposits of $50 million and that it is highway robbery, Mr. Mckenzie wrote me three letters in three days saying that my overdraft had gone to $139.00 and I, Errol Barrow, took in eight paper bags with cents and pennies and dumped them out on his table and asked him to count them. Do you know how many cents that is? One hundred and thirty-nine thousand cents or something like that. When he finished counting them, I closed my account, and I have not been back in Broad Street since. So you are telling me about my personal experiences.

What are we talking about — the Defence Force?

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Defence, yes. Head 50, Defence Force.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: When we published a White Paper on the Defence Force, we made it clear sometime in 1975,1 believe that the Defence Force would have limited applications, such as ceremonial parades.

We did not have such a drug menace at the time, so I cannot remember specifically whether drugs were mentioned, but certainly smuggling, was prevalent at that time, and we felt that we needed a Defence Force with a strong Coast Guard element. I was even attacked for saying something about the Harbour Police as they existed at that time. I said they were not trained as marine people and most of them appeared to be suffering from arthritis from the long nights they spent on the water in open row boats, and I said that I wanted a professional Coast Guard.

I went further. I offered the Government of St. Vincent a vessel, which was subsequently taken over by Mr. Emptage, and the Government of St. Vincent had one look at it — they are the people now who are promoting this regional defence scheme — and said that it was too expensive for them to run. It is a vessel which they need very badly up to this day, even though they have a couple of vessels in St. Vincent, because a lot of smuggling is going on in St. Vincent, and the present Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and I see eye to eye on the need for a strong coastal service. 3.10p.m.

When we published the White Paper, we set out clearly that we were not trying to establish a military presence in Barbados. We were satisfied that for the maintenance of law and order, the Barbados Police Force, with the kind of training that they were getting, was sufficient, and we at no time envisaged a Defence Force of more than 120,1 believe, in the Headquarters Company, and then a Volunteer Force as a No. 2 Regiment, as it is now called, which would assist in ceremonial matters. We were attacked, and what the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) read out from their Manifesto is exactly the kind of campaign they waged against our limited concept of a defence force.

Our present policy has not changed. Does the honourable Member think that I would be stupid enough to ask the taxpayers to pay compensation to about 400 or 500 members immediately of the Barbados Defence Force, including the Brigadier, who, if he works for two days, is entitled to a full pension for two days' work as if he 'retired at 60 or 65? That amendment to the Defence Act was moved in Parliament by the then Minister of Finance, and the then Minister of Finance would not allow the Brigadier to account to his own Ministry for the expenditure of sums. They would take a lump sum and put it in a bank account, because the Minister, did not have any military experience.

I can speak with impunity, I served with two cadet companies, the Barbados Regiment, as it then was, the old Volunteer Force, before I went to England and joined the Royal Air Force, and I served for seven years in the Royal Air Force. I was the battalion shot at Harrison College, so when it comes to military things, I started at about 11, and I still do not have any use for military establishments. But all the latter day militarists, the ones who are frustrated commanders and that kind of thing — you would be surprised to know who told me that he was sorry he was not old enough to go and fight, but I cannot, according to the Rules of the House, call that gentleman's name — they all believe now that when you have military establishments, they have to be conducted in some conspiratorial atmosphere.

I know the strengths of all the military forces of every country in Europe and North America, including the Russian Army. But in Barbados, every time we ask a question — how many people are in the Defence Force? — we could never get an answer. — We know that there are 20 000 civil servants, or people working in the Public Service.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: If they are printed in here they are printedfor the first time, but I do not believe that they are printed, because it is a conspiracy. You are not to know because the enemy might know, whoever the enemy is. The enemy has got to be the Opposition at the time or the people of Barbados, so we could never find out. I had to go to a foreign Government, and they asked me not to call their name — I made a promise and I cannot break it — and asked them to give me the numbers of people in the Defence Force. I, as Leader of the Opposition, was not entitled to know.

But do you know what the whole thing is? The Regional Security System is the creation of the CIA people in Washington. We are the client states of the Reagan Administration in Washington, to be manipulated as part of the foreign policy of the United States of America. It is so bad. Let me give you an illustration. Financial control? Let me tellyou about financial control now.

I came back here on the 28th or 29th of August, and I made a statement that some of you will remember, that something strange was going on because the Barbados Government, through the Chief of Staff, had ordered stretchers, abdominal bandages and I read out the whole list of things, gave the name of the ship arriving, and I asked, who they were going to war against? Honourable Members around here, including the honourable Member, will remember that.

Let me tell you what happened before October. Two members of the Barbados Defence Force, because they were not financially accountable to the Ministry of Finance or any public officer other than the Prime Minister of the time, went to a Captain in Bay Street — I

can give you the dates and the names of the people — and he called me and said "I have just had a visit from two gentlemen who told me that they would buy a ship costing $2 million and register it in my name if I would agree to bring arms, and they would meet me in the Coast Guard vessel." If you push me, I have not given notice, I would tell you the names of the people.

When he telephoned me I said "You go back and tell them that you are not a Barbadian and that you will have to consult your wife." So he went back inside the office .....

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You know who, it would seem. I am not telling you his name. You seem to know.

"I told him to get the numbers of the two motor cars." He did not know who these gentlemen were. "Get the numbers and, if possible, the makes of the two motor cars and come back again." So he went back inside and told them to come back on Monday and he would give them an answer. I got the numbers of the two motor cars and 1 know who the gentlemen are. They were members of the Defence Force of Barbados who were going to spend $2 million of taxpayers' money and give a ship to an Englishman for his own use, provided that from time to time he would bring arms into this country — I can give you all the names, the dates and everything — and this was long before anybody suspected that there was anything going wrong in Grenada, because this was as early as September 1983. Now you understand why the Chief of Staff did not want his accounts to be under the scrutiny of the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Brazanne Babb, and made a lot of derogatory statements about Mr. Brazanne Babb when Mr. Brazanne Babb was calling for them, because they were under the control of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I made a statement. If they want to prosecute me, my name is Errol Barrow, not Eric Sealy, and I am a Queen!s Counsel, I can defend myself. I know what I am speaking of.

I gave information to the same Defence Force that ships were coming in at Bath in St. John at night and landing arms. Mr. Fred Watson from Glenburnie is the person who gave me the information and I went and checked. I gave them the times, and they did nothing about it because they were their ships. I did not tell them anything they did not know.

What happened on the Monday with the gentleman, the English Captain, who got in touch with me, he went back and told them that unless they could put in writing that the Government of Barbados approved of his running this ship, his wife said she has some little children to feed, and if Mr. Adams deported him on the grounds of illegal activities, she would be there having to feed his two little children. Fortunately for him, the same Monday he was offered command of a legitimate ship here in the port of Bridgetown. I could call his name, but I have not given notice, but if you want to know I can give you chapter and verse.

What I said subsequently is that the Defence Force could only be used against the people of Barbados. They sent them illegally, without any Writ from the Governor-General, to Union Island in St. Vincent, and Mr. Banfield was sacked because he went down there and took away the arms out of the hands of the Defence Force people who went down there to shoot the Vincentians, now celebrated in a song by Mr. Carter called "Boots." Boots and more Boot! He mentioned that, and I said on the floor of the House that, if you read the Defence Act, it is illegal to send any Barbadian out of this country unless the Governor-General gives a Writ.

Aside.

3.20p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: One of the gentlemen who offered to buy a ship out of our money is still in the Defence Force.

About six or eight weeks later they invaded Grenada at the behest of President Reagan. I saw where that man was coming from for a very long time. The only thing I can say about him is that he does not understand what is going on in the world today. That is the only charitable thing I could say. It is very dangerous for world peace to have ignorant people in positions of power.

I heard him say over the television that Grenadians have built a runway 10 000 feet long and they do not even have an Air Force. I turned to somebody who was watching television with me and I said, "Barbados has an 11 000 foot runway, longer than anything they had in the United States outside of Andrews Air Force Base. John Kennedy Airport in New York was not as long as our runway at Seawell, as it was and up to now we do not have an Air Force. So when he gives that as an excuse for invading Grenada without any declaration, or informing the Head of the Commonwealth, or our friends in Canada, or our friends in Trinidad and Tobago, or our friends in Guyana, he could not be in our interest.

Barbados was rapidly becoming a pliant, complacent, client state of the United States of America. I do not know whether that is the reason why the honourable Member for Christ Church West decided to pull out of the Cabinet, because he did not want to be tainted with that sobriquet, but he must have seen what was happening, that we did not have a country any longer.

It was being manipulated by some CIA subversives in Washington.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order: I do not want to interrupt the honourable Member in flight, but I want, for the purposes of the record, to make it clear that I never pulled out of the Cabinet. Being in a Cabinet is an honour. You are invited into a Cabinet and you leave the Cabinet at some stage. You do not pull out of the Cabinet. If you are not invited back in, you are not in a Cabinet.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You were not invited to resume. I am sorry to hear that. That is the first time that I heard that he was not invited to come back in. The honourable Member has some pride, so you cannot really criticise him. If you parted company in those circumstances, I would not expect you to say you wanted to be invited back in. You are no David.

Let us get to the Defence Force. If you have a Defence Force which (1) is not accountable to Parliament; (2) it is only accountable to the CIA; (3) is willing to take up Government's money to run covert operations; (4) is willing to invade our neighbours in the Eastern Caribbean at the drop of a hat, without complying with the requirements of the Defence Act, then I say you have to look very critically at that organisation.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West has asked me what we intend to do with it. Do I look inhuman to you? I have the power to stand down the whole Defence Force, like I stood down the people guarding Government Headquarters. They had a lot of people put there by politicians saying they were security guards, and they were loitering on Government premises, as far as I am concerned.

I made an appointment on a Saturday with a certain gentleman, who travelled all the way from Bermuda to see me — he turned up 10 minutes early before I got there — and the security guard turned him out and said, "Nobody works here on a Saturday, so you will have to come back Monday" — the gentleman was due to go back to Bermuda on the Monday — so when I asked if a gentleman had been there — I had arrived at five minutes to nine o'clock — he had already turned away the man. He told me he had told him that nobody works there on a Saturday, so I said "Who gave you the authority to speak for me. I work all through the week sometimes." So on the Monday all the security guards at Government Headquarters were stood down.

You do not have any security guards up there. You do not need any security guards. This was a form of concealed unemployment that Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament of the last regime used to establish their friends. They had about 180 of them, and you will read that I said in a speech in the House of Assembly that it is a concealed form of unemployment and we are turning into a nation of security guards.

Since the honourable Member asked, I have given instructions that no new recruitment is to take place. By a process of attrition, they will do like old soldiers — they will just fade away. That is what is happening to the Defence Force.

There are a lot of things, unfortunately, going on in the Defence Force which the members in the Defence Force itself are not satisfied with, and I have to be very careful, because it is a military establishment, not to undermine the discipline in the Defence Force, but a lot of things need exposing. So any time the honourable Member calls for a Commission of Inquiry into the Defence Force, although I do not believe in Commissions of Inquiry, I will establish one and let the whole thing come to light. But it would not be in the interest of the hierarchy of the Defence Force at all, it will be in the interest maybe of all the British personnel that they brought in here and put over well qualified Barbadians.

As far as I am concerned, if I can find out the true numbers, I will tell the honourable Member. Every organisation drawing money from the Treasury of Barbados lists the number of persons in each post and that kind of thing. I have a vague idea how many officers they are. I have a vague idea how many people are there, but the attrition is going on all the time and I am not recruiting new people.

We have been criticised for our lack of proper security arrangements at the airport. I propose to do something, and I am sorry that the people in the Defence Force have to hear it before they know about it. We need 45 new people, according to the experts, at the airport to guard against terrorism, and since they have been trained in all of these things, I will send them up there. They will have weapons, but the weapons will be under the control of the police at the new building that we are building for the police at the airport, in case of emergency. There is a lot of slackness going on up there at the airport and we need 42 or 45 new security personnel, but I am not recruiting any civilians. I want the Brigadier to send, on a rotating basis, 45 people up there. We are paying them already, so there will be no additional expense to the Government of Barbados.

I say this for the Defence Force, the fellows have a military bearing. They like to feel proud of themselves, and I feel it would be a good substitute for the kind of sloppiness that exists.

I went into the Customs at the Grantley Adams International Airport one evening, as it is now called, and a sloppy Dominican woman looked at me and said

"Minister, where you going?" I said, "Where I am going? Where the hell have you come from?"

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Can you imagine that? That is what is happening in Barbados. Do you think any Dominican woman has any right being in charge of security at Customs? So all of them went the next day and the customs guards were restored, because, according to the laws of Barbados, it is the customs guards. But they had them set up for their own specific purposes, with parcels coming in and addressed to all kinds of anonymous people.

There were two Ministers, particularly, in the last Government who used to recommend every single person for security. I am not going to call their names, because I have not given notice. It is not that I am afraid, but because I have not given Mr. Chairman notice, but do not provoke me. I am not going to call their names in here, I will tell you outside. They recruited all the security guards including people from St. Vincent and Dominica, and put in charge of our security. I want the Defence Force to go up there and help me with the smuggling and the anti-terrorism without any further additional cost to the Government. That is a useful function for them to perform.

There are no new recruitments into the Defence Force, so the bill next year, apart from the usual salary increases, should be a little less than it is at the moment.

I do not remember whether the honourable Member asked any more questions under this Head. If he would like to remind me, I would be pleased to answer.

Aside.

3.30p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and I agreed a long time ago, whatever your legalistic interpretation may be, that we are not signing any treaty, and we never concealed that. If you think that our present arrangement is as good as a treaty, then we do not need a treaty. It is as simple as that. I know it is different, and I am not going to enter into any contractual obligation with the Lesser Antilles, most of whom are frustrated militarists and never went into the logistics of defence in the Eastern Caribbean, because if anybody really wanted to invade these territories, there is no way that a regional security system would prevent them from invading, and I would prefer in so far as Barbados' territorial sovereignty is concerned to rely on the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force.

If you read the scathing comments which the American officer in charge of the invasion said about the Barbados contingent, you will see how much contempt these people have for us, because we placed ourselves in a position where they could use us and at the same time be contemptuous of what little effort we were making in our little assistance. They said that we were no use whatsoever, except for watchman duties and police duties. That is what we shared out medals for, for watchman and police duties, and with all the expensive training they had gone through!

The training has been so terrific that the gentleman in charge of the Coast Guard vessel, whom I had to send for training on maritime matters, thought that the shortest way to St. George's was through the Tobago Cays. Even the Barbados fishermen who drift down there never end up on the Tobago Cays, far less a vessel with radar.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Man, if you are trained in navigation, you are trained in navigation! I never went to Germany until I had to make the first trip. You are now telling me that he never went beyond nine miles. I never went beyond the three mile limit until I had my first operation, but the point is that I was trained, and I got back my crew.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: And be a Lieutenant Commander with six weeks' training? And it took me about four years to be a Lieutenant? You all are making a lot of sport!

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is an indictment against the whole operation itself. I do not mind your getting the report, because if you had asked me for one, I would have given him one, because it is a disgrace. It shows how the taxpayers' money is being wasted.

Mr. Mitchell, the Right Honourable Prime Minister of St. Vincent and I, both having some kind of maritime experience — he comes from a fishing family that owns schooners and what not, and I know the Grenadines by heart — have decided that we need coast guard services, and, if anything, we are going to strengthen the coast guard service, because there is still a lot of smuggling coming into Barbados by sea, and, I am going to tell you something now, a lot of it is happening within 200 yards of this building in those ice boats. I cannot understand how an ice boat, which is supposed to be able to spend nine days at sea, can go out and come back overnight with a full cargo offish in it. You have got to work that one out. They buy it to cover down the other things on top.

What worries me about the Barbados Police Force is that the people you expect to enforce law and order are telling you they cannot do anything. I hope the Commissioner is not going to deny that one of his most senior officers, the one who has been promoted three times in one year, said that there are big people involved in this thing and he cannot do anything about it. He said that. Did you read it?

(Aside: He denied it on May 26).

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is the Commissioner. But since then, within the past two weeks, somebody else has repeated that. What do you expect when you put a man who cannot remember two motor car numbers to go and catch dope smugglers, highly organised people? Do you expect to get some people caught?

We are going to retain a defence force of some proportion, with a strong bias towards anti-smuggling activities and proper coast guard training for the crews. As a matter of fact, I would like to see more coast guards than soldiers, because we are completely surrounded by water being an island, entire in itself. That is no quotation from John Bunyan. He goes on to say: "Send not to ask for whom the bell tolls, it only toll s for you."

The question that the sum of $22 848 876 under Head 15 — Cabinet Office — stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 71 — CAPITAL — CABINET OFFICE — $909600

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $909 600 under Capital, Head 71 — Cabinet Office, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 16 - MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE — $10 148 555

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $10 148 555 under Head 16 — Ministry of the Public Service — stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, on the first occasion when the House in this session had the opportunity to speak on matters relating to the Ministry of the Public Service — it was as a result of a supplementary, and on that occasion, when the Opposition was anxious to have the fullest explanation up front as to the likely scope and functions of the Ministry of the public service, we had to initiate a debate on the issue if only because Government's initial presentation of that matter was by way of the statement that 'we beg to move that this Head stand part.' Subsequently, Sir, there has been enough developments where the Ministry of the Public Service is concerned that we really feel that for the House to remain silent where matters pertaining to the Ministry of the Public Service is concerned would be a great travesty, because the Government would agree that there is no Ministry which has been more at the centre of controversy in recent times than the Ministry of the Public Service. We feel that we have a responsibility, despite the reluctance on the part of the Government, to initiate a very full and frank debate on the purposes of the Ministry of the Public Service, its relationship to the bureaucracy and its relationship to other aspects of the Cabinet, because what has been happening in Barbados, one of the most important developments in Barbados over the last six months, in particular, has been the slow but sure centralisation of power, and the slow but sure amalgamation of many important management functions in the hands of the Minister of the Public Service, so much so that one can say safely that the notion of Government as we have understood it, the notion of the Public Service as we have always understood it, and perhaps might want to continue to be, is now under threat. 3.40p.m.

I do not want to say, Mr. Chairman, that there is a wave of bureaucratic tyranny now prevailing in Barbados.

(Aside: Now?)

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I say bureaucratic tyranny, Sir — and the honourable Members on the other side laugh — because what was supposed to have been a Ministry to be concerned only with rationalization and administrative reform is now turning out to be an administrative monster which presides over virtually every facet of Government, including every aspect of personnel, every aspect of organization and management, and even encroaching itself into detailed matters of financial management. I really, Mr. Speaker, must say that.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a reminder. I welcome the honour, but I am just the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, i, I really must say that we have a responsibility this evening to go deeply into what we are creating in Barbados in the form of this bureaucratic monster. I truly feel so!

To begin with, Mr. Chairman, and as I menti ned in my previous contribution, the only part of Government

where there seems to have been a substantial expansion is in the Ministry of the Public Service, and the expansion would seem to have been undertaken in a manner that is not entirely rational. I believe that if we are to seriously address the management of state enterprises as a structural area of public concern, the worst way we can proceed in doing that is by fracturing the responsibility, splitting the responsibility, for that subject area. I have already made reference that I truly cannot subscribe to the view that you should have the State Enterprises Unit of the Ministry of Finance of the Prime Minister's Office doing the same thing virtually as the Management and Accounting Unit of Finance. And there can be no question, Mr. Chairman, that given the scope of the new rejuvenated Organization and Management Division of the Ministry of the Public Service, that unit would in itself be of greatest relevance, given the broad direction that the Government has set itself, if it really were under the Ministry of Finance, concerning itself with the organization and managements aspects of the financial control that the Minister of Finance is seeking to achieve. I cannot understand how Government could be serious about wanting to deal with state enterprises and seek to splinter, seek to fracture, the exercise of the function in the manner that it is seeking to do.

I spoke, Mr. Chairman, of a sense of bureaucratic tyranny that is now prevailing in this country, a wave of bureaucratic terror where one man, and one man alone, supported by a gang of four — and I am not speaking in the Maoist sense now .....

(Aside: A giant!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: ..... the honourable Deputy Prime Minister says that he is a giant — ..... seem to believe that every particular matter pertaining to every appointment, every promotion, whether in a statutory board or in a Ministry, whether it be appointment or promotion pertaining to established posts or unestablished posts, have to be brought under their purview and control.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: New Tom.)

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am speaking about Tom, Mr. Chairman, only to the extent that when the bureaucratic monster was created in the first case, he might have been the person who gave birth to it, to the extent that he created the Barbados National Bank and made that person both Chairman and Managing Director, and that perhaps the Government could have been warned that if one were serious about having anyone preside over organisational and management issues in the Public Service, given the performance of the present holder of the post of Minister of the Public Service both as Chairman and Managing Director of the Barbados National Bank, he would perhaps be the last person in the world we would want to put in that particular position. Indeed, I find it very alarming, I find it-very ironic, that the Government could really be serious, or regard itself as being serious, about controlling financial waste in the Public Service and to have a Minister of that history where state enterprises are concerned as the person who is going to go about economy and things of that character.

It is a sad fact, Mr. Chairman, that the manner in which the Ministry of the Public Service has gone about exercising its functions is a complete departure from what we were led to believe when this matter was first brought before this House. The Ministry of the Public Service — let us not fool ourselves — is not about rationalisation, it is not about finding a new grand design to create a brave new world in the Public Service to increase efficiency. It is about the politicization of the Public Service and the centralization.....

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This is an opening speech.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I plead only to be heard in silence. I do not interrupt honourable Members, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Allow the honourable Member for St. Peter to make his point.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: And, Sir, you can make up the time that I have been interrupted.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No injury time.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Ministry of the Public Service is concerned, with putting in place systems to politicize the bureaucracy of Barbados, and any concerns with rationalization and administrative reform are considerations which are secondary to the question of politicization. We must debate that this afternoon.

Mr. Chairman, to date we have heard only of the extent to which every particular post in the Public Service, whether it be the post in the central Government or statutory corporations, have to be referred .....

(Aside: That is not true.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: .....for the vetting of the Ministry of the Public Service .....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a daily basis!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR:..... on a daily basis, and the official sanction of the Minister of the Public Service.
3.50p.m.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Peter.....

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

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order. He is deliberately misleading the House. He cannot come in here and say that everything has to be sanctioned by the Minister of the Public Service. He does not know that, and I can tell him, as a matter of fact, that is not true. He is talking foolishness!

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I only trust that the Minister of the Public Service does not hear the Minister of Health and get annoyed with him, because he will know that the posts he might have to ask for may be denied to him, and I would urge him that he should be disciplined when speaking about his masters.

There is now emerging in Barbados, Sir, a very dangerous situation — a very, very dangerous situation — where, through the Organisation and Management Division of the Ministry of the Public Service, one man can meddle under the guise of dealing with organisation and management in the affairs of every department and every board in this country, where, through the new Manpower Development Division, one man, and one Ministry, can begin to meddle in the affairs of every department and every board.

(Aside: I won't stand for that) Mr. O.

S. ARTHUR: Every board! *Asides.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, honourable gentlemen. Let us hear the honourable Member for St. . Peter.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Give us the facts.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Ministry has been built up into a super-Ministry by the accretion of departments which bear little or no relationship to the exercise of a personnel function. How does one truly justify, for example, putting into a Ministry that is responsible for personnel affairs a Government department which is concerned with purchasing?

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The honourable Minister for St. Michael West says that the purchase of supplies and materials is a personnel function. The purchase of supplies and materials is a personnel function by the definition of the Minister of Tourism and Industry, so terrorized is he by the super-Minister who has come into our midst!

The issue that I am trying to pose to the House is that when we look at the composition of the Ministry of the Public Service as it has now evolved, we will recognize that it is an amalgamation of a large number of different functions and responsibilities which cannot truly, by any objective analysis, be said to bear upon the question of personnel management and personnel development. How does one justify a Central Purchasing Department in a Ministry that is supposed to be concerned with personnel development? How does one justify a Data Processing Department in a Ministry that is supposed only to be concerned with personnel development and personnel management? How does one justify, Mr. Chairman, the Government Printery in the Ministry that is supposed to be concerned only with personnel administration and personnel development?

I really must ask the question, Sir — where do the Establishments Division and the Services Commission Division fit within the context of this omnibus Ministry? How do their present roles relate to the roles that have been previously defined for them? How will they relate to the new Manpower Development Division of the Ministry of the Public Service? Are we serious about the rationalisation of the whole bureaucracy when we can have, within the context of the Ministry itself which is supposed to be concerned with rationalisation, a new division whose various functions as defined cut across the already established functions of units of that same Ministry and which those units have developed tremendous expertise in exercising over a long period of history?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I will come back, and I will come back because this House, this evening, cannot any longer deal with the Ministry of the Public Service, by saying, "that we beg to move that it stand part." There is an administrative monster among us that can even destroy the nature of Cabinet Government as we would wish to have and see it in this country, and, if necessary, I will speak at length in my interventions on this particular Head.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I want to pick up from where the honourable

Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) left off. There appears to be a hodgepodge of various functions assigned to the Minister of State according to the *Official Gazette* for March 2, 1987. When we had occasion to debate this Ministry sometime last year, I adverted to the possibility of a dangerous situation being created. The money was voted, I believe, for the O and M Department, and we were just asked to vote the money and I asked then for some statement of policy to be made by the Prime Minister, since it was a new creation, as to where he envisaged this department going and how he saw it functioning. We did not get anything. One of the issues that I raised was the possible shading into each other of the roles of the Ministry of the Public Service and that of the Services Commission. All that I have heard subsequent to that debate convinces me that there is a clouding of the respective roles, to such an extent that, unfortunately, the Minister now finds himself as perhaps the most despised person in the Public Service.

The general public needs some explanation. I am not going to get involved in the legal problems. When you take up the *Official Gazette* for March 2 and you see — Minister of State Public Service: appointments, promotions, transfers and discipline in the Government Service, the average person who is not *au fait* with the provisions of the Constitution or the General Orders and the various bits of legislation relating to Public Servants has the impression — I do not put it any higher — that the Minister somehow is able to determine promotions, appointments and transfers.

Asides.

4.00p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know that is not so. I know that ought not to be so, I had better say that, but I am saying that there is confusion in the public mind and I am being genuine and *bonafide* in this.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not talking about Henry Christopher and Percy Smith on this, I am not even talking about Gordan Matthews. I am talking about people who come to me genuinely and ask what it means.

You have never seen me in here with a copy of the *Official Gazette* yet, but somebody gave me this and asked me what it meant, and I had to take 15 minutes to try and explain to the man, and I feel that it is the function of Government — you have a new Ministry, it has been going for eight or nine months now — if you got the feedback — I am sure you have, if you are going to be honest with yourself— that there is some confusion in the public mind as to exactly whether there is any interference, set it at rest, say how you see it operating. I do not think I am asking too much. So I say that, in the first instance, there is confusion in the public mind as to the respective roles, and I am asking for a clarification so that the public may be better informed and those fears set to rest.

Yesterday, just around lunch time when I was going down, a civil servant drew something to my attention — and I will never call his name, for obvious reasons — I did not know this until yesterday — that at Estimates Committee the Minister of the Public Service took over the control of the meeting when the Minister of Finance was actually present. I was told that the two of them were present and the Minister of Finance found himself in the situation where he was being lectured to. Again you are having a difficulty of the trespass of function from one Ministry onto the other, if that is so. I tell you I only heard it yesterday, I do not know what is going on in Estimates Committee.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, but I am in Opposition and I am highlighting things that I hear. I am in Opposition now. When you were in Opposition, you all came with all kinds of things, so do not get vexed with me. Understand that the boot is on the other foot now. The honourable Member well knows the blows that we endured when he brought in a letter written by the late* Prime Minister about "Hurricane" Hinds and read it out to the Senate at 7 o'clock the night and stunned everybody, so we are accustomed to that.

This is the Official Gazette of March 2, 1987, which shows the transfer of various functions and the re-organisation of departments ministerially. What is clear from this reshuffle of departments rather than Ministers is that the Minister of Finance has been denuded of much of his former responsibility. The Minister of Tourism has similarly been undressed and left with a smaller area of responsibility. At the same time, the Minister of the Public Service has been given all these additional responsibilities — if you like, power. Of course, he did not go on the platforms, get wet and get the cursings and begged for the votes, but he has walked into this substantial position of power — watch this — when two of the elected, ones who were seen by the public as possible successors to the throne, have been sat upon.

A Deputy Prime Minister has been named, and the Deputy Prime Minister's hands have been strengthened beyond any doubt by the accretion of so much power being invested in the Minister of the Public Service, one of his constituents and a well-known canvasser. The Deputy Prime Minister's hands have been strengthened to such an extent that never again will the Minister of Tourism or the Minister of Finance ever be in a position to threaten him.

I told the Honourable Leader of the House last week after we adjourned that I may yet live to see him within the next few years as Prime Minister of Barbados. I expect him to be.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Why not? We want it in that order, and after that, any number can play).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Prime Minister is wise in the choice of his successor. They want it in that order, and after that, any number can play. All right, we now have it.

What I am concerned about is that this super-Ministry which is thrust upon us and bolstering the Deputy Prime Minister is intervening in areas where I wonder if it ought not to tread carefully.

We have just established the O and M Department in November or whenever, some time last year. I believe there are four or five people in that department now, four Management Analysts I think they are called.

Aside,

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Four Senior Management Analysts, a Director and a Clerk/Typist are what we provide for this year.

I think it is wrong for the Ministry of the Public Service necessarily to assume that they ought to send out to commercial institutions, even though Government may have a minority interest in terms of the shareholding, saying that they want to do a management audit in those places, like BET. Those commercial companies have been in existence for so long, making substantial profits — BET is a place that has been well run, I think we will all concede that, as Cable and Wireless and now as BET — and I do not think that O and M, through the Ministry of the Public Service, ought to try to get in there. Those people have statutorily to appoint auditors at every AGM.

Aside.

4.10 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You did not even hear the point I was making. I said letters have been written asking them to allow them to come in and do management audit. Do you know what they should be doing?

Asides.

Mi% D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right. I will talk to you all later. \

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, that is the point I am making, that is the anomaly. And you do not know anything about it, and you are responsible for it! You see how that Ministry has gone over your head already and made you look small?

They should be starting here at Appendix "G" with these parastatals. Let them go into these arid start to re-organize them. These are the departments, and I am speaking as one who has had some experience with statutory boards in the past, which could well do with the intervention of a high-powered unit from the central Government, which is paying them, in the first instance, to look at their systems and try to reorganize them. There are a lot of them that need reorganizing. You may find that there is some fat in terms of personnel, but you have to be careful with that, because there are a means of employment. You will certainly find that accounting practices are a little bit old-fashioned in a lot of them, because a lot of them still have the old vote book system and have not modernized to computer systems, and things like that. In terms of the organisation of those departments, I think the country could be assisted well, and this would help in terms of the Government achieving its goal of great efficiency by starting to let O and M and that department work with the parastatals first.

Again, I think it is anomalous that that department of the Public Service should let it be known that Government housing.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:...! will have to come back... is now under them. But repairs and renovations reside in the Ministry of Housing and Lands. That does not make sense. I do not like it. Just leave it with the Ministry of Housing and Lands. The Ministry of Housing and Lands is Government's superior landlord. Leave it with them.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would like to hear the Prime Minister, no problem. I am prepared to be guided on this.

My time is out at this stage.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): We are dealing with a lot of dead wood, people who have been indoctrinated by nine years, subverted and demoralised. That is the kind of Public Service that we have had, and, therefore, any attempt to shake them up and straighten them out will always be met with opposition, which is fed

into the communication channels of the members of the Opposition and they rehearse all of this.

I really was not being uncharitable, but I described something that the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) did as garbage collection. If somebody dump garbage on your front lawn, you do not have to take that and pass it on to the neighbour next door as if you are performing a charitable act or performing a public service.

I am going to be slightly personal now, because I am being personal in front of the people who have been affected. The Ministry of the Public Service is under Head 16, and if you look, you will see on the page immediately following — it is probably set out there more easily following page 3, the pink page, under Capital — that this is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Public Service: (A) Manpower Development

(1) General Administration
(2) Training Administration
(3) Provision of Training Funds.

The Prime Minister before the last, dismantled training and dismantled Organisation and Management. He came into the House and said he was dismantling them. He stopped training altogether of public officers, and the only person who was able to benefit from any training was a former assistant, who is not even a member of the Public Service, rejoicing now under the sobriquet of Henry Christopher and better known as Glyne Murray. It is absolutely true. Ask anybody around here. All Public Service training was stopped. We have reactivated it, so where were we going to put it? Under the Ministry of Agriculture?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It was put under Establishments, Sir, but they had a separate Training Unit. It is not true. The Honourable Prime Minister would know.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He said so on the floor of the House that he was not giving any further training to public officers.

Mr. D.A. C. SIMMONS: But you said you were going to dismantle the Defence Force and you never did it.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Did ne continue training?

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

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He did it for Glyne Murray and nobody else.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Not Glyne Murray. Rt.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: The only person...

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: What he is saying is not quite accurate. The Honourable Prime Minister would know the number of policemen — I can speak of that — who went overseas for training under our Administration — just to take one set of people — out of the Training vote.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not distort things.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: From time to time, the British Government has offered training services to policemen and other people. Right now we have somebody up there. We have people from the Defence Force offered training from the Canadians. That is not the Barbados Government consciously going in for a systematic training programme. So where were we to put training? The Ministry of Education?

Let me go on: (B) Management Services — (4) Organisation and Management. Sir Carlisle Burton was the first person and then the gentleman put on Special Projects, Mr. Edward Layne. When I went to Sussex University to receive my degree, we had the two of them up there doing Organisation and Management, and they came back here and set up Organisation and Management under my Ministry, and it was dismantled. So when we revive Organisation and Management, are we going to put it with Transport and Works?

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You agree with that. You are not quarrelling with that. Let me move on then.

(C) Personnel Administration Division — (5) General Administration and (6) Centralised Personnel Expenses. I also used to be responsible for that, and I want you all to remember that the Ministry of the Public Service is a Ministry which is attached to the Office of the Prime Minister, that the Public Service Act and the Services Commission legislation have not been repealed or amended and the Services Commission is still responsible for appointments, transfers, discipline and everything in the Public Service, and that the Chief Personnel Officer, although he does not have to notify me that the Public Service Commission has done so and so, or is recommending so and so to the Governor-General, does not report to the Minister of the Public Service — he goes directly to me. It is really the function of the Public Service

Commission, and only in respect to Permanent Secretaries, the Commissioner of Police and somebody else — I cannot remember — does the Public Service Commission by law have to have a recommendation from the Prime Minister, following consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. That is still the law, and the Chief Personnel Officer is reporting directly to me on those matters which he has to by law, and those matters which the Chairman of the Public Service Commission advises him to notify the Prime Minister as a matter of courtesy. So how can you say that the Minister of the Public Service is manipulating personnel matters when the Chief Personnel Officer does not even report to him on any matter of that kind? 4.20 p.m.

We would always excuse the honourable Member for St. Peter because his exposure to the intricacies of Government has been necessarily limited and of short duration, like his stature.

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I hope the honourable' Member does not take offence to that. One of the most efficient of my public officers is shorter than he is, and he comes from my constituency, so that is no reflection on the honourable Member.

We come to the Establishments Division. Let me put it this way, Establishments officers sit down and discuss matters with the CPO and the Permanent Secretary for Establishments, but there has to be somebody who is responsible for Establishments. The Head of the Civil Service, the Chief Personnel Officer and the Minister all sit down and discuss Establishments matters. The Minister does not make any decision about Establishments. Establishments as a matter has to come to the House of Assembly and to the respective Ministers before it gets here.

The other thing is Data Processing. The Minister was given this particular subject because he helped to establish the Data Processing Department, and he was more competent than any of the rest of us because he knew about these things. I only have a nodding acquaintance with computers. I do not belong to that generation. I had a short course in Mexico, to which I took some West Indian civil servants, including Barbadians, in order for them not to resist, as I knew they would, the introduction of computers into the public services of those countries, because with people who have been accustomed to writing out things in longhand and passing files from one person to another, if you put somebody underneath them and they pass up things to them and say this is what the computer says, they would not be able to understand it. So I gave them some exposure, but I am really not a computer expert. I have a brother who is — he is now advising the Government in the Cameroons, and has been for the past few year — but I know nothing about computers, and the Minister of the Public Service was the person who helped establish the Data Processing Department in the Government.

The next thing is the Printing Department, and something has got to happen about printing. I have already spoken to the Minister today about how a Cabinet Paper came to be printed in the *Official Gazette*. Did you know that? So, you see, you must have somebody in control. A Cabinet Paper was printed in the *Official Gazette* last week or this week, a full Cabinet Paper, and the conclusion that the Cabinet Paper asked for was not even what the Cabinet agreed on.

(Aside: That is nothing to do with the Minister.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The Minister did not know about it until I told him. You have got to be responsible to somebody. So what is all this business about empire building? You are not fooling any of us over here.

You have certain people who are now frustrated politicians. I do not want to start calling names, like people who rejoice in the same name as myself — I do not rejoice in having the same surname as they — or the same Henry Christopher or Mr. Smith. I have been in politics in Barbados for 35 years, and I never heard him saying anything before last year at a Labour Party Conference, even at the PDM meetings or on Eric Sealy platforms, nowhere at all, and now he can pontificate on every political matter. If I pass the gentleman in the street I would not even know him, and he is going to tell me how to run the Government of Barbados. That is carrying democracy a bit too far.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Do you know him. I hear he sells hairpins out of Grantley Adams House in Roebuck Street. He is a partner of Sir Ronald Mapp in the hairpin industry, but I do not know the gentleman. Once he is doing it honestly, I do not mind, but he should not try to tell me how to run the Government and try to create dissention and strife. That is all the honourable Member is doing now. He is following in the footsteps of his less illustrious partners and colleagues in thinking that they can run the Government from outside, but this Government cannot be run by the newspapers or anybody outside the Government.

We are running this Government, and the ultimate responsibility is mine. I just want to make it clear, and if you doubt that, read the Constitution. Every now and then I remind the members of my party that, if they have any

problems, they should go back and read the Constitution and they would not have any more problems. I am the last responsibility — all roads lead to me, the high road and the low road. I am ultimately responsible, so when you are criticising the Minister, you are criticising me, because he is functioning out of the Prime Minister's Office. So when you want to attack, attack me and I know how to deal with you. Do not attack people who are not here.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Who decides who is to have what different from the Prime Minister according to the Constitution? Let me hear now. Do you have a vote on it? Did Mr. Adams ever take a vote when he decided not to invite you to join the Cabinet again, as you yourself intimated? The Prime Minister does not take any vote on anything. If he thinks there is somebody with longer experience than he has sometimes, he would say what do you think about so and so, but it does not mean that you are asking for advice, you just want to get a second opinion, and you should know that better than anybody else.

I am not distressed by the criticism or anything. I am going to make this Government function efficiently. I am going to make the Government function at a reduced cost to the taxpayers. That is why we could afford to give the concessions that we did, because I know how to do that. There is nobody who has been in here longer than me or has handled Government longer than I have handled it, and I feel that if I do not know, nobody will ever know. That is! all there is to it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I listened to the Prime Minister, and I thought I heard those words before echoing from Bay Street when this matter was discussed within the Cabinet. I thought 1 heard exactly similar words that he spoke to his other Ministers, that all roads lead to him and he runs the Government. But I think that he has missed the point.

Although eventually the Prime Minister is *primus inter pares,* the Prime Minister's role — and he has the experience in this, I should not have to tell him — is also to coordinate his Cabinet colleagues and to ensure that where there are areas, as there are likely to be areas, as he very well knows, in the Cabinet of conflict, he is the person who is there to make a decision to see that the Government runs smoothly.

The whole gravamen, as I understand from the honourable Member speaking, is that there are two charges. One is the direct interference of the present Minister outside of the scope of his Ministry's proper function. That is the first charge that is being made and the honourable Member must know that.

Secondly, I really do not accept from the Prime Minister that the Chief Personnel Officer only goes and reports to him what the Service Commission says. It is a fact that every day the Chief Personnel Officer goes to discuss appointments with the Minister of the Public Service. What is he going to be saying now? Merely because he says it does not necessarily make it, true and correct. Everybody in the public service knows that. The Minister knows as well that even appointments in statutory boards now are discussed with the Minister.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Three Ministers say not. Ask him, if you do not know, who are the people who run up to him with the personnel problems at statutory boards. Ask about the directives that have gone out to statutory boards from the Ministry of the Public Service relating to personnel matters outside of the area that is restricted to the Minister's appointments and recommendations. They are there in writing for you to see. 4.30 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Minister of Housing says not his Ministry.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: There are too many Bs on the statutory boards).

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member says there are too many Bs on the statutory boards. We should have said that there were too many Ds at the Barbados National Bank. I heard the Honourable Member in here this morning talking about the National Bank. He must know that if there is any failure in the National Bank that I heard him talking about, he has to lay it at the realms of his very Minister, whom he now has all of the confidence in, who set up that board and ran it, with all the knowledge he is talking about, because he called the National Bank an "abortion" this morning.

We have to be very careful, as I see it, in having the constitutional forms, whether it be under us or under them, and mistaking the forms and the realities. I am very disturbed when I know that every day the Chief Personnel Officer goes up for his directions. If the Prime Minister does not know that, he should investigate it. He will find that it is absolutely correct.

I do not believe that we can run Barbados on the basis of Ds and Bs. 1 have said so in this Parliament. When the Prime Minister is going to *saysotto voce* that the problem with the statutory boards is that there are too many Bs, I think it is most unfortunate. What is he telling

me? That he is going to start dismissing people from statutory boards because he believes that they are Bs?

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The boards, not the employees. The board is an extension of Government policy, and if you are in there sabotaging us, you do not have any right on the board.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Minister must know that they have appointed the boards. Since May 28, you changed all the boards!

(Aside: Rt. E. W. BARROW: We changed them, but still left on too many Bs on them.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Well, move who you think are Bs.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am not speaking about the employees. I am speaking of the people who are giving you backing.) i

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am very glad for the clarification that they are the people on the board, that he is not referring to the employees.

Sir, I want to emphasise the point which is made by the honourable Member for St. Peter. Regardless of what the Prime Minister says, there are functions under this Ministry that would be better placed under other Ministries, and the co-ordination which must result will not result.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, the honourable Member is going to get it. I am going to say it.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member does not want to hear how people are viewing his Government. The organisation of the Government must be a matter of concern for the House. Nobody is not saying that he has not got the responsibility eventually, but the organisation of the Government must be a concern of Parliament, and this Committee, which is voting supplies, is entitled to make comments on how the Prime Minister exercises his own responsibility in the choice of subjects and the allocation of them. He cannot fob it off by saying that it is his responsibility and that is the end of the matter.

You made the point when you were in Opposition about the relationships of some Ministers with one of the former Prime Ministers. We must be concerned when we see the position of power being centralised in the manner in which it is being centralised. When the Minister is not in the House down here, it is particularly that we can deal with him from time to time. We must express our concern about that centralisation of power, and where the problems that have been outlined by the honourable Member for St. Peter are real problems that have been coming to the fore. What we are saying to the Prime Minister is that he should look again at this particular area and not merely get up to find an excuse in the circumstances because he feels that he may have confidence in somebody to whom he can say, "Carry out my dictates", he is not an elected Member, and he will carry out his dictates.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am a little concerned. The Prime Minister has got a little impatient again because the Opposition is putting forward a point of view. What is the function of these debates this week? Are we serious? Does the Government expect the Opposition to make a contribution, or just come in and sit down and then vote everything and call it a day. I mean, if so, let us know.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will go out there and tell the people.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not upset. The Honourable Minister of Housing thinks so. 1 am only concerned about the impatience.

I do not see my role as a member of the Opposition as one of dictating to the Government how it is to be done. No way! You are now the Government and you must run the country according to your own predilections, conceptions and policies. As an Opposition we are entitled to say we agree with you or we do not agree with you. But far be it from me to attempt to dictate or pontificate. I will never be in that! Where I see a danger, I think it is my responsibility, if I am going to be loyal, to draw it to the Government's attention, to warn the Government.

All we are saying in this debate is that we do not believe that the change of functions and the reorganisation of departments under different Ministers is the most harmonious amalgamation of departments. I remember that last year, when there was the Budget Debate in April and the present Minister of Finance delivered his fiscal re-arrangement and gave the cost of the re-arrangement, the Data Processing Unit was under the suzerainty of the then Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and that made it easy and commodious for the Prime Minister at the time to be able the next day to have the print out and all the necessary work that was to be done to cost the proposals and come back and lay a statement that they would cost $109 million. That is one of

the things that inspired me to make the observation — if you do not like to hear the word criticism — that perhaps the Data Processing Unit should have been left with the Minister of Finance. But to justify its removal on emotional and sentimental grounds is not good enough! I am saying to the House that you put it there because the present Minister is the one who started it when he was Permanent Secretary, Finance, is not really a mature point of view.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am being reminded that it should remain in Finance because when he started it, he was PS Finance. It is a matter for the Government to look at. We are only putting forward our own points of view and that of the Opposition so far as we have been able to get a collective view on it.

With all these disparate and diverse functions, I wonder whether the Minister is going to make a success of this new department as is hoped for. When the Prime Minister said this morning that the Barbados National Bank is an abortion, I am not sure what he meant. It was not a term of endearment, it was more a term of derision. And the one who started the Barbados National Bank, in the position of, I think he called himself President and Managing Director, he gave himself both roles, is now the Minister responsible for the Public Service. And it is interesting to hear all the talk coming from my left about victimisation and Bs and Ds. He was a well-known Dem at the time, and yet he was given that position of eminence to start the bank!

There is one word of warning I want to issue. Using the term "abortion" as the parallel, I maintain that one of the reasons for the losses of the Barbados National Bank in its first years of operation was because the directorate of the bank — and he has to take responsibility for it — wanted to move too fast to proliferate the number of branches of the Barbados National Bank around Barbados, just to give himself a great sense of power — 'We have a branch at the airport. We have one at Cave Hill near the university.' 4.40 p.m.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Where was the Minister of Finance?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister had very limited powers of interference. You know that. I am not dealing with the Minister of Finance, he is dead. I am dealing with the Minister of the Public Service who is alive. That had to be a decision of the bank.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, I will take your point. It does not detract from mine.

That decision to proliferate the number of branches and to widen the power base, I think, was catastrophic for the bank.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let us assume, for the sake of the argument that the Minister of Finance approved it. Both of them would have been wrong, in my view, because you know they were trying to make a fledgling bank appear as though it was Barclays Bank, with 300 or 400 years existence.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, he was not around. He was not in Barbados. Leave him out!

What I am seeing with the development of the National Bank so rapidly, in such a short space of time, is that they were building up a lot of expenses and carrying a lot of overheads before they had got their asset base on a firm footing. They were bound to lose money. And now the Ministry of the Public Service is behaving* in a similar way. The first thing he did — he who had the first ML car — caused letters to be written to statutory boards telling the officers who had the ML cars to turn them in. Nothing to do with whether it is a breach of the person's contract of employment or not — turn them in!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, he was carrying out a Cabinet decision. So Cabinet initiated that kind of illegality.

Then he causes a problem in the National Insurance Department, wanting to spread wings. He wants a financial and management audit of. the National Insurance Department. Somebody wrote on the weekend, one of the columnists, and I had to say that I agree with him, because the point the person was making was that he did not understand why it was necessary for a question of a management audit to go to Cabinet in the first place. If the board of the Minister that was formerly responsible for National Insurance, a self-financing board, recommended that they thought they needed a management audit, and put it up to the Minister, the Minister could have said, "If that is your view, ...yes, you have the funds." They have the funds internally, they do not have to go to Central Government for the funds. They could have done it themselves. But you carry it to Cabinet and then the Minister of the Public Service says, "No! He will have it done by his department O and M". I do not know if he is trying to find work for the department. Then he moved from that management audit to wanting to do one at BET and Barbados Mills.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I bet you that I heard about it Sunday night. I am not getting this debate into *ad hominem* matters. I just feel that one has to be careful, and all the Opposition is saying is that we need to be careful of this build up and concentration of power in one department, and we are urging the Government that it ensures that there is no abuse. It is open to abuse. If what the honourable Member of the Opposition says is true, it is open to abuse, and I have every reason to believe it, because I have heard it, too, that everyday at 3 o'clock the CPO has to report for instructions. What we are going to do is make sure we have a man on the spot next time with a camera and photograph them. Then you are going to believe it when you see the living evidence.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no! Photograph the CPO going for instructions into the Minister's office. Maurice, if you want the evidence, we will get it you know.

I do not think that Government should see the Opposition's point of view as being a dictation — I must emphasise that to Government — as to how to run the Government. Very often when the boot was on the other foot, the Opposition then criticised us, said the most scandalous things about us. All of them were untrue!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Right, we cannot even curse. We do not intend to curse. The effusions that used to come from the present Minister of Tourism when he was in the Opposition was well characterised as cursing. Well, you say I cannot curse, so I am not cursing you. I do not get into that at all.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Man, keep quiet. This is the cut and thrust of the debate. Keep quiet. You are too soft.

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Has the honourable Member concluded his contribution?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is on a higher plane, Sir.

I was winding up by saying we are not dictating to the Government. We are only alerting Government to the criticisms — and we have to be the mouthpiece for the criticisms of the Government — and pointing out certain dangers or alternatives as we deem it. We do not expect at all that Government will do anything we say, or listen seriously to anything we say. They will say we had our chance, and that is one of the punishments that you have to take in an Opposition. We are going to take it. Four years is not too long!

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): I submit, Mr. Chairman, that any time there is the exercise of power, there is the opportunity for the abuse of power, and if the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) is advising that the opportunity exists for the abuse of power then, perhaps he is right. But I think he has to be sufficiently respectful of the integrity of individuals to accept that, until persons misuse their office and abuse their power, he must not play Jesus Christ, or better still, he must stop playing the divine powers, and presume that he will determine that that power will be abused. He might be better able to look historically at abuses of power, and then he would not have gone too far into the distant past in order to recognize where there has been abuse of power. Perhaps I can understand his fears, coming as they do, no doubt, from the experience he has had as a member of the Barbados Labour Party of the significant abuses of power which used to exist between 1976 and 1986.

I do not think I need to go too far to have us all, especially those who had to do with the recognition of workers and the representation of workers, understand the basis of the fears and the concerns of the honourable Member for St. Thomas. We were all very conscious at that time of where appointments originated, where training originated, where promotions came from and who was responsible for dismissals, and because we knew that all of that had its entire genesis within the person of one individual, we can understand the concern of the honourable Member who has succeeded in that same constituency. And coming as he does from St. Thomas, it may very well be that he perceives that that particular constituency may give him a particular right to speak to matters of that sort. 4.50 p.m.

Sir, I do not wish to concern myself unduly with that matter. I could speak later on to that subject. I rose to indicate that the matter of the Ministry of the Public Service and the work that it can do, and is doing, can be and is a matter, in my case, for some degree of laudatory comment.

I wish particularly to refer to the reinstitution of training and study leave, and to remind you, Mr. Chairman, and this august Chamber that several public servants particularly are now again the beneficiaries of that particular relaxation and liberalisation of the facilities to train and to study. As no doubt we are aware, Barbados has only its people of which it may be proud. We have the sand and the sun and all of that, but basically we are a people who have only our people as our resources, and because of that particular fact, Sir, service is of

paramount importance. Consequently I submit, Mr. Chairman, that there is a need for original training, there is a need for on-job training and there is a need for refresher training, and to accomplish these things there is a need for study leave. Perhaps those people who are best able to express appreciation for that leave will be the teachers who are now able all the better to improve themselves and consequently be able to teach our nation's future generations in a much more professional manner than they would have been able to, had the previous Administration had the good fortune for them, and the bad fortune for us, to continue as the Administration of our country.

I think, Sir, that when one recognises the relevance and the importance of training, and the fact that these areas of training are now again available to our people, one ought to recognise that the Ministry in that area is able to do a significant degree of good for all people within the Public Service and thereby for our nation as a whole. I am, therefore, wishing to welcome the training administration and the training funds that have been provided for in the Estimates, and I wish also to make reference to the Organisation and Management portfolio, because I consider that these are very important to the efficiency of the Public Service, to the organisation and performance within that service. It is absolutely important that we recognise that we cannot continue to manage thousands of workers in an *ad hoc* fashion, that there has to be some system and some professionalism in dealing with this, and there is no doubt that the Organisation and Management Division is very important to the smooth running of any Government. I look forward to seeing that that Organisation and Management Division will continue to function as well as, I have no doubt, the personnel will be ableto bring efficiency to bear.

I wish that we were able to have immediately implemented those steps which will increase the number of persons in divisions like the Establishments Division, and that when we increase the number of persons in that area, we would be able to provide training for them — most likely we might have to do some of that overseas — in industrial relations and particularly in collective bargaining. I think there is too much pressure placed on the senior officer in that division, because, very often, he is the only person who meets with the various trade unions to conduct negotiations on behalf of the Government, and because only one person — perhaps there may be two by now — dealing with that, discussions are usually protracted, and where there are protracted discussions, then there is a possibility for there being a loss of morale and for seeds of dissention to be sown. Especially in areas where people can perceive that they have benefits to derive from sowing seeds of dissention, we can suffer tremendously from having persons being led to believe that they have grievances which are growing and getting larger every day, and it would be very advisable if Government — and I am not referring here to wages and salaries negotiations — especially in the area of continuing negotiations for those conditions of service, which after the salaries are over take up considerable amounts of time, is able to have a large enough cadre of persons to meet with the trade unions to have meaningful and professional dialogue and to be able to make decisions of some meaning.

If that were done, Sir, I believe that the morale within the Public Service would continue to improve, that efficiency could be addressed and that the matter of productivity, which became a subject of discussion in here, could also be spoken to, because in negotiations we might be able to deal with that subject and look at areas of addressing it.

In the general training of which I am speaking, it is necessary for Personnel Officers and Personnel Managers, where there may be such persons, to be trained as a matter of urgency, because it is my feeling that, in some instances, persons may have attained to offices not because they have a particular background in that discipline, or not because they have had a particular training or orientation in the particular field, but perhaps because in some cases they may be more senior. It is very necessary that this Government proceeds to ensure that personnel departments have trained and efficient personnel who are able to deal with personnel matters, and I would suggest that we ought to be able to co-ordinate that training with similar persons in the statutory boards so that, because of the numbers involved, we would have the unit cost for training being reduced somewhat. I have no doubt that were we to continue to work in this area, we might be able to make the Ministry for the Public Services satisfy the functions for co-ordinating not only at the statutory board level but in the various Ministries level within the Government at this time.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I was hoping that we would be able to pass this Head before we have a refreshment break, but that is not possible. The Member for St. Peter wishes to speak a second time or a third time and other Members apparently wish to speak.

I beg to move that you report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

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

The question that Mr. CHAIRMAN report progress and ask for leave to sit again was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.30 today.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 5.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED) Mr.

CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, some time ago a former Member of this House of Assembly tried to have a matter debated in the House. He was prevented from so doing on the grounds that he had brought the wrong thing to the wrong place at the wrong time. I am saying that in the nature of the Public Service and in the person who now heads the Ministry of the Public Service, this Government has done the wrong thing, at the wrong place, at the wrong time.

Mr. Chairman, I speak on this issue from the experience of having been more recently been a member of the Barbadian Public Service than any other person in the House, and, in a sense, the scope of functions that are now entrusted to the Minister of the Public Service has to be seriously evaluated with reference to the directions along which the Public Service of Barbados has been evolving and the directions along which we would wish the Public Service of this country to evolve in the future.

The Barbadian Public Service has been becoming more specialised. The areas of concern that now occupy the attentions of the respective Ministries are deeper and they require far more specialised knowledge than was the case in the past, require the putting together of talent of character that might not have been required in the old days, when the Public Service in Barbados was comprised of a set of colonial people surrounded by a set of functionaries, and that as the structure of the Public Service changes, as its functions broaden and deepen, so, too, must our concept of manpower development for the Public Service be broadened and deepened, and, so too, we must come to see it as an area of specialisation which must be handled by systems which were not part of the old scheme of things.

Sir, members on the other side have not made any case that the Barbados Labour Party has cut back on training. The fact, of course, is that that is not true if one looks at the expenditure. But it is equally not true because of the fact that, in our time, we evolved systems of training to reconcile with the fact that the public sector itself was taking on tasks which could not simply be compared to the tasks that it had undertaken in times gone by. The Minister of Housing, for example, will tell you that the USAID — supported Housing Credit Fund contained an element of grant financing for us to develop the expertise within the Planning Unit of the Ministry of Housing. The Ministry of Education will tell you that each World Bank Loan is now so structured as to provide for specialised training, even in areas such as materials handling at the level of the school. In the Ministry of Transport and Works they know that one now sees training as something that you do not try to centralise, but you try to relate to the specific specialists skills that are required to give effect not only to the ordinary running of Government, but also to give effect to the role of Government as an investor and to the wider role that Government has been assuming in social development. As a result, it is very difficult for us to justify the belief that we can again centralise training and manpower development as it might have been in the past, because that ignores the reality of what has gone on in the last ten years, and we also must be careful that the reality will differ very much from the appearance.

I want to take the Ministry of the Public Service and discuss it in terms of what has been provided for so as to be able to get the House into a serious discussion as to whether that Ministry so conceived, so structured, could ever possibly give effect to manpower development of the kind that we want in Barbados at this juncture of our development, and of the kind that we want in Barbados to carry us into the 21st century. Take Head 16, Subhead 1. You have here a provision made for a new department in the Ministry of the Public Service which is supposed to provide, among other things, for the initiation of programmes of administrative reform in the Public Service, provide consultancy services to statutory boards and manage a number of common services which are used by most agencies of the Government. And to do that, you provide a Deputy Permanent Secretary, one Administrative Officer and one Stenographer!

I want to say to the House that there has to be a tremendous gulf between the appearance and the reality. There is simply no way that one Deputy Permanent Secretary, one Administrative Officer, and one Stenographer/Typist could undertake the task of

initiating administrative reform in the Public Service, as we understand it today, could provide consultancy services to statutory boards and manage any range of common services on behalf of a vast range of Government departments. What it does do is give the Minister, with the control of this one Deputy Permanent Secretary, one Administrative Officer and one Stenographer/Typist, the opportunity to meddle in the affairs of the statutory boards, to meddle in the affairs of the Government departments under the guise of providing consultancy services, managing common services and the like. The point that we are trying to make from this side is that there is simply no way that, given the complexity of the functions that the Public Service is required to perform, this kind of system could effectively result in the kind of solutions that we seek, and that rather than being effective — because one Administrative Officer and one Deputy Permanent Secretary could not possibly manage common services in the Public Service, or provide consultancy services to all statutory boards — is merely providing the man with the elbow room to go into the statutory boards and tell them how they are to be run. There is a gap between the reality and the appearance! 5.40 p.m.

The same argument can be applied in relation to the reconstituted Organisation and Management Division. You have a division now with four so-called Management Analysts. I am told that the head had some training in Sociology. One of the other persons was a former member of the old Organisation and Management Division, had a sojourn at the National Housing Corporation and is now back in the same institution.

What I am trying to get across, Mr. Chairman, is that if we are talking about seriously coming to terms with the requirements of strengthening organisation and management in the Public Service, then we would recognise that we do not want centralisation of that function. We would recognise that that function is best exercised at the level of the respective Ministries, and that the old concept of the Permanent Secretary as still being a pusher of paper must change where he must become a manager of men, a manager of system and a manager of people and resources. That is the point that we on this side are at pains to make, and that when you look at what you are seeking to achieve in relation to what you have put in place to give effect to it, the gap between appearance and reality is so wide that we must come to the conclusion that the centralisation is not for the purposes of increased efficiency, but the centralisation is purely for the purposes of power building.

I want to suggest to the Minister of Finance that a management analyst with some training in Sociology could not come into his Ministry and prescribe for him what kind of manpower development needs reside in the Ministry of Finance and Planning. I want to suggest to the Minister of Transport and Works that it would be better for manpower development of the staff within the Ministry of Transport and Works to be seen as a normal function of the professional staff of the Ministry, not to be separated, but a normal function. We can only get good organisation and management in the Public Service when these things are part and parcel of the function of Ministries at source. That is my fundamental reason for being opposed to this belief. It has to come out of the Ministries themselves. The Minister of Housing, for example, can tell you the manner in which the expertise within the Housing Planning Unit has been successfully developed.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is reminded that he has one more minute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: .....because we understood that manpower development is part and parcel of the ordinary workings of any Government Ministry.

I am therefore of the strongest belief, and I must speak on this again, that the centralisation of all these various functions under the Ministry of the Public Service will be of no effect, because there is a gap between what you have committed to achieve it and the functions that you are intending to achieve, and we will end up as we fear* — and if you want me to bring proof, I will have to bring proof— with a Ministry which has a tremendous capacity to meddle but not to achieve, and that its meddling will be purely in terms of the running around of people in the Public Service such as has been the case over the course of the last year.

I welcome the opportunity to speak again.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, I think we should well understand in this Committee what the Opposition is trying to do. This is a direct attack on the new Democratic Labour Party Government and its attempt to manage and organise the affairs of this country. Let us not watch only the words, but also try to perceive the intent of those words.

There are two principles in Government which any Government that is interested in pursuing a policy for a country and in a parliamentary democracy tries to pursue. One is the doctrine of collective responsibility, in which all of the Ministers of Government are responsible collectively for the policies of the Government. The other doctrine is the doctrine of individual ministerial responsibility, in which each Minister is responsible for the actions and policies of his Ministry. It is the Prime Minister who is responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the individual Ministries, ensuring that there is

collective responsibility and that that doctrine of collective responsibility is adhered to.

What is happening here today, in spite of all the protestations, is a well thought out plan and policy on the part of the Opposition to dent those two principles by launching an attack, first of all, on a Minister in terms of his individual responsibility, and secondly, in terms of the collective responsibility of the Government, calling into question the allocation of responsibility by the Prime Minister, and also seeking to throw some kind of disconcerting attempts at the Government, what the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) referred to as the Chandresakar syndrome, if I can get the alliteration correct, flight and spin.

But let us not misunderstand the background to this. I well remember that in the 1960s, when at the fledgling age of 29 years or thereabouts I was invited to join the Cabinet of Barbados — I have not been invited to leave yet — and the then Opposition launched a most sustained attack on me and on the Government. They talked a lot about people who had not faced the tape, and then they said the same thing about my colleague here, the Minister of Tourism and Industry. Then, when that Opposition got into power, they appointed more persons as Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries and other designations from the Senate than the Democratic Labour Party ever had. They had O'Brien Trotman. They had Nigel Barrow. 5.50p.m.

(Asides: Clyde Griffith!)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They had Clyde Griffith.

(Asides: John Williams!)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They had John Williams.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I said, "and other designations". They had Sir Ronald Mapp.

(Aside: Sir James Tudor!)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: And at other times Sir Mencea also acted as a Minister from up in the Senate.

Again, what is happening? They are coming back again now with a similar kind of attack on the Democratic Labour Party Government simply because we have sought, as a Government, under the direction of the Prime Minister, to have an adequate mix in the Cabinet and the Government, the two are synonymous in our terms, of persons who have the capacity, ability and the zeal to work for the improvement of public affairs in this country, and also persons who are well experienced in the business of public affairs.

The Minister of the Public Service is a distinguished public officer in this country, with a long record of experience, and this attack, well-orchestrated, bears little relationship .....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Defend your canvasser, Sandy.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not have any canvasser. I am not defending anybody as my canvasser. I am talking about a Government and collective responsibility in a Government. This is a well orchestrated. attack, which, however, is missing its mark significantly. Because if we look at the structure in Britain, we will see that the subject that you are talking about, all fall, or most of them, under the purview of the Prime Minister in Britain. Yet you are raising these very subjects .....

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is in the Prime Minister's Office. .

(Aside: Oh!)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Look, let us understand this thing. In our system, all Ministers relate directly to and are co-ordinated by the Prime Minister. I do not think there is any doubt about that. There cannot be any question about it.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: In Britain, those subjects, whether it is Printing, Honours or it is civil service appointments — do you want me to read? I have a handbook here, "1984 Britain". I do not need to read it. It belongs to in here — in each Government department, according to this official document here:

> "The civil servants of the Crown. They are responsible to the Minister in whose department they work....."

Not even to anybody else:

"....for the execution of his or her policies." If we have personnel policies to pursue, and we have establishments and training matters, if we have a whole question of the organisation of the Civil Service, those matters have to be co-ordinated and they have to be given some kind of integrity at some point, if not you would have a bunch of wild horses running in different directions. I do not think that even the Opposition would wish a Government of Barbados to operate in that way. There must be co-ordination. The honourable Member for St. Thomas says he recognises that; therefore, you are not objecting to any of that. You are objecting to the fact that Data Processing is within that area of responsibility.

The fact is that those subjects are placed there because, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, that is a central point from which they can be coordinated. You do not even wish to give the allocation to those subjects in that particular locus any opportunity to see if it would work or not. You are running into some prophetic vein to say it cannot work or you do not like it, just as I understand - I do not recall whether I was actually in the Chamber or not - that my colleague and friend, the Member for St. Peter, said that the Budgetary Proposals would cost $109 million, and I have heard the Minister of Finance get up and contradict him and say it is nothing like that. He was proved wrong.

Aside.

Ron L. E. SANDIFORD: I said that the Barbados Labour Party would have had to bring a new budget, a mini budget and that is exactly what they had to come and do.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Oh yes, before your time.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They called it mini and it was maxi. Let us understand that we have a responsibility to co-ordinate the work of Government, and as we go about our task in doing this, you are launching an attack because we are seeking to do that and get the business of Government functioning properly.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: And we are entitled to put ours.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Are you telling me do not criticise you for putting it?

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: No, I am not upset. You know I am the last person to get upset. I am very quiet and very peaceful. You told me that there is some person in my constituency and sor.iething about my hands strengthened or something like that. It is very good that you did not say my hands were tied. I am very glad you did not say that.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: For the purposes of the record, the gentleman to whom I believe you were making reference, because I am not too sure, is or might not beone of my constituents. He might very well be a constituent of the Leader of the Opposition. So if you are looking for some justification, you would have to find some other justification or end result.

Let us face it, and you know it, too, if you have an office and you have to allocate functions and responsibilities, sometimes the people in those offices do not all like how the functions are divided or separated. But that does not mean that for the office to attain its objectives, they do not have to work together and that you do not have to try to co-ordinate matters. 6.00 p.m.

I would really appeal to the Opposition to realise that this is not an area in which they believe that they, in good colloquial terms, can "pelt lashes". There are no lashes to pelt. There is no point talking about any bureaucratic tyranny or tyrannical bureaucracy. Those are. emotive terms which certainly have no application to the present situation existing in Barbados. I am not sure whether they could not have been applied previously, because I have overheard certain public officers talk about the tyranny that certain Ministers in the former Administration exerted over public officers. You heard about that, too, didn't you?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one minute.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There is no point using those kinds of terms, because if that kind of environment or situation existed in this country, over and apart from the usual orchestrated pieces that come into the newspapers from time to time, we would have had more documentation of all this tyranny that is being practised within the bureaucracy. But what we have had is a number of generalisations, without any substantial evidence being advanced, or any examples which one can take and examine and say that in a particular instance, you may have a point or you may not -have a point. I will counsel the Opposition that if they have specific charges, let us hear them now, so that we can seek to answer them and get on with the business of the people.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, if there was any doubt in the mind of anyone as to whether the concerns being raised by this Opposition are real or otherwise, I think those doubts will be dispelled when we observe the manner of Government front and back benchers in this debate, because the debate transcends, in a sense, the Ministry of the Public Service as a run-of-the-mill Government institution, but it also ascends to the level of the centralisation of power, and the centralisation of power in the context of a system that has become very dynamic.

There is in the Public Service of Barbados, Mr. Chairman, a desire and willingness on the part of a

large number of young professional people, of whom I used to be one, to be an integral part and parcel process of its own development, to be part and parcel of all the programmes to be taken to move the Public Service at the same pace of progress that this country has been moving and to carry it with us into the 21st century. That young professional talent is today as silent as the front benchers of this country.

The Minister can fool himself, but the centralisation of responsibilities of training, promotions, transfers, study leave, purchasing, data processing, all in the hands of a Ministry that by reference to this Schedule is equipped with just enough power to meddle, but not enough muscle to be effective, is going to be one of the major deterrents to the advance of the Public Service in this country. When you add all centralisation and autocracy, it is a dangerous recipe. Centralisation in itself in the context of people wanting to make a contribution at source is dangerous in itself, Sir, but when you add to and put on top of that an autocratic presence, we can be talking about disaster in Barbados. And the sullenness of the back bench of this Government is telling the Minister that he knows what I am saying is true. This front bench has been heckling me as a matter of course.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Oh, you are heckling me now.

Aside

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I have raised specific points, Mr. Chairman.

Aside

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Poor Branford!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I was about to ask you to address the Chair.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: The Government side for example, Mr. Chairman, invites me to provide evidence that the Ministry of the Public Service is involved, for example, in making appointments at the level of the statutory boards in respective Ministries. I do not speak lightly on this matter, and I do not like calling people's names in the House of Assembly, but the Prime Minister himself can confirm whether it is not true that a very well-known supporter of the Democratic Labour Party, from a St. Michael Constituency.....

(Aside: Call it!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: .....St. Michael Central..... had approached a statutory board for a job and was told by the Chairman of the statutory board that the file is with Harry Lewis.

(Aside: Marson Gibbs.)

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Marson Gibbs then. I did not want to call his name. As I said, I do not like to call names on the floor of the House of Assembly, but this is a fact. And he said he came to your house on a Saturday morning and you told him that, by the end of January, he will have to get a job. But the significant fact is that he was being told that the files are with Harry.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member referring to a specific person when he says "the files are with Harry".

A sides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, this is a real situation, that we now have a situation in Barbados where appointments to boards are not now a matter for the personnel departments of the boards or the establishment committees of the boards, but have to reach the level, of the Minister of the Public Service. This is a matter of fact, Sir, and this is the point that the Opposition is at pains to make, that the range of powers and functions assigned to the Ministry of the Public Service allows it to meddle in the affairs of every Ministry of this Government without having the necessary talent to give effect to the functions as broadly defined. 6.10 pjn.

You ask me for an example and I will give you one. Do you truly believe that one Deputy Permanent Secretary or an Administrative Officer could undertake to provide consultancy services to the Board of Tourism? Those are specialised functions which ought not .to be centralised in the fashion that we are seeking to centralise them, through the creation of this Ministry with its given structure, with its given terms of reference.

I come back to a point that I made earlier, and which I think has only been fitfully defended by Government, that the Ministry is an amalgamation of a wide range of subjects some which fall outside the realm of personnel management and manpower development. How do we truly justify having a Central Purchasing Department of Government, which is responsible for managing Government purchases of supplies and material, located in the Ministry of the Public Service rather than under the Ministry of Finance at a time when the Minister of Finance has declared a policy which says that he wants to control Government's expenditures and he wants to control them by putting in place systems to control Government's purchases of supplies and materials? Does the Government not understand that they are the people who have created the apparent contradiction, to the extent that it is a contradiction in existence, that it cannot therefore be justified in terms of rational ordering of things. It does not reconcile itself with Government's stated policy, so are we not left to the conclusion that

what we are talking about therefore, is centralisation fof its own sake, to make sure, perhaps, in following the vein of my former tutor that all roads will lead to the Leader, or you, or the Minister of Transport and Works and then any other number can play?

The Prime Minister said this evening, Sir, that all roads must lead to him, and after him the Deputy Prime Minister or the Minister of Transport and Works, and after that any number can play. Let us, therefore, look at the politics Sir, because by the accretion of responsibilities under^the Ministry of the Public Service and by the accretion of responsibilities under the Prime Minister's Office, we now have a distribution of political responsibilities in this country where, in effect, it has come to pass that all roads must lead to the Prime Minister, or they must lead, next, to you or to the Minister of Transport and Works and after that any number can play. And we are asked on this side not to discuss this Ministry in political terms! We are asked on this side, following what the Prime Minister said, not to discuss the process by which this Ministry has accreted powers in political terms!

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. You would give way if it was a point of elucidation too. The major charge made by the Member for St. Peter as I heard him speak is that there is bureaucratic tyranny, and this Committee is still waiting for evidence of this bureaucratic tyranny. Nothing that I heard him say so far establishes any kind of tyranny in the bureaucracy and we are waiting for evidence of that. He is my former student and I would like him to be very precise.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I do not hold myself responsible for the fact that I was his former student.

Laughter.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Or that you were able to learn well).

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: But I thank God that I was successful as a student notwithstanding.

Laughter. ,

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, we can have these moments of levity as we reflect on the monstrosity that we are creating. The Government would do itself a favour if it were to keep its ears close to the ground. The Minister will want me to call out people's names one by one. I gave you as a matter of fact the Marson Gibbs' case and you sought to make laughing sport of it, but there is great restlessness in the Public Service of this country today because there is the strongest understanding in the Public Service that power is being wielded by an autocrat that he has a giant's strength and he is using it like a tyrant that he has the ability to be involved in persons' promotions and leave; that he can go into Government departments and tell them how they should be organised and managed; that he and his Ministry can determine that another Ministry needs consultancy services and that they have the capacity with a Deputy Permanent Secretary and an Administrative Officer to provide those consultancy services that they have the capacity and the right to manage common services that people within Ministries themselves feel that they better can manage than the Ministry of the Public Service. All these things matter. The Government may want to brush it off, to laugh at it, to ask us to compromise people by calling specific situations, but it is a fact that there is a restive spirit in this system because of the concentration of effective power in critical areas. And if you were to understand the psychology of the Civil Service, you will understand how it reacts to the wide range of authorities over things important to it that are now vested in a select number of people in this country. And if the Government is not prepared to awaken to the danger, let us just simply say that you have been warned.

The autocratic character of the Ministry of the Public Service and its Minister is a political issue. We have not made it one. The centralisation of these important' functions raises another set of issues which I have tried to get discussed in this House by our wanting to broaden the debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is in extra time. One more minute. 6.20 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want us to broaden the debate to ask ourselves the question, before we entrust a Ministry with the responsibility to undertake Civil Service reform, should we not, first of all, let us discuss what Civil Service reform we exactly wish? And the point on which I wish to leave in this debate, that we have given a Minister and a Ministry the authority and the responsibility to undertake Civil Service reform but we are no clearer in our minds as to how we want to reform the system.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, much of the discussion we have heard from the honourable Member for St. Peter purports to derive from a consideration of the effective function of Government Ministries, but I believe that, in fact, what we are hearing is an extenuation and a continuation of political strategy that has been used by the Barbados

Labour Party for a very long time, to suggest, first of all, that there are differences within the party structure of' the Democratic Labour Party, suggesting that certain persons in the hierarchy of that party might be jostling for positions, and suggesting that, perhaps, within the Cabinet itself, the judgement of the Prime Minister is being challenged because of the allocation of certain departments held in certain portfolios of particular persons. I believe that they have been on a whole fishing expedition this afternoon. They talked a great deal of verbiage which is meant to excite that feeling in the public that there is a problem in the Cabinet of this Government.

We are aware, those of us who have been following this, that in the very early stages, from the time there was mention of a Public Service Ministry, the honourable Member for St. Peter was critical of the concept of the Ministry. We are aware, also that their acolytes in the media, from the time there were reallocations in these particular areas, were quick to point out that it meant that some persons had been demoted and some had been promoted. A lot of malicious verbiage! It is meant to cause a certain unsettlement or whatever in this country. It is meant to arouse the feeling that, in a short period after we have taken the position as Government of this country, there are differences, not in philosophy, because they do not have much of that, but differences of style and differences of procedure among, perhaps, the members of the Cabinet. I think that it is malicious, it is harmful, and I think they will use all sorts of stratagem, because they have no facts to support anything that they may be saying.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: I am sure the honourable Member who is speaking is not attributing malice to the three members of the Opposition, because, if he is, then he is out of order.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The comments that were made are potentially malicious, and I would say that they know that they have ears of the Press, and all of that discussion was for the Press. It has nothing to do with right thinking people in this country. It is an attempt to brainwash those •who are of their own persuasion. They have not yet accepted the vote of the electorate. They find it very difficult to accept that. They are not really addressing those words to anybody in here, anybody who is thinking, anybody who is politically alert in the country.

There are contradictions. The honourable Member for St. Peter talked about this Ministry that was created as being "a super-Ministry," and then he comes back and says it does not have enough power — it could only be a meddling group. A huge contradiction — a super-Ministry and all it can do is meddle, it does not have enough power. Which position are we supposed to take from the honourable Member for St. Peter? Is it a super Ministry or is it a meddling group?

The point is whether or not the Ministry of the Public Service is not a Ministry that will have to abide by the principles, the philosophy and the programmes of the Democratic Labour Party. Is it likely that that Ministry will operate within or without the parameter of that particular programme that has been established? Is it likely that it will set its own path and that it will not, under the person who heads it, have to come every Thursday to follow the guidance of the Cabinet of this country?

There can be no suggestion that the Minister or his Ministry can get on as though they are not part of an established system of Government, that they are not subject to sanctions like any other Minister or any other Ministry, to suggestions and methods of control that operate within our democratic system. Also, I am sure that that particular Minister has Cabinet colleagues of integrity, and if they felt that he was going wrong at any time, they would tell him so in the proper place. I have no doubt about that at all.

I do not know if the honourable Member for St. Peter is expecting that if there is any difference in the Cabinet on the question of how that particular Minister operates — I do not think there is any difference — it is necessary any time for them to come here and, because of his blandishments, start discussions along that line. The fact that the entire front bench might not speak on the issue, or they might not heckle unless you invite them to heckle, should not leave you to think that they have not given consideration to what they are saying. It is that they do not consider it to be worthy of any comment.

On the whole question about the need for this particular Ministry, I get the impression that the honourable Member for St. Peter cannot yet support the idea of the structure of this Ministry or of a unit being established that would perform an auditing function for other areas of administration within the Government. He believes that each area should develop its own unit — you gave the example of the Transport Board to develop their own training functions and other similar functions. That is only one theory of administration, and it is not necessarily a pre-eminent »theory. There are other theories that you should bring a unit from outside which has no on--going and day-to-day relationship with a particular administration because it is possible that it will bring greater objectivity to the task of training, analysis and auditing of that particular unit, and there are also cost considerations. We need not parade a theory with which we are familiar or, perhaps, one that we prefer and suggest that it is the only or the best theory that can be applied to a particular situation.

Sir, the honourable Member for St. Peter also gives the impression that all the young, bright people in the Civil Service are coming to him and reporting on the difficulties that they are facing. The impression I got is that there is a cadre of young professionals in the Civil Service who are dissatisfied with how the service is functioning, and, apparently, they come to him, or somebody else who then relays the information to him, and he is now giving that information to the Government of this country that we will take the necessary corrective measures. I believe there is a difficulty sometimes when you move from being a civil servant to becoming a politician. 6.30 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order: I never said nor sought to imply that young professional civil servants are coming to me with their grievances. The point I was making is that there are large numbers of young talented civil servants who want even within the confines of their Ministries and departments to make a contribution to manpower development programmes at that level, and that the centralisation of the function can block that mobilisation of their talents. That is the only point I was making, and the honourable Member should not seek to mislead the House in relation to what I said, and he should also not put me in a conspiratorial relationship with young civil servants.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you for the clarification, because I really felt that you were saying that there was a certain degree of dissatisfaction among those young persons, and that they were not allowed to function in the way they want to function because of this centralisation. I thought you were performing trade union functions in servicing their grievances. Thanks for the clarification.

In any bureaucratic structure, in a small office far less an institution as large as the Civil Service of our country, there must be difficulties in bright, young, ambitious persons fulfilling the kind of functions and reaching the levels of participation that they would want to be able to reach. We have these problems in terms of our concepts of worker participation. There is no difficulty with us. We believe that workers with the ability and the training should be able to help structure the programmes with which they are involved, and, therefore, we would want ,to believe that systems within the Civil Service that are being developed, any structures, modalities of operation, will take as a first premise that those civil servants who have the training and the ability to input into these systems would be given an opportunity to this.

But you raised it as a problem; you raised it as a difficulty; you raised it as though this happened since this - particular Administration assumed the reins of Government of this country. You raised it within the context of a discussion of the Ministry of the Public Service which was only developed since May 28, 1986, and therefore I will have to assume that you are saying it is only since that time that these young professionals have not been able to input into programmes to which they are related. That that could not be true — nothing has happened since then to stop them from making inputs into the programmes with which they are related. I am suggesting to you that, perhaps, exaggerations have been made because of the primary function of this particular debate under this Head, and the primary function of this debate has been to suggest that there is a rift on this side. It is a political debate. It has no consideration whatsoever with efficiency in the management of the Ministry of the Public Service.

You also took the opportunity to address the* suitability of the Minister of the Public Service. You want to raise doubts about the way he functioned at the National Bank.

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. I know we are getting a little tired and we need these light moments to refresh, but let us have some order. The speaker may continue.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: You want to raise doubts about his suitability to function within this particular Ministry, and you question his role as Chairman and Managing Director of the National Bank. It is an unfair debate. You have engaged in a lot of unfair debate this afternoon and a lot of unfair tactics. I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that in fact, there is no real consideration on that side about the need for a Public Service Ministry, there is no real consideration on that side that the areas allocated to that Ministry are not proper areas for allocation to that Ministry, there is no real concern on that side that that Ministry will not function efficiently to try to improve the Public Service of this country, and I do not think there is any real concern on that side either that the person to whom that function has been allocated will not be able to function in that particular area.

I draw the parallel between that person who was a public servant, and later on became a Minister, and the honourable Member for St. Peter, whose career has taken a similar path. I think you were once a public servant and then you became a Parliamentary Secretary, and I believe your hope must be that one day you will become a Minister, whether or not he is elected by the people of this country. I do not think he would have any difficulties if he had to go in the Senate and be appointed a Minister one of these days, because there can be no real concern on that side either about whether or not the

person who has been made a Minister of the Public Service was elected by the people of this country.

To summarise, this has really been a very spurious debate, politically motivated. It has not advanced our considerations about this Ministry of the Public Service at all. It has just taken up a whole lot of time in this Chamber, and that is why I will close at this point, because I think we have said enough on it.

Thank you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I think it is very good that the honourable Member should close then, because he obviously closed on his very weakest point. The honourable Member is normally a very skilful debater, and probably the chiding of the honourable member for St. Peter about the relative silence of the back bench brought him forth, as it did my good friend, a well-known student and professor of politics, who had, unfortunately, to resort to a standard work on Britain to justify and defend the strictures made against the Ministry of the Public Service here. Whenever I see the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E, Sandiford) bring out a textbook — and in this case it is not even a recognised book on Government — he has gone to a handbook that is lent to tourists who go to Britain and really is not even a nutshell — I wonder what he has been doing.

I watched him very clearly. He knows that the Opposition's points have really got through and therefore he goes to the last resort, followed by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) to make it appear that the attack is an attack on collective responsibility, so that we must, like in Russia, hold hands regardless against this battering ram of the Opposition. Therefore, the whole of the Government's defence is not really to analyse what has been said so clearly and so eruditely in this debate, but rather to defend it on the basis that we" are all in this together and as politicians we must hold hands together. 6.40 pjn.

The Member says it was politically motivated — and ,1 have never heard a more politically-motivated speech — as though this Committee and these Estimates are not about politics. They are not simply the arithmetic of numbers, they are not only numerals. They are about political philosophies, about systems, about how we approach Government, about how we get the most efficient systems out of Government.

The argument here is that there may be a realm where, as the honourable Member so rightly concedes, you are apt to get a conflict between the duties and organisations of Ministers. The ultimate arbiter of that, of course, is the chairman of the Cabinet, and that is why, as the honourable Member knows, it is very unusual for a Prime Minister to give out of his hands some of the functions, that you have seen given out here. And the honourable Member very well knows as well, particularly in small democracies such as ours, that where you are dealing with certain functions impinging on the Ministry of Finance, if the Minister of Finance does not retain that function, he centralizes it in his Ministry of Finance if he is to get maximum efficiency. The honourable Member was very clever in not reading all of the functions that even in Britain, the Prime Ministers are very careful to see that in their distribution they have an overall control.

We have now had on each side allegations being made against both political parties about political interference in the Civil Service. That is a problem that we. are all going to have to be careful in the Caribbean and come with a solution. It has surfaced more recently than here in Trinidad and Tobago, and those of us who have followed the argument have recognized that there is, in some realms, a pressure from your political party and associates for political appointments to be made. I would be less than sensible, if I did not recognise that within the Civil Service there are some persons who believe that their path to promotion lies along political lines. Let us be realistic about that.

The honourable Member adverted to the fact that the honourable Member for St. Peter was a civil servant. So, too, was the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin). But there are persons in the system who — you talk about times of fear and all that — believe that their function is political. There are also people who, if they are not careful when they are in positions of power, if you want it put that way, believe that all civil servants are political, as I have heard it being said that you have to remove those who are in the path of Government. I have heard it in this very House from an honourable Member who is not in the Chamber now. It brought the Honourable Deputy Leader on his feet on that occasion to discuss in this Chamber what is the right level at which you organise a Civil Service, given the Westminster model that we have followed.

Sir, I do not know, if honourable Members have recently been studying the development of public services, but I can tell them that in Mexico, whore a party was in power for over 30 years, even down to the level of secretaries believe that they have to look to a Minister for an appointment. I can tell them that in Venezuela and some of the less-developed countries, as soon as there is a change in Government, you find everybody being changed — lock, stock and barrel. The end result of that has been a worsening system of administration.

I am not here to say that we are levelling strictures there or you are levelling strictures here. My concern is

that you have to be able to keep a balance between a Minister's correct responsibility *vis a vis* other Ministers and departments. Do not give me the impression that Ministers do not row. A country believes that if Ministers have differences, that means somebody is splitting up, but I would be less than sensible if I accepted that there is one face in a Government, whether it was our Government or their Governments and there are not genuine disagreements on major areas. That is where, more often than not the chairman of the Cabinet has to stand above it all.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Tell us about them!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member says, "Tell us about them." I am not here poking a little fun. What I want to ensure is that you do not create, and you have accused us in the past of creating one, what the honourable Member calls "a super-minister" who believes that he is nearer to the throne than anyone else, to the detriment of proper administration of other Ministers, so that Government functions properly.

The other point we are making is that either Barbados is going to determine that it is going to have a Civil Service that operates on a proper level or not. I do not care how many times the honourable Member gets up to push us off the point by saying Tom or somebody else like that. The point is.....

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: .... and it is a good left hook maybe .... that, I am saying as a fact that the Chief Personnel Officer now takes his directions from that Ministry, and the Public Service Commission is losing its power. Either we want it or we do not want it.

(Aside: You did it.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Well, it is even worse under you, because there is the same element of fear. I do not accept that the Chief Personnel.Officer, as I said earlier, merely goes to keep the Prime Minister informed on any matter on which there must be consultation. I know it is not true, no matter how often it is said in this House. Obviously, if you have that happening, you will have civil servants talking to their relatives and friends about the fear that they have.

1 am also concerned, Sir, about a report which has reached me. I do not talk lightly on reports until I have got some background information, but I am going to talk on this one. I mentioned this in passing earlier on State Enterprises and it comes up again on this audit business, and the Member for Christ Church East Central has referred to it. We have not worked out yet properly in our minds, and we have to do it soon, the real role of some of the organisation and management and audit functions. The Government can go into a corporation in which it is the sole shareholder and do as it likes, if it wants to. But there are other corporations in which the Government is only one of the shareholders, and it has no greater function to go in and audit anybody's books, as far as I am concerned.

The problem you have is when the Government may be one of the major shareholders, and w.hen a Government is dealing with an interest, the interest, in some respects, is pliable in the hands of a Government, because it does not want to offend Government. But is not the Government stronger when it has a function to perform if it allows the shareholders to carry out that function properly and it acts like a shareholder and asks the right questions at the right time? What is a Government department going to want to go and audit Barbados Mills for? What is it going to audit • Arawak Cement Plant itself for? The Prime Minister said today he is talking about a management audit, and I am talking even of a management audit. You must remember that you are dealing with shareholders. You are dealing with other people's equities.

The Government comes to you on a basis and the country voted. It is not that we have not accepted that. We have accepted quite carefully in our minds the position of the electorate. I am not running the Government, but I ant going to run in here, to the extent that I am allowed as a Member of the Opposition, to put an alternative policy to convince the country about other matters.

What does the Government want to get over its particular functions for? You came in on the position that there was too much Government. If there was too much Government, how, all of a sudden, the Government's tentacles are now going to embrace enterprises with which the Government is associated in that way? It is possible to have methods of control either at management level or otherwise? 6.50 p.m.

I am aware that the Ministry has been looking at the whole range of managerial salaries and allowances, *et cetera* in all Government statutory boards. But there is a . distinction between Government statutory boards and enterprises in which Government have an interest. They are not all the same and, therefore, that Ministry must make that distinction. That is all we are saying here. I am aware that the Government is looking to see which manager has a car, what allowances he has, who gets more than anybody else, and you have got to be very careful because there is sometimes a jealousy that permeates not only public life, but even the public sector, in which you get one person bringing you a story, because they believe it is to their advantage, telling you that somebody is well paid than them and that sort of thing. We are warning of these things.

The Ministry has started to stretch its tentacles in that way. We believe it is the wrong way to stretch its tentacles. We believe that it is possible to get proper organization and management in the country without that sort of approach. If the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central cannot take our fears as being genuine, it is a matter for him. Perhaps, we should not say anything. We should do like you all did until you brought your back raise. We should sit down and say go ahead and do not even offer a positive suggestion. In fact, very frequently, while I am tempted to get up in here and say try something else, I am always reminded that my role is merely to sit down and let you make your mistakes, it is a matter for you.

We have expressed our fears. They are fears we believe that are not only genuinely held, but there is a basis for some of these fears. The Government can choose to ignore the fears at their peril.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition should suggest that he has been tempted not to get up. I got the impression that he was fairly athletic and was showing that constantly by, his capacity to speak.

One comment has to do with the instructions that have been reported as having coming to the statutory boards. I am aware that Statutory Boards have, in fact, received instructions, but perhaps the Opposition was not fully aware of what they said. Mr. Chairman, you may be aware, I am sure you are, that in 1975 or thereabouts statutory boards and the unions were advised that when statutory boards were entering into negotiations with a trade union, a representative of the Establishments Division - it was then in the Prime Minister's Office — should be present. My understanding was, and my experience in those matters led me to believe, that the intention was to streamline conditions that were being negotiated so that there were not contradictions across various work places. Where there have been checks made on levels of pay and comparable levels of pay, I am aware — because I served on statutory boards from 1976—86 and before that too — that that was started i way back in 1980 by the Prime Minister of the day, So if there is a question of auditing and comparisons being made generally, that is nothing peculiar. It may only be different in that it might be assigned to a different Ministry rather than by the Prime Minister's Office.

The problem relating to this particular discussion, as my colleague said, has to do with the sometimes unsettling coverage which there has been. Take as an example the instructions which were given to make the collection of taxes more efficient and the unsettling coverage which there was in the Press, giving the impression that all of the benefits which the workers got were going to be eroded or denied by some subterfuge. That is a kind of problem which one has to guard against, I think, when one addresses subjects of this sort, and one has to be very careful of the problems that one is faced with when one deals with issues, generally, and particularly issues of this kind.

The Opposition, Mr. Chairman, would like us to think that they have issued a warning. Where there is any warning that can be given, I am sure that that warning can be accepted. The problem is that I keep repeating that it cannot really be seen as a warning itself. It seems to be a presumption which says that A, B, or C will happen. All I can suggest to them is that they are warning us not to imitate and or emulate the Barbados Labour Party. We would have to accept that as being good advice, because we would not want to find ourselves where we try to harass and to victimise persons in the Public Service, to harass them, victimise them and have them fired in the private enterprise, and sometimes, even when they are playing in their own villages and in their own streets and they make comments that are not complimentary of us, to discover who they are in an effort to harass them.

It is not, Sir, without our competence to mention all of the names that immediately come to mind, but there have been a whole host of persons working, for example, Mr. Chairman, at the Advocate. You may remember that a person at the Advocate carrying an accurate comment of what took place in Parliament. You may remember that now infamous debate, where in Parliament we were told that if our names were Douglas Leopold Phillips we would be made to starve. The writer from the Advocate who Carried that story had to leave Barbados, because he was no longer able to find a job in this place. That was not because there was any accident. It was by deliberate intervention of the political machinery of the day. That is something that we will perhaps forget because our memories may be short. I am not permitted to call his name, Sir, but we are all aware of that.

We may also be aware of the president of a union division at CBC who, because he was pursuing a trade union matter — Winston Worrel — was summoned to the office of the Prime Minister of the day, Tom Adams, and was given notice that he would be fired and he lost his job within a matter of days. That is the sort of thing that they do not want us to emulate, so I have no problem with recognising that.

I also would not want to follow what happened to the member of the National Housing Corporation, or Jerry Richards at CBC, or a lady reporter who happened to have been covering the St. Peter by-elect * for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and who was fired

because the equipment broke down. Fortunately, we were able to get payment for her. That is part of what was happening.

We could cite present officers in the Public Service who have been moved around, or who have been made to be denied promotion because they came wrong with certain leaders. As a matter of fact, certain people were told that as long as the late Prime Minister was in charge of the machinery of Government, they could never get advancement in this country.

So we are perfectly aware that the Barbados Labour Party understands that there might be areas where victimisation might take place, or where Permanent Secretaries have gone home rather than stand for harassment. We are hoping, though, that the Opposition, Barbados Labour Party, will give the Democratic Labour Party the chance to govern and judge us on performance rather than judge us on their own perception of what would happen, based on how they used to manage. 7.00 p.m.

A quick word, Sir, about a member of my constituency whose name was mentioned here. I am aware that a Marson Gibbs, a very good friend of mine, made application for the job. I am aware that he filled out an application, and I am aware that that application went in the right channels. I am not aware that that application went anywhere else but where it was intended, to a statutory board in this country. One member of the statutory board indicated to me that he was aware that a friend of mine had made an application. Whether he has got a job or not, I am not yet able to say, but he has not told me that he has problems because of a Harry, and it is rather surprising he told somebody in whom I would imagine that he would see a certain Opposition element. Perhaps there is a misunderstanding and the Member for St. Peter did not wish to give an inaccurate account of what may have transpired.

I wish to say in closing, Sir, that I have some problems, as some other people do, with the same Barbados National Bank, which was mentioned during this debate and which, I hope, you will allow me to mention. Within the last four weeks I thought I would like to do some business and I sought to have a loan from that establishment, only to be told that I had to make an application and I had to be interviewed to be given the form to apply. But I understand that on the same day some persons had forms posted to their homes, so it is quite possible that the term "abortion" is not a bad term to use in that regard, and it is quite possible that the victimisation that the members of the Opposition are speaking about is still inverted victimisation, and although the Democratic Labour Party is in office, we are still being victimised.

The question that Head 16 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 72 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE - $400 000

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 72 stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, earlier today we heard from the Prime Minister that a Cabinet Paper was published by the Printery. I wish the Prime Minister to give us some more details of this, whose fault and responsibility it is, because it seems to me that if a Cabinet Paper is going to find itself down to the Printing Office to be printed that it cannot be dismissed only as a wonder or a consternation. One wants to know what is the function of the Cabinet Office.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Prime Minister says *sotto voce* that when he makes recommendations to the Public Service Commission, he must also make recommendations to himself as to where the ministerial responsibility lies as well, so it is not a question simply' of making a recommendation about an officer. One has to consider the matter this way..

There are certain publications now being done by the Printing Department, for instance, the Law Reports of Barbados. I understand that there is some difficulty, it appears, in fixing the price of those reports — certainly those of us in the profession have been trying to obtain those reports - and I wonder if there is, in fact, any difficulty.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Both the Laws of Barbados and the Law Reports. I think the problem seems to be putting a price on the functions in order to remunerate the Printing Department.

The other thing, Sir, is that it has always been my understanding that the Printing Department would eventually expand further in the office that is occupied by the Town and Country Planning Department. Am I correct that the Town and Country Planning Department is moving somewhere to the Garrison and that the old Town and Country Planning Department will now be the whole Ministry of the Public Service? If so, does the Prime Minister see there is any need to expand the Printing Department, and if so, where?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, let me answer the last question first. The honourable Member would know that the Printing Department has been very congested for a long period of time, I would say as long ago as 12 years it was overcrowded, and so, too, was the Town and Country Planning Office. I used to be a bit concerned, it is true', as a practitioner, that they took so long to process applications for Town Planning permission, but I was surprised to see the confusion that prevailed in there, not that they took long, but that they were able to process any applications at all. So the move up to, I think it is Block B at the Garrison, is to give them more accommodation so they can have a proper filing system and that they can deal with the applications in a more expeditious manner.

Therefore, it is logical, unless you are going to build a new Printery, that the additional space required by the Government Printery should be made available to the building which is right next door to the Government Printery, which is the former Town and Country Planning Department.

The honourable Member asked about the printing of a Cabinet Paper in the *Official Gazette.* I find it difficult to believe that that was an accident. That is all I can say. I was absolutely flabbergasted this week - I think it was March 5 - to see not an extract, but a complete Cabinet Paper with the reference number and the proposal that Cabinet is asked to do so and so and everything else printed *in extenso,* in full, in the *Official Gazette.*

I might as well tell honourable Members what it was about. There was a recommendation in relation to Barclays Bank, as far as I remember, and the Chase Manhattan Bank, which was subsequently sold to Caribbean Commercial Bank. When the matter came before the Cabinet, the recommendation was not agreed to, because there is some doubt about the legality relating to the transfer of the investment in the Chase .Manhattan Bank. So it was felt that that should be left over.

Somebody has got a vested interest in creating mischief, because it Would look as if we discriminated against the Chase Manhattan Bank and came to a conclusion in favour of Barclays Bank, and that was not the issue at all.

I do not like repeating how long I have been in the House, I have been in here so long that I have forgotten when t came. Iknow it was December 1951. I am a frequent reader of the *Official Gazette,* both because, infrequently, it contained mistakes relating to the House of Assembly, and also, because as a legal practitioner, I felt it incumbent on me to pay close attention to what was in there.

Since 1951, I have never seen a Cabinet Paper published in the *Official Gazette,* that is all I can say, and I can go in court and swear that nobody has ever reported to me that any Cabinet Paper has ever appeared in the *Official Gazette.* It is a breach of the Official Secrets Act. That is the first thing, and one cannot tell me that was an accident. 7.1.0 p.m.

On an inquiry being made to the Government printer, the Government Printer said that he prints what is sent to him and you cannot really blame him if you analyse what the Government Printer is saying. I do not mean the Government Printer, the head of the department - the person who printed this said he prints what is sent to him, and I think that he has a duty to print what is sent to him, because he does not know whether the Cabinet decided that was some extraordinary matter.

I do not know if Members on the other side have had this experience, that sometimes if you ask your typist what is in the document that they have handed back to you, they do not know, because they cannot confuse themselves analysing your English. If there is a mistake in it before they have re.-read it, they will type on everything. If you ask them sometimes what the paper is about, a really efficient typist does not know. It is not like reading a novel, or doing homework in Greek or Latin. They are mechanical typists. It is only at the stage when they have to read back with the assistance of somebody else that they begin to make some sense out of it. So a printer is not concerned. He probably does not even see the words "Cabinet Office". He sees some words there and he goes straight through and prints.

In another case here in the very Estimates, you cannot blame the printer for taking what was sent to him from the Ministry of Finance — and I have been warning the Minister about the people in there all the time — because that was a direct print-out from the computer at the Ministry of Finance and he put it on the offset and Photographed the thing and stuck it in the back of the document. It had no right in there. You know very well that you do not put into your Estimates what the Ministry of Legal Affairs requests for next year's expenditure and what they were granted. That was deliberate, too, and it was done by people I have been warning the Minister to watch, "they do not deliver from up here, they bowl round arm all the time." Those were my exact words to him, but he would not listen to me. He believes that everything is sweet in the garden, that there is no perversity amongst the people who work for Government.

I am not saying they do it to please the Opposition. They do it because they are wicked. You do not have to bribe them. You do not have the money to bribe them, I hope. The kind of money they would want, only the cocaine dealers could bribe them.

I am making a statement, an incontrovertible fact, that they do it out of wickedness. They do it to embarrass the Government. Sometimes they are embarrassing themselves. They cannot embarrass me, I have been at this game too long.

I will be making some recommendations tomorrow morning. I will tell the 'Minister before. Until they can explain to me how they can publish a Cabinet Paper in the *Official Gazette* I think it is better for them and the safety of this country that they should stay home, draw full salary, if they like, draw some salary for the next 20 years, but I would not want to see them any where about Government business as long as I have anything to do with the Government, because those people are dangerous.

It is a breach of the Official Secrets Act, and that is capable of being visited by terms of imprisonment. You cannot blame the Government Printer, because, as I said before,-they do not read what is sent to them - they print what is sent to them. Their job is printing, not correcting, nor phrasing, analysis, grammar, common sense and that kind of thing. They print what you give to them. They print it and they reproduce it faithfully. They are not to question the legality of what you send to them. I do not want to say anymore, because I feel too worked up on it.

The question that Head 72 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved: in the affirmative without division.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

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

The question that Mr. CHAIRMAN report progress and ask for leave to sit again, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Hori[1]. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am seeking leave of the House to re-open the item "Government Notices" in order to give notice of one Resolution and one Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, then leave is granted.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

A Resolution to grant the sum of $12 908 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1986/87 Part I, Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1986/87, No. 27 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Bill to amend the Special Loans Act.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the following Bill was read a first time.

A BUI to amend the Special Loans Act.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of our work at this time.

I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 10.00 a.ra tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18, 1987.

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

The question that the House be suspended until Wednesday, March 18, 1987 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

7.20 p.ra

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. On the suspension, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it now reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 18 - AUDIT - $170 891

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $170 891, under Head 18 - Audit — stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 18 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division,

HEAD 19 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - $2 049 677

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $2 049 677 under Head 19 - Ministry of Finance — stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, among the revenue which the Government is hoping to collect this year is the sum of $31 million in Special Receipts. These are composed largely, no doubt, of the levies levied under the Training Fund and the Health Levy Fund. They exclude the Levy under the Transport Board. I think you will recall, Mr. Chairman, that on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, the point was made by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) that these receipts had not been brought into the Consolidated Fund, other than in so far as there had been a surplus on the Health Levy, and what I wish to debate in this Committee is the Government's policy in relation to levies.

I think it was on October 5, 1985 that the Right Honourable Member gave the assurance that if the Democratic Labour Party was returned to power, they would be abolishing the Transport Levy. What has happened that the Government has changed its position? Surely that is a major change of position. Having promised that you were going to abolish the levy, I now hear from the honourable Member saying that levy is expected to realise $13 million this year, and that it is that $13 million which will be used as a subsidy for the Transport Board.

We were being told that the country was so over-taxed that it was wrong to impose any levies whatsoever. I have heard an argument that we were in breach of the Constitution by not paying sums into the Consolidated Fund. I note, however, that last year, 1985, a surplus of over $11 million from the Health Levy, a levy which collected some $20 million-odd, during our time was paid into the Consolidated Fund.

I want to know what is the Government's policy? Has the Government changed its policy in relation to the abolition of the Transport Levy? If it has, will it clearly state that to the country and let us know what is its current policy in relation to that matter? It was not simply a matter of saying that they were going to pay it into the Consolidated Fund. It was going to be abolished at one stage, after the great consultation at the Crane Hotel. The statement was at one stage that they were considering all the levies, but what they had firmly made up their minds about was the necessity to abolish the Transport Levy.

Sir, that levy had been used for the purchasing of rolling stock for the Transport Board and for the improvement of various roads, in accordance with the Transport Levy Act. There is no provision in these Estimates for subsidising the Transport Board. In fact, the subsidy given to be paid by the Ministry of Education for a subsidised bus fare has been taken out of the Estimates, and even the amendments which have been circulated now make no reference to this. I anticipate that even on the projected figures for the collection of the levy and the Transport Board revenue, there will be a shortfall. Will the Minister please let us know what measures of supply are being made at this time for the shortfall which, obviously, will occur?

In relation to the Health Levy, when we get to the Ministry of Health we will have a lot more to say on the use of that levy and the fact that now it is going to be in the nature of a -general taxing measure. If we are not to continue with it, then we will want to know what other provisions are being made for some of the services that were being paid for out of this levy fund.

I want to move on, although I will give the Minister time to reply — this has about five or six Heads — to the question of energy. I note that there is in the Estimates, a provision under Capital to pay for expenses in connection with the Wind Energy Project. My information is that that office has virtually closed, or if it has not closed yet, will be closed by the end of the financial year, and it seems as though the Government has now abandoned the project for looking at alternative ways of supplying energy at reasonable costs to the country. 10.10 a.m.

The last time when we raised the matter of energy here, when we were dealing with the loan, the use of the Venezuelan Investment Fund's money, the Minister made a statement concerning Government's energy policy, but only in so far as is reflected what would be Government's policy in making charges at the pump. I should like to hear from the Minister how much more prospecting is now being done, drilling, at Woodbourne. Is the Government now fully satisfied — and I have not heard that from this House — that the Barbados National Oil Company is an enterprise that the Government must keep? Is the Government now satisfied that the Oil company has the probability of being viable, and, in any event, that it is likely to make, and has already made, a definite contribution to the energy needs of Barbados, in addition to saving foreign exchange which we formerly spent on the

importation of oil and hydrocarbons from our neighbours?

I also wish the Minister, Sir, to give this Committee an update on the progress being made by a project which was initiated under the Barbados Labour Party, the construction of a liquid petroleum gas plant. When we went out of power, arrangements had been made with private investors from Canada and Canadian agencies for assistance in this regard. The original project envisaged that private investors in Barbados would have been partners in the venture together with overseas interests and some Government interests. I would wish the Minister to let us know whether the format of the shareholding in the LPG plant has in any way been reconstituted or reformed and what provisions there are for local Barbadian investors, including the people who will be the workers at the plant, to take an equity share or interest in this investment.

From the figures which I have seen, from the amount of natural gas being made available to this project, the price at which it was being made available, having regard to the equity that was going into the project and the cost at which the equity was going in, and the anticipated profits arising from the sale of gas at the price at which it was anticipated — LPG products are being sold and will be sold in the market — it was forecast that the project will be self-liquidating within five years, and that, within that period of time, investors would have been able to recoup the total investment and would have had a rate of return in excess of 15% on their investment. Obviously the project is an extremely viable one. I have not seen any provision in the Estimates for the Government taking an interest in the project. I do not know at the moment what work, perhaps, the PIU would have done for the Government on the project, but I would hope that the Government will see this as another area in which a state enterprise should, hand-in-hand with local investment, and in this case, to some extent, overseas investment, be able to go into a very viable project indeed.

I was also aware that when we left power, plans had been in train for the establishment of an ethanol plant at the port. It had been envisaged that there would be a joint venture with a Brazilian enterprise, and, of course, the development would have provided us with the opportunity to look at alternative uses for our sugar product. I recognise that the proposed proximity of the plant to Barbados Mills Ltd. and the sugar terminal was a problem which, in some respects, called for further consideration. But I believe that that project, too, which was left for this Government to consider, was another way of not only looking at avenues of economic development, but at the same time promoting alternative energy sources. The Minister will be aware that under the CBI ethanol exports from Barbados to the United States would merit special treatment, would go in at a preferential rate. That, no doubt, is one of the attractions of such a project for the Brazilian investors. But despite its attraction for them, it also has some tremendous benefits for Barbados, and although we are not now in the Government of the country, we have an interest to see that these projects which, in our view, can contribute significantly to the economic development of Barbados are developed further and continued, that their viability and feasibility are examined, with further care, if necessary, and that they are brought on stream and are not allowed to lie in the files at Government Headquarters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, I should like to address this Committee on the issues raised by the last speaker relating to the Transport Levy Fund.

Sir, in the months and weeks leading up to the election campaign in May last year, and during that campaign, the Democratic Labour Party stated unequivocally that it would be paying the proceeds of that levy as well as the other levies into the Consolidated Fund. That is a commitment we gave to the country during the election campaign and at the time of our election. That is what we stand by to this day. It is still the intention of the Government to, at a time that is convenient, transfer the proceeds of the Transport Levy Fund into the Consolidated Fund. Those of us who were in this Chamber, and I believe that we all were two days ago, on Monday, when the Minister of Finance was introducing the second reading of this Appropriation Bill, would have heard the Minister of Finance say that that was the position.

The Minister also said that the proceeds of the Transport Levy would be used for subsidising the losses of the Transport Board. Sir, this would not have become necessary, and we would have been able to honour our undertaking, if we had found things differently at the Transport Board. I was appalled when I became Minister of Transport at what I found there, and I could only conclude that the past Government was bent on total destruction of the Transport Board. 10.20 a.m.

There are many things that led me to that conclusion, but I do not want to get into any detailed debate on the Transport Board at this stage, because it falls under a Head of its own, and at that point I will be better able to go into the Transport Board. I will just go to the periphery of the matter now.

When I became the Minister, there was no General Manager in place. There was provision for a Deputy General Manager and there was no Deputy General Manager in place. There is not one in place to this day, and there will not be

one either. That was the position created by the past Government in order to put a friend of the Government in a job. I have no friends looking to put in any jobs, nor relatives. There was no Financial Controller in place. How can you run a corporation without a manager, a deputy manager, or financial controller? There was no Personnel Manager at the Transport Board. Worse yet, we have a fleet of nearly 300 buses. That fleet has got to be kept on the road in order to make money, but there was no Chief Engineer at the Transport Board either. So none of the top positions were filled; They, together, constitute the management of the Transport Board and there was no management at the Transport Board. What else can you expect us to conclude, but that the past Government intended to destroy the Transport Board? Because that went along with what they had done earlier and tremendously increased the licenses granted to the minibuses.

How was the Transport Board run? How was it run? It was run centrally by one man, and one man only, and that man was the past Minister, the man I succeeded at the Transport Board. Take a simple thing like the installation of fare boxes. Those fare boxes were ordered from a company in the United States of America that immediately went out of business when it supplied Barbados. That company is no longer in business, so We cannot even service those boxes unless we can try and piece them together ourselves. You cannot replace them. You cannot get spare parts. And you would be surprised to hear, Mr. Chairman that those fare boxes came to Barbados for the Transport Board not consigned to the Transport Board, but consigned to the Minister of Transport in this country!

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Consigned to the Minister of Transport in this country! Yes, Mr. Vic Johnson. Everybody knows who he was. I can call his name.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Yes, he was the legaladviser. I would not say that the Leader of the Opposition had any-[v]' feng to' do with that, but I believe he knows wriat I am talking about.

I do not want to get ii\tb'any further details of the Transport>fJoard. I have givenVenough for this moment to let the honourable Members understand what the position was as regards to the Transport[1];Board. They went ahead and ordered coin counting rjiachines and everything else at great expense, and the Trarisport Board trien proceeded to * lose more money. They bought the tokens and proceeded to lose more*money.

We have come to the conclusion that, for the time being, because of the parlous state in which we have found the finances of the Transport Board, we are going to have to do a serious restructuring. Until we have done this we will have to keep the Transport Levy Fund in aid of the Transport Board, or close it down. To effect this, we will be coming to this Chamber with an amendment to'the Transport Levy Fund Act, at which time all honourable Members will have the opportunity to have even a further debate on this particular matter.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition has raised a number of questions which I will,only be too glad to reply to in detail.

The Honourable Minister responsible for Transport has dealt decisively with the Transport Xevy The policy of the Government, both in respect of the Transport Levy and all other levies, is that they should be paid into the Consolidated Fund. It was the policy that was clearly enunciated at the time of the election and before that.

The question which arises, Mr. Chairman, is the timing of the transfer of all these levies. It is much easier to do so in respect of the Training Levy and the Health Levy, and appropriate steps have been taken in relation to those two levies. In respect of the Transport Levy, apart from the very serious state of the accounts at the Transport Board, there is also the problem that commitments of a long term nature were made against the Consolidated Fund. These relate to the purchase of buses some years ago, which will have to be funded out of the Transport Levy over a period of time.

Several things will have to take place to ensure that the integrity of that fund. and GoVerntfient finances are maintained. Firstly, the extent of the liabilities against the Transport Levy Fund, long term and medium term, have to be quantified. What are they? There* are still liabilities against the Transport Levy Fund going back to 1985—1986 that only came to our attention, I think, a matter of two or three weeks ago. Until those short term, medium term and long term liabilities are properly accounted for, then we will have to maintain that fund in place, because when these liabilities are properly quantitated, they will have to be transferred over to the appropriate sections of Govern ment accounts, debts against the Consolidated Fund and ,£he other o^tstandirigs, against the appropriate Heads.,-10t30a.ni. "'" <[!] '";...

V

^ Ifhat is the first thing that could not be ascertained because of the really appalling saticounting state that existed prior to the Government's take over. It is nothing to do with those persons responsible for the fund itself. It is those people who were creating liabilities against the fund and giving directions when they'thought fit, and the chief culprit was the former Minister of Transport

and Works, Mr. Vic Johnson.

Bills are still coming in. I am sure that, even as I speak now, bills will still be coming in for prior years, and it would be very unwise of me to take into the Consolidated Fund a portfolio in which I do not know what the outstandings are, and I therefore wish to allow another year to pass in order that the contamination of the portfolio can be cleaned up. Whenever it is cleaned up, then we will be able to deal with it. It would not surprise me if next year we get a bill for 1984, the way how things have been going with the Transport Levy Fund.

During the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, I indicated that, by way of a move-in, which has been circulated, $2 million would be provided in the Estimates to meet any shortfall during this transitional stage.

In terms of the availability of funds, there will be no shortage of funds to meet the projected deficit in relation to the Transport Board and to meet the liabilities that we know about at the moment during the next year. That is the position as we see it now. When it comes to this time of the year, I do not know what other bills I will be presented with relating to previous commitments by the Government. They come in weekly. All of a sudden, you see a figure of $1 million or $2 million going back to 1985-86.

There was no greater mess in Government than what was going on at the Transport Board, almost entirely due to the misconduct of the former Minister responsible for Transport. Intrinsically, there is a problem in terms of the provision of public transport in Barbados — these issues will be dealt with elsewhere — but I am talking of conduct that did serious violence to any principles of propriety in relation to the handling of public funds, and I refer to the activities of the former Minister responsible for Transport, Mr. Vic Johnson.

We have also said that it makes for mismanagement if you have income coming from several sources. If you have a Transport Levy in place, why do you have to put money in there under Education as well? The parents pay the Transport Levy. The children pay the lower bus fare, but the buses are always full. The point is that the source of funding will be the transport levy, and that is a policy decision that has been taken.

We had a wide range of matters raised. Our policy in relation to the price of gasoline and diesel, the pump charges, is stated in our manifesto, was stated on the floor of the House and will be restated again by me, that the price to the consumer will bear an equitable relation to the cost of the product. It is as simple and straightforward as that. The precise words are there in the manifesto.

On the question of the ethanol plant, that project is still under consideration. There were several factors which have held up the ethanol plant. It is not really in the portfolio of the Ministry of Finance, it is really a matter for the Ministry of Industry. The IDC deals with that particular matter.

The first problem that came to my attention, first of all, was a question of the supply of water. It is a very high consumer of water. The second problem that arose was whether there could be modifications to the plant to make use of sea water. The third problem is that there is a considerable amount of wastage as a result of that process which could be a serious environmental problem, not only in terms of contamination of adjacent activities, but also in relation to the capacity of the soil of Barbados to absorb the extensive chemical waste that would have to be dumped. All these things have been evaluated and are being evaluated, and it depends entirely on how fast the investors can move and how fast those responsible for protecting the environment of the country would be able to deal with these particular matters. That is the state of progress on that, as far as I am aware.

In terms of the windmill project, not so long ago I made a statement in this House on this particular matter, and I think the only way to answer the Leader of the Opposition, who is quite clearly geared to some element of mischief this morning, is to repeat it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member must not accuse me of being mischievous. My debates in this House are very serious. No Member comes in here to create mischief.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown (Mr. P. J. M. Miller) seems to have had some pepper sauce last night.

(Aside. Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: You are talking about Windmill you know.)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: For the benefit of the honourable Member, I will make an appropriate Statement:

"On 26th October 1982, the Government signed a a non-reimbursable agreement with the IDB, in which the latter provided US$1.5 million for the implementation of the wind power project, estimated at that time to cost $1.87 million The contribution of the Government was US$370 000. 10.40 a.m.

"The estimated completion date as set out in the agreement was 26th October, 1985. The project has,

however, experienced delays in the following areas: The placing of the contract for the wind turbine. The IDB had rejected the pre-qualification recommendations of the Special Tender Committee regarding the purchase of the wind turbine generator. The delay was of six month's duration." All this preceded the Democratic Labour Party. "The manufacturer of the turbine was six weeks late in handing it over to Government. Additionally, blade inspections and other teething problems delayed the monitoring period for a period of three months. Between 16th June, 1986 and the end of August 1986 the machine was out of service as the manufacturer carrier out checks on suspected defects in the blades. From the 15th October the machine has been inactive because the manufacturer could not guarantee the structural integrity of the blades' design. The manufacturers, James Howden, have estimated that the machine will be inactive until the end of June 1987. The project consultants, British Electricity International, estimated that it will be out of action until the end of July.

"As a result of those delays and difficulties, the estimated cost of the project has increased by US$237 000 from the 1982 budgeted figure to US$1.87 million. Of this cost, the overrun of US$237 000, US$110 000 was identified as resulting from the early delays, and the remainder, $121 000, as a result of the in operation of the turbine from the 15th October, 1986 and an estimated restart date of June 1987."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one minuted to wind up.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES:

"The Ministry of Finance met with James Howden, the manufacturer of the turbine, on the 6th November, 1986 to find out their position with respect to the extra costs which are attributed to the inoperation of the machine as a result of the defective blades. Discussions were also held with other contracting parties, British Electricity International, the project consultants, and the Caribbean Met. Institute to see what could be done to reduce the costs of the overruns to Government.

"The Ministry of Finance has also held discussions with the IDB in order to determine whether they would be willing to help meet the costs of the overruns. The IDB agreed that under the circumstances, there was a case for approaching the IDB for extra funds and that a submission would be made which would have to be processed in Washington and would take an estimated two to three months.

"The period of the inoperation of the wind turbine, the causes of which I have clearly set out in this statement, will still be costing the Government $37 000 per month.

"The Ministry of Finance therefore took the following decisions: the closure of the wind power unit from the 28th February, entered into negotiations with contracting parties to see where they could reduce their costs while the project was at a standstill, has formulated a position to be communicated to the manufacturer, James Howden and Company Limited, with respect to their responsibility for the extra costs which have resulted from their defective machine and we are preparing a submission to the IDB for assistance in relation to the extra costs."

I will come back later.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I understand the criticisms of the Minister of Transport and Works in relation to the Transport Board, and since we are likely to debate that this week and in the future, I will reserve my other comments for those substantive debates, except to say that I was under the impression that when the new Government took over an appointment had been offered to somebody as General Manager, some man called Smith from North America, but he had not physically taken up.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I see. Okay.

Sir, I want to take the opportunity to discuss some aspects of banking for which the Ministry of Finance is responsible. I have a lot of sympathy with the very last statement made yesterday by the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman), in relation to an experience he had with the National Bank a few days ago. If he looks at the Senate Debates around 1982 or 1983, he would see that I recorded my own experience then.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could the honourable Member point out to me in this subhead the related fact we are discussing now on banking.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister is responsible for the National Bank.

I thought the National Bank had become a little bit more responsible and reliable, but I have to relate another bad experience. I think it is running into four to five weeks now that I wrote them a letter asking for some information about standing orders in my account. Would you believe that for five weeks they have not even replied to my letter, a letter of about seven lines asking if they could give me details of the standing orders? When I

move the account tomorrow now, I would be the worst person in the world, and I would not be nationalistic.

I am concerned about the standards in the National Bank and I am seeing no signs of improvement even under the new Board. I have a son who is at university in America. I have to send him money, with permission from the Central Bank, every month to pay his expenses, and not once in five months has the National Bank been able to get my son's allowance to him on time. The instruction is to send the money on the first of the month. October's he received in November, November's he received in December. I stopped the wired transfer and said send the draft to me and I will put it in a registered envelope and send it to him, and I cannot get the draft out of the National Bank before the 15th or 16th of the month, and this is a young boy who is not even 20 yet and has to suffer those inconveniences.

I hope the Minister will try and encourage the National Bank to be more responsible. We all want to see it succeed, but not purely as a matter of negritude, as I said in the Senate in 1982 when they published the first photograph of the Board that I was happy to see a black Board and that we have a duty to see that that bank does not fail, to be able to prove to the doubting Thomases that black people can run banking businesses, too. But I cannot see any change of attitude to satisfy me that we are serious about the commitment to that institution which has a golden opportunity, again like the Hilton Hotel, as I said the other night, as a pace setter. We are going to lose business, good accounts, if they do not bring to bear a higher level of efficiency than obtains now and obtained in the past. I am not saying that under the previous Administration it was any different. 10.50 a.m.

One of the problems, perhaps, is that the Minister, by law in the Act, has very limited powers of intervention, as he will realise now. Perhaps, that is as it should be in a commercial enterprise, but if the Minister cannot have the same degree of supervisory jurisdiction as, perhaps, in other areas, a greater responsibility is placed on the Board and the management to ensure that they are aware of the proper functioning of the Bank on a day-to-day basis, and I just make those general observations about the National Bank.

I thought that since the first President/Managing Director had gone things had changed. I said yesterday that errors made in the first few years were entirely due to his empire building attitude, his love of expanding and having banks. The branch at Speightstown is still recovering from the initial folly. The National Bank rented in the Speightstown Mall. They lent the money for the development of the mall to the developers then rented back from them more space than they needed for their operations. Foolishness! But that was not the end! What they were paying in rent to the developers more than paid the developers' mortgage. They were bound to lose money.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You would have heard that we were taking advantage of the President/Managing Director because he was a well-known hard-nose dem, so we let him have a free hand. But he had too free a hand. I hope he does not carry such attitudes now into the other place.

Similarly, next to the BWIA building in Fairchild Street, a man called Abed wanted to buy the property for about $200 000 or some such figure. The National Bank makes an offer to him and then goes and says to him, "If you do not sell us, we will have Government compulsorily acquire it." The result was that under the pressure it was sold, and Abed made $200 000 more profit than what he paid for it initially. Foolishness! You all know that. I am not saying anymore on it, because I believe it might be under consideration elsewhere. These are bad decisions.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Around 1979/1980. It went to Cabinet? I was not there. I would not know that. Do not ask me about Cabinet. If you ask me about the' one in my kitchen, I can tell you about that.

Sir, I believe this Ministry also has responsibility for the Central Bank. You still have it? I am not sure. I just want to know. I am not being facetious. I am not even being mischievous today. I just wanted to know if the Minister has responsibility for the Central Bank still. So much has been taken from the Minister of Finance, I do not know what he is left with, Sir, other than the Budget.

Assuming that the Minister of Finance still has the responsibility for the Central Bank$_3$ I believe that since we are getting near to March 31, and the end of the Governor's term, that we should pay some tribute, because whatever may be a person's individual failings, idiosyncrasies, or problems with personality in the management of his job, in his functioning, I do not believe that if we are serious — we do not have to be generous — if we are truthful, we all as Barbadians must acknowledge the tremendous contribution paid by the outgoing Governor of the Central Bank.

Allowing for any personal idiosyncrasies and so on, look at the office, if you like, of Governor of the Central Bank. Under both Administrations it has been properly run, and only in the very best interest of Barbados as a nation; not in the interest of any particular party but in the interest of this country, and I think we have been well-served as a nation by the person who has been

Governor for the last whatever years, since 1972, and I want to take this opportunity to pay public tribute to him.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no! He is going home! He is not dead, he is going home.

In his years, the Governor has developed a rapport and a respect in the international banking community that has from time to time redounded to the advantage and benefit of Barbados. It is with regret that he has to go, but the Government has its own ideas, and, as I said yesterday, the Government is free to make whatever changes it wishes. I still feel respect should be paid to the way in which Barbados was assisted in its financial and economic management in the last 14 or 15 years by virtue and by reason of the presence of the present Governor in the position and office of Governor of the Central Bank.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, there are one or two other matters — I ran out of time — that *I* would like to respond to.

First of all, to deal with the administrative problems which the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has highlighted in relation to the National Bank, I would like to give this House an assurance that I have every confidence that the new Board will, in due course, be able to solve them. I say this because I am aware of the general thrust in policy being pursued by the Board to make sure that they recruit persons of the highest calibre available to fill the critical posts in the National Bank. They have also instituted a programme of ongoing training within the National Bank and I think that this will go a long way to the solution of the problem.

I am afraid that the problems of the National Bank, which I have spoken about in this House so often in Opposition, are not problems that can go away overnight. It is my own feeling that, with the recruitment of adequately trained bankers to supplement those who are • already there and a continuous training programme, a continuous upgrading of the level of service offered to the public will result, inevitably. I would hope that, in the not too distant future, the Barbados National Bank would be offering the same level of services to the community as any other commercial bank, and probably a wider range of services within its commercial sector.

A few questions were asked on the Barbados National Oil Company. As I pointed out earlier, again in the House, the only major change in policy so far has been a cut back in the drilling operations and a cut back in the amount of oil produced per day during 1986. That has resulted in the reduction of a projected loss of $21 million to a loss of $2.2 million. If we had continued with the programme which was then being carried out by the present Administration, the losses would have been some $21 million. At the end of the year, despite the unnecessary losses from about January to April, when there was clear evidence that you would have to cut back on production if you were to reduce the losses, nevertheless the BNOC was able to reduce the losses to $2.2 million. I think that the staff should be congratulated for that particular achievement. That was in the face of the fact that we cut down production, but, of course, the price of oil dropped down to about US$9.00. That was the average that they got for the year. ll.OOajn.

The company should make a profit this year if it can maintain the present level of production. The average for the year may well be just under 1 400 barrels a day, and we hope that the average price of oil is maintained at about US$15 per barrel.

As far as drilling is concerned, the company is getting geared, as I indicated'in the House recently, for a judicious programme of dealing with existing wells, particularly those wells that have a lower yield of gas and a higher yield of oil, and will gear any drilling programme down the road according to the market conditions in relation to oil. I do not anticipate that any significant amount of money will be spent this year in terms of drilling.

In terms of the liquid petroleum gas plant, it has been announced already that the plant will cost some $4 million, and that it will come on stream, hopefully, in October this year, with production of some 70 barrels a day. It is also anticipated that a compressor station will be made available from CIDA to be used with the LPG plant. This, together with the new six inch pipeline being installed for the National Petroleum Corporation, through CIDA, will obviate any venting of gas by the Barbados National Oil Corporation, or certainly will reduce the amount of gas that you have to vent. One anticipates that the increased sales to the Barbados National Petroleum Corporation will go up by about 60%.

In terms of its viability the LPG plant project is expected to earn $2.8 million in its first five years of operation and to generate cash flow necessary for repayment of any loans borrowed in relation to this project.

In terms of shareholding, no definite decision has been taken by us at the moment as to the range of participation. There are persons in the private sector who have indicated an interest. I do not know of any individuals who have indicated an interest, but certain corporate citizens operating in Barbados have indicated an interest. This would have, of course, to be judged against the interest of the two companies, the BNOC and the NPC, and also in

terms of our overall strategy for development of the country. So whereas there is an interest by at least two corporate citizens, the Government has not formulated any particular strategy as to the levels of participation by persons outside of the public sector in this particular matter.

I believe I have answered all the questions raised so far.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am much indebted to the Minister for the sober manner in which he has approached these matters that are being raised and the serious manner in which he has approached them. I am very pleased to say that there are at least three areas this morning on which I can say that the DLP, as a successor Government, is obviously satisfied with the successful analysis we made of going into various measures of investment, and 1 am pleased indeed to hear of the progress which is being made on the establishment of the LPG plant.

The Minister says no firm decision has yet been made on the shareholding and how it will be constituted. I wish, however, to draw to his attention certain points which I believe have to be borne in mind. At present, there are persons who are the main importers of LPG, and obviously, if we are now going to be self-sufficient in this sphere of our energy needs - we are talking largely of supplying householders who buy the various bottles or containers of LPG for domestic use, that is principally the area in which this plant will be operating - then I think it is extremely vital that some arrangement be made with the traditional suppliers; firstly, because they have the expertise in this sphere of distribution, in particular, and they have been in the market for some time, and secondly, because in my view, it seems, from the studies I have seen on this project when we constituted the Government, that it is a terminal project, unless the drilling programme of the BNOC reveals that down the line we have more reserves of natural gas than is at present known. 11.10 a.m.

If my memory serves me right, it seems as though there were reserves for at least ten years, more likely 20 years, I do not know what is the Minister's most recent information on this. Therefore, unless we can look down the line to a 15-20 year period, we may reach a stage where we have not got the natural resource ourselves. That was one of the reasons why it was considered most important for continual drilling to be indulged in, and, as the Minister well knows, our oil wells produce more natural gas than they do produce crude oil. But the natural gas resource is a very important resource, and now that it will be used for the purpose of LPG, as well as for the purpose of providing fuel to the main public utility, the Light and Power Company, it is important that we should continue exploring that source of hydrocarbons. I am pleased that the Government is resuming the drilling programme at the BNOC. In fact, it seems to me very vital that a continuous programme, judicious, no doubt, must be continued if we are going to go into the position of getting into an LPG Plant.

But it is not only the retailers of LPG that have to be kept in mind, the Government itself, as the major supplier, through its BNOC subsidiary, must have a stake in an enterprise that, on the figures which the Minister has shown to me, seems to me to be extremely viable. If you are putting up $2.8 million in equity and you are going to be able in five years to service and recoup your investment, so that there is no loss down five years, and the project has, let us say, a viability of fifteen years, you are going to have ten years where you are certain of getting a proper rate of return, and the Government, as the main supplier, seems to me to have a strong case for having an equity shareholding on behalf of the public of Barbados.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member would know that this is a money maker. The honourable Member has dene very well in his private investments. I am sure that if he brings the same hard nose approach to look at the analyses that have been done on this project, he would find that it is a money maker..This brings me to the third leg.

The third leg is we must involve Barbadians in investing in their own resources. I am aware that one of the major shareholders of the company from outside is a Barbadian. He went to school with me and, I believe, with the Honourable Member as well, although we were a couple of years ahead of him at the school. **He** is a very distinguished person. As a matter of fact, he comes from my own constituency, from the area in which I spent some of my life as a youngster, the Dayrells Road area.

It seems to me that this is an opportunity to really involve the small investors of Barbados, including some of the persons on whose lands we are drilling oil, in a venture that, if it is properly structured, in my view can hold benefits for the country. I believe that that was one of the things envisaged would have happened when we started out on this project.

I am glad to see that the Government is obviously now going to keep the Barbados National Oil Company. The Minister as he mellows into his portfolio, will recognise that in a Government all does not go as wrong as we were made to believe before May 28, 1986. I remember that when we came to the House for the purchase of the Mobil assets, all sorts of statements were

made then. We were told it would never be a viable proposition. I am glad to hear now, down the line, that the Government is seeing the possibility — not this year, the Minister says by next year — the company should make a profit.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Minister says "Good management!" He must know that politicians do not manage these things, we have to choose good managers.' If we put the wrong manager at the Barbados National Bank at the start and we had four years of bad management, we suffered losses. If we put the bad manager up at the BNOC, of course, we would suffer losses, and because of the nature of politics, we got beat for it. But the point is that that project is viable as the Minister will soon discover, as we said in the debate yesterday, that Heywoods is viable, and he will see that the operating profit this year will be in excess of $2 million.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Go and look at your facts.,I am not going to mislead the Minister. I am going to give him the information if he has not got it. He will find out that that project is viable, and I have said, and I am glad that this project is going to be viable.

I am not doing it to say to the Minister, 'Well, we told you so at the time.' I am pleased to see that we are getting to the stage where, if these projects are allowed to fructify and settle down, and we take a lot of the politics out of some of the economic enterprises that we are going into — whether the politics come from us or you all — I am a strong Barbadian nationalist in this respect — these projects can and will pay, and this idea that the mass of Barbadian people cannot do things well will be exploded. Do not mind what a few columnist may write about these matters. I am glad that the Government seems to be satisfied that in the long run the National Bank will be a worthwhile venture.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member may well know that there was a difference of opinion, even within our own party, as to the actual components that should go in there. If at the moment it is necessary to take out that section, do so. But what I am saying is that, basically, that is one of the ventures in which local people, either through the state or otherwise, must be involved. We cannot forever believe that the only persons who know anything about banking, insurance or the development of oil must be people other than our own hue, must be people who are outside of Barbados, that those of us who are capable of running this country in such a manner as it has been run in the last 50 years, only have the ability to talk and do not have the ability to do. The honourable Member, like me, went to school at a time when we had to struggle to get where we were but we knew we had the ability to perform. The point that I must stress, from our perspective, is that we are going to have sometimes some setbacks, but I defy all of the publicists to deny that Barbadian people, the mass of them, the black people in particular, in Barbados have shown a mastery of their affairs in the last 50 years that should be copied by a lot of countries. And if we can show it in public affairs, in my view, we can show it in the private sector as well. That is the message that I want him to understand, vote for me or do not vote for me. I am convinced about that, and that is why when I see a project having problems I am not going to pull it down immediately, even if it is started by the other side. We must give it time to go on.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, the honourable Member said I have the spirit of the DLP manifesto. The honourable Member should listen to the statements that I have been making in this country for years in the House and out of it. Do not mind what people may say.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas raised a point that I want to touch on. The Central Bank's building has caused a good deal of political difference in this country, and I am going to let the bygones of that, unless I am taunted, be bygones. But, as the honourable Member for St. Thomas said, with the effluxion and the fact that the present Governor demits his office at the expiry of his contract — the Government does not intend to offer him a new contract - and as one of the Members in here when the Central Bank Act was passed and who saw the DLP bring him as the first Governor and knowing the man, I say that he has grown into his office. It has not been an easy task for him. Any of us in public life at the level at which he was, do not have an easy task, and you are going to be the subject of criticism, some of them justified and a lot of them unjustified from time to time. He has had sometimes to make some very difficult statements which have not always accorded with the views of sectorial or other interests in this country. But none of us can say other than that the Central Bank has performed and given economic advice of a high standard 11.20a.m.

I am not saying that everything the Central Bank has said or done, the Government, or indeed the people, would be satisfied with, but it has now got to the stage where it is a respected Barbadian institution, and those people who have led it must take some measure of congratulation for this fact. The economic forecasting which the Government now does has been improved

beyond all measure. The standard of the material which they produce has been high, and I can say that each one of us should be able to recognise that their publications have not been slanted in favour of either of the two major political parties or those people who are on the periphery. There are really only two major parties here, and will be for many years to come, I trust. So I would wish, likewise, to pay tribute to him.

I just want to correct one point yesterday in talking about Central Bank matters. It was said that former Prime Minister St. John voted against the Central Bank in the Senate. We have checked the records and that is not so. He pointed out some of the difficulties, that, by passing the Act, we did not completely control the banking institution. But in no way did he take any stand against the Central Bank as such.

The other point I want to make is that there was no division in the House or the Senate on the Central Bank Act. It was passed unanimously, as I understand it.

I want finally, Sir, to deal with the question of the levy again. The Minister was very careful to say that part of the policy of the Democratic Labour Party was that the levies would be paid into the Consolidated Fund. There were two aspects of the policy that were enunciated, that I recall, and from the records of speeches, both voice speeches and written speeches, that I have seen were made by the DLP. One, quite correct, they wanted all levies to be paid into the Consolidated Fund. But there was also the clearest enunciation of policy by the leader of the party that the Transport Levy would have been abolished. After the famous weekend at the Crane, St. Philip, in giving a Press Conference and appearing on television, that was part of the policy. If there has been a change of policy, there has been a change. Maybe wisdom has now convinced the Government that such a levy was necessary if one were to deal with the serious problems of transport in this country — problems that have been going on before us. It is an area that has become so harshly partisan that some of the very criticisms which I have heard the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Hon. P. M. Greaves) level in here were levelled against past Ministers of the Democratic Labour Party Government in relation to transport. I seriously believe that we will always have the problem, wherever you have employment at that level, of some degree of interference, if you want to put it as far as that, in order to get people who are pressing you for jobs employed. I am a realistic person.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: One more minute, Sir. Five more minutes, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, only one more.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want in that one minute to say to the House that I defy the Minister to show that anybody has taken and misused the Transport Levy Funds. The levy funds are collected by the Director of the National Insurance. The latest report was issued and laid in this House in February this year, I think, and it is up to the year ended March 31, 1985. There has not been a report since the year ended March 31, 1985. It has a certificate from well-respected auditors, Coopers and Lybrand, and they have had all the information to satisfy them that the funds were being properly used, and I look forward to seeing the auditors report. It has the same chairman. It list the liabilities, the assets, and the cash in hand.

The Minister may quarrel about decisions taken to borrow money and whether it was in breach of the Financial and Audit Act, and we have had that debate in here. But so far as people putting their hands in any funds - that is the point I am trying to make — I am sure that these funds have been secured. In those circumstances, one has to be careful in the political fray of sharing good lashes when you can share good lashes, but not giving the people the impression that somebody has dishonestly acted with funds. The report is here of the Transport Levy Fund, the Third Annual Report. I am looking forward to the Minister bringing the fourth report down to this House in due course. Let me say that if the Government finds that anybody, regardless of who he is, has put his hands in the public funds, send it to the Director of Public Prosecutions, and make a case of it then. Bring out all the auditors, the Auditor General, Coopers and Lybrand, and let the person be prosecuted. But do not speak in such a tone as to leave impressions and not to deal with the factual position as it ought to be.

I believe my minute has expired.

The question that Head 19 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 20 - REVENUE COLLECTION - $2 872 201

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 20 stand part.

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

The question that Head 20 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 23 -LOANS AND ADVANCES- $1 325 616

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 23 stand part.

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

The question that Head 23 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 11.30 a.m.

HEAD 24 - PENSIONS -AS AMENDED - $18 400 000

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 24, as amended, stand part.

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

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

HEAD 73 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - AS AMENDED - $34 316 228

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 73 as amended stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, under Subhead 2 I see that the Government is continuing with its equity shareholding in the West Indies Shipping Corporation, and I take this opportunity to get some clarification for the benefit of the House about Government's policy in relation to the Shipping Corporation in the area.

I notice, from reports coming from some of the eastern Caribbean countries, that most of the OECS countries are now opting out, including Belize, their contributions to WISCO, and therefore it seems as though the major ownership of the corporation, and any liabilities accruing from that ownership, will devolve on Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. I know that Barbados has always paid its share of such liabilities. I also notice that there continued to be a decrease in the net tonnage of cargo handled annually by these ships, and I wonder whether the Government, in conjunction with its CARICOM partners, has had an opportunity to review the overall viability of this project and to put in place measures for improving the viability.

I listened to a recent speech made by the Right Honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E, W. Barrow), the Prime Minister, at the opening of a shipping conference here for the formation of a West Indies Shipping Council. In that speech he advocated the formation of a shipping line for the Caribbean nations to trade with the outside world. I do not know if his concept was limited to a shipping line only within the English-speaking Caribbean, because a wider shipping line covering the other Caribbean nations, including Mexico, Columbia, etc., was tried - NAMUCAR - and NAMUCAR, despite the clout which should have been added to it by including nations such as Mexico, has also run into very serious financial difficulties.

Part of the problem is that the world market is such today that there is an over supply of shipping space, both in cargo carrying vessels for goods, what we recognise to be the normal goods, as well as in tankers, and with the falling of the price of oil and the oil crisis which occurred, there was even an extra surplus. In fact, several shipping lines have taken a beating as enterprises. In addition, not that Barbados or the Caribbean is thinking of getting into the wider ship building part of this exercise, but, as we know, the change in the nations who are now leaders in ship building from Europe to the Far East — for instance, South Korea — has meant that ships are now being supplied at a cheaper cost in the southern developing countries, if we look from a north-south perspective, than in the other countries.

It is in that context that I want to know how far Government's policy is going. Is there any real chance of rescuing WISCO? Are we going to continue always to be picking up the liabilities without being able to grapple with the problems of ownership?

As the honourable Member will have seen from the files, each territory who had a small shareholding in WISCO was demanding that the ship should make regular visits there. Whilst there is a case for the movement of Caribbean cargo, intra-Caribbean I wonder whether it is economically sensible for every route to be plied by WISCO, rather than using WISCO as a mother ship in some respects, for the major cargo, leaving some of the schooner trade to ply their own routes and do the lesser jobs and tasks that have to be done in this field.

I can, to some extent, understand the concern of some of the eastern Caribbean countries, since their private enterprise sector has been able to transport their fruit, charcoal and their other goods through the islands, and passengers as well, with some measure of success and at lower cost than it seemed that WISCO was attracting. I still believe that if this project can be put on proper management lines, it is an instance in which a Caribbean venture can succeed, and that, not only for sentimental reasons but for good and true economic re^ons, we could continue to probably subscribe to the project. But I wonder how far the Government has got in further analysing this project.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, on the question of the shipping services, Barbados

Government is subsidising the shipping services to the tune of over $400 000 each and every year. Some of the CARICOM countries have withdrawn from the shipping service for economic reasons, and the interesting thing is that the countries which have withdrawn are countries which traditionally provided, from the private sector, communications by sea between Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean States. The rationale of the establishment of a shipping service was that we had to somehow or the other make up with a regular cargo carrier, from Jamaica, which is the most remote and far flung outpost of the CARICOM archipelago through the Eastern Caribbean, for reasons of trade. I am not convinced that we ought to continue the shipping service at that level, as the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) has said.

I did state that we were given an opportunity way back in the late seventies to join up with the Governments of Venezuela, Mexico — President Alvarez Hechevaria — I do not know whether I have the matronymic first or the patronymic last, but it is very difficult sometimes anyhow. President Alvarez Hechevaria of Mexico took the initiative and had Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in this shipping service, and I believe they are still members.

The significant thing about NAMUCAR is that the countries which belonged to NAMUCAR had heavy bulk cargo to move — in the case of Venezuela and Mexico, oil through their respective corporations: in the case of Trinidad, Guyana and Jamaica, bauxite, although Trinidad is not a consumer producer of bauxite but merely a processing country for conversion of the raw bauxite into aluminum — so the other smaller territories did not at that time consider it was in their interest to join NAMUCAR. I pointed out at a seminar which was held just a few days ago that Barbados alone is paying out $110 million to industrial countries for shipping, we import a lot from industrial countries, and we export let us say, in the vicinity of 75 000 to 80 000 tonnes of sugar a year. 11.40 a.m.

When we had a schooner pool the Intercolonial Tariff rate was in the vicinity, as far as I can remember, of about $19 a tonne of cargo, but we had a lot of small inter-island vessels. I would just like to say that a boat is something the size of a moses. It is either a vessel or a ship. You do not call a schooner a boat. A schooner is a vessel.

The private entrepreneurs were like the people from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Barbados shipowners, in which there were whole families involved not only in the plying of the trade between the islands, but actually in the construction, people like Captain Graham and Mr. FoAde not the gentleman from Christ Church West, father of the recently departed Courtney Forde.

I remember that a gentleman, who was a member of the Barbados Harbour Police, Mr. Lorde, who before I went away had started building his schooner in River Road. Everybody passed day by day and did not see much progress, but ten years later, when I returned to Barbados, I was fortunate enough to witness the launching of "Confident I. G." — I. G. meaning "in God". So you had even a Harbour policeman building vessels and this is the kind of indigenous enterprise we had. I think that when we move into buying motor vessels from outside, we are destroying the kind of initiative of the Beckwith boat builders, the people at Speightstown — the Santa Maria was built in Speightstown — the people in Bay Street, the people in Hardwood Alley up there by St. Michael's Cathedral and all over the island who were shipwrights, and competent shipwrights.

My grandfather made a short venture into two schooners, but he did not build them himself. I think he bought one from Lunaberg in Canada, and one from their Captain Cummins, the S.S. Angela, or something like that. My grandfather was not a very good businessman, but he was fortunate to marry a lady who had her head put on, the right way.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am saying that I grew up walking about Hardwood Alley and watching the people at work there, but we in CARICOM region did not try to build on what we had. It started with the Federal Government buying an old, broken-down tram steamer from Hong Kong called the Win-sang. Anybody who is acquainted, like I have a knowledge of and acquaintance with Cantonese, would know what that means converted into English. Win-sang is a very famous gambling game in China. It does not mean wind song, it means something else related to gambling. That ship was a disaster. It was bought, as far as I can remember, from Jardine Mathieson, one of the biggest shipowners out in the Far East, an English company with headquarters in London and Hong Kong. Then when the other CARICOM countries got together after the dissolution of the Federation, you could hardly call it voluntary liquidation, they carried on this concept that, to have a shipping service, you should go outside and buy shipping vessels. The Canadian Government encouraged us to some extent, by making a donation of the Federal Palm and the Federal Maple to the shipping service. Everyone knew that the running from Barbados to Jamaica was an economic run, because if we had kept the two vessels plying, let us say, only between Guyana in the south and Antigua, Montserrat and so to the north, we would have been able to provide

a frequency of service almost on a daily basis, maybe two ships moving in opposite directions all the time. But right from the beginning the shipping service was a burden, and we should have encouraged the people in the Schooner Owners Association by giving them grants and loans to purchase larger equipment to move the produce, which is the rationale of a shipping service, between the islands.

You had a situation in which some of the islands were industrialised and some of the other islands were not industrialised, and those of us who have travelled to the Lesser Antilles — I am not using the word in a pejorative sense, I am using it as a geographical expression — would know that when the Federal vessels called into the ports, it was like a social occasion — everybody went. There was no produce to move, let us say, between Montserrat and Antigua, so Government officers, Government Ministers and the better-off elements of the community used the ships as a social weekly entertainment. Everybody would go aboard and have a drinking party, and the ship would stay in port for a day or two and then depart with no cargo at all, because there was nothing to move.

There was cargo to move between Jamaica and, let us say, Barbados and Trinidad, and those who were importing. But what is significant is that Jamaica itself has a shipping service, and from a very early stage offered to place one of their vessels at the disposal of the shipping company to move their goods from Jamaica to the Eastern Caribbean. For some reason or the other, that offer was neglected.

My concept is that with the container ship which now comes from Miami and with the Jamaica shipping service — I forget what you call it — those Members who have sojourned for some time in Jamaica would probably know this, like the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) and the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Hon. L. E. Sandiford) — Jamaica can be served by lines like Tropic Lines and those container lines which come from Miami, go to Jamaica and return invariably to Miami when they can continue down to the Eastern Caribbean, as they do, but there is a duplication of effort there. It is no longer necessary for us to subsidise the shipping service to keep Jamaica in the CARICOM trade exercise. Jamaica is in a position to provide its own shipping or to have other lines provide shipping for it.

11.50 a.m.

We have to watch every single item of expenditure, and I deplore the removal of the inter-island vessels from here and having them supplanted by luxury yachts from outside the region. I feel we ought to build a proper marina after proper examination of the feasibility of a marina, and not necessarily in the Deep Water Harbour. I do not think that the Shallow Draft Facility, with its limited sanitary arrangements, is somewhere that we should invite 200 luxury yachts from Europe to come down to Barbados. I have correspondence from the son of Lord Beaverbrook, who has a luxury yacht, outlining what he thinks ought to be done about the accommodation down there, and I am inclined to agree that the shallow draft facility is, let me put it this way, a good parking exercise for those people who are involved at the port, but not necessarily in the best interest of Barbados.

I have not given the Chairman of Committees notice that I will call anybody's name,but we have to be very careful about these operations which are promoted by one person, and where a particular firm of "engineers" is given the job of preparing the feasibility study at great expense and without examining alternative areas, and we find ourselves committed to building a marina at the Shallow Draft Facility. I took the opportunity of leaving the debate yesterday for ten minutes to write a fairly critical minute on this approach to the economic problems that we haye in Barbados. 1ft*

I am all for a marina, I like sailing. I do not sail much; I cannot afford to. When I was practising at the Bar, I had little more disposable funds available; now that I am working for the Government, I am not so well off, so I cannot afford yachting or flying. Nevertheless, somebody may give me a ride now and then. I regret the late Captain Fergusson is no longer with us, because he and I used to enjoy frequent excursions down to the Grenadine Islands, all under sail without the benefit of expensive fuel.

I think we ought to be moving in the direction of becoming a sailing ground or a centre of sailing in the Eastern Caribbean. You would be surprised to know that some of the yachts that came down here, about 200 in January this year, rented two and three motor cars. One yacht would rent two or three motor cars so it was very difficult for anybody who had friends coming in from North America or England who wanted a car to get a car, because they spent a lot of money. People who can sail transatlantic yachts are necessarily people with some kind of, to use a colloquial expression, "bread", and although they do not often stay in hotels, they probably leave more money in the country as a result of their visit here and stay longer than the people who come down here and stay at the expensive hotels. So we ought to encourage all of these activities.

To answer in a nutshell the question raised by the honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Leader of the Opposition, as far as the shipping service is concerned, we are looking at it critically. I do not think that a country like St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which

pulled out of the shipping service, would do so lightly. They must have made a proper examination on a cost and benefit basis of their making further subsidies to the shipping service. We have to examine whether our goods can be moved and are being moved by other carriers, and if the goods are being moved by other carriers, I do not think that the Government ought to take the tax-payers' money for the sake of glory or the sake of fame, or the hope of glory by saying we have that kind of shipping company.

I am very much concerned that Barbados alone should be spending $110 million. In 1651 Barbados went to war virtually with the so-called mother country over the whole question of shipping. The people of Barbados maintained that they should have the right to move their goods however they wanted to, whether by Dutch, French, Spaniards or Seminole Indians if they had ships to move. And then 120 years later after, the Navigation Acts were being rigorously enforced by the United Kingdom, because 1703 was the Act, as you know. You have heard, Sir, of the Boston Tea Party, in which the people in Massachusetts threw the Cargo overboard. They went to war and got their independence on this whole question of shipping.

We had a shipping conference here recently. Every-one complained about the shipping conferences, and the shipping conferences are a euphemism for a monopolistic organisation of ship owners, a cartel — they should call it a shipping cartel, WITASS is one of them — who impose freight rates on the former benighted colonies which makes the cost of living expensive for us. They make sure that they do not lose money, and they even nowadays, make it difficult for our maritime seamen to get jobs on their same shipping lines.

I remember that on one occasion they got the trade unions in Barry — Barry is a port in Wales — when the Geest Line were offering freight rates to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean cheaper than WITASS people were offering, to join with them to refuse to load the Geest ships, which are owned by Dutch people of course, naturalised Englishmen now, but which found it profitable to move freight for us at a reduced rate, because they were mainly concerned with moving bananas back in the opposite direction. We are still fighting wars against the imperialists, and I have calculated about three years ago, without actually looking up the figures, that just by our international trade we must be spending some $80 million, and before I went to the meeting — let me call it meeting, because "conference" in shipping is a pejorative term — at Dover Convention Centre, I was told by the people in the Ministry who delved into the actual figures that it was $110 million to $120 million that Barbados alone is paying to English and Canadian shipping companies.

Our subsidy is only $400 000. We can impose Navigation Acts saying that no foreign ships should move our cargo either out of or into this area. The Americans felt strongly enough about it to revolt against the mother country, so I am still of that point of view. If I get an opportunity at the meeting, which will be held next week, of the Inter-American Development Bank, I will speak to some of the Ministers from the Central American countries and see whether we could not extend NAMUCAR, which only Dr. Williams in Trinidad had the foresight to join.

The amount of the subsidy this year should be $400 000 as a result of the withdrawal of the other people. So I will pursue, and I am sure I will have the backing of my colleagues, the idea of having our own navigation Acts and getting the collaboration of our colleagues in the Eastern Caribbean, and even of. Jamaica. One hundred and ten million dollars a year is a lot of money to be going right outside of Barbados. No part of the $110 million is left here — that would be a joke — it is entirely going out. In other words, it affects our balance of payments position to the extent of over $100 million a year. If the Ministry of Finance could redress that balance to a zero position or 90:10 or 90:20, then we would not really have any problem because we would not have to look for that foreign exchange, but it is going to call for concerted action on the part of the' Eastern Caribbean nations.

I hope that answers the honourable Members' questions.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I was very interested in the Prime Minister's dissertation, which was very informative, but I think he did not follow up on something that he said. He seemed to be concerned about the capability of the Shallow Draft to accommodate those yachts which come in at the end of the year for the race that was started last December, and, as I understand the newspaper reports, we are going to have a similar, hopefully bigger, even in 1987. He did not say whether the Government in the next eight months, let us say, has any plans to render the area where the yachts are to come in any more sanitary and congenial, because I think that if we recognise the problem, we have a duty to solve it. I would be grateful to know if Government intends to do some development at the Shallow Draft to provide the necessary facilities which are presently lacking or if Government is thinking of another area completely. 12.00 noon

This is not for the Prime Minister, because this is for the Minister of Finance. I do not see any funds under Subhead 3 - Purchase of Equity by Government in Com-

mercial Ventures — for CARICARGO this year. Last year there were some funds voted for CARICARGO.

We spoke of Heywoods day before yesterday, but we spoke of Heywoods in terms of the privatisation or, if you like, denationalisation, or otherwise, of Heywoods. I wonder if the absence from these Estimates is by reason of the fact that Heywoods in its last year has made an operating profit — I said "operating" — of about $2 million. I wonder if the Minister is aware and if that informs the decision not to grant any money now. Do not sell it yet, it is making some money. The potential is there.

As to CARICARGO, CARICARGO has operated very well, to the best of my knowledge, and is providing a very useful service but I do not know of its financial viability. Is that also starting to show a profit, even an operating profit, and hence the absence of any subsidy this year?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: If I may answer the question in connection with the Shallow Draft Facility, I was trying to speak in parables, and I thought that the honourable Member for St. Thomas would understand what I was saying when I talked about "parking facilities."

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Right. Okay.

The point is that — let me speak a little more plainly now — the Manager of the Barbados Port , Authority and his friends have put up a scheme to use the Port Authority's money to improve the facilities at the Shallow Draft for yachting — I am putting it as plainly as I could — so we would not normally have to come to Government. But the Port Authority, as far as I know, is owned 100% by the Government of Barbados, and I am not persuaded at the moment that improvement of the Shallow Draft Facility is the right way to spend the money. So I wrote a note and said, "Please examine in a scientific way the best place to have a marina because the Shallow Draft Facility is in a tight •security zone. I do not agree that the passengers of the. Jolly Roger or any other of the pleasure boats should be going through the port area. They were removed from up here and sent down inside the port area, where you have an amorphous group of tourists going every day, twice a day, right inside this security area, because the pleasure vessels were sent to the Shallow Draft Facility. I would like to move all of them out.

Since we have decided that the inter-island vessels should be using the Shallow Draft Facility, if they put out piers coming from behind the Central Purchasing Department, they are going to make it very difficult for the inter-island vessels to manoeuvre and berth in and out of the Shallow Draft Facility. What I was going to say is that, whatever we do, they are going to come under the jurisdiction of the port, because the law says so. I am , satisfied that the Port Authority, despite all the expenditure and cranes and so on we got from the European Development Fund, have funds available to provide * adequate marina facilities somewhere in Barbados, and I am not prejudging the issue. I can show them three or four locations where Government has land that it could be done without any disruption of trade or commerce or marine activities in this island. You understand that.

The honourable Member should know about CARICARGO because I think that he was legal adviser. He went up there trying to get arrangements for the hush kits for the two 707s of CARICARGO, I am pleased to announce that the refitting of the two 707s has been done about two weeks ago. One was completed before Christmas, the other one was completed about two weeks ago, and they should be taking delivery like today. I happen to know the technical adviser — he is related to me — and he informed me yesterday morning that he would go to Las Vegas to pay them the money. The crew has gone on to Santa Barbara, California, where the outfitting was done. It is in the vicinity of $3 million. The Ministry of Finance has provided some bridging financing because our partners in the venture, Trinidad and Tobago, said they had a liquidity problem, as they always seem to have.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: No, that was the first one. It is about $3 million for each. I think that when you were negotiating, it was about $2.3 million.

It is about $1.6 million, and, fortunately for us, the Barbados National Bank has come forward and provided the bridging financing.

With those two aircraft available, I think CARICARGO is in a position to make a fairly handsome profit this year and repay the debt. Air Canada has offered continual charters and another company has offered 240 hours a month, which is very good utilization. Sixty hours a week is good utilisation for any cargo aeroplane. It looks as if CARICARGO will now have to work some dry leases, that is, charter aircraft from other companies, to carry out all the work they hope to do this year, so I have told them not to expect any subsidies or grants. They must have a turnaround. I hope that our friends in Trinidad and Tobago will come up with the capital requirements that we have already met, but which they, for liquidity reasons, had to throw the full burden on us this month.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): I think it should be generally noticed under this Head that we are making some steps forward in terms of reducing losses in certain areas. I had no difficulty whatsoever in approving the loan to CARICARGO which the commercial banks in Trinidad could not meet as part of their obligation of the arrangement, because the asset value of CARICARGO is such as it makes very adequate security as against any advances to CARICARGO, and, as the Prime Minister has indicated, CARICARGO is expected to make a profit this year. Heywoods' cash flow position should improve this year. The Government would, of course, have to continue to service the World Bank debt, but the cash flow position would improve because of very tight cost controls that were put in place very early in the life of the Administration. 12.10 p.m.

This Government believes that with projects such as Heywoods and the Hilton Hotel, CARICARGO, hopefully, in the long run, and depending on what happens in other areas, certain types of development in those areas should be done through the commercial banks. There is no reason why, for example, the refurbishing of the Hilton should not be done through borrowings from the commercial banks as you proceed with that kind of development. Once the projects remain viable, if at least the Government has to service the debts in certain areas and if the cash flow generated by the projects can be such that they can meet the requirements of the commercial banks in terms of lending, I see no reason why we cannot see this figure under this Head dwindling and dwindling. In point of fact, if one looks at it, you will find that we are down to, apart from WISCO, the cement plant, which is about $15.5 million, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, $1 million and a small item for Aero Services amounting to roughly $245 000, $200 000 of which is due to the insurers and $45 000 to the auditors. I think this Head is beginning to dwindle, and quite frankly, I look forward to the day when under this Head we will see zero.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to follow the Minister on one point. The Minister looks forward to the day when he sees no Government vote under this Head. I really look forward to the day when I would be seeing that the Government is purchasing new equities under this Head. There are areas in which we really must continue to invest.

I am indebted to the Right Honourable Member for the information which he has given us on the shipping service. He answered my queries quite well, and I really look forward to seeing the developments in that field.

I am also pleased about CARICARGO. As you know, Sir, it was a joint venture between ourselves and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and it is one venture which is succeeding. I also think it bears out the point that I made earlier on other ventures, that given time, and proper management, these ventures can pay and will pay, and that many of the state enterprises, except perhaps enterprises such as the Transport Board, which operate for a different purpose and has a very high social purpose, will likewise pay.

Sir, under the Head we are making a subsidy this year to CBC. I do not know whether the Minister will care to tell us of the amount of $1 million for CBC....

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I just wanted to know what was the amount here. I realise that at one stage, in the corporation's operation, it showed a net profit and had begun to pay back money — that was my information — into the Consolidated Fund. I would like to know what are the plans for ensuring that this corporation also earns its way. It has a monopoly of television. It does not have a monopoly of radio, but with a monopoly of television, which gives it some security, it should be able, again with tight management, to show that it is a viable proposition in the interest of the taxpayers. It is not an area like the Transport Board, to which I believe we are going to continue, or we should cpntinue, to see subsidies being' paid. It does not perform like the Transport Board, with the same social purpose, and I feel really that with tight management here, stricter control, we can get to the stage where this enterprise will pay. I am conscious of the fact that other radio stations are doing quite well, and there is no reason why the state radio station and television station should not do likewise. I hope that the Minister is also paying regard to this. We are very interested in having these enterprises succeed, and in any way that we can at all — in a positive manner not critically now — urge that they be made to pay, we will do so.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I do not know if I share the optimism of the Leader of the Opposition, in regard to the possibility of CBC making a profit so easily. Earlier this week or last week, the Prime Minister said that if you do not say certain things, there are never said for you, and even though I do not like to say these things, I have to say that the first time CBC made a profit was when I was Chairman, for the year 1979-1980, a small profit. I think we started at $300 000, but the projections down the road, when VOB came on stream....

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister was not running the operation of the corporation in relation to the profit angle. He may have tried to interfere in other

respects. I resisted and stepped off the ship and went on with my business. That is the proper thing to do.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was personally losing money by being chairman. After, I could attend to my work.

On a serious note, Sir, the competition that was offered to CBC by a very progressive and innovative Voice of Barbados was recognised and.....

Asides

Mr, D. A. C. SIMMONS: But I think the opportunity was lost for CBC to continue making a profit. I say this in recognition of the facts of the implication. Once the decision was taken and imposed by law, against the advice of the Board, to split CBC into two separate organisations, one for radio and one for television, that was the beginning of the reversal in the profit trend. One has to be honest and fair with the country. That is why we are here talking the truth, even though it may be offensive even to our own party. I cannot be otherwise than open and frank on these matters. I do not know if the present Government could redress that situation.

I believe that on one occasion, I gave an example of the kind of loss that you were incurring which prompted my resignation. You were operating one set of accounts, a consolidated set of accounts, then the policy makers decided that you should split, so you had to go out to the auditors and ask them to prepare a system for keeping accounts reflecting the split in the corporation. They charged for that. Then when it had to be acknowledged that it was perhaps not the wisest thing, you were told to go back then and get them to create a new system of consolidated accounts, and it was another set of money. So about $50 000 went down the drain. I do not think that any Director or Chairman of a Board, having warned against that, had any right morally or in law to stay. It was a matter of principle and it was a decision....
12.20 p.m.

(Aside: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You should have left the party).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, no, you can have disagreements. You all are having disagreements among the party but none of them has left yet; neither him nor him. He was going to leave Thursday week before last, but he has not left yet. It is loyalty to the party. He prevented the Minister of Foreign Affairs from going to the Non-Aligned Conference, because the local political flak was of such moment that he thought it proper to stay and help smooth over things. His diplomacy has ensured that he is here sitting over there with you all this week.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This matter was not reported on CBC?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I hope my comments will be reported tonight, Sir.

One of the problems with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation had been the question of staff. I am not sure how many people VOB has working. When CBC started, it started with a staff of about 34. By the time I left in 1981, the staff had grown to 132, I believe. I do not know what it is now, but one of the things we had to do was to create additional accommodation for this additional staff, because everybody was on top of everybody else in the little space that they had. So I built what the staff called the two "chattel houses" above to house the news room and so on. But perhaps it may have been overloaded with staff, and I do not believe there was quite the same kind of innovative drive at the station as there was at VOB.

You had the competition. Do not forget, prior to 1979, 1980, you did not have VOB, you did not have BBS.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, it is still going. I do not know how it survives, but it goes, and plays very good music, too!

So there was increased competition and increased expenditure, and at the same time the market for advertising was contracted. The market had to be shared now among a greater number of entities, and you were still seeking to carry the same overheads and expenses, and indeed expand. You were bound to lose.

I also pointed out earlier in this debate, that one of the great areas of loss of revenue, was from the CIS in the relationship between CIS and CBC, where CIS used studio time — probably still do — and did not pay for it.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There was an agreement).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What? They never paid for it. That they would use it free? It must have been changed, because I can tell the House as a matter of fact that I remember the then Permanent Secretary in Information promised us that we would get the money from CIS to CBC, and there is correspondence, which the Minister will find on a file and the people at CBC would find on a file, in which we were asking the

GIS for money — you may say in ignorance of a contractual relationship, I say perhaps as a result of a changed contractual relationship — and the Ministry of Information were promising to pay and yet we never got the money. It is news to me now to hear that it had always been agreed that it would be free. I do not know if there was a change before I went.

Then, of course, there were the problems of the licence fees. That has been more of a nuisance and honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Perhaps the Government has taken the decision that there was so much difficulty in collecting it, forget the $400 000, but you have to make it up again.

It was necessary then to build a completely new station to reflect the needs of the 1980s, and a decision was taken to improve the physical facilities. I think this is necessary, because one of the key aspects of management, of course, is proper personnel and human relations, and the staff at CBC had been asked to carry a very heavy burden in terms of waiting incessantly for better conditions, and the time had come to develop. I trust that the development will proceed with all speed to ensure that we have a satisfied staff and modern and commodious conditions for their work.

I do not know what plans there are to recoup these expenses in future. I have not heard anything recently about the STV, how soon it is to come on stream, whether the Government has settled the types of programming, the cost to the consumer and so on. This will be an opportunity to bring us up to date, and I trust that the Minister will be in a position to give us some information about STV.

I am obliged, Sir.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Let me answer the financial implications first. I think the House of Assembly approved of a loan by a commercial bank to CBC for the necessary physical expansion of the plant. I have spoken with the Chairman of the Board of CBC on the viability of STV and any other system. We are not committed to implementing STV in its present form and I have asked for a careful examination of the merits and demerits of the system.

One of the problems that we have in Barbados is that the advertising revenue in this island is predicated by the allocations made by the commercial firms. There are competing areas for this advertising revenue. There is television, over which we have a virtual monopoly, and then there is the Press, two or three newspapers — whether you call them two or three or four, it does not matter — two main publishing companies, and then there are about three radio broadcasting companies, all of them competing for the advertising revenue which is available. The advertising revenue does not expand to respond to the number of programmes and the amount of time which CBC or any of the other media is prepared to make available. It depends on the budgets of the firms which are entered into before January 1 every year, and they get in touch with the media personnel there, the advertising agents, who then tell them the best way in which the budget they have delivered may be spent. Until industry, trade and commerce expand their markets in Barbados, there is an upper limitation, as far as we can see, to the amount of advertising revenue that CBC can hope to gain in any one year. Right now we would know what the advertising revenue is, so I do not expect any startling turnaround in CBC's revenue position in this year. 12.30 p.m.

The loan is partly subscribed by a loan from the Government and one from the Caribbean Commercial Bank, I believe, one of our local banks. That is for the physical expansion of the plant. Twenty million dollars has been allocated for the repairs to the antenna and the physical accommodation, which I am reliably informed, will be required anyhow, whether we have STV or not.

We have to look at the size of the staff that they have there. I am not saying anything more than we have to look at it, because the hours of broadcasting have not been extended, except for CNN, which does not really require more staff, on mornings. I do not understand how a company can expand from a staff of 30 professional personnel to about five or six managers, or how many of them they had and a staff of 205. It looks as though it is a form of outdoor relief for friends of the board of management or something. I really do not understand what they could be doing.

Right now we find difficulty in getting competent cameramen to go out and do their outside recording. Having created this structure of Manager and so on — I do not want to be personal — we find .that the people who are now managers of the various divisions feel that they should not get their hands contaminated by handling cameras. This is the kind of thing you have. Then, they have to be given motor cars, allowances for gasolene, and all that kind of thing. When they took the jobs, they were glad to get any kind of job at CBC without any transportation. But we have now more divisions than General Montgomery had at Alamein when he attacked Rommel, and you know that General Montgomery — having worked closely with him, not in the desert, but certainly in Europe — never believed in moving until he had three to one seniority. CBC does not believe in doing anything until they have a five to one seniority over VOB and everybody else. That is the situation we have inherited. It is an absolute fact. I do not think they had so many directors and managers when the honourable member for St. Thomas was there, but this is the kind of structure that we are confronted with.

These things will take time, no matter what pronouncement we make. We know that when we get down to the practicality, or even when we find people at fault, we have certain decisions with the Supreme Court that make it virtually impossible to relieve yourself of the burden of some of the inefficient people and defaulters that we have, and I will say loiterers, because they are a lot of them loitering on the CBC premises. You can only call it loitering. If they "live in", at least we could tune in and hear what they were saying. Bare loiterers!

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, in December 1985 there was a work stoppage somewhere in the Wildey area involving some people at a certain company that produces drinks, and I had occasion in my work to go there and have the matter resolved. I was a little taken back when I had one person come to me for an interview, and then a second person, and then a third person, all of whom interviewed me, and then I suddenly realised they were all from CBC. Up to now I do not exactly understand what parts of CBC they represented but.....

Asides.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Well, I always was.

I could only assume, Sir, that they were interviewing for CBC-TV, for the normal CBC radio and the other one, and the problem that we have had to face, very often, has been the difficulty associated with that kind of duplication of effort. It is the same kind of difficulty that one gets, for example, in sport, when some people may be making sport somewhere and you get two or three different persons from the same CBC going to cover that sport.

But that has not been the only area of difficulty that we have been finding at CBC. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, it reached the stage one time around 1980 that certain people were persuaded to refer to it as the Caribbean Broadcasting Confusion. There was, at that same time in 1980, the situation where in one department there were five staffers and three of those five staffers were supervisors, really showing the kind of problem to which the Right Honourable Prime Minister and the honourable Member for St. Thomas has been alluding.

From the point of view of the trade union movement, our particular area of concern was in the attempt that was made in 1977 to create a cadre of management persons. At the time that these persons were removed from being leaders in the areas and were called Managers, they were told that a condition of their being upgraded was that they would have surrender their right to maintain their membership in the trade union of their choice, which happened to be the Barbados Workers Union, and in discussions I had with the chairman of the day — and let me hasten to say, before he raises it, that it was not the honourable Member for St. Thomas — he made it clear that if the workers were prepared to accept the $400 a month more that he was offering, they would have to leave the Barbados Workers Union. In those days, I suppose the $400 meant an awful lot to them, and they left the union. But they were, in fact, being coerced into that position, contrary, as we understand it, to the spirit and the text of the trade union laws that we have in our country.

Ever since then, other persons have been moved to supervisory and management positions on the same conditions, that they have to surrender their right to membership to the trade union of their choice, that is to say, the Barbados Workers Union, and the salaries that have been paid to them have gone outside of the levels that would normally be negotiated for those categories of workers. But at the same time that these management persons were getting salaries above and beyond what persons would normally associate with that level of person in another establishment, the directorate of the day, that is to say, the BLP as a Government, was widening the gap in salaries between the management and supervisory level and the persons at the levels of the actual drawers of water and hewers of wood. So the problem we now have at CBC is a problem where people like the reporters, some of whom may be here, I am not too sure, the announcers, the people who actually get out there and do the work, are being paid, in relative terms, salaries less than at real and satisfactory levels, notwithstanding the efforts of the trade union to negotiate, because, to a very great extent, those negotiations had very grave implications and impositions by the Government of the day. When the successor to the honourable Member for St. Thomas, for example, became the Chairman of the Board, we had particular difficulties in getting a settlement because of the imposing elements involved by the Government of the day.

Asides.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I said after the honourable Member for St. Thomas ceased to be chairman. I am not saying when he was chairman. As a matter of fact, the time when the Member for St. Thomas was the Chairman was the best period for industrial relations that we had with CBC during the period of 1976 — 1986. Even now on the floor of this House, I wish to compliment him for the way that he handled the affairs of the Board as Chairman of the Board. At NHC, too, he was willing to recognise when the workers were right, and, when the Barbados Workers Union and he entered into discussions and there was a case to be made and it was made, he would accept it. I wish I could say the same thing for his colleagues who filled the position both at the CBC and at the NHC. I can only say that it was a little unfortunate that he did not

remain at the CBC longer, because he would have been able, perhaps, to save us some of the problems that we now have, problems like the one I have just alluded to, where, because of efforts to drive a wedge between different levels of workers, pay differentials have been created that have caused problems. 12.40p.m.

My own view about CBC is that it is over-managed where over-man age means there are too many management persons, but it is under-managed where under-managed means that there is not a lot of management in some instances. As a matter of fact, one sometimes gets the distinct impression that there are persons at work and not a lot of work being done by the managers, and the extent to which there is a lack of cohesiveness and a lack of direction over the years, especially the period between 1980 and 1986, would show us that there has been that problem. Two years ago one was forced to ask oneself the question as to who or what really was managing the CBC. Was the General Manager the manager or were the Deputy Managers the managers, and which of them managed and what they did beyond managing? In this time the chairman would not be considered as a manager. That would be the 1977 position we would be addressing if we refer to the chairman as being manager.

One of the things with this, Mr. Chairman, has to do with the effect that that has had on staff morale. The honourable Member for St. Thomas would recognise that in the days when he was chairman, there were a number of persons with initiative who were permitted to exercise their initiative but initiative after a while seemed to have been that particular characteristic which would disqualify a person from serving at the CBC. For example, there was Winston Worrell, of whom I made mention, who, because he had initiative and was perhaps the best anchor man that CBC has had, was got rid of. Mohammed Saheed Kothdiwalla exercised initiative, especially during the Malone Commission, but one understands that he was being advised how to write the news and the leading stories into the news out of the Malone Commission. When he could not comply with that, his services had to be got rid of, in the same way that Sisnett a reporter, Eddy Reid and Sylvester Forde, if I may be allowed to mention a few persons, were gotten rid of.

Asides.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Not Leroy Sisnett; Sisnett a news reporter.

The Sports Director was removed because the CBC Board and Chairman, in discussions with me, advised me that they were negotiating with a top-notch Director of sports who was going to be so much better than anybody else in the field of sport that they had to remove the Sports Director they had at the time in the person of Sylvester Forde. Of course, they could not tell us at the time, because to mention his name would be to prejudice the negotiations. Well Forde was moved, and we are yet looking to see this exceptionally fine person who has taken over as Sports Director at the CBC.

It has been because of problems of this sort that the staff have been made to feel insecure and threatened during the period 1980 — 1986, before the day of deliverance. One has constantly to be concerned about these matters, because in areas where the management breaks down and one does not recognise that there is any apparent purposefulness to it, then one has to be concerned. One has to be concerned, for example, if the position of a vehicles manager is created, or any other position for that matter, and if within those areas there is not any set purpose for the work that one expects to be done. When staff morale falls because those people who are given positions of authority are not trained in those positions and are not guided into how to manage their positions, it only leads to differences between those who are being managed and those who are the managers, and to further deterioration in staff management. But I do not suppose we could lay too much blame at the feet of the management who may have harassed their colleagues at that time, because the interference did not start with the management persons. It was interference at the political level, and interference which, I believe, we shall no longer have. I look forward to the situation where management will be allowed to manage without the interference which was so evident during the period of 1976 — 1986. Again I would like to make an exception of the period during which the honourable Member for St. Thomas was the Chairman of the Board.

I would like as well, Mr. Chairman, to make reference to what the role of the CBC needs to be, especially the role of the CBC-TV. It seems to me that we have over the years been allowing a syndrome to be created where CBC became an extension of the North American TV screens, and it seems to me, Sir, that we have to recognise that TV can be a very important medium for education, and if that is so, and if that is going to be so, and the Government, I am sure, will need to recognise this, we have to look for ways and means by which we can have it used in such a way that especially our young people will be made to develop their innate skills and talents, and where we can by using the TV and radio, be in a position to educate our people. Of course, one way by which we can do that is to make sure that when persons speak on radio, and when we see them on TV, they remember that whatever language we are using, we have to make sure that we use that language — if they are using Bajan, they use proper Bajan, and if they are using English, they use proper English — and that we avoid trying to be members from somewhere out there by

the Bermuda Triangle, which is nowhere and between nowhere and nowhere. I think that our people have to recognise that we are locals and maintain their local identity when they use that medium.

In that connection as well, we have to see the TV especially as a medium for national development, and I would suggest that our programme content in that regard must be made more Caribbean and more local. Obviously, there is going to be a cost consideration, and the Board of Management will have to recognise that, but I am aware that they are working towards that, and that successive Governments have been working towards that. My hope is that we would move more rapidly towards that so that CBC becomes identifiable with the aims and aspirations of the people of Barbados and the Caribbean as a whole.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, I just wish to put in perspective on this question of CBC, recognising that we only have ten minutes before the luncheon break, a couple of points that have to be made. The Prime Minister has already alluded to some of the problems which exist at CBC, but I think it is fair to say that since the new Board has been appointed' that CBC, it has, to a large extent, reverted to the policies.....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: After the May 28 election.

From the policies which they have carried out, changes have occurred at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation which will have an effect on the long term development of broadcasting in the country. Those changes relate not necessarily to any specific things, which I do not wish to go into in detail, but certainly the idea that the Broadcasting Corporation or the broadcast medium in which the Government has a major interest or is the sole shareholder ought really to be a leader in the community insofar as (a) the upholding of the individual rights as far as the citizen is concerned, and (b) the quality of information, entertainment and related material which it puts out into the marketplace. Two of the things which the Board has been able to do since I had responsibility for Broadcasting was to establish a policy, a clear policy, that everybody working at CBC now knows and which everybody now working at CBC would follow. That is a policy with regard to news. 12.50p.m.

There was nowhere — and this is clear when one hears the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) and indeed the Minister now responsible for Broadcasting and the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) — that anybody working at CBC could point and say these are the rules by which. It is clear that a system very clear to the serf system that used to operate on the plantation, where certain people would have favour based on their relationship with other people, was the way in which the corporation operated. There was no clear policy on news and there was no clear policy on programming. The policies have been hammered out and put into a single document in the case of news and in the case of programming so that all the people involved in the management of CBC and all of the people who work for CBC can refer to documentation which spell out what the position is.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You would need a couple of days to explain it to you. If you wish to deal with it in those picayune ways, you can. But I am trying to point out, in the context of what was said by the honourable Member for St. Thomas, that the corporation was, it seemed to me, going around in circles, and one of the things which one set out to do was to put the corporation on a firm footing.

The second thing is that it is not well known, as the honourable Member for St. Michael Central has said, is that they had so many areas of management at CBC, and the problems which were created at CBC had to do, as the honourable Member said, with the splitting of CBC. When one examined the corporation, one found that there was a lack of accountability. One found that the Minister responsible for Broadcasting was, in fact, the Minister, the Chairman, the General Manager, the News Editor and, on some occasions, even the announcer. One found .....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am talking about Nigel Barrow, if you want to know who I am talking about. I am saying that when Nigel Barrow was Minister responsible for CBC and when the policies of the Barbados Labour Party in relation to CBC are examined, what one found is that the Minister used to pick up the telephone and tell them what to do on almost every point along the way. I am saying that no self-respecting organisation can function that way.

The financial arrangements at CBC left a lot to be desired. If you wish details on this, you are going to get details on it.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The answer to that is a categorical "no." The honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, who is among the most .....

Aside.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You brought her in here to protect you, you know.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are walking around with your own protector.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is asking if I spoke to the chairman and told him not to put him on. The answer is a categorical "no." I am stating here, Sir, that I never gave the Chairman or anybody at CBC any directions, specific, indirect or otherwise, about who should or should not appear on CBC. The only time I have ever given any instructions, I gave it on CBC, and everybody heard at the same time when I said that banning had stopped, that the beguine, childish and puerile reasons which previous Ministers had given directors and managers for not doing things, banning this and banning that, and behaving like if they were God Almighty, those days were over.

I think that the honourable Member for St. Thomas and the then General Manager had information about what went on at CBC which, in time, they are going to have to give the public.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: As I was walking in, I heard my name called.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your name?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. Or the official appellation, Sir, "the honourable Member for St. Thomas." It is true, Sir, that when I went to CBC, I was able to find out that under the DLP Government and up to 1976, there was a directive from Peter Morgan or the Minister responsible at the time, that only the positive side of news should be carried and nothing from the then Opposition, which constituted the Barbados Labour Party, should appear.

Thank you, Sir.

(Aside: No, no!),

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

(Aside: That is not true!)

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I stopped you?

The honourable Member got up on a point of order and obviously wants to mislead the House.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member gave this House information that .....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: He cannot accuse me of wanting to mislead the House.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I withdraw that, Sir. He did not wish to mislead the House. He made a valiant attempt.

The point is, Sir, that Dugle Smith at *the Advocate* had written a similar directive to the staff of the Advocate that, instead of rushing through with gloomy news, to the extent that it is possible, they should print the positive side' of news. That is a standard thing that used to go out. That is completely different from a Minister who directs a corporation to hire his girlfriend. That is completely different, and you know what I am talking about, from a Minister who decides who will be hired and who will not be hired on the basis of how warm the person is. I do not wish to go into those kinds of detail, ...

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You better not!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT:..... but I want the honourable Members to understand that if we are going to have a debate on CBC in that detailed a manner, I am perfectly ready to discuss, and I am sure the honourable Member for St. Michael Central will be able to discuss it in great detail.

The point I want to make, Sir, before we take the break, is that in terms of the broad policy for CBC, the present Board has been able to identify and clearly define the policy arenas within which the agenda for CBC's moving forward can operate. In fact, all those persons of goodwill who have been observing the station can say that they already detect a change in the direction and the quality of broadcasting and programming at CBC television. Indeed, VOB has alredy begun to be concerned that even in the area of radio, which has been losing money, CBC radio has started to turn around. 1.00p.m.

If the Honourable House wishes to have further j details after lunch, we will be happy to discuss them, Sir.

LEA VETO SIT AGAIN

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

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, this House has reached the agreed time for the luncheon break.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.05 p.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: The sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it must revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When the sitting was suspended, the honourable Member for St, Michael West was making his contribution.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think that I should, although the honourable Member for St. Thomas had alluded to the division, give this Honourable House some information. The development programme for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation was intended to overcome a number of problems while at the same time ensuring that the corporation function commercially where that was warranted. Major problems identified were the cramped physical conditions in which personnel of the corporation had to work and the obsolete equipment which had to be replaced in an effort to improve the quality of programmes and transmission.

On the question of transmission, Mr. Chairman, let me say that the current induced controversy about St. Vincent is one which, when I reviewed the files on taking over responsibility for CBC, I discovered had been thoroughly canvassed. The officer who had, in fact, spoken to the matter has now, unfortunately, departed this life, but the files show that the question had been raised, that the engineer at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation had made a definitive statement to the engineers in the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications that the whole matter had been canvassed and that a decision had been made at the technical level that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation could proceed on Channel 9. And without any prejudice to any view one might have as to the efficacy of having channel 9 while St. Vincent had a similar chanel, it is sufficient to say that the technical people had pronounced on the matter, and we either have to accept the technical advice that we get in matters of these kinds or we do not need technicians or technologists or advisers and, therefore, for whatever reason, the corporation made the decision in 1985 to go to Channel 9.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: In 1985.

I have to say the files in the Ministry which I inherited indicated that the matter had been thoroughly canvassed and that the technical advice was that there would be no interference with St. Vincent, and to the extent that there was interference, it would be negligible. I am also advised that at the time when the switch was turned, CBC was operating on less power than it could operate on, and this was in obeisance to the concept of not interfering with St. Vincent. I think it would be quite improper for anyone to try and manufacture an incident between St. Vincent and Barbados, when, if there are difficulties, these difficulties can be smoothen, or can be determined by a co-operative discussion between the parties concerned.

It may be felt that because I have no direct responsibility for CBC that I have taken leave of my senses, but that is not true. What one has to understand is that one continues, within the collective system, to which my good friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael South alluded so eloquently yesterday, and irrespective of the source of his information, Sir .....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT:..... no, the authenticity has been declared by the British Government ..... we still have to take an interest in these matters.

The other consideration which informed the policies for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation was the provision of programmes which may not necessarily attract sponsorship, but which can ultimately contribute to the development of the country. It has to be recognised that a Government-owned station has responsibilities above and beyond the mere necessity to earn a profit. For too long people in this community have allowed themselves to be seduced by media information which suggests that the only time one is doing something that is worthwhile is if one can put a quantum on the bottom line, the so-called profit line. No one can say what the profit line is for the Ministry of Education, because it is measured and remeasured and over measured for time for evermore. One has only to look at the honourable Members who sit in this Chamber and recognise that one cannot quantify the amount of money that was spent on them to bring them to the high quality which they had to have had in order to sit in this Honourable Chamber. Therefore, when we are looking at developmental aspects of our lives, we must stop being consumed by an alien philosophy which can only determine what is good or what is bad by how much money one makes. 2.10p.m.

That is not in any way to condone inefficiency, or * sloth, or any of the things which all of us who have any decency must condemn in the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation after 20 years of existence.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is the North England pronounciation, but we who have been schooled in the United States sometimes allude to their, perhaps, wrong pronounciations.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not follow what is wrong).

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We do not always know that it is wrong, that is why we follow it. The Deputy is telling me how to pronounce "sloth". Well, it is just like pre-fer and pref-er. Some people pref-er pre-fer and some people pre-fer pref-er.

Mr. Chairman, I know that I have to speak again, because I know my time is running out and I do not wish to, if you will pardon the expression, hog the show. But the point I am making is that when we are assessing the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, and while one recognises the right of every single citizen in this country to criticise the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, because every single citizen in Barbados who pays taxes, or who does not pay taxes, is a shareholder in the CBC — he is a shareholder — "he" here meaning "she" as well — by virtue of the system which we have in this country which says that when the Government makes a decision in the name of all the people, it includes all of the people — we have to be careful.

There are persons who feel that because the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation may have dropped a few dollars in the way of its development, something should happen to it. I think that this debate will proceed extremely well if we can distinguish between those areas in which clearly inefficiency prevailed and those areas which are vitally necessary for the development of this country. That is why programmes, sponsored or unsponsored, like The Africans, programmes of enlightenment, programmes which deal with the teaching and the learning process in this country, that the community can expect, all things being equal, this present Board will continue to bring programming towards that kind of enlightenment.'"

Mr. Chairman, I am going to stop here, because there are a few other things I wish to say and this is a convenient point.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I must say I find myself in sympathy, in agreement, empathy, whatever, with the last observation of the Honourable Minister, who was responsible for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation before .he was divested of it with effect from March 1.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I withdraw the word "divested" since it has connotations of privatisation and profit and so on. Let me say, Sir, since the lord who gives took the responsibility away from him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: "Relieved" would be a better word.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Relieved him! Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, when you intervened yesterday with some crisp and telling comments, I had to say that you were very much like the New Zealand umpire, Fred Goodall, you were pulling weight.

I think it is absolutely essential for the Minister responsible — it is now the Prime Minister, even for him — to understand that you cannot in regard to the role and functioning of the developmental side of CBC ascribe necessarily a cost or a profit to it, because there are intangibles which that station contributes to the development of our people that cannot be quantified in terms of cost. I think of a very simple thing. I doubt there is anyone in this Chamber who will deny that our children raised in

the era of television are a lot more effusive, self-assured, self-confident, independent of spirit than we were when we were growing up, and I believe that part of the reason — I only say part of the reason — for that kind of development in our children born since 1962 has to do with the influence of the media, and particularly television. It is a plus and we cannot measure that plus in terms of whether the corporation makes $100 000 profit or loses $200 000.

But the earlier part of the speech of the Honourable Minister is a lesson in the advantages of being in Opposition. Ten years in Opposition were able to point the way to the Democratic Labour Party that when they had held the reins of power between 1961 and 1976, , perhaps they had misused the television and radio station to the detriment of the total population. I maintain, Sir, that in those years there were policies, some spoken, others unsaid, which mandated the management of the corporation .....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:.....and all unwritten but understood, which mandated the management of the corporation, as far as possible, to keep the Opposition off the television. But looking at it soberly from the point of view of Opposition between 1976 and 1986, the DLP realised that the policies they pursued between 1962 and 1976 had been too heavy-handed, and if they have acknowledged that perhaps they had erred and they are now salving their consciences by offering, as the Minister says, a more open policy, that is the benefit they recognised from the mistakes that they made between 1962 and 1976.

But I do not accept that there has necessarily been any change or that the behaviour of the present Administration responsible for CBC is any different from what it may have been before. We are hearing a new policy being espoused, but is the reality matching the espousal of those policies? Two people have been dismissed, not by the Manager, not by the Board, but by a female employee coming to them and saying, "As from tomorrow, we have no more use for you. Your services are terminated." .2.20p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not going to. The lady is working up there. I will call the names of those who have left, if you want me to do that. I am not worrying with you.

Who was fired the same time as Leslie Seon? Seon and Ian Cumberbatch were given their walking papers by a female member of staff who is not I submit, top management. It has nothing to do with whether you have a work permit or not. The point is that responsibilities of duty at the corporation were terminated by somebody other than,. let us say, the General Manager, and we have noticed other situations which call for concern.

I was amazed to read a columnist in a Sunday newspaper two or three weeks ago, who is a well-known supporter of the Democratic Labour Party! a young chanticleer, political aspirant, who alleged that two decisions of the previous Board had cost the Corporation $200 000 in compensation for termination. Not true! I am advised that one for a certain announcer who is now at the other station is $10 000, and for the other one operating in the Sales Department, the settlement with him was $30 000, which gives a total of $40 000. To say that the two of them cost $200 000 is simply not correct.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. For the record, I know the honourable Member can read, but I do not know why he is misreading what he wishes to misread.

He said that the two decisions had cost $200 000, not that those two got $200 000. Two decisions by the previous Board had caused the corporation to pay out $200 000, and I wish to say for the record that they have paid out a lot more than $40 000.1 do not know the exact amount, but there are a lot of people at CBC who have had to be rehired because they were wrongfully dismissed. They have had to be brought back or paid. That is a fact of life, and the honourable Member for St. Michael Central will be able to verify some of this. They had people at CBC who fired people willy-nilly. They fired people on no particular proper legal basis.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: My submission and contention is, Sir, that in relation to the two persons I am speaking about, and on whom I have information, the corporation, as of May 28,1986, retained the services of a lawyer in Bridgetown who was advising the corporation in regard to those two things. He never, in his advice, told the corporation that the persons had been wrongfully dismissed.

In regard to the second one, not the announcer, the sales person, the firm for which the Honourable Minister of Health used to work, was representing the interest of the employee. The corporation's lawyer assured the corporation that by reason of the several complaints, memos, and whatever else was in his possession, it was his opinion that the corporation was justified in terminating the gentleman's services. Do not forget that when he was supposed to turn up to a meeting of the Board, rather than turn up he sent a letter from his lawyers.

By the time there was a change of Government and the new Board, a settlement of $30 000 was reached, without the knowledge of the lawyer who had been giving advice all along. My contention is that, okay, we know

that there has to be a change of attorneys on a change in Government, we understand why this is necessary, but I am submitting that when a case is pending the corporation should have allowed the lawyer to complete his advice. To have settled behind his back is not nice. That is true.

(Aside: That is what he told you. You trust him?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, I trust the lawyer.

It is interesting to see what happened in the case of the person who was ultimately paid $10 000. A Board member who works in the firm that is now advising the corporation.....

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir. I am told, do not do that to him. I am going to be respectful. Do not let us go into that. I will speak with the gentleman privately. I am not going to say anymore about it. The Minister has appealed to me, and that is the end of that.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no! I am responding to the appeal. I would say that, perhaps, I ought, as a senior lawyer to the person, to speak to him otherwise.

All I am saying is that all is not sweetness and light at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation under the new management. There are complaints by staff daily — I am going to tell you now — about the General Manager who wants to do all the productions and have memos flying all day long between people.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Who was the last chairman? I do not even know who is the chairman.

If that is so, it is as bad as the Chairman of the National Bank — we are still on Finance — getting into the day-to-day management of the bank.

I just want the House to be aware that all these corporations need a time to settle and a time to be properly organised. I said yesterday, and I maintain, that these are the organisations into which the newly created Department of Organisation and Method should try and go and set up proper systems and structures for them, because CBC is still in a mess. Senior staff, staff friendly to and supportive of the present Government, are complaining that never in their born days have they seen so much confusion.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You know when you all asked for information yesterday, you got a name that caused a lot of problems.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no. I will speak privately to some of the Members, but I do not want to call people's names into the debate as a matter of record.
2.30p.m.

We have had very little debate on STV. I will come back to STV since my 15 minutes have gone, but just as we were breaking up for lunch I made the point to the Minister off the record that none of us has addressed, perhaps, the fundamental problem with CBC, and that is that, in my submission, CBC from its inception, during the DLP regime and during the Barbados Labour Party regime, was never properly capitalised. Now that CARICARGO is showing a profit, if that eventuates, now Heywoods is showing a profit, if that eventuates, rather than strip this Head "Purchase of Assets in Commercial Ventures" to nil, put in some money to put CBC on a proper equity basis in the future. It will be money well spent. Let us make up for all that we have neglected in the past. If the money is available — we give them a new' building, new equipment and so on — at the same time let us properly capitalise it so that it can be well run financially, without necessarily expecting a massive profit.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am going to respond to the last point first by saying that, in recognition of the problem relating to the capitalisation of CBC, in fact, the $22 million figure agreed to by the Ministry of Finance has been agreed after re-examination, and in fact the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, by virtue of its own ability to borrow money, has been given the go ahead to make the appropriate borrowing for its necessary capitalisation. The $22 million figure is, in fact, a figure dealing with the capitalisation of CBC.

What I was able to do, in consultation with the chairman, was to obviate the decision which was made, the rationale for which we have not been able to find, that CBC would borrow $3 million in the petrodollar market. • In fact, by making the decision to do away with this business of going to borrow money in the Eurodollar market, the corporation was able to save something like $3 million.

One of the things I feel bound to say is that, on the whole question of the financing of CBC, there are some arrangements the rationale for which we have been unable to find. The long and short of the story is that whatever monies CBC require to carry on their programmes, as

outlined in the development programme, they are now able to get from, as the Prime Minister has said, the loans from the local bank where CBC has its account. We have repatriated that loan. That loan is being done here in Barbados for Barbados dollars.

There has been a lot of talk including letters from the previous chairman about why we stopped matters. Let me say for the record that it was not the Board that stopped the matters — it was the Minister. When I became Minister responsible for CBC and I saw some of the transactions which had occurred or were about to occur, it occurred to me that those transactions lacked a certain efficacy. I do not wish to go higher than that. For example, when one is asked to approve a transaction for $950 000 and a scratch below the surface demonstrates that the equipment which this $950 000 is supposed to purchase is lying in the Port and has already been paid for, if one is a sensible person, one says, stop, bring everything up and let one see it. At that time the Board, except for two members, had submitted their resignation, and there was not even in place a proper arrangement for the signing of cheques. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information had to assume the responsibility, as, Accounting Officer, for the signing of cheques. In those circumstances, even the most purblind oppositionist would have asked for a halt to whatever was going on so that a clean slate could at least be started with.

On the assumption of office by the new Board, a thorough re-examination of the programme, as it was then put in place, was undertaken. That is when the financing was re-examined by the Central Planning Committee and the Government made a decision that we would proceed with the development. Even so, we were able to discover, shortly after that was agreed, that the plans for the building had been approved, the contractors had been engaged, only to discover that the studio was not of the proper size. Arrangements were made to correct all of these errors. For those who advocate that the matter could have gone ahead, had the matter gone ahead without any review, what we would have is that we would have spent something like $6 million on the building which would have turned out to be inadequate for the purposes for which it was designed.

All of these are the reasons why the Board, with the approval of the Minister, determined that they should re-examine every single aspect of the development. Twenty-two million dollars is a lot of money by any standard, and any proper new manager, new Minister, new board has a responsibility, if they will be expending $22 million on behalf of the shareholders, to be thoroughly, fully and completely *aufait* with how the money was being spent, why it was being spent and where it was being spent.

So far as the questions alluded to by my honourable friend concerning the staffing at CBC go, far be it from me ever in my capacity as Minister to come here and degrade any individual. Suffice it to say that when the then General Manager's contract came to an end, the Board did not consider, after examination, that it was desirable of extending that contract, and the Minister agreed. A new General Manager was appointed, by virtue of his experience, and of whom Percy Smith and others have done me the honour of making my family, which is not true. But I do not mind. If they wish to give me relatives who are competent, relatives who are trained and relatives who know what they are doing, I will take them, as long as they do not include Percy Smith and certain other members of the Barbados Labour Party.

The fact is that this General Manager came on board and he is the process of doing his job under the direction of the Board of Directors. I have said, within my political party, that I was not appointed General Manager of CBC and I do not believe that Ministers should assume responsibility for either the chairmanship or being General Manager of a corporation, and I wish to state, for the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition, that I have never told any General Manager of CBC or anybody at CBC to keep anybody off the television, especially the Prime Minister. What I have done is to tell him that he must put on everybody.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He told me what Tom said to you.

(Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What Tom said to me?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Why do you not let me continue this debate? You know how it is.

The point, Mr. Chairman, that we are making here is that CBC had a number of persons in management positions who understood that they were carrying the steam, as I perceived it, of the Minister of the day, whoever he may be, and they proceeded to treat people working at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation in a discriminatory manner. One of the reasons why the lawyers for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation have advised the Board to settle a number of issues is that it is clear that in a court of law that was not a kangaroo court the people would win substantial sums of money in settlement. It is a matter of opinion. 2.40p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes. One is a QC, one is not. The one they have now is a QC, the one they had before was not a QC, but, as we all know, not every QC is necessarily a good lawyer.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I agree with that.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Oh yes, I know you would agree with that.

Therefore, the corporation felt free to take the advice of its present lawyers.

But this is what must be borne in mind. This country has a reputation for fair play. How is it possible for the CBC, for example, to deny leave to one of its staff members who applies for leave to go and study in the field in which he or she is working, that is to say broadcasting. They send certain persons to the Mass Comm. course in Jamaica, but when other persons get accepted to the course, they say to them, "Thou cannot go." The persons then resign and go to the Mass Comm. course, because, for personal development, they feel they want to go to the course. They come back to Barbados on vacation, and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation employs the same identical persons and pays them for the duration at a rate some four or five levels below what they were earning, or where the persons were employed at before they went away.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member talked about somebody firing somebody at CBC with a notice. I do not believe that, because it would be highly improper. I think that anybody or anybody who is laid off, or whatever is entitled to equal treatment, and the Barbados Workers' Union and the Democratic Labour Party have been insisting on this for the workers in Barbados for a long time. So anybody who is so ill-treated has recourse to the same law that the Democratic Labour Party is now paying for. The Democrtic Labour Party is paying for people who were fired for no other reason, apparently, than that the Prime Minister of the day appeared to or did say that they should be fired.

If it is one thing I feel able to say without any difficulty is that in respect of records at CBC — that is not records to play, not 45s or 78s or LPs, — the recording of decisions, one of the most difficult things to find at CBC is a record of what happened. In every case where you had to deal with persons and the way they were dismissed, finding a proper record was a difficulty.

I cast no aspersions on previous Boards of CBC, because the Boards serve at pleasure and they are invited to come and serve, and, therefore, it might be unfair to say of a board or an individual that he or she was inept. But the people who get paid to do a particular job have a responsibility to keep records. Some of them can give you meticulous records of where they were at half past three on a particular day in any given year. Ask them for a record of what happened at a particular meeting, and they have difficulty producing that record!

I am saying that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has suffered from an avalanche of political interference under the Barbados Labour Party. If the honourable Member says that it happened in the first ten years of the Democratic Labour Party, he who accuses must prove, and that is for him to prove. I had the benefit of observing what happened in the ten years of the Barbados Labour Party, and it is my conviction that, had the Ministers not interfered in the CBC as often as they did, those people with talent in CBC might have been able to do a better job.

I want to allude to another point.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Let me just make this last one.

The honourable Member said that they made money in 1979. In 1980—81, the corporation made a profit, a substantial profit was recorded. Within that period to 1984 the corporation made very bad decisions and they built capital projects out of the meagre profits they had made. When I said that they have fritted away the profits, no commercial operation that made profits in a given year' would build a building the next year with those profits. When you are going to build a building and you are going to do capital development, you go to the bank and you borrow the money because you wish to amortise the capital over a period of time. The equipment that you need to help you make more profit is what you would spend your money in. An so what they did was to build a building at Black Rock — that is what I alluded to — while not supplying some of the basic needs which they needed at the Pine.

I will go on with that, Sir, if it is necessary.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the Honourable Minister is, in some regards, reinforcing the point I made. In the absence of a proper capital structure, I do not see how a commercial bank would lend you. If you look at the files, at the time when we were preparing a project for CBC to bring in line this same thing that you all are doing now, the whole development, the problem was the capital base of the corporation. It had eroded whatever capital it had before, and no bank in town, even though the Act provided recourse to a commercial bank, with the approval of the Minister, was prepared to lend.

I really enjoyed the Honourable Minister's speech about this efficiency of CBC and so on now, Sir, which is a reflection on him, because the Minister must take credit for the efficient running of the corporation. And I wonder

how come this super-efficient Minister got fired? How come, with all this efficiency?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think we can say he got fired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Relieved! How suddenly, the efficient Minister was relieved of his several responsibilities now to become Minister without Information.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And other things added.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You are not advised, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. And other things added, most likely.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He has got nothing else added, Sir. That is the thing.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. It is not that. I am just trying to get as much information as possible.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Now that the Minister of Finance has come back, Sir, I am leaving CBC and moving to something else.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you want to continue debate on CBC? Somebody else can speak on CBC.

I am concerned that yesterday the Honourable Prime Minister was very scathing in his remarks, some of which were distinctly pejorative, about Barclays Bank. We know the involvement of Barclays Bank with South Africa, and I believe we all abhor it. But he said a lot of thing at a time which I consider, from the information I have, to be inopportune. I understand — the Minister of Finance can tell me if I am right or wrong — as the Government has conceded, the Opposition will get information — that Barclays Bank at this time is the team leader on the Eurodollar market for a substantial loan which the Barbados Government wishes to negotiate in the order of $50 million or $60 million. If it has not gone through, I think it is a little inopportune, I say no more, for the Prime Minister to have spoken quite in the terms in which he spoke and then to be running to the same people to ask them for $60 million. If the loan has been negotiated, then it smacks of a kind of ingratitude. However you look at it, I think that it is perhaps an unfortunate statement, made at an unfortunate time, which could cause some damage to the standing of this country. For whatever reasons we may be opposed to each other politically and have different points of view to ′. put, not one of us can be less than patriotic to our country, and if we are in Opposition, we have a function to perform by way of criticism, but at the same time none of us wants to see Barbados suffer, collapse, or has its image tarnished and its reputation in the international financial community held up to ridicule. 2.50p.m.

Yesterday, I issued a warning about something else. We had a lot of talk about slime and okra. I just feel, and the Opposition is being very serious, that we are appealing to the Government — well, we do not have to appeal to the other Ministers, but particularly the Prime Minister — to be more restrained sometimes in his language when we are dealing with sensitive matters, because I think, as I said, the country's image could be adversely affected.

That is the information that I had.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, while I will make a brief comment on one or two CBC matters, I would like to appeal to the honourable Members of the Opposition to give me a chance to make a special appeal under the appropriate subject heading of the Ministry concerned for some health facilities in St. Michael Central, some housing in St. Michael Central, some road improvements in St. Michael Central, and sports facilities in that area. What I am saying, in essence, Sir, is that I do not know if I will get there if they continue to deal with CBC so lengthily.

I wish to say that it is perhaps correct that when one wants to borrow, one has to be careful of what one says, but I do not know if that is necessarily true. If one is begging, one has to be careful about how one criticises, but when a bank lends money, I do not think the bank is doing a favour to the person who borrows. If that is so, then the honourable Member for St. Thomas is in a peculiar predicament, because he has advised us, Mr. Chairman, that he has a situation where, through the bank, he has certain facilities for I suppose his elder son, and I am wondering what position of mendicacy that puts him in when it comes to the arrangements for having those advances made to his offspring.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: I made it very clear this morning. The honourable Member did not understand me. Well, let me make it clear now. I do not have no overdraft. I do not have to go and beg the bank for nothing. I am not borrowing from the bank. I have a document from the Central Bank stamped with approval for me to remit foreign funds to my son to keep him going every month. What I am saying is that the bank, well knowing that my account is in credit, will not send the money to my son on time, and I feel that even though I am a customer of the bank, I am not beholding to them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will honourable Members keep a bit close to Head 73?

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, you know that I am still with Head 73. I only spoke about banking and about CBC. I believe that the honourable Member for St. Thomas would respect your wishes if he has to speak again. I would not comment on what that Member said.

In relation to CBC, I wish to make the point that just yesterday it came to my attention that a young person, not at CBC, was employed in one capacity, was subsequently upgraded to be a supervisor and when that person had certain difficulties with the management, out of which she asked for certain assistance to herself — I almost said certain aid for herself, Sir, but I would not wish to confuse you with that kind of language at this time — the manager was unhappy and sent her a letter the very following day indicating that her request to fill a junior position had been examined and had been refused, and, therefore, she lost her job. I am saying that apropos the situation at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to make the point that, whoever forms the administration of CBC, one needs to recognise the importance of respecting the rights of workers and the rights of workers to work within their professionalism without undue interference — in fact, in some areas, without interference at all except for advice and guidance — and in that connection, Mr. Chairman, I wish to laud the Government for moving towards a situation where it is putting its money where its mouth is in regard to re-employment of certain individuals.

As you know, Sir, we have been making out a case for a Right To Work Clause to become part of the establishment governing management-worker relationships, both within the Constitution of our country and within the severance payments legislation. It is our considered opinion, Mr. Chairman, that, as in the case I have just described to you, where a worker lost her job overnight when in fact she did not ask for any relief of her job — I guess a Minister may ask for relief of a portfolio within a Ministry — and when she lost her job, there ought to be some mechanism that addresses the subject of what has to happen to that individual. It is not enough for the employer or for the legislation to say that that person is going to get a compensatory amount of money that relates to the years that have passed. It is much more relevant, and equally important, that it is recognised that with a person who goes to study in a particular field and who gives of his or her time, and his or her efforts towards personal advancement to function professionally in that job, when you cut off that person from that job, you have not only removed the past, but you have destroyed the future as well.

In such circumstances, Mr. Chairman, we are pleased to note that persons like Miss Alleyne and Miss Bynoe have, in fact, been re-engaged. My concern, and I hope I do not have to go to CBC and discuss this matter at that level, is that when those persons are re-engaged, they should be re-engaged at a level of pay that takes into consideration their years of service, their professionalism, and their experience. If we try to take them back at the bottom of the scales, then we are doing them a very great disservice. I wish to make this point, Mr. Chairman, and hope that I do not have to make it in another place.

Aside.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I heard, in passing, that there might be the reinstatement of a particular chairman. I hope that in the year 2025 or whenever it is that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition hopes to make his first real effort to sit in the chair that he aspires to — 2025 — if that is brought to any fructification, he would not do this country the dishonour and the disservice of making a certain person already named here a Minister for information, dis-information, or mal-information.

There are other persons, Mr. Reid, Sylvester Forde and others who need to be reinstated.

The corporation needs to look very seriously at the present structure that it has. It is in my view a problem at CBC that it is very closely, associated to a Mexican army. There are far too many chiefs within the establishment and that does not allow for any smooth functioning. 3.00 p.m.

Earlier today, Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Thomas was careful to make a comparison with a rival radio station, and it is not a bad comparison that the Member made. If we were to examine that, and if the Minister and the Board at CBC were to examine that, they would find a much more efficiently run organisation, so run because the management personnel do not just sit back in their offices and read newspapers, but they are involved not only in management but in using their special skills and talents to advance the job that the organisation has to do. I believe that CBC can be better structured, better managed and made to be a much more profitable organisation if it is structured better and more progressively and made to run more satisfactorily.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, matters falling under Head 73 pertaining to the portfolio which I have the honour to shadow, but I have desisted from making any lengthy contributions on this matter, because I will have more ample opportunity in the near future, I hope, to look at financial issues. I will therefore be very specific in one issue which I rather doubt I will be touching on at some future stage.

Earlier in the Session of this Parliament, the Minister of Finance delivered himself of certain

preliminary and indicative plans in regard to the Industrial Credit Fund, and I think he indicated at that time that it was the intention of the Government of Barbados to broaden the scope of the fund to so structure it that entities who cannot now borrow from the fund would be in a position to do so. The broadening of the scope of the fund, as I understood it, would be to enable persons, for example, who need to purchase taxis, to purchase taxis under the guise of becoming involved in an industrial activity.

The Industrial Credit Fund, if I recall correctly, was established as one of those special financing mechanisms by our previous Administration to provide credit to the manufacturing sector, particularly, to assist them in financing on-going operations, and more specifically, to assist them in financing new ventures. It was a fund established at a time when the manufacturing sector in Barbados was deemed to be short of capital for both purposes.

I speak in this debate only to question whether it is still the intention of Government to so broaden the scope of the fund to make provision for a large number of non-industrial type activities to qualify for financing from the fund in preference to deepening the use of the fund for industrial purposes in such a manner that activities which have now become activities that the manufacturing sector may want to become involved with, because of tax concessions could be more easily financed under this Head. I speak particularly of the heed for us perhaps to allow the Industrial Credit Fund not so much to be used to purchase taxis, but to earmark a higher percentage of it for things such as market research and market development, because I do not believe that the prospects of manufacturing in Barbados can be overcome unless a substantial amount of funds are spent on market research and market development. That activity has not really factored very heavily in the lending portfolio of the fund to date.

I am suggesting it would be doing a violence to the concept of an Industrial Credit Fund to make it all things to all people, and that we ought really not so much to broaden the scope, but give real financial muscle to the • ventures of the Minister of Industry by restraining the use of the fund to activities which can be classified as truly industrial activities. I am also wondering, Sir, if some proportion of the Industrial Credit Fund could not really be earmarked for the financing of technological research and development within the industrial sector, if necessary, to be administered on a contingency recovery basis, where it means that if the monies earmarked for research and development lead to the development of new products of a commercial character, the fund would repay the amounts, and if, as in most research and development projects, they do not, then the amount would be treated as a grant.

Since I am not obviously going to be talking about the Industrial Credit Fund in days to come, in light of Government's announced policy on the matter to make it all things to all people, I wonder whether we could not refocus our concern on it to make sure that the Minister of Industry, who is grappling with very fundamental difficulties in making sure that the Barbados manufacturing sector not only remains viable but regains its former vibrancy, benefits from that fund, which was established to give that Ministry and that part of the private sector real financial strength, and is not so whittled down by putting on it a number of charges which can so more easily be carried by other parts of the financing system.

If there is a change in heart by the Ministry of Finance, we on this side would surely welcome it, because we really conceive of the Industrial Credit Fund as a *bona fide* fund to promote the fullest industrial development in this country. Without prejudice to the needs of the taxi men and other non-industrial users, as a matter of policy, we on this side would prefer to see the Industrial Credit Fund remain as an Industrial Credit Fund.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if I might wind up at this stage, the Leader of the Opposition, is trying to dictate to the Government whether they should wind up or not. I was very courteous, I sat down here, I listened to everybody, I enquired if anyone else wished to speak, but the problem is that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has to come in here and play political party leader, because even to be the Leader of the Opposition you can only get one vote, that is the vote from the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), and he has to get the casting vote himself. Two votes to one and he is the Leader of the Opposition!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member probably feels that the Prime Minister is not here and he can now open his mouth. I will let him know that I probably have more chance of being the real political leader of this party than he has at this time, but I am not getting into that. The honourable . Member is only making some political play and sport.

I thought that when he got up to speak he was really only going to respond to the speech by the honourable Member. That is why I saidsotto *voce* "not winding up", but if he wants to wind up, wind up. I have had enough of CBC. We want to do Agriculture and the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) wants to beg for a few roads.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I may continue, I am sure the honourable Member realises the kind of pressures that he is under within his own party. You can

rely on the honourable Member for St. Peter but I cannot guarantee you that you can get support from anywhere else.

In relation to the Industrial Credit Fund, the points made by the honourable Member for St. Peter are exceedingly valid points and I think his contribution was a good contribution, except in so far as he should have been calling on me to reverse the policy of lending to taxis, because the loans to taxis started before we came into office. The brief which I read from indicated that those were disbursed to tourism, manufacturing, agro-industries, services and fisheries, and apart from the larger projects, the fund has assisted taxi operators. This is going back to the past. 3.10p.m.

Asides.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: This is the brief I read from.

I will certainly take his advice and look into the question of trying to direct more of the resources towards the productive sector of the economy rather than to taxis, as was done in the past.

On the question of the diversion of some of these funds to market development, there is no question that, in the final analysis, we have to, and I have said so before, recognise that one of the major priority areas of the Government must be the area of market development, particularly external markets and outside of the CARICOM area. To this extent, Sir, in all of the negotiations that I have had with the international lending institutions, I have been insisting that marketing should form an important component of the loan. As a matter of fact, in the recent loan negotiated for agriculture, the maketing component of that has been increased considerably.

I have gone further and indicated both to the World Bank and to the IDB that, for a country like Barbados, they should regard market development and the development of services as justifiable areas for lending in terms of infrastructural and capital development. It is very difficult to convince international agencies that infrastructure means more than things that can be physically seen, but our concept is that human resource development, technological development, and market development are important parts of the capital development of Barbados. And at this stage, in many areas, it is not physical development that Barbados needs. Sometimes, in some areas you need physical improvement, like in the hotel industry, but what is very important now is to get your market development in place with human resource development in order to utilise maximally the existing capacity within the country. I can assure the honourable Member that this has been a priority area, an area that I have been working on consistently in all negotiations which I have had with the international institutions, and with the allocation of resources available to me.

I think it may have gone unnoticed so far under this Head that the Barbados Government this year will be putting something like $4 million into the Barbados Development Bank. The annual subvention of $500 000 will be augmented by $3.5 million. This is to ensure that the productive sectors of the economy should have more funds available to them. These funds will be partially counterpart funds in relation to the injection of capital by the IDB. So we have already started, and, as I announced some time ago, the resources of the BDB will be enhanced this year in order that they can meet the needs of the small businessmen and the community productive sector in general.

When we make statements of this kind, we make the statements because we know that, in a few weeks, we can produce. We just do not talk. I made that statement at an annual meeting of the Barbados Development Bank only a few weeks ago, and the evidence of it is to be found in the Estimates today.

As far as Barbados' image in the financial world is concerned, I can assure you that I have done everything in my power to make sure that that image has been substantially enhanced over the past eight to nine months.

In terms of the National Bank, there was really no substantive base for attack on the National Bank, and I notice that honourable members did not get into the meat of the matter. One of the first things that I did, as you know, I have mentioned it before, was to make sure that an extremely competent Board was appointed, and I am very happy with the performance of that Board today.

I went further — I publicly stated and I addressed the Board, and told them that I expect them to run the bank and would not be interfering in any matter relating to the bank unless I have the statutory authority to do so. I am not going to be interfering with any loan applications. No one need come to me, because that is not the way a bank should be run. That is the best way to run down a bank. An institution can never develop in the way it should if you get that kind of political interference. To date, I have been able to fulfil that commitment which I made to this country and to the directors whom I have appointed. I have not approached that bank, and will not approach it, in relation to any loan for any individual. If the loan is approved by the bank, it is approved by the bank. If it is turned down by the bank, it is turned down by the bank.

According to the law, loans over a certain amount have to be referred to the Minister, and where there is a statutory obligation placed on the Board to have

ministerial approval, I have a duty to examine such loans under the laws of this country. That is the way the bank should be run. You will never be able to develop that institution, or any public institution, if it is subjected to interference and I use the word "interference".

I remember that a former Minister of Finance used to object to the word "interference", saying you cannot interfere with matters in your own portfolio. I never agreed with that kind of philosophy. I believe that an institution must be allowed to develop a corporate entity in terms of discipline, morale and other terms. As far as the broad policies to be pursued are concerned, they will be laid down the Minister of Finance, but in terms of the daily execution of matters like loans and so on, that is the exclusive prerogative of the Board of the Barbados National Bank. Running a bank is a professional exercise, and you cannot be running a Ministry that is involved in the totality of Government and believe that you can take *ad hoc* decisions in terms of loans and so on. The moment you interfere with one loan, you undermine the morale of the staff, you undermine the institution and you open the flood gate, and moreover, you lose your authority of being able to deal with these matters if things begin to go wrong down the road. 3.20 p.m.

In terms, Sir, of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation a matter which has attracted a considerable amount of debate, from a finance point of view, the $1 million provided here was part of an agreement made between Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and the previous Administration in respect of its capital development programme. When the Administration changed, that programme, as you know, had been started, a lot of equipment had been bought. The programme was subjected to analysis, and, as you may have gathered, there is some concern about the programmes in various directions. Nevertheless, I share the hope very much that this $1 million might not be an indication for more dollars to come year after year in the light of this new programme for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, because I strongly believe that at this stage we have to be putting as much resources as we can behind those sectors of the economy which are going to generate wealth.

I think that some imbalance has crept into the Barbados economy over the years in terms of wealth generation on the one hand and the expansion of services on the other hand, and unless that balance is restored, and restored in the short and medium term, we may encounter problems down the road. This is looking at it in the very broadest perspective, at a broad philosophical level. Therefore, we have to be very careful when we think in terms of equity inputs into ventures that those ventures should largely be going towards strengthening the productive base of the economy at this stage. Not that that necessarily, in ideal circumstances, has a priority over other areas. All I am saying is that when you look at the broad spectrum of the Barbados economy, there can be no question that it is in this area that any equity participation by Government should be focussing at this particular point in time. That is why I had no difficulty at all in agreeing with the suggestion of the Shadow Minister of Finance as to how the Housing Credit Fund could be more usefully used, that is, to divert more of it to the productive sectors of the economy, and I promise him that I will look into the matter and that I will discontinue, if it is still continuing, the practice started under the last Administration of using the funds for things like taxis and so on. There is enough money in the banking system for so doing.

My final point is that I have listened all day, and in three minutes the honourable Member for St. Peter was able to make a greater contribution to the debate than those on the other side.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My understanding is that the honourable Member was winding up the debate to Head 73.

The question that Head 73 — Capital — Ministry of Finance stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25 — MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES —$12 923 881

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the Opposition would like to examine this Head fairly thoroughly, and I therefore beg to move that the sum of $12 923 881 stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman, if I may take the opportunity at the request of the Leader of the Opposition to start the debate rolling, I will for the first time, give a brief review of the Ministry and its working, and hope that, at the end of it, we can have some discussion on it.

Head 25, Subhead 1, General Administration, deals with general agricultural policy affecting all projects and programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture and its departments. At this particular time in the history of Barbados, Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Agriculture is going through a very colourful period, and it could be a historical period, in that over the last couple of years, due to the difficulties we have been having with sugar, which has always been one of the leading money earners and foreign exchange earners for this sub-sector, the Ministry, of necessity, had to look at a programme which has forced

it to have a wider look at the general overall agricultural policy of Barbados.

During the time when sugar was going well, the sugar sector was left very much on its own, since it had built up over those years a tremendous amount of infrastructure in supporting institutions, but within recent times, since the Government, with taxpayers' money, has had to subsidise the cane sector very much, it was only obvious that the Ministry of Agriculture should, in conjunction with the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited, have a closer look at the overall agricultural portfolio in Barbados.

As a result of a closer look at this overall portfolio in Barbados, the Ministry has structured the agricultural sector in Barbados into three sectors really, an examination of crops that would earn foreign exchange, an examination of crops for import substitution and an examination of crops for local consumption. As we go ahead under these subsections, you will see that we have structured those crops very quickly.

As to our foreign exchange crops, we have been looking at the continuation of sugar, and I want to put on record, as I have been doing, that we are not diversifying out of sugar — we are diversifying around sugar. We are down to about 33 000 acres in sugar, and if you take an overall acreage of about 50 000, we would first of all have to seek to bring back many acres that are not presently being cultivated properly before we interfere with those areas that we have under sugar. So it is some time yet before we can reduce further the acreage under sugar, since this year we expect only about 85 000 or 90 000 tonnes, and in terms of the infrastructure that has been set up, there is a big debate going on as to whether or not the present tonnage can support the existing infrastructure. We also have to look at that. 3.30 p.m.

One of the main areas of interest that we are looking at, because of the high import bill with meat and meat products, is our livestock industry. There is beef potential, and we have decided that the best way to develop it is by intensive feed lotting, with some grazing in those parts of Barbados not suitable for mechanical harvesting of sugar cane, such as St. Joseph. We have been looking at our dairy cattle and continuing our development work on the Black Belly sheep. The chicken industry has been doing quite well. The pork industry is coming on. More recently, we have turned our attention to the development of our goat herd and rabbit industry.

Another area we are beginning to put some emphasis on is our production of fruit, since our import bill in this area is very high. We figure that this is another area where we can have some potential of exporting, and you will see in our Capital projects that we have the National Fruit Orchard Project going on.

In terms of Research, our major research effort at the moment is a team put together to fight the onion blast, which has been one of the major problems we have in Barbados with the onion crop. At this time I would like to place on record my own and the Ministry's appreciation of the effort being played by the University of the West Indies in offering a couple members from their faculty who work together with members from our own Ministry, CARDI and IICA in this respect.

In the whole area of research, I have been seeking, through the Ministry's research wing, to try to co-ordinate all the agencies in Barbados in research a lot more than has been done before. I found that there was a lot of duplication in research efforts, so we are now seeking to co-ordinate this for the maximum benefit of Barbados. There are indications that this is happening.

We, naturally, are looking very much at non-sugar, export crops, but there are problems with that, and one is that the average Barbadian is not export-oriented. He is accustomed to growing small quantities and getting high prices, and the first thing we have to do is get him into the feeling that he can produce bigger quantities so that we can get into the markets at prices which are competitive. The constraints in this area are things like air fares, quality production and consistency of supply. We are looking at these very carefully, and all indications are that we are going to get a move afoot.

There has been tremendous growth in our fishing industry. We have been having some slight difficulty with our fishermen in areas like Tobago. Only recently, we had a problem with one of our fishermen in St. Vincent. As a result, we are beginning to have discussions with my counterparts in these countries, and Barbados is proposing an initiative, which we are going to put on to our next programme, in which we will seek to have a common area which will be used by all the fishermen within this area.

Under Subhead 5, Sugar Cane Variety Testing, naturally work is continuing on that. You cannot stop your variety development, otherwise you will slip. The agronomic research, as I said before, is mainly with the onion blast, and also with potatoes and the development and the improvement of our cotton industry.

Land Use and Water Research is a very keen area for the Ministry, since the availability of enough water is one of the constraining factors in our production in Barbados. The Ministry's approach to this is to try to discover wherever possible, water which can be used and move on

to a trickle irrigation system. We have recently had a study in the use of brackish water for irrigation of crops.

Plant Protection — our work is continuing in this area, with emphasis on the pink ball worm and diseases that affect the other export crops.

Under Subhead 12, Animal Nutrition, we are continuing our research on local feeding stock.

Subhead 13, Veterinary Services — the Ministry is extremely fortunate at this time to have four qualified vets on its staff. These have been working particularly in the areas of animal health, the development of our pork industry and the development of our beef industry.

This brings me to the end of a quick overview.

Mr. Chairman, I now beg to move that Head 25 stand part.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, as Shadow Minister of Agriculture, I can promise the Government we are in for a fairly long debate on Agriculture. When last we tried to get a debate on Agriculture going, and it was in December last year, the Minister of Agriculture was advised by his colleagues that it was too close to Christmas for him to confuse himself with contentious issues. The time has come when we must get ourselves tangled up in contentious issues.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: It is too close to Easter!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: There is a crisis in commodity production in Barbados. The Minister of Finance was partly right when he said that we have now to devote a lot of our resources to the actual production of wealth, that we have to restore the real balance between services and the production of goods.

To the extent that there is a large economic problem •in Barbados, the crisis in commodity production manifested itself predominately in terms of the major recession in manufacturing, and I am hopeful that we can say that these Estimates begin to address our minds to some of the issues where manufacturing is concerned. The crisis also manifested itself in relation to agriculture, which is our second most important commodity producing sector. The main aspects of that problem, the main aspects that we of the Opposition want to put on the agenda of national issues, concerns the present situation and the immediate and future prospects of the Barbadian sugar industry. We really must put that on the agenda.

We also want to come to grips with the imperatives, the appropriate techniques and the necessary support for agricultural diversification in this country, taking a very careful analysis of the schemes and the rumours of schemes that the Government has been announcing, or has been appearing to be announcing, to give the fullest possible effect for an expanded diversified agricultural sector in this country.

It is proper, I suppose, from a public accounting point of view, for the Minister of Agriculture to carry us quickly through the subheads and tell us that we might be doing some work on crop research, sugar cane variety testing and so on. But we cannot, Mr. Chairman, this evening allow ourselves to become too immersed in the minutiae of these details. We have, before we even come on to these things, to start to put the broad picture before ourselves.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is making a general speech.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am making a general speech. I will have ample opportunity to come back to make a large number of other speeches.

(Aside: Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: No problem. Go ahead.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I think that the situation that presents itself in relation to the sugar industry is sufficiently fundamental for us in this Estimates Debate to address it in a very finite way.

The sugar industry has over the last three years been, to some extent, propped up by Government's commitments to price support mechanisms, one on-budget and others by way of a guarantee of bond issues, which are, as I understand it, to be redeemed through the increases in the domestic price of sugar. It is only proper, Sir, that an industry which has only survived in recent times because of Government's commitments to a price support mechanism be discussed in relation to our policies. In regard to price supports, are we going to continue with them? If we are going to continue with them, in what form will the price supports manifest themselves?

I am really disappointed in the Minister, having regard to the fact the sugar industry has been subsisting only on price support, that he has not really used the opportunity of this Estimate Debate to bring to the House his Government's position on the question of exports. How are we going to deal with it in the present, in the future? Are we going to structure it in such a way that it

takes the problem off the hands of the Minister of Finance, or are we going to structure it in such a way that it takes the problem off the hands of the Minister of Agriculture? That is one fundamental issue. We can structure it in a way that it takes all the pressure off the Barbados National Bank but leaves the sugar industry still very deeply in the doldrums. 3.40 p.m.

We also have to ask ourselves the question, what do we want from a price support? Do we want to spread a price support so broadly that we even end up subsidising inefficient producers, or do we want to begin to fine tune the notion of a price support to make it a true deficiency payment that keeps in active production those producers who can themselves show that they can produce to take advantage of existing premium market prices? These are fundamental issues which this House of Assembly has to discuss, and discuss today, and resolve today.

We want to know, Sir, what will be the Government's position in regard to having the sugar industry financed on-budget. I remember that in 1985, the present Minister of Finance used the opportunity of a fairly large gallery to announce that it was the intention of his party, if they were ever to become the Government of this country, to make sure that the sugar industry got a large and handsome grant. I was prompted to indicate on that occasion that the day would go down in the history of Barbados as the day when Parliament decided not to nationalise the sugar industry, but the day on which the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was himself nationalised by the sugar industry. What is Government's policy in regard to the financing of the sugar industry on-budget? Are we to expect, Mr. Chairman, recurrences of the tragedy that occurred last year when delays by the Government in announcing its price support mechanism, whether off-budget or on-budget, created a situation of complete uncertainty in the sugar industry, to the extent that it forced growers in this country to go into a reaping period in 1987 without knowing what was the price that they were going to fetch for the harvest reaped, in 1986? And what has been the price paid for that period of uncertainty, caused by the reluctance of Government to state a true position on price supports one way or the other in sufficient time that would allow producers and growers in the industry, and agriculture, in general, to take proper planning and production decisions for this production year? These are the issues that we have to thrash out.

We also want to know, in relation to the sugar industry, what has become of the Research and Development Fund. We want to know if the Research and Development Committee of the sugar industry has met since May 1986, and if the $1.5 million in the Research and Development Fund have been committed for any research and development projects. What is the direction of those projects, Sir? We also want to discuss whether the Research and Development funds are being designed to address the fundamental problem in the sugar industry, which is the problem of the reduction in cost.

Mr. Chairman, I have said enough on the sugar industry to imply that I subscribe to my earlier position, which says that the solution to the sugar industry cannot be found in a temporary one year price support on-budget — and when I said that I was criticised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central — that if we cannot start it, do not begin it.

The problems in the sugar industry are basically two-fold — the problem of reducing cost to bring cost in line with prices at least for premium markets, and secondly, Sir, the problem of access to adequate supplies of long term capital. On the second point, the sugar industry has been going through a process of recapitalisation. It has been having to mechanize to take account of the fact of the labour shortages with which it has been plagued over the last two decades.

I am saying, Sir, that the time has come when we must put the sugar industry on the same type of industrial footing as we put the other industrial sectors of Barbados. We recognise, Sir, the value of long term capital, at reasonable rates of interest, to the subsistence of industrial and manufacturing activity. But so long as we believe that we can continue to finance the sugar industry in the same fashion as it has been financed since the 17th century, by way of commercial bank loans or overdrafts, so long, Mr. Chairman, as the people in the sugar industry have to carry even some of their capital needs out of cultivation loans, to that extent debt service within the industry will continue to be a major problem. And I really want to reput the position that I took when we were discussing a previous loan secured on behalf of the Barbados Development Bank, that unless we create some particular mechanism by which the sugar- industry, at a time when it is recapitalising, can have access to a source of long term capital at reasonable rates of interest, and reduce its dependence on commercial bank credit for all its needs, both operational and capital related, to that extent, Sir, the sugar industry will continue to wallow in this country.

I endorse the position of the Barbados Labour Party, now discovered by the Democratic Labour Party, that diversification must mean diversification around sugar rather than diversification away from sugar. There is still a lingering policy position that there might well be the need for a day to come when there will not be a cane blade in Barbados — that is diversification away from sugar — and you know in whose head that particular concept of diversification away from sugar resides. I am pleased, Sir, that the principles of diversification, as embodied in the price support programme of 1984 and 1985, where

production of non-sugar commodities could qualify for price support as if they were production of sugar for the purposes of the 1984 and 1985 price support mechanisms, now seems to be informing the policy of, at least, the Minister of Agriculture. And I say the Minister of Agriculture guardedly, because I know that there are divergent points of views within the Government in which heserves.

I want, Mr. Chairman, to make one broad point before coming back to the issue. We must not adopt a Little House On The Prairie approach to agricultural diversification in Barbados. The problems of agricultural diversification in this country, Sir, will be as vast, and, perhaps, will be even more difficult, than the problems facing the sugar industry of this country. It is not a fact well known that the estates in Barbados which perhaps are the most exposed where the banking system is concerned are those estates which have gone very heavily into the production of pure stand vegetables. 3.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has a minute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I will be back, Sir.

We now have before us enough evidence in Barbados to suggest that the production of non-sugar commodities for their own sakes can expose estates so involved to a degree of financial difficulty which is not unlike that that confronts the sugar industry of this country. It is therefore very important for us in this debate to begin a serious discussion on the choice of commodities which will form the core of the diversification programme, and to begin a serious discussion on the best ways by which we will bring about a true integration of that select set of crops that we choose with the core of sugar that we want to retain.

In this debate, I will also be venturing into areas such as the Agricultural Development Corporation and the new initiatives taken by the Agricultural Development Corporation as part of Government's national policy and I will come back to debate this.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, I think agriculture is a very important area in any country, especially a developing country. The "honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) has agajn brought to us the story about a crisis. In his political party they should be very careful how they talk about agriculture, because agriculturalists have seen their worst days in Barbados between the years 1976 to 1986. I am going to get back to that.

First of all, the sugar industry in Barbados did not start in 1976, the sugar industry has a long history, and I would recommend to the honourable Member for St. Peter a very interesting book called The Slave Trade, which is written by a man from Rhodesia. That book has some very good background information on the sugar industry in the Caribbean, and those of us who have followed the historical development of the sugar industry could understand why the cane blade story was given.

When sugar came to Barbados in the late 1600s, sugar was grown by the Europeans in the Caribbean, and those Europeans became fabulously rich out of the sugar industry, for two basic reasons. One was that cane sugar had no competitor, it was the only form of producing sugar and it therefore had a monopoly on the market, and two, sugar was produced by slaves at no labour costs whatsoever to the people who owned the sugar industry. Therefore, you had people in England who became richer than the Kings and Queens of England out of the sugar industry, and that notion of those people who became the multimillionaires of Europe. Most of them never even saw the Caribbean or knew where the Caribbean was, and, as a matter of fact, their managers in the Caribbean, who managed the plantations and shipped some of the money back to England, were able to buy off lands and they themselves became rich in the Caribbean. This is part of the historical background of sugar.

In the book I referred to, The Slave Trade, you will find out that at the time Europe became involved in the production of sugar, and when slavery was abolished, those of us who were interested in cane sugar should have been looking at what would eventually happen to the sugar cane industry. There are some facts we have to face.

Developed countries are not going to buy commodities from developing countries when they themselves are producing them. The fact of the matter is that, if you look at the sugar market today in the developed countries, they are putting out all kinds of propaganda about the ill effects of cane sugar. They are telling you that you should not use sugar, that you should reduce, and therefore we have to stare the situation of the sugar industry full in the face. We are faced with a problem now that we will be producing sugar and we will have no one to buy it. What we have to look at is what other uses we can make of the by-products of sugar and the cane itself. This is a fact we have to face, and the fact that the Government will have to from year to year put in a few million dollars to subsidise an industry that is dying, and because it is employing people, should not stop intelligent people from looking 15 and 20 years down the road as to what we will have to do eventually. It will die whether we want it to die or not, and we will have to find ways to treat a dying patient. It is as simple as that. I only want to say that, in this my first turn on agriculture, about the sugar cane industry, because I will come back to the sugar cane industry.

The honourable Member for St. Peter started to talk about promises he heard being made by this party about agriculture. I want to refer him to a couple things that they promised the people of Barbados in 1976, when they campaigned around this country.

Aside.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: You had ten years to do it and I am going to tell you what you promised the people:

> "The Party also believes that home production must be increased to make the best use of our limited land resources and reduce the alarmingly high^bill for food imports which constitutes a serious drain on our foreign reserves."

Mr. Chairman, every small farmer in Barbados will tell you that the worst times that they have ever seen were the years 1976 to 1986, and I want to give you some figures about the food import bill. In 1975, Barbados' food import bill was $92 million, and in 1976, the last year the Democratic Labour Party ran this country, it was $97 million. By 1981, the year of the General Election, the food import bill had gone from $92 million in 1975 to $179 million. Those are the people who had promised the people of Barbados that they would have reduced the food import bill. In 1984, the last year for which I have records, the food import bill in Barbados was $160 million. But you promised the people in 1971 that you would have reduced the food import bill because it was a burden to the taxpayers of Barbados!

You promised the people of Barbados that there would be agro-industrial sites in St. Philip and St. Joseph and that you would be freezing and canning food. In 1971, that was a promise that you made. You say you are no longer running the Government, but you had it for ten years; where are the freezing and canning plants that you promised in 1971?

You also in 1976 accused the Democratic Labour Party, which was then embarking on a programme of diversification, because the Barbados Labour Party is trying to make people in Barbados believe that diversification started in 1985, of taking sugar cane out of agriculture. The facts are that in 1971, there were 60 000 acres of land growing canes, by 1983 it had been reduced to 43 000 acres and by 1986 it had gone down to 40 000 acres. So you complained about a reduction of acreage under sugar cane and it was reduced dramatically under the Administration of the Barbados Labour Party. These are figures which you cannot refute. 4.00 p.m.

I want to get back to the whole concept of diversification. It is a fact that in 1972—73 the Democratic Labour Party put up a cotton ginnery at Spencers Plantation, that the ADC itself put 25 acres of land under cotton production, and by 1975 the ADC had 800 acres planted in cotton. In 1975 they had produced 350 000 pounds of cotton, and in 1976 we had produced 193 000 pounds of cotton. But by 1981 no cotton at all was being produced in Barbados. You killed the whole cotton industry in five years and have now come back in 1985 to make people believe that cotton in Barbados was going to be planted for the first time.

You just heard about diversification. When you talk about diversification around the sugar industry or away from the sugar industry, it was the Barbados Labour Party that killed diversification. In 1976, we were producing $1.3 million tonnes of onions in this country; by 1985, it was difficult to get local onions grown in Barbados. These are the solid facts about the agricultural situation in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party in 1971—72 had set up a yam processing plant in Wildey and that yam processing plant was able to take the yams from all over the country, from people who had an half an acre or a quarter acre of yams, and that yam was not only sold in Barbados, it was shipped to London and New York, everywhere there were West Indians, and that yam was bought. Do you know that the yam processing plant is no longer in existence? You closed it down and they took away the car from the lady who used to run that yam processing plant.

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Whether it was a ML or MP, car, you all took it away. That is what you all did to the industry.

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, another aspect of agriculture is the fishing industry. In 1975, fishermen in this country were catching 9.3 million pounds of fish, and in 1976, fishermen in this country, in the shrimping industry, brought in 515 000 pounds of shrimp. The shrimping industry was very important to Barbados, because shrimp is a rare commodity and it was an earner of foreign currency. But as soon as the Barbados Labour Party came in, the first thing they did was take the shrimp boats and turn them into military boats, therefore denying the people of this country a lot of well-needed foreign currency.

Your record in the agricultural area is dismal. It is all right to come in here and talk about, what have you done in the last eight or ten months that you have been running the country? But you have had ten years in which to demonstrate that agriculture can go forward.

We have a very serious problem in this country. There are a lot of plantations which are owned by Government, and some that were owned by private people, which are in receivership. I have alluded to this already in here. We have a lot of small farmers, and I have identified where some of these small farmers come from. Some of

them are from St. Peter, some from Bright Hill in Christ Church, some from Mount Friendship, some from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's constituency up in Fordes Road. He knows what I am talking about. These small agriculturalists, who have been raising their sheep and cows, have been denied access to these small plantations, because whenever they go to the agricultural sector of the National Bank, the big boys in agriculture in this country have been blocking them from getting land to extend their agricultural bases.

If we in Barbados are serious about agriculture, we have at times to look at some of the developed countries. If you look at Canada, for example, if you look at England, you will realise that the real agricultural base in those countries is family farming. We have to be realistic. The big people in Barbados who want to get into agriculture are not going to milk any cows or are not getting up at 4.00 o'clock in the morning when their cow is giving calf to go and see it calf. They want to employ people who are going to do that. But the days of slavery are finished, and you are not going to be able to employ people in an enlightened age to take care of cows if the cows do not belong to them.

If we are serious about agriculture, we have to look seriously at family farming, with some modifications. I am not saying that you can adopt every aspect that we see in Canada and the United States, but we have to take the small farmer in this country seriously. And just as the honourable Member for St. Peter is urging that the Government should put millions of dollars into the hands of sugar producers, an industry whose demise you can see when you look down the road, whether you want to look at it or not, we have to take a serious look as to whether the Government should not invest in some of the young Barbadians who are into farming.

We know that the children of a lot of the big people who are involved in the sugar cane business go to school in Europe, and we know that most of them own homes in Europe. So when the agricultural base of these small countries fold up, they get on a plane and leave. The small people that I am talking about have no place to go. Their future is tied indefinitely with Barbados, and whether or not Barbados succeeds depends on whether or not they . succeed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has exhausted his time.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will come back again.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Chairman, earlier today the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) made the remark that I came in here like I was indulging in pepper sauce last night. I took it in the spirit that it was given, and I know that you know that it is a fine product. At least, even in the joke the honourable Member recognised that I am involved in an industry that has serious linkages in agriculture in the region, and more specifically in Barbados. 4.10p.m.

I do not think it is any secret that we were responsible for developing the first commercial project using the Barbados cherry, and it was our intention, — by "our" I mean the company I work for — to continue to try to develop the local agro-industry by way of using as much locally grown produce as we could. But just like the whole attitude that the Barbados Labour Party Administration had towards sections of the private sector, they had a very similar attitude to the small business sector, and in this regard I am particularly speaking about the small manufacturing sector.

Asides.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I really do not understand your position on the private sector anyhow, because in one breath you are telling us that they cannot tell you what to do, and that if you had the Government, you would not listen to them. I believe this is the party's view and not necessarily the personal position of the honourable Member for Christ Church West, because I know he is very well involved in the private sector. In the next breath, you tell us about your serious concern for the black section of the private sector, but when we try to tell you about that, you call us racist. It is no secret that the Barbados Labour Party Administration, over the ten year period that they were in Government, Mr. Chairman, only paid lip service really to the small business section of the private sector, and certainly to the small farmers.

I have been at many meetings with their Ministers, Ministers of Agriculture, of Trade and two different Prime Ministers in their Administration, and at no time did any of us get any comfort when we left the meeting to feel that we would be able to progress and one day maybe not be called small business any more. I can remember times when we asked for relief from Stamp Duty and other taxes so that the export-led growth that they kept ranting and raving about, particularly the last Prime Minister, could become a reality and not just a lot of rhetoric. In the case of the late Prime Minister, he emphatically said "no", so at least he was honest enough to let us know where he stood. The last Prime Minister was a little more diplomatic or political, and he gave us some token relief just prior to the last General election. I am sure you will recall it.

Mr. Chairman, to deal more specifically with agriculture and the part I know best of all, agro-industry. I heard the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) mention that the import bill for

food has been growing steadily, and that it certainly started to skyrocket after, I believe, 1981. We have heard this before, and if we are a serious people, we would know that we have to do something about cutting that bill down, or at least stopping the rapid growth, and if we recognise that, then we must understand that we have to start putting mechanisms in place, we have to come with policies which will determine that the food import bill must be cut down.

I do not mean that everybody should go on a diet. What I am saying is that we need to have some import substitution. I know that whenever those two words are called, some people get a little uncomfortable. I have no difficulty with import substitution. Import substitution, if properly handled, is the best thing that could happen to this country now. In fact, the time is past due. I recall that, some time last year, I had to meet with some people from the United States Agency for International Development, because it is no secret that we import probably most of our food from the United States. I had written an article which was published in one of the daily newspapers, and only a segment of that article dealt with import substitution, but they called a meeting, and when I got there I realised that I was the only Barbadian at the meeting, I was surrounded by a number of Americans. When I tried to ascertain why the meeting was called, because I was called as a representative of the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce, they said that they were concerned about my feelings about import substitution. Out of eight people only one thought that import substitution could work for Barbados.

I say that to say that sometimes we tend to want to take a lot of recommendations from these so-called experts and we do not recognise that these experts are, in the first place, working for their country and in the interest of their country, and if they are, they must want to sell food from their country, so they may not necessarily want to encourage us to substitute what we are already buying from them by growing it or producing it in our country.

They also made the point that they had heard our Prime Minister, as he was then, say that we should be concentrating on export-led growth and stop the talk about so much import substitution. They were concerned at the time that the Prime Minister was on the right path as far as they were concerned, and I was talking about something that was tried in many countries, as they put it, and had failed. It had failed, to my mind, because they were the advisers.

I tried to explain to them then, and I will say the same now, that while certainly in the early stages of import substitution we have to produce various food products to substitute for those that are imported now, we needed certain technological inputs, we needed various additives that are not produced in the Caribbean region, or in Barbados, for that matter, and we certainly needed equipment and, to some extent, packaging for those products.

Mr. Chairman, most of these things that I have just called come from these very developed countries like the United States which would want to tell us that import substitution really cannot work. To my mind then, they did not have to be so concerned, and if they were really looking out for our interests, as they tried to, make us believe sometimes, we could, as it were, share the pie. We could have what is commonly called a percentage of local value added. At the same time, the serious linkages would be dealt with in that you would want to link maybe a fledgling packaging industry in the forward sense and in the backward sense, the primary producers. But you see, Mr. Chairman, a Barbados Labour Party that would destroy a yam processing pilot plant — and I stress the word "pilot" — could not understand the serious importance and the significance of that, or if they did, it would appear to me that they were serving some special interest that would have probably prevented them from encouraging local production which would become substitutes for things that are now imported by a section of the private sector that is okay with the Barbados Labour Party. 4.20p.m.

The yam plant, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South East said before, though a pilot plant, was producing a very high quality product. That is not my opinion, that is an opinion of experts who do scientific tests. As far as my memory serves me, just before the Democratic Labour Party Administration went out of office in 1976 experiments were being carried out with sweet potatoes and, I believe, carrots — I am not too sure. I was on a trip with a United Nations group in late 1975, and in Toronto, Canada, I was at a large food brokerage firm and heard the broker remark that he had samples of the instant yam product from Barbados. With an improvement in the packaging, he thought that it would make an excellent product, and there was a large market, particularly in the United States of America, for such a product because of the mix of ethnic groups in the United States and, to some extent, Canada.

Yam as we know it here is not something that is peculiar to the taste buds of Barbadians. There are many other people in other parts of the world who eat yam. So we should not have been so limited in our view as to how far the product would have gone in terms of marketing. I came back, and at the time, I believe Shipping and Trading was the people who were marketing the product, and I gave them the information, indicating to them that there was a company in Canada that was very interested.

So you can appreciate, Sir, how saddened I was to see that a plant with the potential that the yam plant had was

closed soon after the Barbados Labour Party took over the office of Government in 1976.

In the same way that, earlier in this debate, we heard members of the Opposition say that what they thought was justifiable for certain statutory corporations to continue because they were — to use my own term — going through the teething stages and would probably be viable somewhere down the road, one would have thought that a project like the yam flake project would have been viewed in that way. But it is obvious to me, and as the Member for St. Michael South East continues to say, that the Opposition we now face is either suffering from amnesia or they are schizophrenic. Can you imagine, if the late Prime Minister had had his way, as the Member for St. Lucy was saying before, and closed the BARPAC plant, what would have happened in terms of our meat processing industry?

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the yam flake plant, if it was allowed to work as it was working and allowed to do the developmental work it was doing, was rapidly getting to a stage where you could have put it on the market as an operation.I am sure that Barbadians would have been willing to buy shares in an operation like that. It could have turned into a proper commercial operation, and even Government could have divested itself out. A good example of that kind of thing is the lone brewery we have in Barbados. It was at the time given enough protection that it could get off the ground, to the extent that today, with all of the competition, it still holds its own way ahead of all the competition that is coming into Barbados now from the other neighbouring territories. Another example is the macaroni factory, and I can go on. As a matter of fact, in the case of BARPAC, two more meat processing plants have developed, because it was recognized — and BARPAC was allowed to get to a stage where it could become viable — that it was such an attractive market niche that it attracted two other processors.

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: The pig farmers will get to that stage, too.

There are some areas being dealt with now by the Ministry of Agriculture which I am very pleased to see, and I speak of areas particularly dealing with fruit production and.....

Aside.

Mr. R. J. M. MILLER: I know you started it. Do you expect we could start everything in nine months? But we now have to make it work.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I will come back to this.

We know you started the fruit orchards. But we have to be very careful. One of the things is that it is all well and good to start it, but you have to plant the right things so you can sell and know where you are going to sell them. You have to understand where the market is.

(Aside: Cherries)

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Cherries? As a matter of fact, we planted those. We started those in 1975. Paw paw has been going a long time. It is only because of .the bunchy top problem that you had to go through that again.

Mr. Chairman, I will come back again.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, the Opposition is in a positive mood in dealing with agriculture, because we feel, as I said earlier, Sir, that on the matters that confront Barbadian agriculture, it is not a question as to whether projects are started under us or started under DLP, but that they are sufficiently serious that we must use this debate to talk about agriculture in a serious way. But the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) has grasped the reputation of the Barbados Labour Party into his clutches, and I do not think that is a safe place for me to allow it to remain. He wants the debate to go back to the slave trade, and I do not really think that I can carry back the debate to the slave trade to please him. And, before I go back to some of the issues which we brought forward in a positive frame of mind, I ought to counteract some of the propaganda that was put abroad by the honourable member for St. Michael South East.

The agricultural sector, Mr. Chairman, has been in a state of progressive decline since the early 1960s; in fact, due to the change in national development emphasis, which placed manufacturing and tourism in the forefront of national economic considerations. If you are involved in agricultural planning in a small country such as ours, you might want to be guided by certain criteria for proper agricultural planning. One criterion is that in a small country, while you may not be able to obtain self-sufficiency in the production of food, you could at least gear your agricultural sector to earn enough foreign exchange to meet a large proportion, if not the full proportion, of the country's food import bill. If we were to apply that basic balance approach to agriculture planning, which I subscribe to — we cannot be self-sufficient in food so we have to have a mixture of domestic

food production and production for exports — the numbers where Barbados is concerned are very interesting. 4.30p.m.

Up to early 1960, we were in a position in Barbados where, even though we could not produce all our foods, we were earning enough exports from food production, sugar, and other things to pay for the imports of the food. In 1961, Barbados imported $22.4 million of all various categories of food and we exported $35 million of food products, which meant that, in a real sense, we were feeding ourselves and that we were earning from agricultural exports enough to pay for the imports as well as make a contribution, by way of an export surplus, to the wider development of the society. That basic balance has been progressively destroyed. In 1976, our imports of food increased to $97 million and our exports of food fell to $69 million. So that by 1976, Sir, rather than there being a net food surplus in the sense that we would want to be, we had become a net importer of food in a big way. That situation, I will admit, expressed itself again in 1981, when we imported $179 million in food. But if the Member is going to speak honestly and accurately about our record, particularly in the last five years, he will tell the House that whereas we imported $179 million worth of food in 1981, we imported only $155 million in 1985, and that in itself tells a tale.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Hold on.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South East wants us to rewrite history to completely ignore the significance of the steps that have been taken to reduce this country's food import bill from $179 million in 1981 to $155 million .....

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: I think the honourable Member is giving a wrong interpretation to what I said. I said that in 1976, when the food bill was $92 million, the Barbados Labour Party said it was too high. Their campaign about agriculture was to state that the food bill was too high and that they would cut it down. But by 1981, the year of the election, when I thought they would be most prudent in making sure that the food bill was at its least, it went up to $179 million. It is a fact that it went back down a little after that, but by then Barbados had problems importing food anyhow, because we were in severe financial difficulties, and, as the honourable Member for St. Peter would have said in the Budget Debate in 1986, the fiscal policies in 1981 forced us to go to the IMF.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Oh, Jesus! Mr. Chairman, it is painful, very painful, Sir, to have to deal with the views of the honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not really suggesting that it is that painful.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is really painful, Sir.

What happened where our food import bill was concerned in Barbados was that we had a situation in Barbados where the pace of development in tourism, which added to the number of eating days in Barbados, increased between 1976 and 1981 faster than our capacity to meet the increased demand for food occasioned by a rapidly expanding tourism sector, first of all, Sir, and faster than our capacity to put in place alternative systems to deal with the overall demand for food. And if we were to look at the whole history of Barbados' development in the relationship of agriculture to non-agriculture sectors and we fail to take this into account as a serious issue, Sir, we are wasting time.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is theory.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: That is not theory. Between 1976 and 1981, when this country realised the fastest growth in tourism in the history of this country, the rate of growth in the demand for food occasioned by that was more than the country could accommodate in a short space of time. That is a fact. My point, however, Sir, is that we must remember that tourist* arrivals reached a peak.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Oh, my God!

My point, Sir, is that between 1981 and 1985 the food import bill was brought down in both nominal terms as well as in real terms, and on that, I say, Sir, hangs a tale.

The honourable Member is saying that the Barbados Labour Party has done nothing whatsoever for small farmers, nor nothing to stimulate domestic food production in this country. The Minister, who I hope is more sober, would tell him that that is not true. Whereas we were exporting a large category of food commodities for domestic fresh consumption in 1976, by 1985 we had reached the stage where this country did not have to import that similar range of vegetables and other food stuff for domestic fresh consumption, and it all has to do with the measures put in place, through schemes such as the Rural Development Programme, to bring a package of assistance to bear in supporting the production of at least 1 000 small farmers. How can you say, Mr. Chairman, that the Barbados Labour Party had done nothing for the small farmers when there is the record of the Rural Development Programme to point to, a project which has been so successful that the Minister of Finance himself in this debate two days ago saluted it as a

project that the Democratic Labour Party would want to carry with it into the future? How do you, Mr. Chairman, ignore the effects of that range of incentives that were put in place, deliberately so, in the 1982 Budget, and which led to a situation where the non-sugar agricultural sector in Barbados, largely comprised of the small farming community, was the sector in Barbados which realised the highest rates of growth, particularly in the years between 1981 and 1984, and even brought this country to a stage where, for the first time of our history, the value of non-sugar agriculture in this country even exceeded the value of sugar production? We want to ignore these things. Does the honourable Member want me also to go into the Livestock Development Fund that we started? The non-sugar Agricultural Development Fund? Does he want me to talk about these things?

Does he also want me, Mr. Chairman, to talk about the manner in which decisions taken by the Democratic Labour Party in 1974 and 1975 have put the sugar industry in its present bind? Is that what he wants me to talk about? Does he want me to say, Sir, that before LOME Barbados had guaranteed markets for sugar under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement of 131 000> tonnes, and that our problems was that, despite the fact that the price that we received for sugar then was greater than the cost of production, we consistently under-produced? In the years when we had a guaranteed market of 131 000 tonnes, we were down to 119 000 and 110 000 tonnes.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am ignoring him, Sir. I am ignoring the boy! 4.40p.m.

In 1974—75 there was a temporary one-shot, massive increase in the world market price of sugar, and the present Government, rather than honouring its commitments under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, decided to take advantage of the one-shot, massive increase in the world market price of sugar, choosing to ignore all the facts of history, that the world market price may occasionally go up to historic levels, but you cannot "predicate t;he future of an industry on that one-shot, massive increase. So when our market quotas had to be established in LOME in 1975, it was set in relation to the amount that we were selling under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement of 1974—75, and whereas countries like Maritius, Swaziland and other major sugar^producers were able to expand their quotas under LOME, ours was set not at 131 which would have given us a premium market for sugar of 131 000 tonnes a year, but at the level that we ridiculously chose to adopt in 1974 by going at the artificial increase in the world market price in those years. It has been documented in studies to which the Minister of Agriculture has access.

The bind in which we find ourselves is that we have an industry which is capable of supporting an infrastructure with 150 000 tonnes, but, because of decisions taken by the Democratic Labour Party in 1974—75, we were put in a position where our market to the EEC was set at 53 000 tonnes, our maket to the United States of America at 14 000 tonnes, and we have our domestic market of about 17 000 tonnes. This means that so long as we are talking in terms of production now of over 85 000 tonnes, Sir, with an infrastructure capable of supporting production of over 150 000 tonnes, we are going to be in problems, and the big problem, therefore, is a problem of cost in many respects.

I wanted to go back to the history of this thing, which is well caught up in fundamental errors of judgment made in 1974—75, to move away from honouring our guaranteed markets to taking advantage of a one-shot increase in price on the world market sugar, as if we did not know that if you take a historical trend, that you have those one-shot increases in the world market price only once in every 50 years.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has a minute to wind up. I was rather generous.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am going to come back to this issue. I am coming back, in a fractious mood to deal with the honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. C. V. WALKER (St. George North): Mr. Chairman, it is obvious that we have just reached the point where we can discuss things as they relate to the masses of the people of this country. I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition made the point yesterday that it was absolutely necessary that we discuss things as they relate to the 22 000 members of the Civil Service. That 22 000, incidentally, represents about 8% of the total people who are responsible for all of us being here, and we have spent over two days out of the five days allocated, which is again over 40% of the time, and we are now at the point of discussing the realities of Barbados, and that is agriculture, and I, in my contribution, will deal primarily with the question of sugar, since the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) has spent his time on sugar.

I should know a little about sugar. I represent a constituency that is considered the centre of the sugar production. Someone asked earlier if anyone had ever dug a cane hole. Well, you have to be from the country district of the canes to know about cane holes.

Aside.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: That is right! Flat Rock.

Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Peter said that we should be serious. In reality, sugar is not what it used to be. You could almost say that sugar is dead. In the whole world people are using substitutes. If he is going to be serious, let us be serious. Everybody is going towards substitutes.

He also mentioned 1974 and the production of 130 000 tonnes of sugar at the price that we could get in 1974. I wonder if the honourable Member for St. Peter would like us to produce 174 000 tonnes now at the present price.

Aside.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: That was your argument. You were saying that if we had continued then, we would have gone into LOME at about 130 000 tonnes, and we would have been able to produce that at this price now.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is misrepresenting what I said. He clearly has not understood it. I was simply trying to explain how Barbados now finds itself in the present situation, whereas in the past it was possible, and even profitable, for us to produce over 80 000 tonnes a year. That is deeply rooted in decisions taken in 1974, when this country refused....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point I made, which the honourable Member is misrepresenting, is that we went into a situation where we had a market of over 131 000 tonnes under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and we lost that in LOME, the successor to it, as compared to countries such as Mauritius, which increased their quota under the LOME as compared to the quota under the CSA, because of our deliberate decision to .....

Mr. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, is he going to finish the point of order?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR:....and sell it on the world market.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You may proceed.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, again the honourable Member for St. Peter is trying to correct what he said, because he said earlier that we should be serious. In his first contribution, he spoke about a crisis in the commodity area. There is not only a crisis in sugar, there is a crisis in everything else. I agree with you. However, you also said that we had to look at the future of the sugar industry and you then introduced the whole world of diversification. I will get back to that.

Asides.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: Do not worry about my voice, let me worry about that. I told you already you cannot stop .....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I refer you to the Rules of the House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I apologise for shouting across the table that the only thing about the honourable Member is his voice and there is nothing else north of his shoulders. I apologise for saying that, Sir.
4.50p.m.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: I think that should be struck from the record.

Mr. Chairman, he also said that the Minister of Agriculture had to be sure whether or not he would move the pressure from the Ministry of Finance or whether it would be moved from the Ministry of Agriculture, *of* whether it would be placed on the National Bank. He must remember that whether the responsibility is under the Ministry of Finance, the Minister of Agriculture or the National Bank, the citizens of Barbados would have to fund any contribution or any support that you give to to it, s| it does not matter. That is just the tactic that you were trying to use, as you were trying for the last two years.

You talked about a one year price support on — budget. If you say not a one year support on-budget and you continue for four, five or six years, whenever you are finished, it is still a matter of funds that we have to pay to prop up the industry. And you said that we should put it on the same footing as industry, but yet, you said it was an industry to start with, and you admitted that it was a dying industry.

The problem that we are faced with is the problem of price, and no matter what reference you use, no matter what records you go back to, if you go back to 1964, 1963, 1972, you will discover that the problem you are facing is price. We have to face the impact of the price and the conditions that were prevalent in Barbados over the years. If you were to take the example of even the people who are working in the industry, in 1979, out-of-crop people who were working — and, remember, it was under your party — no longer had a five-day work week. In 1969, there were 10 189 people working in the sugar industry out of crop. In 1972, it dropped to 7 300.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member is very enthusiastic and I like to hear him, but the honourable Member must not mislead the Committee. The law of Barbados is such that it requires a five-day work week, and the union which represents the workers has been insisting on that five-day work week.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: There is a difference between the law and reality. As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, it dropped in 1975 to 4 583. It went down again in 1978, to 4 329, and it went all the way down, if we stop at 1983, when there were only 3 507 people working in the out-of-sugar season, and that included some Vincentians. What is interesting also is that when we look at that group, we find that the ratio was 3:1 from 1969. Therefore, I submit that it is a dying industry, and no one can blame this party for what has happened in 1974.

Asides.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: If you want to call it a cane blade speech, if you go back and look at the history and what is happening now as it relates to what was said in Queen's Park as to the cane blade speech, you will realize that it was, in fact, the truth, and nothing but the truth.

When we talk about just a move away from the sugar and diversification, the honourable Member for St. Peter, obviously, is not aware that in this country, under the Democratic Labour Party, there was diversification started in the area of carrots, onions, in the yam processing that was mentioned by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East and in cotton, in an extensive way. You killed it in your time.

The honourable Member for St. Peter must remember that if you are going to talk diversification, it was there before, and if you are going to talk about sugar, and you want to talk seriously, let us accept the fact that it is a dying industry.

I will come back on other areas of agriculture.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

LEA VETO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker has agreed we have reached the time for a refreshment break.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.30 p.m. today.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House until 5.30p. m. 5.00p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, I can assure this Committee that this will not be a discourse in history, we have already been exposed to that type of discourse, but I think that whenever sugar is debated, it has to be put within certain perspectives. It is very useful sometimes to remind us of the history going back to the very beginning.

I think the history of sugar would suggest to us that we are dealing with a very problematic industry. There is certainly no other industry, or any other sphere of economic activity in Barbados, or, in fact, in the Caribbean, that has been so studied and reported on as this industry. Just for the records, if you look at the major studies into this industry from the late 19th century, one can note the Norman Commission, 1897 and the Ollivere, 1930. Those were two Imperial Commissions that came to the Caribbean to look at the sugar industry. There was a local Committee established in 1935, Committee of the Joint Houses of Parliament to investigate; there was the Shepherd Commission in 1945, the McKenzie Report in 1957, and most of us around here we are aware of the Farley Report, a path breaking report in 1963, and of course, Sir, the very recent McGregor Report, which is 1980. In fact, it is only within the last seven or eight years that we have not had an investigation into and report on the sugar industry.

I would like to suggest that, perhaps, it might be time to have such a report anyhow. I do not think we have to be waiting for periods of 17 years as between the Farley and McGregor — The period between Shepherd and

McKenzie was 1? years and the period between McKenzie and Farley was a brief six years — I would suggest that so many things have happened in the sugar industry in the 1980s that perhaps we can think seriously in terms of looking again in depth at this industry, because, quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, I am afraid of this sugar industry.

I think one of the basic things facing us in that industry is the kind of decision that we will make and how this decision is to relate to the future. I do not think we need as two political parties to divide on this in terms of whether the Barbados Labour Party is responsible for the state that sugar is in or the Democratic Labour Party is responsible for the state of sugar. Sugar is a problem, and we have to understand that it is one area in our national life that we have to meet courageously.

I have heard the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) speak in terms not different from the Honourable Prime Minister in terms of their views of the sugar industry. When the Prime Minister made the "no cane blade speech", as it was called, it was just a perception that was more advanced than the perception of others around him. It was a matter of vision, it was a matter of a person who knew the results of history and was therefore able to project, with some clarity and sense*, what would happen in the future. I have heard the honourable Member for St. Peter raising really important questions about the status of the sugar industry, and I think he has serious doubts about our ability to continue in the sugar industry.

Let us be honest in the debate. Let us look at the sugar industry from a position of intelligent analysis. Let us not be afraid to make comments that the sugar people in this country will hear what we say and be scared about what they think about what we say. My interest in sugar is not related to whether the people who own sugar hear what I have to say and therefore feel that the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central came down negatively against sugar,, and that certain people in their drawing rooms will say that he is against sugar. Those considerations do not weigh with me. What I have to say about sugar is based on a study of the industry, as I am sure that most of us in here have studied that industry and formed conclusions about it. What we are not willing to do is to come to the obvious conclusions from the research and the study we have put into that industry.

Anybody who has looked at the sugar industry in recent historical times know that the people who control the industry have always blackmailed the country as a whole to go along with their dictates. I remember an instance, when I was looking in depth at the sugar industry of the 1930s for a research paper which I did last week for the Emancipation III series, where there was a depression on and the sugar planters in this country attempted to hold the British Government to ransom. They tried to force the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give them sugar supports, a guaranteed price for their sugar. The Chancellor of the Exchequer refused to give them, because he said that the British taxpayers were not going to continue subsidising the colonial sugar interests, and in an attempt to blackmail the Chancellor of the Exchequer they held back sugar here in Barbados. Instead of exporting the sugar in the traditional months^ April and May, they went down into June and July, holding it back hoping that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would send up the price of sugar. By the time that they exported, they had not got the support they needed and the price of sugar had gone down on the market, and it almost led to a crisis in Barbados. That is because they knew the importance of sugar in the economy at that time. At that time sugar was employing about 34 000 people directly, out of a labour force of just about 90 000, and it accounted for something like 90 per cent of our domestic exports. So at that time they had a tremendous power in the economy. Sugar controlled the economy, yet still they could not force the imperial Government to follow their dictates. When they tried also to use other measures, for instance, the,y wanted to tax Barbadians by putting on Income Tax to get money out of that to prop up the sugar industry, the Barbadians resisted that in 1934/35.

In 1982, a Government, which should have learnt because of that past history about the strategies an4 the techniques of that same sugar sector, followed blindly the guide and the lead that they were given by persons in the sugar industry. There was an alliance between the sugar interests and people like Jerry Hagelberg with the last Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Cheltenham, to create a regime in Barbados that handed over to the sugar people whatever they asked for. Just look at the kinds of Boards that were established that had anything at all to do with sugar in those days. White Boards! You know that is true, too, all of them. ADC or whatever Board there was to do with sugar was dominated by white people derived from the planter class element. There was an assumption by the Barbados Labour Party that sugar was a matter .....

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That was in the late stages when they tried to dilute the whiteness, so he got in somewhere. They did not even go for somebody white like me. You know in the old time days you used to talk about mustifmos and quadroons. I am not sure which one he would be in. He must be a quadroon or something like that, he would not be a mustifino. It is what he recognises himself to be.

The McGregor Report relates, Sir, to the dualism in the sugar industry, who control as against those who

have to render service to that industry. It is a dualism that continues. This country is held at ransom by a relatively small group of powerful interests that continue to dictate to us where we have to go in terms of building a developmental path for this country. I reject that. I reject that deeply and fundamentally, because I believe in a concept of independence that goes past just the notion of political independence. I believe in a concept of independence that will allow us to make certain determinations. 5.40p.m.

Of course, there are certain pragmatic matters that one has to consider — I have no doubt about that — and one recognizes that one cannot get rid of the sugar industry, one cannot appropriate the interest of those who control sugar. One cannot write off sugar. That is not for consideration. What I am saying is that when we have to make determinations, we have to understand that these determinations must be based on long run considerations as well as short run considerations. I think that sometimes the short run considerations overwhelm us. We have to be able to look down the line and see what is best when we are taking the funds of the hard-working taxpayers of this country and pushing them indiscriminately into a particular industry. We have to be very careful about that.

I would like to repeat, Mr. Chairman, that I am afraid of the sugar industry, sorely afraid. In 1980, you will remember that the last Administration decided, on the advice of the sugar people, that they would disband a number of funds that had been accumulating over years. These funds had been established for one or the other purpose in terms of trying to ensure that when sugar ran into difficulties, there would be some support there for the industry. I think about $25 million were taken out of those funds and invested into the sugar industry one way or another. I am concerned about the outturns of those investments, and I want to know — I am sure the members of the past Administration in the House would be able to give us some idea as to whether they felt they were satisfied with the way those funds had been deployed into the sugar industry. For instance, when capital was taken to purchase equity in that industry, it was said that it would integrate 10 000 small farmers into that industry. I would like to know that is the result of that experiment now? What has happened to the small farmers? Are they benefitting from being integrated in the sugar industry?

We had a way of thinking in the Barbados Workers Union that when the lion and the lamb lie down together, in most instances the lamb is going to be in the belly of the lion. That is how it is going to end up. They are not going to lie down side by side, one is going to end up as a meal for the other, and I want to know whether, in fact, these 10 000 small holders, for whom money was used to purchase equity in Sugar Industry Ltd., are deriving any benefits from that kind of integration? It seems to me that a lot of these small holders are now not in operation, that in recent times they have not been benefitting from being involved in the cultivation of sugar at all, and that, in fact, all that happened really is that that money in the long run would have helped the large planters and large manufacturers and the small holders would not have got much out of that scheme at all.

The honourable Member for St. Peter looked at the area in the process that is very important, the area of marketing. We know that sugar has always been a very difficult area to assess, because the same people who are doing the planting are the same people who are doing the manufacturing and are the people who are doing the marketing. They will always suggest to you that they are losing on the cultivating aspect, and it is always very difficult to find out whether they are really losing overall, because they can lose on cultivation and make a lot of money out of manufacturing and out of marketing, especially marketing, because they have had a monopoly on marketing in • this country for a very long time, from time immemorial. They are the experts on it.

This leads me to the intervention that the honourable Member for St. Peter made when he talked about that innovative intervention in 1974, when the then Prime Minister taught them a bit about marketing. Instead of going to all of the old, tired, tried past, he went and he sold in the Middle East. He sold where markets were available and he made a lot of money. You know that, too! Money that benefitted this country!

The suggestion from the honourable Member for St. Peter that that was to our disadvantage everlastingly canno^, be taken seriously. When we went into EEC, LOME, you could not have gone in there with the position that you have to guarantee 140 000 tonnes of sugar. You went in there negotiating to see what you could get in along with all the other Commonwealth countries, all the other ACP countries, under the sugar protocol.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: You could not go in there and determine what you would get in. You were not in a position to dictate to Britain and the other European countries how much sugar they would purchase from you. And I am suggesting to you that if you look at the outturn figures in terms of how much we have made from sugar, we have had glorious years under this arrangement. Go back to 1980 — $109 million! The same 1974 you are talking about, we made what? Approximately $95 million!

(Aside:, Hon. P. M. GREAVES: In money ferms.)

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That is just nominal. I am not talking about the value in terms of the currency at a different time.

I am saying that the real constraint on us is not that we gof out of a particular situation, the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, in 1974 and had to go into a different arrangement and that we were disadvantaged by any move by this particular Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has a minute.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I will have to come back on this issue again.

It is clear to me that the honourable Member should not try to bulldoze the Democratic Labour Party into a position in terms of sugar — let me hear now where you stand in terms of sugar. Let us understand what the position is. It is not a matter of BLP doing better for sugar or DLP doing better for sugar. It is a question of what sugar can do for all of us, that is the important thing, or do to all of us, which is even more important.

I will come back, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. B. M. TAITT, Hon. H. deB. FORDE and Mr. E. BOURNE rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I recognise the honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Each time one of you speak, you have a disproportionate position.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things about history is^ that if you are part of it when it is happening, you have a different perception and a different knowledge from those who come to it subsequently. I think this House deserves to have, again, the facts concerning the marketing of sugar, our entry into the LOME Convention and our entry into the Agreement, and which there has been no other among the developing countries and developed countries before or since.

The LOME Convention, for all those who have a knowledge of relationships between developing and developed countries.....

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: LOME I.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I am talking about LOME I. That is the only one we negotiated. We cannot speak of the others, nor would we speak of them in the same terms.

LOME I was considered a watershed, a landmark in the history of relationships between developing and developed countries, because it was the first time in the history of those relationships that the developing countries had negotiated as a bloc and had successfully concluded an agreement which could be said to manifest not only the concerns of the developed countries, but an overwhelming concern for developing countries. I think that any discussion of LOME I must be informed by that fundamental fact, because, unless one understood the nature of the negotiations, one could not speak with any authenticity, or, indeed, validity, about the results of those negotiations.

Sir, up until the determination by the United Kingdom Government that it would enter into the European Economic Community, the disposition of sugar from Barbados and other Commonwealth countries was a matter that was determined essentially in London. It was so determined because the major market for such sugar was, in fact, in London, especially cane sugar, and indeed, even as I speak, the only major market where cane sugar is being processed is at the Tate and Lyle refineries in Britain. So when Britain decided to go into the European Economic Community, the question of what would* happen to commodities, such as bananas and other primary products, produced by the colonies, now having become countries, was a question to be determined between the former colonies and Great Britain. At the time, only some of the former colonies were independent. Here in the Caribbean we had only four countries that were at the time independent, with one pending. And so, the formula for entry by the United Kingdom into the European Economic Community had to carry with it a sub-formula of how the United Kingdom would deal with its long term arrangements and long term agreements between Britain and its erstwhile colonies.

5.50p.m.

There was a thing which came to have the term Part 4 of the arrangements. The Part 4 countries, so-called, was a regime that was in methodology established by the British and the Europeans for the negotiating position of those countries which were not independent and which, perforce would form part of the British entry into the European Economic Community. Those countries happened to be, for purposes of the Caribbean, full countries in our eyes, because they were members of a treaty that had been recognised by the developed countries of the Caribbean. They were members of CARIFTA, and by 1974, the four MDCs had become members of CARICOM, and the so-called Part 4 countries had, in fact, signalled their intentions to become part of the Caribbean Community. And whereas there was a dilemma for the United Kingdom as to whether those countries could properly

enter into an agreement with the four MDCs, there was no such dilemma for the 4 MDCs, because Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana had already indicated that they would regard the other countries, with a possible exception of Montserrat, as equal for purposes of treaty making.

When, therefore, the Caribbean Community countries went to negotiate as part of the African Caribbean Pacific group, the Caribbean came to be regarded as a single unit for purposes of those negotiations. Having solved the problem of the Part 4 countries here in the Caribbean, by telling the British that we would not allow them to be party to our negotiations — because the British wanted to have the peculiar position of being both an EEC country for their purposes and an African Caribbean Pacific country by virtue of their being masters of the Part 4 countries — the lesser developed countries in the Caribbean — when, therefore, we managed to get the less developed in the Caribbean, with some tremendous difficulties, with Dominica, Montserrat and Grenada, which wanted to have a formula that the British were working out at Whitehall, which would allow the British to know what was going on in our deliberations — the Caribbean countries told the others they would have to decide if they were going to be British or Caribbean — finally, we reached a position, a tenuous one, but one that we had to hold together very carefully, where every time we went to negotiate in Brussels, we used to have two layers. We used to have a negotiation to make sure that none of the lesser developed countries would bolt from the Caribbean position, and we had the new negotiations to make sure that African Caribbean Pacific countries would stay together. These negotiations, Mr. Chairman, were long and protracted, and, as the honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, knows, when you are having negotiations of these kinds, they are always very tenuous, because the longer the negotiations take, especially on economic matters, the greater is the risk that one of the members of the fold will bolt.

Sugar was discussed as a special protocol. Indeed, the maior interest of Barbados in the LOME Convention was sugar. One could almost say the only interest, but that might be carrying it a little too far. Our major interest was sugar, because at that time the maior problem facing Barbados was not a question of whether we could get a quota of 130 000 tonnes or 60 000 tonnes, or any thousand tonnes. The major problem facing the sugar industry at that time was that the sugar barons in Barbados — that is my term — the sugar producers in Barbados, wanted a guaranteed market. The most important single factor for them was not the price they would get, not the price we would get, but that we would have a guaranteed market, and if you examine the LOME Convention and its successors, LOME 2, and 3, you will see that the sugar protocol makes provision for a continuing guaranteed market of 50 000 long tonnes.

The 50 000 tonnes were worked out specifically on (a) advice and (b) requirement. If you look at the figures, Sir, you will see that in 1974 Barbados produced 110 COO tonnes of sugar, and at that time it was projected that from then and forever Barbados would never go back into the halcyon days of 200 000 tonnes. Indeed, Sir, the statistics indicate that we have not reached more than 136000 tonnes, which we did in 1980, but'there is an average between 1974 and 1985, Sir. The sugar produced in Barbados is as follows:

1974 - 110700 tonnes;
1975 - 98 600 » ;
1976 - 103 600 " • ;
1977 - 124 100 » ;
1978 - 104 100 " ;
1979-118000 " ;
1980 - a bumber year - 136 600;
1981 - back down to 97 500;
1982 - 85 500 tonnes;
1983 - 82 800 » ;
1984-104400 " ;
1985 - 102 000 » ;

One can see that except for the 136 000 tonnes produced in 1980, at no time did Barbados produce more than 125 000 tonnes of sugar.

I was not here when the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. Arthur) spoke, and will not, therefore, essay to understand what he said. But if, in fact, he was making the point that 131 000 tonnes were available to Barbados as a figure for LOME in 1974, or that some other figure was available, let me point out to him that the domestic needs of Barbados at that time were deemed to be 16 000 tonnes.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is all right. I said 16 000 tonnes. If it is 17 000, it is a small point. He is an economist and he knows that 16 000 and 17 000, for these purposes, cannot be important. Let us say 17 000; he helps my argument if it is 17 000.

The price of sugar which we got at LOME 1 and will ever get, will always be hovering around where it is now. The world market price does not, and did not, influence the price negotiated at LOME on a supply/demand basis. It was a formula worked out to take account of the over-production of other African Caribbean Pacific Countries. The formula worked out was based on Britain saying that it could only absorb a certain quantity of sugar, the 45 APC countries allocating the quotas going into Britain, and the Caribbean allocating that on the basis of the Caribbean and not on the basis of Barbados. In Guyana, they produced two crops of sugar. In Jamaica, at that time they were still producing sugar in

fairly large quantities, and Trinidad and Tobago was capable, and did, in fact, get part of the quota. So Barbados did extremely well to be able to get -50 000 tonnes, and the 50 000 tonnes is, in fact, what was agreed upon as a proper medium and long term projection for a guaranteed market. I well remember the Barbados Sugar Producers Association, as it then was, and Mr. Osborne, now Sir Neville Osborne, indicating to Charlie Skeete and myself that if we could get 50 000 tonnes, the Barbados Sugar Producers and the cane farmers would be extremely happy, because, for the first time in the circumstances of the marketing of sugar at that time, they would be in a position to plan — this was the important factor — their production. I invite the honourable Members of this Committee to go back to the period before 1974 and to see the sporadic nature of the production in Barbados. 6.00 p.m.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in that context, the question of marketing. As I said, there were 16 000 tonnes for domestic use. There was a commitment to the United States market, if the honourable Member will remember — the facts are available — which required us to have in excess of 20 000 tonnes. I am speaking entirely and completely from memory and I could be wrong on a thousand tonnes here and there, but there was a commitment to the United States which, as has been seen failure to fulfil the quota in any year into the U.S. market would result in a cut in the following year, so one had to maintain the foothold in the U.S. market. Even at that time the derivatives had begun to invade the sugar market.

It is well known that the world price of sugar fluctuates in seven year cycles where there is a period of plenty - for example, 1975 - and then there is a systematic, clear diminution of the price of sugar, whether it is artificially induced - or whether it is part of the international monetary forces. Just as is happening with coffee today, there is an inexorable decline of the price, which goes on for a circle of roughly five to six years, and then, suddenly, because the money manipulators are functioning, there is a sudden rise in the price.

In 1975, for the first time in the history of Barbados, the Government of Barbados - a Government, any Government, from 1645 when sugar was introduced until 1975 - said, let us participate, come let us reason together, I will teach you what to do, because the sugar negotiations, so-called, used to be that the sugar producers used to journey to London where the shareholders in sugar in Barbados, who resided in London and participated, and the shareholders in the production of sugar would determine, through the British'Government, what price they would give to Barbados and the rest. They did that with all commodities, not only sugar. The British Ministry of Food was a colossus on the scene of Production of primary products in this Caribbean. So when Barbados, as an independent country, in 1975 said this is how we will play the ball game, that is when Barbados taught — I am going to finish, I realise I am going over — the sugar producers how they could market, and because we did what I have been saying we must do always, to go and find out how to satisfy a particular market, we got an extraordinarily high return from the sale of our sugar on the world market.

Mr. Chairman, as necessary, I will finish that story, but I believe the story from that point on is sufficiently well known, and even the honourable Member for St. Peter in his collected moments will accept that the marketing of sugar has been a scientific methodology applied from Barbados under the leadership of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. E. BOURNE (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman, I would like to speak on Subhead 18 — Fishery Department. Under this subhead we are asking for the training of fishermen in navigation, net handling, maintence of bolts and engines; training for the fishing industry, research in inshore fishing and aquaculture project.

In the manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party of 1976 they said: "The BLP attaches equally great importance to the development of the Fisheries Industry. While' it produces less direct employment than Agriculture, it is still a significant employer; but more importantly, the sea is a source of highly nutritious food which can be brought reasonably cheaply to the consumer, if the industry is efficiently organised.

A BT.P Government will make provision for: —

* Three new fishing ports .....

* A viable shell fish industry along the East Coast of Barbados.

* Inland fish farms...

I think I will deal with those.

It is said that the Barbados Labour Party introduced the ice boats to Barbados, boats 40 feet and over, but what I am saying now is that if you start on the wrong foot, you will end up on the wrong foot.

Over the years, people in Barbados would ignore the fishing industry and they would think that it was something for a man who only should be interested in an old bath pants, who would get into a boat and bring some fish back to eke out a living. But as time went by, people in this country realised that fishing was profitable, and going back to history you will see that during the war of 1812 between England and the United States, fishing at

that time was controlled by the merchant class in this country, so it must have been profitable.

What the Government of that day should have done was to carry out a thorough research into the fishing industry, because each of those boats cost in the vicinity of $200 000 and up. I will say roughly a quarter million dollars to put one out there, and when you look at 20 boats at a quarter million dollars, easily you are looking at about $5 million. But in the industry, you will find that the people who man these boats have very little knowledge about navigation, if any at all, very little knowledge about maintenance of the boats and engines and very little knowledge about fishing *itself,* because it is different today from in the old days when fisherment had to serve an apprenticeship like in any of the other trades. Any Tom, Dick and Harry can step on a boat and automatically he is a captain or he is a fisherman.

We notice as the years go by that our boats have to go further and further afield to catch the desired flying fish. Rumour has it that it is due to the scarcity of fish, and because of over fishing they have to go further afield. I disagree strongly with this. If you look carefully at the Atlantic, if anyone had to study the ocean, you would see that there are times when tides change. The world goes around in a circle, everything goes around in a circle, hurricanes hit Barbados in a cycle of every 50 years. Always remember this. I remember as a little boy watching the fishing boats from Silver Sands going out, some of them with just one sail and a pair of oars, to catch flying fish, because during that cycle the fish were brought very close into our shores, and I am strongly of the opinion that when the tide leaves the African coast, the south east Atlantic current on its way to Barbados, maybe 100 miles or so east of this island, part of it breaks off slightly and the main bulk of the flying fish goes down to the south west to Tobago. 6.10 pjn.

If you go around all the West Indian islands, you will see that flying fish swim all around them. It is not only Barbados or Tobago, so before putting all this money out there, the Government should have carried out a thorough research in the industry, not just leave it to the whims and fancies of these people. They have not done this, and we have to do it. We have to pick up the tab.

I would expect that when we start to carry out our research, we do it in a very thorough manner. In this day of technology, there is a piece of fishing equipment which is called a fish finder, and I would suggest to the Minister that he put out some money, some $5 000 or $6 000, to get a very good piece of equipment to do the job. This can tell even a single fish on the bottom. It can tell you how they are swimming, how big the shoal is, and you will be able to tell where the breeding grounds of these fish are. You will be able to tell the feeding habits. Many people think that a fish is something that just swims about at will. They all have areas to breed in and special areas to feed in^ and it is the conditions of the water around them that causes them to hatch and feed in these particular areas.

I remember that once the Brace Research was carrying out an investigation of the flying fish. Some of the old fishermen told me quite frankly that whatever they do, they are going to find that the flying fish is a fish which travels with the tide, because they are tide fish. The late Captain Fergusson said so, too, and after a year or two, they came to a conclusion that truly they were tide fish, because, listening to the fishermen, and having carried out some experiments myself, I have found that wherever the direction of the 'tide is strongest, is the area where you catch more flying fish.

I do not care how many times our Minister of Agri culture goes to Trinidad and Tobago, or how many times he goes to Guyana, the time wjll come when these people will say you cannot come down here anymore, so we might as well start now and tap the source of the flying fish so that we would not have to go down to Tobago. We can send our boats to the east of the island or wherever they branch off and catch our fish there. What I do not understand is that you get the Japanese and the Koreans travelling all of these thousands of miles to just east of Barbados to catch fish. You would not want to equip a big steamship to travel down here just for the fun of it. There must be some profit in it. Then there is the demersal fish, fish like red fish, snapper and the likes. I remember coming from New York some time last year and being surprised to see that, 75 miles due north of St. Lucy, there was a stretch of.....

Asides

Mr. E. BOURNE: Yes, of course. The pilot of the plane told us we were 75 miles away from Barbados, and I looked out the window, because by nature I belong to the sea, I love it. What I am saying here is that we should investigate those fishing banks. The same fish finder will tell us whether it is profitable to use those banks or not.

I do not like the idea of worrying about going to Guyana for shrimp, croaker, snoop and snapper. We have snapper here and we can breed shrimp here. Up to Sunday I saw two shrimps in the little water at Silver Sands which used to be a river at one time. We can improve our shell fish industry but what has happened was that the Minister of Agriculture we had was just a joker, that is why we marched him out in such a short time. He was just pooh-poohing with it. All he had to do was to dredge each little stream that goes into the sea, the sea water will come in. Shrimps strive readily in brackish

water, they grow at will. We used to play with them at Silver Sands as kids. We did not know what they were, because the people considered them as dirty. This is what I would support, J will give the Minister of Agriculture my full support in carrying out these projects.

When it comes to the training of fishermen in navigation, I think that this should be done, beginning now, and also the handling and maintenance of boats and engines. I remember being sent off to Aruba year before last to retrieve a fishing boat which went adrift down there, and I was the saddest person when I looked at the type of thing that these fellows were travelling around in. I was told by the Harbour Master that regardless to whatsoever I did, it would have to be sea worthy, and to make that thing sea worthy it would cost me about $50 000 or $60 000. It was the first time that I had ever seen a boat on land with water in it, and the water was pouring from the inside out. I saw that, I then had to put it on a container ship and ship it back up here for a cost of some $8 000 or $9 000. This was the best price I could get, so I came back and I told the Insurance Corporation that they could expect to pay for about 30 boats, and they laughed at me. They thought I was crazy, and they ended up paying for 32 boats.

What I do not understand is that a man will put out about $50 000 for a truck. He makes sure that the man who is manning the truck has a good driver's record, he has a driver's licence and everything, but he would put out a quarter of a million dollars incurred by acquiring a fishing boat and put any John Harry in it to go out to sea. We must protect our interest, because when the boat goes down — the Government has a two-thirds share in it — we would be losing two-thirds on every boat.

What I am saying is that these boats should have regular inspections. Trucks go for yearly inspections. These boats should go for yearly inspections. The people who man these boats should be trained, and to make certain that they are well trained, they should be issued with licences or permits like the drivers are issued. I think that when we do this we will be going on the right track. 6.20 p.m.

As regards maintenance of the boats and engines, I find that most of them believe that they are engineers overnight, and I would suggest that they, too, have proper training in maintenance, because, usually, whenever a boat goes adrift, it is either because of something wrong with the starter or something wrong with the fuel system, something simple, and it is right that these fellows should have proper training, not just a little six weeks' course, because few people can absorb anything in six weeks. Proper training is needed. You must teach them how to use the direction finder, how to use the compass.

I can rernember that under the first Democratic Labour Party regime, such a course was started in navigation, but it fell down because the fishermen themselves were stubborn. They are a very stubborn bunch of people, this is true, so the whole system fell down, but we have to enforce this, we have to make this a law. It is the only way you can get things done. I find that Bajans only understand force. If it is the law that you must walk down this street, then they will do it. If you tell a guy I think you should walk down the street, he will walk the other way. So we have to enforce this.

Another thing I would like to talk about is the sea egg industry. While I was in Toronto, I was hearing a lot about the demise of the sea egg. One Minister of Agriculture suggested that we put a ban on sea egg for two years, but then I realised that he was a lawyer. If he were a medical doctor, I do not think he would have said he was going to ban sea eggs for two years, because medical men will always say look at the cause first before they start thinking about putting a ban.

Some people talked about over fishing and dynamiting and this type of thing. It is true that I asked the Minister of Agriculture a few weeks ago about dynamiting fish. It is a very bajd thing, because >oy kill off the young ones, and dynamited fish is bad for your health, and destroys the reef, but the amount of dynamite that was thrown out there could not have destroyed the entire sea egg beds. I came to the conclusion that it is the chemicals that go into the water. The cobbler is the first cousin to the sea egg — he lives in the rock, he does not live on the seaweed — and there are few cobblers out there anymore. I went for a swim one day and there were no cobblers to be seen. Who killed them? Did the dynamite kill them? Did they over fish them? Nobody has ever fished cobblers yet.

Mr. Chairman, what should have been done in the first place was to carry out a thorough investigation. If we do not have the know-how, I am quite certain that the Canadian Government — I do not too much like the U.S. Government — would give us some aid in carrying out these tests to see which chemical or chemicals are doing the damage. Instead of doing this, we blamed some of everybody. We blamed the fishermen, we blamed the dynamiting, we even blamed ourselves, instead of trying to get to the root of the problem, and this is the way we in Barbados behave. We never ever try to get to the root of something first.

The sea egg is a creature that will eat anything, but he thrives best in the best reefs, and the sea moss that everybody likes is the one that the sea egg likes to live on. Those who live on this sea moss are healthier than the fellow who lives on the leafier moss, and are more productive. If you crack a sea egg in half, usually you will

find whatever the sea eggs eats. If he is on a sandy ground, you will see sand inside of it and his rows will be half sand and rows. I know this from experience. So it stands to reason that if the food is gone, you know you do not have long to live, and if you are smart, you will get away from that house. So you will find that many of the sea eggs have vacated the shallow water for deeper water, because seaweed around our island, and around the tropics, for that matter, will live about 100 fathoms down, about 600 feet down, so when the sea eggs go into waters 40 and 50 feet deep, it is difficult to dive them unless you are an aqualung diver, and it is a problem.

I think, however, that the Minister can cheer up a bit, because a friend told me that there are some heading up around Bath. So if you would carry out some investigations and find out exactly what has led to the demise of the sea egg, if it is the impurities we have in our water, then we will put the aqua-culture industry on a sound footing.

I thank you.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN (St. Philip South): Mr. Chairman, the idea about the Estimates is that we look at the revenue collection and expenditure for the current year. The main thing we look at in these Estimates, Mr. Chairman, is the expenditure, and I believe that one should look at whether the expenditure is in the right direction and offer suggestions as to other directions where expenditure should be and things of that sort. One should, of course, look back briefly to see how previous expenditure was targeted and what was right and what was wrong with that expenditure.

Before I go into what I have to say, I think that the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) largely answered the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) when he said, and continually repeated the statement in here, that it was because of the decision taken by this Administration when it was in office in 1974 that is the cause of what is happening in the sugar industry today. I believe the honourable Member knows better than that.

There is something else the honourable Member for St. Peter has to understand. The problem in sugar has nothing to do with any decision taken in 1974. The problem in sugar is a problem of price. The problem in sugar is how much money you are going to get per tonne for your sugar. It has nothing to do with what we did in 1974. Regardless to what we did in 1974, the price of sugar today would still be next to nothing.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that, had the Barbados Labour Party been in power in 1974, they would have taken the same decision that this Administration took in 1974. I am sure the honourable Member for St. Michael West is going to reply to him again and explain to him the difference in revenue that we got that year by selling some of the sugar on the world market as opposed to selling all of it to LOME. I just wanted to make the point that the problem with sugar is the problem of price.

Mr. Chairman, we have to look back at" what went wrong over the years. I do not like to do that, because I always accused the other people of doing it when we were on the other side, and I do not want to do it. But the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) called out the figures of the amount of onions and cotton we produced in 1975—76. Conveniently, the honourable Member for St. Peter forgot — I do not remember if he was in Barbados — that between 1976 and 1981, those of us who care to remember would remember that there was a virtual collapse of the extension service in Barbados and a collapse of the tractor cultivation scheme due to bullying of the Minister at that time. And that is why there was a- fall-off at that time in the production of non-sugar agriculture. The honourable Member for St. Peter seems to have forgotten, or he was not in Barbados, that between that time, that there was a total abandonment of Government agricultural stations at Sayers Court, Bullens, Jerusalem, all of them, resulting in the absence of many useful services and any new research that we were doing. They closed them down, so we can see straight off why there was a fall-off in non-sugar agriculture. 6.30 pjn.

Let me tell you about some other things which caused a lot of problems in Barbados. That Administration of the Barbados Labour Party was an Administration which believed that, as long as you come from outside, you had knowledge about everything. They brought in experts in agriculture, they brought them in in housing, in every facet of Government in Barbados. They brought them in to run the hotels. They believed that as long as you come from overseas, you had the expertise. They even brought overseas people to run the Government. Let me give you an example of what I am talking about when I talk about experts. The Board of the World Bank decided that it was going to give Barbados a loan of US$4.0 million to finance the foreign exchange component of an agricultural development project which it estimated to cost US$5.97 million. We are talking about Estimates and how money was spent, and I have not heard any honourable Member from over there criticise how we are going to spend this money. Would you believe that, in that situation where the World Bank is lending us this money this US$4 million, they had projected that they would use one 104 man months of overseas consultancies. Each man month of consultancy is approximately Bds$16 000. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture cut it down to 49 from 104. This is how he is - spending the money.

We are using that extra saving that we have made by cutting down on those foreign experts, the people who you all think have to come from overseas to have sense, to increase the allocation for land equipment from US$50 000 to US$150 000. We are also increasing the training component from US$52 000 to US$150 000. And what is most important is that we are using the rest of the money we are saving to increase the agro-industrial credit component, to give credit to people in agro-industry, from US$2.5 million to US$2.84 million. They were going to bring in experts with all of that extra. That is how money was being spent in Barbados before.

(Aside: Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Shameful eh?)

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: In every single Ministry that is how the money was being wasted.

Import substitution is usually a subject that people tend to shy away from, because the economists always try to say that when you go in for import substitution, the other countries might do the same. As far as I am concerned, once we are dealing with food, I am all for import substitution.

Mr. Chairman, just before the Democratic Labour Party went out of office, those of us who lived in the country areas would remember seeing acres and acres of yams, potatoes and eddoes.

(Aside: Corn.)

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Corn, too. Those of us who live in the country know that certainly for the past ten years you could barely find eddoes, yams or anything at all in Barbados, and if you found them, you had to buy a bag, because if you play you are only buying four pounds, you would not see them again for the rest of the year.

We have to come down to some home truths now. The citizens of Barbados would be very, very glad, especially the country people, if once again this Minister of Agriculture can show us acres and acres of eddoes, yams and potatoes. But let me tell you about one problem that the Honourable Minister faces, and he has to face the problem, because once you are convinced in your mind that what you are doing is right, you should go ahead and do it. Over the past, I think it was about two months ago, tomatoes were selling in Barbados, fresh tomatoes, at 15 cents per pound. Do you know there are people who still preferred to go into the supermarkets and take down tins of imported tomatoes? If you can take down a tin of imported tomatoes, you give your neighbour the impression that you have money or you are bigger than they are.

We have to take some serious decisions as a Government. We have given people a lot of Income Tax concessions. We are basing our programme on a reduction in cost. I believe that it is not right for Mr. Kinch at Wake field, or any other plantation owner, to plant his tomatoes, or his peanuts or any other thing, for importers to be allowed to import and then Mr. Kinch has to plough back his tomatoes in the field. We have to face the problem up front. When we face it, the Barbados Labour Party are going to run around Barbados telling the people, "you see, they are stopping you from importing the things you like," but we have to make serious decisions in this country. If I was Minister of Agriculture, there is no way that tomatoes could be selling in Barbados at 15 cents a pound and I would be allowing people to import tomatoes in tins. I would stop all importation of tomatoes. We will have to get down to tasting fresh tomatoes again.

Applause

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: As I said, if you are a Minister of Government and you are convinced in your mind about what you are doing, do it. It is a simple matter.

The Honourable Minister of Agriculture and I see almost eye to eye on many things. We are from the same parish and everything. We are country people together. I have no doubt that he knows what is needed in agriculture, and I have no doubt that he will do what is needed.

Thank you.

Applause

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I really must commend the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne) for a very enjoyable speech. 6.40 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Although I share his view that we should have some waters in which we can produce some shrimp and we could look, as well, at dealing with the problem of sea eggs, my view of life, Sir, is that we deal with the small things but we also deal with the very big things. And I speak this evening as much as the Shadow Minister of Agriculture as I speak as the Member for St. Peter, recognising that while the sea egg problem is important to us and we must solve it, and we can solve it, and while the shrimp problem and having some inland waters in trying to produce some shrimp can be dealt with, and probably will be dealt with, the fundamental problem in agriculture, which we must not shy away from, is the 6 000, and at one time 10 000, jobs that are locked up in constituencies like mine and other rural constituencies, the use of the 30 000-odd acres.

of land that we have traditionally used in sugar, and the future of the rural society which has, up to this point, been bound up in some very important respects with the fortunes of the sugar industry. Do not let us walk away from the problem. Let us face it.

The honourable Members on the other side, having heard the exposition of my friend and colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) is satisfied that he has laid the matter to rest. But the honourable Member has only confirmed the point of view that I am trying to establish. In 1974, we were in a position where we were producing 118 000 tonnes of sugar, of which, if we were willing, 31 000 tonnes could have been sold on guaranteed markets at premium prices, under the CSA.

Aside.

Mr. O. S, ARTHUR: Hold on. I heard you in silence. Please hear me in silence.

In 1974, I am saying that decisions were taken which put the Barbados sugar industry in a position that it could only have contemplated the production of sugar beyond 80 000 tonnes, provided that you could be sure that you could sell it at reasonable prices to the world market, and the point I am making is that under the LOME Agreement, a country that was producing 110000 tonnes of sugar was left, as a result of no decision in relation to LOME, in this position, and the numbers are very clear - 53 000 to LOME, 17 000 tonnes on the local market, and 19 000 to the U. S. The further point I am making is that in the previous four years we were producing 157 000 tonnes of sugar in Barbados, and in the previous two years we were producing 137000 tonnes, and we took decisions in 1974 which made it possible for us to expose production of sugar in Barbados above 84 000 tonnes to the vagaries of the world markets.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way, on a point of elucidation? The honourable Member continues, and it is now years he has been making the point. The decisions were not made in Barbados. The decisions were not made by anybody out there who decided that they were going to produce. They were producing 150 000 - odd tonnes at a cost that was higher, . they were selling at a cost that was lower than the cost of production, and the 110 000 tonnes that it produced, of that amount they could not have sold 131 000 anywhere. But you keep making the point that they could have sold and that a decision was made. Sugar is not something that you produce by pressing a button. It produced only 110 000.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member might also want to look at the number of hectares burnt per year between 1967 and 1974 and understand the relationship between the burning of canes and the increase in per unit cost to understand why in that interval your per unit cost of sugar and our position went up. But I have heard you in silence. I beg you to hear me in silence.

The point I am making is that we now face a dilemma in Barbados where sugar is concerned. We cannot afford to stand where we are in relation to the premium price markets, because at 80 000 tonnes you cannot support the overheads of an industry which is, even now, still geared to produce 150 000 tonnes, and you cannot afford to go pass 84 000 tonnes, because you can only produce successfully in Barbados beyond 84 000 tonnes provided that the world market for sugar in Barbados pertains to the type of price that prevailed in 1974 and 1975. The cold hard facts of the situation in Barbados is that we cannot afford to stay where we are, and we cannot truly afford to produce for the world market unless we can be sure that the type of prices that we are going to get for the world market sugar equate to those that were current in 1974, when the export price for sugar was $835 as compared to $221 for the entire 1970s.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West may not like the stricture, but I am saying that our sugar quota under the LOME successors to the CSA was related to our most current production and our current servicing of our obligations under the CSA, as distinct from Fiji, Mauritius, and Swaziland, who, despite the temporary change in the world market price, continued to honour their obligations under the CSA, on the understanding, Mr. Chairman, that you cannot link a production process that you want to take place over an extended period of time only on a price which could be very temporary in nature. That is history.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I know, but that is history, Sir. So when I say I trace it back to 1974, it was around 1974 that we had the situation where our premium market for sugar was defined at 80 000 tonnes, and we cannot go beyond 80 000 tonnes unless we contemplate the sale of sugar on the world market, and we cannot contemplate the sale of sugar on the world market profitably unless, we have the type of prices that pertained in 1974. •

The problem is not so much a problem of price, as is being suggested to us. The problem is a problem, more basically, of cost. Because if you were to look at the numbers dispassionately, and that is why I want to steer the discussion in the longest direction, you will see that if we were in Barbados producing sugar at the type of per unit cost that other people in the world are producing sugar at, we would be able to have a sugar industry that could be viable. 6.50 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, we talk about ten years, but we are talking about the future as well, that the production, for example, of sugar cane by-products can only be a viable proposition for us, and one of the options that we contemplate as part of the total package of sugar production, if our cost of production can be held down below a certain minimum. I am saying that in discussing the question of cost, we cannot disengage ourselves from discussion of the issue of management, and this is where the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central and I find some identity where ground is concerned — that we are seeking in Barbados to perpetuate a system of production which institutionalises high per unit cost of production as a matter of course; that we will never be able to bring our cost of production into line, even with premium prices — and premium prices of $900 a tonne are not bad — unless we make fundamental changes to the production system that presently pertains in the sugar industry, and that so long as we are talking about a hierarchical system of management where sugar costs are, to some extent, inflated by our payment for managements that bear more relationship to an old plantation system, our costs will remain high.

Aside

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have always made this point, Sir, it is a consistent point.

Let us compare ourselves with Brazil or Australia, where the cost of production of a tonne of sugar cane is $30 a tonne. In Barbados, on the most efficient estate it is $80, and on the worst it is $125. They do not have the over burden of management costs that we carry in Barbados, because for them, sugar is an industrial activity which must be run along industrial lines, like any other industry.

The fundamental approach, in my view, to the sugar industry, is not to throw out the baby with the bath water. Do not let us let it die. It is for us to bring to bear on the sugar industry, management and production systems which accord with sugar's status as an important primary commodity, and which also accord with the sugar industry's status as a very important potential source of raw material for future downstream processing. For example, Barbados will never be able to go into sugar cane by-product as a serious area of production, so long as the delivered price of sugar canes to the factory is $110 a tonne. At that kind of price, it is more profitable to convert alcohol into rum for consumption — in other words, it is better to sell alcohol at $40 a gallon to the consumer as rum - than to sell it at $4.65 as a fuel. So the point I am making is that the fundamental problem is the overburden of cost on the management side.

There is another fundamental factor that adds to fhe sugar industry's cost, and it is the cost of interest. It is one of the few industries which even finances its capital investments by way of overdraft. You will remember that, a few years ago, the most modern plant in Barbados was financed by way of overdraft. Fundamental capital acquisitions in the industry are financed by short term credit, and once you have that situation, where you have to finance both capital and important capital acquisitions by short term credit, it is going to be very clear that the interest on short term loans, is going to factor as a very high proportion of your per unit cost. When I argue today that if you are going to be talking in terms of a future for any sugar industry, we have to recognise that the industry has been in the process of recapitalising and it therefore will require, if it is to survive, some source of long term capital at reasonable rates of interest, to allow it to make the kind of structural adjustments that are necessary, I am speaking to the fact, Mr. Chairman, that interest costs can in fact amount to about 15% of the total cost of the sugar industry.

I want also to say, Sir, since I must say it, that the time has come for the sugar industry to comply with the informational requirements of the Sugar Industry Act.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: While you are on the question of time, one more minute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The total cost of the sugar industry was said to be set at $115 million per year, when last I was involved with it. That represents income accruing to somebody. The receipts from the industry, including receipts from the sale of fancy molasses and all of the domestic sales of sugar, are somewhere in the region of $75 million. The importance of the industry complying with the informational requirements of the Sugar Industry Act is that we want to be able to break out the full cost of the sugar industry as between the pure sugar cane cost and the cost that can be attributable to the production of vegetables grown in rotation to sugar. Until we can get at that, we will not truly know what is the real cost of producing sugar cane in Barbados, we will not truly know what is the extent of the deficit, or even the potential surplus, and we could therefore be taking a decision about an industry which, in my view, could have a future if we conceive of it as a totally integrated industry, with proper management of costs, on which 6 000 people, including people from my constituency, the shopkeepers of my constituency, can depend for a livelihood. Tha.t is why I am posing this issue, this evening, in this fashion, that we have to begin to deal with the industry from an industrial point of view.

Last year, I was the only body in the House of Assembly who said I would not put the sugar industry on budget. I said it before an election, knowing that my constituency is a rural constituency, and I stand on the

point, because I want to know what the true cost of the sugar industry in Barbados is. I have to know that. I do not believe that costs are ever static, costs are related to management systems and production systems, and in the same fashion that other countries of the world have evolved production and management systems to be viable not only in sugar cane production but in by-production, I feel that it is not beyond the capacity of the people of this country to do so.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Applause

Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I seek to intervene at this time because of the last contribution by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur). The honourable Member for St. Peter, for the information of the Jiouse, speaks from a position of knowledge, since he was the one charged, prior to the change of Adminis tration with wrestling with the same problems that my technical staff and I spent many hours wrestling with, and" that is the sugar industry. 7.00 p.m. .

The sugar industry, Mr. Chairman, is one, as we have said, that has gone on for over 300 years. During that time it was mostly successful and, as a result, it was left almost on its own, and has developed some rules. Even the accounting system in the sugar industry is completely different from the accounting system in any other industry. You have things called pure stand vegetables and rotation crops, and one of the things that people like us try to unravel is that although the costing of a crop like yams is costed against sugar cane from a costing point of view, the revenue is not put to the sugar cane revenue, and when one seeks to find out the reason, it is said that because the yams are planted between the sugar cane, the preparation has already been in place for the sugar cane and, therefore, it is legitimate to put the costing against the sugar cane.

The Ministry's problem and that of the previous Government is very similar, and that is that we have not been able, up to now, to accurately determine what is the cost of production of a tonne of cane.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: And you will not until after death!)

Laughter.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: It seems as if that is going to be a fact.

I sought to use ADC's figures, the nearest I could come to figures that were available to me, and the figures I got from ADC worked out that, on an average, if you were getting 35 tonnes of cane per acre, your production cost was down to about $68.33, while if you dropped to 20 tonnes per acre, your production cost went up to about $90.14. The production figure that was given to me was as follows: cultivation cost, $415; planting, $129.40; spraying, $114.02; fertilizer, $112.50; weeding, $128.80; second spraying, $114.02; harvesting, taking 35 tonnes to the acre, $892.50; carting, $487.20; for -a total of $2 391.44, which works out to be about $68.33 per tonne.

When I take into consideration that ADC usually inherits some of the worst lands in Barbados, plus the fact that it is a parastatal body and we have to put in about 15% for the fact that we usually carry more labour than the efficient, it leads me to believe that if these figures come out to about $68.33, we could well be down to about $62 a tonne for a production cost at 35 tonnes an acre, and roughly about $72 to $73 a tonne for the other ones.

The other problem we have is that there is a formula where the processing end of the industry takes 27.25%, and it is extremely difficult to analyse and justify the 27.25% for the processor, since that is inter-weaved with the overall owners of the matter.

Secondly, what the honourable Member said is also true, that in the past it has been difficult to get all the information as required in the Act. I must say that within recent times they have been a little more co-operative, but it was only December 15 that I was provided with the interim figures for the crop — Christmas was coming up — and the final figures were only given the first week in January, so it was almost impossible to do an analysis of the figures to come up with any price support.

Because of this difficulty that we have had, and because of the structure of the sugar industry, one must admit that the management structure is not in keeping with modern day management technology and that it is necessary to have a very close look at the cost attributed to sugar in the overall plantation system. This is a very difficult 'problem, because the sugar industry was not subject to this scrutiny when the sugar industry was supporting itself. But one finds himself with the prob-lem, as the caretaker of the Government's purse and the taxpayers' money, having to wrestle with your conscience about the large sums of money going into the industry, which, naturally, is a minus in other places, and justifying it.

We have to admit that at this particular time the industry has a place in Barbados. I cannot think of any crop, or series of crops, at this time, using the kind of soil situation, that can replace the 63 000 acres. I would not be* the person to suggest that any lands be taken out of sugar until we are satisfied that alternate crops are available and viable, that we have wrestled with the

erosion and those problems, and markets are available for them. So we come back to the point, how can we most make the sugar industry most effective? .

I am certain that the honourable Member for St. Peter is acquainted with the Sugar Technology Unit. This is the association that represents some of the overseers, and it is a strange thing that quite a few of the members in that technology unit are convincing themselves that not enough effort is being made fast enough to reduce the cost of production of sugar. As a^result of this, part of the World Bank study is going to be having a look at the production cost.

We have to have a look at things like the size of the existing plantations. We have to have a look at the management structure and, believe it or not, we have to have a look at the size of the management structure as it applies to the ownership patterns of the plantation, because the ownership pattern of the plantation has a lot to do with the management structure. The present situation is that, because of the management structure and the present situation on the farm, the Ministry of Agriculture is finding a different problem, in that the people who are now working in the sugar industry, because they are so accustomed to sugar, are not equipped management-wise to do farm planning to take in your wider diversification or overall farm situation. The research and extension wing of the Ministry now finds that in order to pufsfcr? our diversification programme, our researchers and our extension people have to spend long hours in the older ptante-tion system because the people on the plantation are nor* equipped enough to formulate proper farm plans and monitor the situation as it is. 7.10 p.m.

The sugar is an easy crop. Even from the aspect of financing, the banks are accustomed to it. The banks know when they need fertilisers, when they need harvesting money and they have a good idea how many labourers you are going to need during the time, so the banks have evolved a system of credit.

I must say that some of the lending institutions are partly responsible for it as well, and in this respect I must point a finger at one of our national institutions, since I believe that in their lending policy Barclays Bank has been a lot more stringent in that they demand that farm plans be produced in the lending portfolios, but up until now BNB has, not been able to insist on proper farm plans, and even if they insist on proper farm plans, they are not presently staffed to monitor the situation on the estates. Because we in the Ministry at the moment realise our obligations, our planning unit now is undertaking the task of almost treating Barbados as one big plantation in doing a farm plan for the whole of Barbados. We are able to get the co-operation of the BAS, because we are tying it into the whole thing, but it is not at all an easy thing.

I understand how the honourable Member feels, because I feel the same way, but, as the honourable Member for St. Michael West has said, this is something that is going to take us a long, long time to unravel. We have started, because part of the World Bank loan is going to be dealing, with the cost of production, having a look at specialty sugars, having a look at special markets, having a look at by-products, and having a look at the complete management structure of the industry. I would hope that when we have had that study, with the further co-operation of the industry, we will arrive at some solution. Either we reduce the cost or we find some way of doing some value added on the sugar that we make.

The second part of the programme in the Ministry, in our agro-industry section, is to see how much of that extra sugar we can use in some processing situation.

In summary on this part of the programme, the Ministry is fully aware of the problems. We are also aware of the feeling of the people out there, the taxpayers, and we are also aware that we cannot justifiably continue to pump these large sums of money in the industry if we are not satisfied that we are getting 100 per cent co-operation from the industry's owners towards reducing the cost of the product.

I give the honourable Member for St. Peter the assurance that we have set up between the Ministry of i^Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance a Committee to iStrik^tf the whole idea of financing the sugar industry and the overall idea of agricultural credit. This is the next matter that we have to look at, because we have made a forecast that we would need some $68 million in soft loans credit over a five year period for our diversification programme, and we are looking at the whole area of agricultural credit as we come down.

Now let me take the contribution of the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne). I must thank the honourable Member for his contribution to fishing. What he has stated is a fact which we are finding through research, and we are now sure in our minds that if we had the capacity to go far enough east, and we calcukte, it might be between 160 and 200 miles east, we would be able to cut off the flying fish on their way to Tobago and not have to go into the Tobago waters. At present with the exception of a few boats, we do not have that kind of capacity, and the big problem is that most of the fellows who fish with these boats do not know where they are unless they are able to see some type of landmark. As you know, when you go east, the next place from Barbados is Africa, and if you cannot see Africa, you have to be able to navigate.

We are very aware of this and are looking at strengthening of the Fishing Division of the Ministry. In

conjunction with the Defence Force, we thought we would have been able to mount a navigational course — until one of the fellows proved that they did not have the capacity to steer a path to the Tobago Cays! So we have to have a look at that.

I am presently in discussion with ICB about the whole idea, and in conjunction with an officer on loan to the Ministry we are looking at maintenance, licensing, training, etcetera, of our fishing industry, since it is growing extremely fast. There are now 54 ice boats and there are 15 to 20 under construction, so it is obvious that we have to have a look at it.

I will speak to the Ministry of Housing's Environmental Unit, since they are beginning to come around to the school of thought that it is the chemical run off during the heavy rainfalls coming through the soil and going into the sea, particularly along the coast, where there is also chemical run off from the hotels and their laundries, that is causing this problem. The fact that the honourable Member stated that we are beginning to see some sea eggs in Bath would further confirm this, because on that side of the island you do'not have the kind of(hotel population that you have around the south and west coasts that could be responsible for that. But we are looking at it as well.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) started and ended by saying that he feared the sugar industry. Let me put it this way. We in the Ministry are going to see that the sugar industry understand their role in Barbados and play their role. We would not be afraid of the industry since, unlike in the past, I think we have a right to look at the industry now, because the industry is receiving taxpayers' money and we would not be meddling in industry, we would be representing the taxpayers in Barbados.

I want to bring my colleague from St. Philip South (Hon. H. A. Blackman) up to date by saying that the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture have been having on-going discussions along the same point that he has spoken. We have a permanent committee, and not only the tin tomatoes, but many other products .will come off the shelves. The Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Finance have been having a look at the overall thing, since it is felt that we cannot encourage people to produce and then not have any markets for them. If we need to change the taste of Barbadian housewives again, we will have to change it. 7.20 p.m.

This is where we are trying in agro-industry. I hope that, some time tomorrow, we will have time to go into this, because this is one of the thrusts of the Ministry of Agriculture in trying to make provision for our export agriculture. In export agriculture, there is a large spin off, because only about 50% is going to meet the quality for export markets, and the domestic market is too small, so we have to look to some type of processing facility to take up part in that other section.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am drawing the honourable Member's attention to the time.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman this brings me to the first part. I am not winding up because there are other people who want to make contributions tomorrow.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, we are at the end of our work for today, but before I move the suspension, I wish to remind all honourable Members that tomorrow night we are expected to have a late session, going until approximately 10.30 p.m.

I beg to move, Sir, that this sitting be now suspended until tomorrow, March 19, 1987, at 1.00 p.m.

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

The question that the House stand suspended until Thursday, March 19, 1987 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

Are there any other honourable Members who would like to make a contribution of Head 25?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, we are very much reassured on this side by the Minister's assurances that the Government is attempting to work out a policy the recognises that any agricultural strategy for Barbados must have as its core some element of sugar production. This is, of course, a very refreshing contrast from the past policy statements on the part of the Democratic Labour Party where there was either a commitment to abandon sugar altogether or a complete lack of direction as to exactly where the Government was intending to go where sugar is concerned. If I recall correctly, I think that the Minister was on the point of saying exactly what might constitute the totality of Government support mechanism for sugar, and we look forward during the course of today's debate to hear not only what is Government's support on principle, but what is in fact, the exact mechanism by which Government intends to give some measure of relief to the sugar industry of this country.

We make these points, Mr. Chairman, in light of the types of comments which have been emanating from the Barbados National Bank to the effect that unless the sugar industry can be brought up to full solvency by May, 1987, certain drastic measures will have to be put in place to change the ownership structure of the industry. I wait in anticipation, Mr. Chairman, to the further development of the thoughts of the Minister of Agriculture in regard to exactly what Government proposes to do, whether by way of on or off budget support, to try to bridge the gap between the revenue of the industry and its cost. In so doing, I will remind the members of the Democratic Labour Party that they have committed themselves by way of a manifesto pledge to give adequate price and subsidy support to this most important part of our agricultural sector. I want to hear what is the position of the Government.

Mr. Chairman, it is also important that during the course of this sitting, this debate has to be widened beyond the parameters of the sugar industry. We will want to know exactly what is happening in regard to the Soil Conservation Project. We will want to know, Sir, whether it is, in fact, true that the substantial cuts in "Other Personal Emoluments" for the Soil Conservation Department reflects a decision to lay off as much as 80 persons in that department.

We will want to hear, Mr. Chairman, what is the Ministry's position in, regard to the management of the National Fruit Orchard Project. It was not by chance that in the 1986-87 Estimates the National Fruit Orchard Development Project reflected itself under the Special Assignments Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. The development of fruit orchards in Barbados does not just represent the planting of trees. It represents a very important, potentially productive, activity which will require the most scrupulous management of men and materials, and it was the policy of the Barbados Labour Party to ensure that the National Fruit Orchard Develop ment Project, which was started by $400 000 of public expenditure in 1986—87, was located under the Special Assignments division of the Ministry of Agriculture, for a number of reasons.

The National Fruit Orchard Development Project was but one of a series of project activities located within the general ambit of the Scotland District area of Barbados, and we thought that economies where management costs were concerned could have been effected if we were to seek to integrate the management of the National Fruit Orchard Development Project with all of the other project activities that were taking place in the Scotland District.

It is also true, Sir, that within the Ministry of Agriculture the strongest element of management really resides. I am not trying to reflect adversely on the central Ministry as such in the Special Assignments division of the Ministry of Agriculture. That division has been the division that has been responsible for the execution and the implementation of the Oistins Development Project, and it is the division, Sir, which has so managed the Bridgetown Fishing Harbour that, as I understand it, the project today is perhaps two months ahead of schedule. When we therefore took the decision to locate the Fruit Orchard Development Project under the immediate discipline that resides in the Special Assignments division of the Ministry of Agriculture, we were concerned to ensure that such funds spent on this important project gave rise to results wluch could justify the expenditure of public funds on such an important activity. 1.10 p.m.

We must cite in this debate the departure which is now manifested in the shift in this project from the Special Assignments division of the Ministry, where there is a real capacity to make things happen and a real capacity to manage men and materials, -to the central department of the Ministry of Agriculture, where this project can be lost. The shift is now reflected in this year's Estimates. It has been taken away from the Special Assignments division of the Ministry of Agriculture and is now finding itself among the welter of activities to be undertaken by the central administration of the Ministry. We are concerned about it, Sir, because once we commit public funds, we have to be sure that there is effective management to realise the results that we are seeking, and we on this side think that it is a backward step to move the project from Special Assignments.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Fish project.)

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, a National Fruit Orchard Project in Barbados is very integral to any attempt by us to reduce our food import hill. It has to be

systematically managed, and even though Members on the other side may want to make sport of it, the shift in the responsibilities is going to give rise to a situation where the persons responsible for overall management in the Scotland District area, in which that project is having its genesis, are no longer responsible for this part of the project. It is also going to give rise to a situation, Mr. Chairman, where the proven talent for management in the Ministry of Agriculture is not going to be deployed on that part of the Ministry's new projects which can have a potentially significant effect on the reduction of the food import bill of this country. I draw reference to it, Sir, in the belief that a project of this character, which holds such potential for advancing economic change in this society, should not now be compromised by the lack of adequate management where such management exists.

I think it is important, too, Mr. Chairman, that our debate today should venture into the exact character of Government's plans for the development of the cotton industry. We have been bombarded in the Press with statements which seemed to suggest at one stage that the Government is thinking in terms of an integrated industry, from the primary production through to the processing and final production level. At other times, we have heard that arrangements may be on the point of being entered into with entities involving only the sale of cotton as a semi-processed commodity. I think that to the extent that cotton may represent itself as one of the more important products, one of the major new products within the total diversification programme of the Ministry, we ought to investigate very clearly what exactly are the Government's plans. Does ths Government really plan to have three million pounds of cotton produced as an input into an integrated production system, or is the plan merely that of producing three million pounds of lint for sale to an entity which will do the further processing abroad? I must also ask, Sir, are Government's plans for cotton predicated only on the assumption that funds would be available through the 936 operation for a processing plant? I would also wish to enquire of the Government whether a feasibility study has been undertaken by the Government to explore the potential costs, both financial and economic, of moving this country from its present stage of cotton production . into a situation where the farmers are required each year to produce three million tonnes to satisfy a processing facility?

Aside

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Now the Minister of Finance and Planning is trying to distract me. From an agricultural point of view, a farmer who is presented with the option of having to produce each year the cotton to satisfy the requirements of an industrial enterprise located in Barbados, particularly to the extent of three million pounds of lint per year, is in a different ball game to that which now presently prevails, where he has the option of not having to commit his own agricultural resources to the long-term commitment of satisfying a locally operated processing facility.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has a minute to wind up his speech.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I will come back on this cotton issue, because it is important. We are treating cotton in Barbados as one of the most important aspects of our diversification programme, and we ought to use the opportunity today to find out exactly where the Ministry stands in relation to the issue.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with two matters. The first one that was dealt with was the National Fruit Orchard Project. The honourable Member for St. Peter did bring to the attention of this House that the National Fruit Orchard Project was originally located, from a management point of view, in the Special Assignments division. 1.20 p.m.

The Ministry of Agriculture, as you know, has two Permanent Secretaries, the Permanent Secretary (General) and the Permanent Secretary (Special Assignments), who has from time to time been given the fairly large capital works programme under the Ministry, mainly dealing with the fishing harbour which is under construction, Soil Conservation, the Back River Project and so on. But the honourable Member for St. Peter must give some credit to the Minister, who is responsible ultimately to Cabinet, Parliament, and to the people of Barbados, for the successful implementation or otherwise of the projects under his Ministry. And after taking everything into consideration, including the naturally strong management capacity of Special Assignments, - this is indicating that the management capacity of the General Service is weak — taking into consideration the location of the Chief Consultant to the project, who is the CEO, and taking into consideration that the ease of communication between their Minister and the chief persons, a decision was made, with a complete agreement with everyone concerned, for the shift of the National Food Orchard Project to the general section of the Ministry in order to have that close co-operation and co-ordination between the senior persons and the Minister during the implementation of that project.

I want to spend a little time on cotton. It is true, that the Ministry has been having a very close look at cotton development in Barbados. A feasibility study by Tootles of England should be in the Ministry's hand in

another three weeks, and on the receipt of that feasibility study, the Ministry will then determine which way to go. There are a number of options available to the Ministry.

When I joined the Ministry, and realising the situation with the sugar cane industry and the fact that there is potential for value added in the cotton industry, we started to have a look at it. It was my contention that with the price of cotton in the world market, in order for us to maximise the return from the cotton industry, we would have to have some value added to it. There are series of possible models that the Ministry are looking at, and all of these models are being examined by Tootles and a recommendation will be made.

The first possible model is that the Ministry would contract with a spinning and weaving operation for the spinning, weaving, and possible dying of the material, and an arrangement for two things, either a distribution marketing end as well as a cut and sowing industry in Barbados, where, in connection with one of the better known fashion houses of Barbados, we will seek to have an arrangement where some of the stuff is returned to Barbados and manufactured into high quality garments to enable the Ministry and the people of Barbados to get some value added to it.

The second possible model is that we can seek to have one of the operations done in Barbados — weaving — and pass on the material to another company under contract for the spinning and the dying.

The third possible model is that we can have the spinning done in Barbados.

The fourth model is that we can have the whole situation right to the finished product.

The Ministry is very aware of the implication of having to supply three million pounds of lint a year for the minimum size factory that we were told would be feasible, a factory that could process 2.5 million pounds of lint a year. We are naturally working very closely with other cotton producing islands of the Caribbean, and, obviously, discussions are going on with them. The most I can say at the moment is that they would be part and parcel of any operation in Barbados. In addition, if it is decided that we will go the whole way in Barbados, a plant will be so designed that we can import lint to make up any shortfall in the crop in any one year.

The situation, as you were saying, is that we are as concerned as the Member for St. Peter about our capacity to move our cotton production. There are problems. Obviously, he is talking about the problem of soil erosion. We have had a look at it and it would not be advisable to grow cotton on lands with more than a 10 to 11 per cent slope. My information is that there is available to us some 7 500 acres of land that suits that requirement, but obviously, we will have to be rotating that. The present production is about 350 pounds of lint per acre, and if you calculate that, that will give you the amount of acres you will need. You must also take into consideration the discussions going on between ourselves and the other sea island cotton producers to take up the acreage that we are not doing, because our plan is that at any one time we would not be in more than about 4 500 acres of cotton so that we could rotate that. Obviously, at this time, the House will have to bear with me, since I would not like my colleagues in the other islands to hear of discussions going on over the radio before they have reached finality. But I want to assure you that we have taken it into consideration.

One of the things we are absolutely sure about is that we want to employ some of our people here in Barbados in a high quality cutting and sewing industry. We have had discussions, in conjunction with the Ministry of Industry, going on with persons in the top design areas in a few places, one in America and one in Canada, about the possibility of co-operation between themselves and Barbados.

There has been tremendous interest in the industry and from the preliminary report from Tootles, they are satisfied that there is a distinct possibility that we can do the whole works here in Barbados. They have even gone as far as to look at an area that we were concerned about, and that is possible pollution if we went into the dying aspect. They have assured us that having looked and discussed with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Health, and even having a look at a possible location for a plant, we can go, if it is found feasible, into the complete area, right up to cutting material. As I have said, we shall have the feasibility study in our hands very shortly, and on the completion of the feasibility the Ministry will then make a decision on where they go from there.

There are numerous people interested at the moment in the funding of the plant. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance have seen and had preliminary discussions with no fewer than four parties from as far afield as Canada and America. We will make the decision on what type of funding will be necessary when we have received the feasibility from Tootles.

Our Soil Conservation Project is continuing under the same Special Assignments PS, with the same high quality management capability that I know he has, and which the Opposition is satisfied about, and I am satisfied that everything is on schedule.

The last question asked was about the cut-back and the lay-off of 80 persons in the Scotland District. There have been some lay-offs in the Scotland District, but it is not 80. The reasons are that in January or February 1986 approximately 35 workers were recruited for this project, particularly to assist the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation in planting and maintaining ten hectares of cherry orchards in Haggatts, St. Andrew, and to expedite work on the planting and maintaining of several orchards in East River and Back River under the above programme.

The exercise under the BADC was essentially completed in May 1986, and the workers employed under the programme were transferred to the EDF programme at Back River, where the heavy rains in the latter part of the year demanded the labour intensive thrust to control the growth beneath the trees. This programme at Back River was behind schedule at the time, and an extra effort was being made to expand the orchards and nurseries to make full use of grant funds from the EDF which had to be utilised by March 31, 1987. As a result of this labour intensive thrust, the Government was able to recover $278 000 in grant funds from the EDF during the year January — December 1986.

Unfortunately, engineering activity on the Back River Programme has been slow over the last quarter, and the construction of access roads, and a dam has not reached the stage where a large labour force will be required. To some extent the engineering work has been restricted by the very heavy rains which were experienced In the last quarter of 1986. It has become necessary, therefore, to reduce the number of workers with effect from March 21, 1987. There were some 35 workers, not 80 workers. 1.30 p.m.

I think this answers the questions posed.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. Arthur) is developing a debating style which seems, from time to time, to stray into an intellectual approach to a problem, and then, in between he tries to slip in by way of damaging suggestions, remarks that are really ill-becoming of him. One is beginning to look very carefully and see what kind of track he intends to go down and you have to listen very carefully for when these things slip in.

For example, the honourable Member said it was the policy of the Democratic Labour Party to abandon sugar. The Democratic Labour Party has articulated on the floor of this House, on numerous occasions down the years, that it was committed to the sugar industry, for a variety of reasons: firstly, the recognition of the ecological needs of the country in order to maintain our soil; secondly, the critical importance of foreign exchange generation as the economy evolves over time; thirdly, as a central focus around which the enlightened diversification programmes so well articulated by the Minister of Agriculture could take place; and fourthly, as a recognised and important area of land use in this country, as our economy evolves into the 21st century.

These very important considerations have always been the philosophy of the Democratic Labour Party, and that has always been the Democratic Labour Party's position. But in the days when the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) was in the Cabinet, they never ever allowed the Democratic Labour Party's position to be fully articulated, because they would confuse every sugar debate. They would throw it immediately into social terms and terms relating to waste, and would never get down and face the issues relating to sugar. So I wish to make it absolutely clear that the Democratic Labour Party, in Opposition and in Government and in its manifesto, has demonstrated very clearly that it is committed to a reorganised sugar industry which is responsive to the economic requirements of the country. I want to make this absolutely clear, that the Government will be insisting that the informational requirements in the Sugar Industry Act are met from year to year. I think that this is important if the Government is ever going to be in a position to have a full appreciation of the allocation of costs at plantation level, and also if it is going to be able to assess precisely the extent to which it is giving subsidies or support towards the improvements in the sugar industry.

Mr. Chairman, as part of this overall plan for the sugar industry already articulated by the Minister responsible for Agriculture — and I do not wish to go over this ground — the Government recognises that at least one part of the solution to the sugar problem in Barbados is that it must have access to long term financing. It is in that context, Sir, that the Barbados National Bank has been looking to see what it can do to assist in this area, both from the point of view of the bank and also from the point of view of the further development of agriculture.

Quite clearly, Sir, the arrangement for short term financing of the sugar industry is not a satisfactory one. It has gone on now for several years, the indebtedness of the industry has increased year by year, the expected windfall, according to the philosophy that guided the previous Administration, did not come, and, therefore, the bank has to look at its own position. But at the same time, committed as it is, it has to take a positive approach to this matter in relation to the sugar industry and agriculture as a whole.

In addressing this matter, Sir, two important things have happened in the Barbados National Bank. In the

first instance, the bank has effectively reduced the dependence of financing of the sugar industry on the Central Bank. Secondly, in the not too distant future steps will be taken to seek an amendment to the Barbados National Bank Act to make it clear beyond any doubt that deposits with the agricultural sector are fully guaranteed by the Government. These represent two very important steps towards the objective of making long term money available to the sugar industry. This is just the beginning. I am not saying they are major things, but they are steps in the right direction, two important steps.

The third thing, Sir, is the recognition that when estates are overburdened with debt and they continue in sugar production and they know, whether it is by way of subsidy, support or what you like that they will get money still, then at the end of the day they are going to be in more and more debt, and a heavy contribution to that factor is the short term borrowing and the interest rates that they have to pay on that. It is with that kind of thing in view that the bank at this moment, at a conceptual stage, is looking to see whether it would be possible to come to some arrangement, within the context of an enhancement of agricultural activity in Barbados around sugar, to put those loans on a long term basis. Quite clearly, the two things must go hand in hand. There is no point in trying to rescue the bank and something not being done for agriculture at the same time.

The Government is highly sensitised to the financial needs of agriculture. We are looking in terms of trying to find long term financing. We are trying to so structure our local institution, which is the main lender to the agricultural industry, that, hopefully, over time, it might be able to revert to a situation where you have a separate bank for agricultural development in Barbados, because we strongly believe that it is important to have knowledge about agriculture. In fact, lending to agriculture requires more agricultural knowledge than banking knowledge — that is a pretty fundamental fact about agricultural banking - so in the meantime, we will be looking to develop that kind of expertise within the agricultural sector of the bank as it stands now. Hopefully in time' we will be able to get back to the situation where we have an agricultural bank which can attract long term financing both from the domestic system and from elsewhere. 1.40p.m.

When it is suggested that the bank informed the sugar industry that they should be solvent by the end of May or otherwise they would not get anymore money, that really is not true. The Chairman of the National Bank has already published in the newspaper that he was misquoted. Yet, it is repeated on the floor of this House. It is not true. What the bank is trying to do is to get a kind of agreement with the sugar interest, to ensure that a mechanism could be put in place to relieve the immediacy of the debt burden on the plantations and give them some breathing space st> that they can participate not only in sugar production but also in the overall goal of agricultural diversification. I congratulate the National Bank for taking this initiative, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, because it seems to me to be a very enlightened step. In fact, in many ways it is not very dissimilar to what took place some years ago in relation to the manufacturing sector of the sugar industry, when the integration of the factories formed a very important part of restoring reasonable cost price relationships in that sector of the sugar industry.

Aside

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition keeps disturbing me.

If I may continue, the honourable Member raised a question as to whether we would be supporting the sugar industry on budget or off budget. My answer is that it depends on the circumstances in any given year. What is sure is that we are going to try to protect the jobs of the people in the sugar industry. We are going to do everything to ensure that the goals of agriculture are achieved within the context of the policies laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture, and we work close in hand, day by day, to see how these things work out.

I think the Honourable Minister has already addressed the question of the rationalisation of staff in agriculture, and I want Barbadians to understand this very clearly. You listened to the honourable Member for St. Peter yesterday. You have heard him again today. He is totally and completely against any on-budget subsidy for the sugar industry. I listened to his arguments too with interest. The people of Barbados must know that the Barbados Labour Party is committed to a policy of no support for the sugar industry.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order: The honourable Member must not really distort the speech of the honourable Member. If the honourable Member remembers when he was railing against the sugar people being given support, some two or three years ago, and will read his speech, he will see that his position is now going full circle. But the position of the Barbados Labour Party has always been support for the sugar industry and for the workers in the sugar industry, whether it is on or off budget. We have a way of knowing how to get the bank out of problems without necessarily putting it off budget. You have to use your nous to find out what is that way.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, it is very interesting. There is quite clearly a division as far as the Barbados Labour Party is concerned. The honourable

Member for St. Peter, who is the spokesman on Agriculture, has made it absolutely clear that he is not supportive of any on-budget subsidy for the sugar industry.

Aside

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I hear the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central please?

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Leader of the Opposition now gets up and says that is not the party's policy. Confusion even among three people! I wonder what the honourable Member for St. Thomas is going to say when he gets up. You will probably hear a third policy coming.

Asides

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In respect of Portvale, Sir, I agreed with the criticisms made by the honourable Member for St. Peter last night when he said that it was a matter of concern to him that Portvale was built out of short term funding while looking at the question of longer funding for the sugar industry. Those were the same criticisms I made in 1981, because, as you may recall, it was built out of cultivation loans before the CDB long term loan was arranged, and that created a cash crisis within the sugar industry in 1981. So what I was heavily criticised for by the Labour Party in 1981, their principal spokesman on Agriculture now comes in the House today and supports the enlightened position that I took on Portvale five years ago.

Talking about foresight, the policies pursued by the Barbados Labour Party during the past .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has exceeded his time.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Thank you very much. I will come back again, when I will demonstrate that, over the past ten years ....

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am having a problem here. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is completing his speech.

Asides

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, do I have possession of the floor or not?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At the moment you are on the floor.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: And I have possession of the floor?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And you have possession of the floor.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have concluded my speech.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE and Mr. P. J. M. MILLER rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My eye has caught the honourable Member for the City.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. FORDE) were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

1.50p.m. »

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier in this debate under this Head, when the Barbados Labour Party Administration was in office they never treated agriculture, particularly-at the level of the small farmer or agro-industry, with any seriousness, and every time one of them gets up to speak, I am more reassured that I am right.

When the honourable Member for St. Peter was speaking just now, he started by trying to give the impression that they were seriously interested in import substitution. You will recall that earlier in the debate I made the point that it was very important to Barbados that we get seriously involved in import substitution, particularly in the area of food, if for no other reason than the fact that we have a very high food import bill and one that continues to escalate. The honourable Member for St. Peter is trying to defend a position which really, is not the one that the Barbados Labour Party held before. I say that because the former Prime Minister had made it clear on more than one occasion that he was not seriously interested in import substitution — the former Member for Christ Church East Central — and if he was the Prime Minister, I would have to assume that that was the policy of his Government. So when the honourable Member for St. Peter tries to give the impression that they are interested in import substitution, we have to wonder about that.

He went on to say, in giving a reason, that they were busily involved in providing us with the fruit orchard project in St. Andrew. Either the honourable Member does not understand what was going on or he does not know. The fact of the matter is that the Barbados Labour Party Administration never treated that fruit orchard with any seriousness. It was never a priority, because the funds from the European Development Fund were available for quite a few years, and I heard that from the lips of the former Member for Christ Church East, the former Minister of Agriculture, but the project only really

got off the ground somewhere between January and March last year. To me, that does not sound like anything you were treating as a priority.

Furthermore, I cannot see how you can come and tell us now that by planting the fruit orchard in St. Andrew, that was a serious attempt at import substitution, when, in fact, as I said earlier in this debate, they were the ones, who closed down the yam plant factory in Wildey. I know you do not want to hear about that, but it is a fact. You know Carmeta used to work there. They are the ones who closed down the yam factory in Wildey, and as I said yesterday, just at the point where it was becoming a viable operation and could have been sold off even to the private sector or to any commercial entity. I know that people of the ilk of the honourable Member for St. Peter would like to argue about through-put costs for the raw materials and things of that nature, but if we examine economies of scale and we look at the success we have had, it would be clear to any right thinking person that the project would have been a successful one.

I also heard the honourable Member for Christ Church West make a remark yesterday in the debate about their having a cherry orchard as part of the Fruit Orchard Project. I am to remind the honourable Member that that project was started between 1972 and 1973, and if my memory serves me right, it was the Democratic Labour Party running the country then, so I do not see how you can claim that you started the cherry project in Haggatts. I know about the cherries, because we were the only people processing them. What I can tell you is that another BLP Administration came along and destroyed the project. I was involved, so I know what happened. In. fact, I will give you chapter and verse.

Asides.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I believe that is what happened, because they tried to destroy the BMA when I was President, so it is possible that it was destroyed because I was involved.

However, Mr. Chairman, some two to three years ago a company in Holland indicated to me — I was there at a European-ACP conference - that they were interested in what they called the acerola berries, which we call the Barbados cherry, and they indicated to me that the Barbados cherry was the best quality of the cherries that were available and they wanted them specifically from Barbados. The gentleman was fairly knowledgeable, because he explained to me that it was something to do with the soil in Barbados. I am not an agriculturalist, but he explained to me in a lot of technical terms why the Barbados cherry was the better cherry. He even explained to me that they had taken plant seedlings to Puerto Rico, but although they were plant seedlings taken from Barbados, the cherries they produced did not have the same high level of vitamin C as the ones produced in Barbados.

The gentleman was at the time interested in the cherries in what he called a puree form; we would call it pulp or deseeded. I explained to him that we were already doing that in the company for which I worked, and we did not see it being a problem and that what we may need to do was to expand.

To make a long story short, Mr. Chairman, the trees were, and still are, on ADC property, so I .had to deal with Government. I explained to the then Administration what was going on, and I was told that I would have to involve the BMC. Well that was the beginning and the end of the whole thing, because the BMC, as the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) was saying in an aside before, probably recognised who I was and' the party I belonged to, and they decided that although the gentleman from Holland, who knew what he was doing, wanted to buy cherries in a puree form, they would ship them to him whole, with bits of stone and wood. The end of that story is that the gentleman from Holland decided that he was not doing business with us anymore in terms of buying cherries. That is a fact. So when the honourable Member for Christ Church West talks about the cherry project and tries to give us the impression that the Barbados Labour Party had anything to do with it, what in fact happened is that they had a lot to do with the demise or near demise of the project.

I have been assured by the Minister of Agriculture that the cherries will form an integral part of the whole fruit orchard project.

Mr. Chairman, I recognise that I am running close on time. I hope that I will have an opportunity to say some more on this.

I am obliged to you.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
2.00 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, we have reached the time for our luncheon break.

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

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

The question that the sitting be now suspended until 2.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 2.01 pjn.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, as I was saying before we took our break, if we are serious about import substitution, and even if we figure that we have problems facing sugar in its raw state — and I am one of the people who do not believe that we have as much of a problem as we would like to believe - why has there been no attempt at the serious marketing of sugar-based products?

I recall some four or five years ago meeting with a businessman from the United States who was interested in purchasing and marketing Barbados raw sugar through a chain of health food stores in the United States. He was talking of some, four containers, I think it was, 20 foot containers, a month, which is roughly 120 000 Ibs., dried and packaged in one pound packets. I recall I had extreme difficulties with the sugar producers, the then Minister of Trade and sugar factories to get anybody to understand exactly what the gentleman wanted to do. There were all kinds of technical reasons advanced to me as to why you could not just sell the man the sugar like that in packages. Barbados raw sugar can fetch a premium price as a finished product ready for sale to the consumer in the health food market in North America. I am sure the same thing would stand for Europe. I am talking about Barbados sugar. It is rated as some of the best raw sugars in the world.

Right now we have — I have seen it on the shelf in the supermarket here, check it out — molasses coming here to sell to us in Barbados, packers from New Jersey. Can you imagine that we are importing molasses? And we say we have problems? We hear the Opposition talk about a Government that was serious about import substitution?

Aside

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I am drawing it to the attention of the Honourable House now. I will be drawing it to the attention of the Minister of Trade, you could be assured of that. I see no reason why Barbados should be importing packaged molasses, the same molasses that we export, but put in a bottle and sent back.

There are several products that we import into Barbados that are high sugar content products, preserves. You talk about development of a fruit orchard? Develop the fruit orchard, but understand that there are sophisticated markets in developed countries that are interested in buying well-packaged, well-presented, preserves, especially if you can tell them that you are using some natural sweetener. I am not concerned about the statement that some honourable Member made about people being worried about sugar. If it is properly packaged and you use a sweetener, that is in more of a raw state, raw sugar, honey, whatever it may be, that is another market. We-have other ways that we can sell sugar other than in the bulk state that we sell it now. I am not saying that that is the total answer to the problem, but that is part of the answer.

You talk about import substitution. There are several retired people, and even now some young ones, because of the unusually high level of unemployment, who are making a lot of preserves at home. I am sure that many of us go into the stores and we see preserves that are made at home. They are finding places on the supermarket shelves.

I recall that there was a department set up by the last Administration which was supposed to be assisting these women, and I recall the lady who was in charge coming to me and appealing for assistance from us, a private company, the same private sector that keeps getting criticised by the Opposition. The lady came to me for assistance in marketing. We tried our best to assist them, but the organisation of the whole programme was lacking. There was not much that we could have done at the time.

If we are serious about import substitution, let us look at the things that are costing this country a lot of money. I recall a Member of this Honourable Chamber once even showed a tin of corned beef, and I believe it became a document of the House, or it was called for at the time. So those of us who are involved in politics know that corned beef is a very topical food. Yet, I have not seen anywhere any serious effort — we import a lot of corned beef into this country — made to produce that product in Barbados.

I recognise now that the present Minister of Agriculture is seriously looking at a beef industry in Barbados. This is the first time that anybody has taken a serious look at it. I can say that without fear of contradiction; because the last Minister of Agriculture has had several papers presented to him and documents on how a beef industry could be set up in Barbados, how we could do either near to zero or zero grazing and produce beef at a relatively low cost, how we could produce crops like sorghum, which we call guinea corn, it is a good additive for animal feeds, rather than the relatively more expensive corn that we bring in from overseas.

Mr. Chairman, I am satisfied that Barbados can do a lot more in terms of producing its own food. I am satisfied that if we have an Administration that is serious about reducing the food import bill, as this Administration is, we will see the food import bill come down. I have heard recently that one of the meat processors in Barbados is seriously looking at producing the same corned beef I mentioned before. That is only one example.

Right now in the United States of America and in Canada, there is a big demand for high quality avocado pears something that we take for granted. I was very pleased to hear the Minister of Agriculture say that they have now developed an avocado pear that can grow in a season other than the one that we are accustomed to. We can almost have avocado pear 12 months of the year.

Asides

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I am not saying it was developed in the last six months. But what I am saying is that you talk about food changes and you talk about developing agriculture, and you have been talking about it for the last five years. Did it take him five years to develop it? Money was available. So said the last Minister of agriculture. I do not know if he did not have any access to the money, but he said it was available.

Even so, when you do develop these fruit orchards, what are you doing about developing the markets? It is only in recent times that there, has been any serious effort made between the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture, under the two present Ministers, to look at linking the marketing capabilities of the Export Promotion Corporation with agriculture. You had the BMC and the BMC could even help themselves locally, never mind export.

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: The BMC? I did not even know it still existed! I recall going to a trade show in New Orleans where Barbados displayed ginger lilies and anthoriums. There was tremendous interest shown by people who attended that trade show. I should point out that another country also displayed anthoriums and the same ginger lilies but for some reason — I am not a horticulturalist — the Barbadian variety was more attractive. I stood at that booth for half a day listening to the comments. I know, I can tell you, that there is definitely a serious market out there for ginger lilies and anthoriums.

I know that the honourable Member for Christ Church West is going to suggest to me that that did not happen six months ago, and I agree with him. What I am saying is that that marketing effort was two years ago, so you knew then that there was a market out there, but I am not satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that there was any serious attempt made to exploit those markets. So I am very heartened, Sir, when I hear the Minister of Agriculture explain to us that these areas are now going to be fully exploited, and I look forward with keen interest to seeing us earn more foreign exchange through the increase of export agricultural commodities, both primary and processed, and save the foreign exchange by increasing our import substitutions. 2.55 p.m.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, I join this debate out of a concern which seems to come from what I have seen as a slide in the" fortunes of agriculture under a Barbados Labour Party Administration. I say slide, Sir, because I believe that marketing is a very important factor in any enterprise.

The Barbados Labour Party's manifesto of 1976 General Election on page 8 found that marketing as it related to agriculture was a problem, and they said that they were prepared — and I quote from it as one of the principles "re Capitalization, Restructuring and Redirecting of the Policies of BMC — to ensure that it fulfills the basic objective of providing service to farmers by assuming the responsibility for marketing their produce."

If we take that seriously, Sir, it would say to me that the Barbados Labour Party at that stage saw the Barbados Marketing Corporation as an entity that would have been an asset to the thrust in agriculture. What has happened since that, Sir, is that although they found it as an entity that was creating an avenue where people could find agricultural produce produced in this island for purchase in a very short space of time the Barbados Marketing Corporation was transformed into a distributing centre for a foreign product under the brand name of Hyde Park. Ever since those days, there has been a general slide in the fortunes of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. And why I said I joined this debate out of concern is because I believe that when we are discussing the bread and butter issues of the people of this country, we should be serious, and when we promise things, I

believe we should be serious enough to at least make an attempt to provide those things that we have promised.

We are in a situation today, Sir, where, as the honourable Minister of Housing mentioned, we have produce coming in forms of gluts at sometime or other during the course of the year, and very often, because of the competition of imported commodities, and even at the low prices it is difficult to get rid of the glut produce. It seems to suggest, Sir, that if we would look seriously at an import substitution in terms of agricultural produce, we must look very seriously at the processing and canning of our vegetables.

I would like the Minister to give this Honourable House some idea as to what are the programmes set in trend to effect a proper processing and packaging of vegetables in this country. I would also like the Minister to give us some idea as to what are his plans for the meaningful restructuring of the Barbados Marketing Corporation as it relates to the initial reason and purpose of this institution. I believe that if the Barbados Marketing Corporation is put on a very sound footing and given the kind of direction that is necessary, the small farmers in this country would be at an advantage in terms of meeting their day-to-day existence out of their own hands. I believe also, that we should try not only in the area of expenditure, but cut down in terms of all kinds of wastage, so that we can find the savings that are attached to cutting out wastage to the benefit of the people of this country.

I remain convinced that while you may wish to be helpful to people other than yourselves, there is a true saying that home drum beats first, and it is a great concern that you can have commodities imported into this country in strong competition with local produce. I am going to confine my remarks to this particular area of agriculture, because I believe that a country which cannot feed itself is a very poor country and every effort should be made to satisfy our local demand for food. After that, I think we would be on a very good road to meeting our targets.

So, Sir, all I am asking is for some clear idea as to what is in trend to repair the damage that has been done to the agricultural sector by the last Administration, that we can begin again to make strides of progress in this direction.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES (St. Lucy): Mr. Chairman, I propose to speak briefly in this debate, and I want to address the question of import substitution which has been mentioned by a number of speakers in the course of our sitting here this week. I am doing so, Sir, because the speed at which the discussion is going would suggest to me that it is unlikely that there will be any meaningful or lengthy debate on the Ministry for which I have responsibility, and which has responsibility for imports and exports.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not accusing the Chair for that? 3.05 p.m.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Not at all, Sir.

Reference has been made by a number of speakers on the^question, or indeed the policy, of this Administration relative to imports, and particularly during this debate to the question of what mechanisms we have in place for reducing what could be considered an enormous food import bill.

Let me say, in the first instance, that when we came into office, and I think that, generally speaking, this is acknowledged, we found a situation where, for the lack of a better description, it was clear that the commercial lobby in Bridgetown had, as it were, the better ear of the fqrmer Administration, rather than the manufacturing lobby. I think that there were a number of concessions which were made to the commercial sector to the detriment of the manufacturing sector, and that is the kind of problem with which we have to grapple at the moment.

The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade and Commerce have instituted a system which we have planned, to on an on-going basis, be able to review, particularly in the area of food imports, the kinds of things which are coming into this country, and look at the way in which the agricultural sector can respond to the demands of the consumer. When we find that that response is there, naturally the Ministry of Trade and Commerce will use its power to ensure that the advantage is given to the producers here in Barbados, because we recognise that the whole question of import substitution has very important meaning for this country, in that, in the first instance, we are talking about the creation of jobs, and secondly, we are talking about the reduction in the outflow of scarce foreign exchange.

I do not want to really let the debate get in now to the question of import substitution, but I would just, for the purpose of this discussion indicate that when we talk about import substitution, we have to recognise that we not only have to look at food, how we can substitute food imports by locally produced food items, but we also have to look at other areas, and I hope we will get a chance to get into that debate. You would be amazed at the kinds of pressures which are sometimes put on the Ministry of Trade and Commerce from the commercial sector to allow certain items of not much consequence to come into this country.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will leave the BMC for the end. One thing the BMC should do, though, is to pay their debts, especially to the foreign suppliers of eggs and tomatoes, and do not let matters end up in court. I am talking about the BMC now particularly in respect of the tomato shipment in December. The eggs may have been paid for recently.

Sir, I want to make a pretty broad sweep under this Head and draw attention to a few things that I believe may have been left unsaid by the Minister. Since we are expecting another statement from him, presumably in reply, he may care to give them some attention.

The Minister began yesterday by saying that Government's policy is one of diversification around sugar, which is a policy that was being carried on by the Barbados Labour Party. To that extent, there is no shift in policy. The policy is sound, but I believe that there are some questions which remained unanswered listening to the Ministers who replied yesterday and today. I am bound to ask him a number of questions.

First of all, there is a policy decision to reduce the tonnage of sugar to 90 000 tonnes. I believe I read that somewhere. At the same time, we have not heard of any commensurate decision to scale down the cost of operation, that is, you have the same amount of overheads — you may be waiting for information from the industry, I do not know - covering a lower tonnage. So there is a problem for the Minister to grapple with in terms of policy in regard to the scale of production against the cost of production.

The second thing happens to do with acreage. What is to happen to the acreage that has been taken out of sugar production? What is Government's policy for the use of that additional acreage which is now available?

On the Opposition side, we have tried to make it clear to Government that it is our view that we should not dismiss sugar out of hand. I think it was put by one honourable Member as throwing the baby out with the bath water. I do not believe that anybody has addressed the fact that virtually every country in this world — I am not speaking about CARICOM countries — has a clear policy for the subsidisation of agriculture and important crops, and I think that we must, for all the strictures that we have levelled against the sugar industry, still be conscious that there may be a public responsibility to subsidise the production of sugar as a matter that is necessary in the interest of Barbados, having regard to the employment factor and the foreign exchange earning capability of sugar.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: St. Thomas produces some of the best sugar in the island. We know that.

I have not heard anything in the debate about factories. I believe the uncertainty of Government policy, certainly prior to yesterday when we had some clarification, will probably lead to closures. I understand that Haymans is planning to close. The time will come, and I believe soon for a complete rationalisation of the sugar industry in Barbados. It is possible that we might be down to three in the next few years. I do not know if the. Ministry is addressing this, but if it is, I think the Minister could let us know what is Government's policy in regard to the factories.

Obviously, the policy of diversification around sugar is sensitive, because, as I have heard — because I do not pretend to be any agriculturist — and applying a little common sense, they say that there is a benefit to be gained from the thrash left from the cane, and that thrash not only provides much but is important when one is using cane lands for subsequent planting of vegetables. So cane itself and the trash of the cane has a very important role to play in regard to the vegetable production that may revolve around the planting of canes.

The honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller), I believe, spoke about export crops. I wish to remind the House that under the Barbados Labour Party, great efforts were made to develop sweet pepper and eggplant as export vegetables. There are tan dew melons — we are not going into the problems, since the Government has get into power, about the failure at Fairy Valley, just below the airport — and I believe there is also a market for cut flowers and foliage leaves — I think some people call them that — and things of that, kind, and perhaps, finger okras rather than the short fat ones. But there are constraints, in my view, and if I am wrong, the Minister can tell me I will be happy to be corrected.

Listening to the honourable Members, it came to my mind that there are three possible constraints. First of all, there must be the problem of post harvest cold storage. Have we got those facilities in place in Barbados? I think the Barbados Labour Party had started some development up by the airport, I think it was — I seem to have read that somewhere — so there is a base upon which the Government can build to expand the post harvest cold storage facilities. It would be very important if one is to develop export of vegetables and exotic fruits in a meaningful way.

Certainly, there must be a consideration of the cost of transportation. I am sure that, from pure commonsense, it would cost more to ship exotic vegetables and fruits to England or North America by aircraft than it would cost if one were shipping in containerised, chilled — what do you call it?

I happened to go to my office this morning. I found on the top of the correspondence which came in yesterday a letter from an importer complaining about the quota which he was allocated for the importation of pet foods into Barbados, and one big noise he is making because he was not allowed to bring in as much pet food as he would like. I do not know whether or not the pet food which is, or could be, produced here will damage the dogs or the cats or the other pets which are in Barbados, or whether they have developed a special liking for imported canned stuff, as it would seem a lot of consumers in Barbados have developed. We have to look at this very carefully. I know that there are a number of people here who, even in this small area are looking at getting into the area of producing for the particular market.

We have a wide variety of juices coming into Barbados and some of them are coming from extra-regional sources. There are things which we have to look at. We have not only to create a market locally for our local produce, but we also have to go beyond, to look also at the CARICOM market. But all of these are matters which we, through the collaboration which has been established by the two Ministries are looking at.

One of the things which disappoints me is the attitude — and I hope I will get an opportunity to speak about it later on when my Ministry comes up — which is coming from the commercial sector in this country. They do not seem to think that their role is to become totally involved in the developmental process of this country. It would seem as if they see their role merely as importing. Any opportunity to get to import, they will get in imports, but when it comes to investing in manufacturing, to using their initiative to embark on manufacturing enterprises, that is not their cup of tea. They want purely and simply to be able to import, to sit down in their offices, send cables and telexes out and order goods.

We are saying we have to encourage manufacturing and we also have to encourage our commercial sector to have that link with manufacturing. One would hope that this message will go home in a most effective and forceful manner to the commercial sector. The Government has made it possible, through tax concessions, for the commercial sector to realise profits on their enterprises, and one would hope that we will see some concern and some returns in this particular area in terms of their involvement.

Having said all of that, I want to make the point that because this Administration is interested in promoting manufacturing and in import substitution, we also have a responsibility to the consumers of this country. The Ministry for which I have the responsibility also has responsibility for Consumer Affairs, and we are developing a programme and strategy to deal with this particular matter.

I want to advise the consumers in this country that they have to form their own lobbying. They have to get ;up and protest when they are sold shoddy goods, when they get shoddy service, even from some of the garages in this country that import motor cars, because people who purchase motor cars are complaining about the kinds of service that they are getting. But it is not only them — there is a whole range of complaints levied not only against locally-produced goods, but also against imported goods. As I said, we recognise that we have to encourage local manufacturing, but at the same time we have a responsibility for ensuring that the consumer gets the best possible product at a most reasonable price, and, of course, as far as quality is concerned, the best quality.

I just thought I would make those few comments at this stage, recognising that, if the opportunity presents itself, maybe tomorrow, I will be able to expand more widely on some of these points.

Thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I was very interested in the comment made by the Honourable Minister responsible for Trade and Commerce about the unwillingness of the private sector to expand into new areas, particularly in areas of manufacturing. He is now realising what the Opposition has been warning against, that the whole of Government's policies predicated on a positive response from the private sector.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Those policies are misguided. You are not going to get the response that you are looking for, because in the private sector the interest is purely one of self and pocket. 3.15 p.m.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not talking about you. I am not speaking about the pepper sauce man.

Sir, before I get into my speech, I was reading today's newspaper, and I believe it is appropriate on behalf of the Opposition to offer our deepest condolences to the honourable Member for the City. I believe a relative of his, or the Miller family, passed.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I just cannot do it? I *d,>* not think it is improper to do it, Sir. If I am out of order for ....

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is why-I was speaking at the level of common sense. I want to hear the experts. As I say, I am not an expert, but these are matters that* arise out of one's own empirical experience. 3.25 p.m.

Nobody in this debate so far has addressed, with reference to the sugar industry or any industry connected with agriculture, be it vegetables or whatever, the cost of labour in Barbados. What a/e the figures among our competitors? The cost is US$19 in Barbados as against US$4.00 in St. Vincent, Dominican Republic, US$4.00 - this is not an attack on you, this is a statement of reality - Dominica US$7.00 to US$9.00 and in Grenada, similar figures.

Sir, I think the cost of labour in Barbados has to be looked at when we are talking about developing, diversifying, and exporting, and whether, in any event, having regard to the cost of labour, we can be competitive. And there has to be an extension of that into small farming. I cannot get into that now Sir, because, as I said, I am only making a broad sweep and I am not necessarily seeking to link point to point or a particular principle.

The honourable Member for the City spoke about ginger lilies. I seem to remember that the Barbados Labour Party had set aside a five acre plot on which research was being carried out into ginger lilies. The Minister was reported as saying that in two years we can earn $14 million from ginger lilies. On reflection, he may wish to correct that area of optimism. I do not believe it is possible in two years to get $14 million from ginger lilies. Agronomic research has to come first, the market research is no problem.

I accept what the honourable Member for the City said, that there is a million dollar market out there for ginger lilies, cut flowers and that kind of thing. We are competing, though, with Colombia, the Dominican Republic and places like that. Let us assume that we have top quality. Can we produce the volume now to earn $14 million in two years? Has the research been finalised? When you get the research in place, you then have to get it out to the farmers, and they then have to plant and grow these things. I think all that will take time. I am not saying we cannot attain the level that will earn us substantial foreign exchange. My point is that perhaps two years is being over optimistic, having regard to the state of play on the ground now.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: As the Honourable Minister of Finance was wont to do in relation to the strictures levelled against the Chairman of the National Bank, I hear *sotto voc&* that the Press was wrong again. You make a statement and if it does not come out right at the end of the day, you blame it on the Press. I understand the tactic.

I wish to mention to the Minister that there was some experience in Jamaica with a scheme called Agro Twenty-one, a scheme which had a lot of external funding, but a scheme which has not prospered, and I would wish the Minister, before he steps too quickly, to perhaps ferret out some information from Jamaica as to what were the pitfalls and why it failed. Did fellows put their hands in the till? I want to make the point that it seemed to fail. They blamed the honourable Member for St. Peter for working under Manley and now they blame him for working under Seaga. All of that only proves that they do not speak the truth in relation to the honourable Member. You so not know which horse to ride, so you end up riding a cow.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not referring to any proceedings of this House, though?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. Do you want to hear? In the Budget of 1986, the then Leader of the Opposition, now the Honourable Prime Minister, alleged, untruthfully, that he had caused the downfall of the* Jamaican economy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry about that, but your time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was mistaken in his allegation that the honourable Member for St. Peter had had anything to do with the downfall of the Jamaican economy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Anyway, will you conclude your presentation?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Save me from them, Sir. We are only three, so you must give us minority rights.

Sir, just to wind up, I must encourage the Government not to take to heart every suggestion and rumour that comes from every source about agriculture. It must be rooted firmly in serious analysis, research and so on. It amazed me to hear on my radio one evening between six and half past six a well-known supporter of the Democratic Labour Party, who parades as a small businessman, full of ideas - Trevor Clarke - promoting the idea that we should immediately get out of sugar and plant dunks trees and start exporting dunks wine and dunks this and dunks that. He was there for half an hour on CBC, national radio! He might have been talking sense, but 1 do not believe he was talking sense. He is the man that is behind the cotton now and the ginnery.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: On a point of order, I heard the honourable Member call a gentleman's name and claim that he is a supporter of the Democratic Labour Party. As I understood it, he was supposed to be a candidate for the Barbados Labour Party against the honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I believe that, other than the honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow), and the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Hon. L. E. Sandiford), I have probably been in the House longer than other honourable Members, and it really does not surprise me when I hear some of the arguments which have been trotted out on this subject being trotted out over and over again. If anyone takes the trouble to read the debates on the Estimates for perhaps over the last 14 or 15 years, you will see that some of these arguments are recurring, if not almost all. 3.35 p.m.

Despite that, I think it is right that this Committee should address in a serious manner the subject of agriculture, not merely because we are voting for supplies to enable the Ministry to have an overseeing role and, in some respects, a directing role in an industry that is, largely speaking, not controlled by the governmental sector, but we have to take an interest in it because, in the first place, it is a significant employer of labour in this country. There are some 6 000 or 7 000 people, particularly in the rural areas, directly employed in agriculture. There is still a reasonably strong peasant farmer class, the small farmers, although today they are much smaller than they were 25 years ago. A lot of them are part time, but many of them still depend on farming as the main source of income. Also, agriculture, particularly non-sugar agriculture, is still a significant earner of foreign exchange for Barbados. I wish I could say that non-sugar agriculture is now a significant earner, as sugar agriculture is, of foreign exchange. For these reasons, I would expect that the Committee would be concerned to ensure, particularly with the new Government, that we get a clear enunciation of the policies which will inspire the Government's five year tenure, or shorter, whatever it may be, and that we also should get a clear •enunciation of the policies of the past Government which would be found acceptable. I make bold to say that there will be a greater continuity of the policies of the Barbados Labour Party conducted over the past few years in relation to agriculture than one is led to believe if you listen to the views of some honourable Members.

It is significant that the Minister, in a much more sober speech than some of his backbenchers, has been able to make in this House, continues to recognise the very vital role which sugar has played and will continue, for the foreseeable future, to play in the life of Barbados. The honourable Member fqr St. George North (Mr. C. V. Walker) — and his speech, in some respects, did surprise me — characterised sugar as being dead, and, for him, all that is left now is to bury it. His view was taken up by another honourable Member. Yet, when we heard from the Minister and from the front bench, including the latter day St. Paul, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Hayries), we got the recognition from the Government's point of view that it would be a reckless act on the part of any Government at this time not to do all in its power to continue the sugar industry in as viable a fashion as is possible in Barbados. Regardless of whether we like it or not, sugar is still the main plank of Barbados' agriculture, for several reasons, not least among which is the ecology of Barbados and the relevance of the sugar cane, or any growing grass such as sugar cane, to the maintenance of that ecology.

I am not surprised also that the Minister of Finance has had to acknowledge the Government's commitment to assisting in the financing of the sugar industry at this very difficult time. I said that he is a latter day St. Paul because I have been in this House and heard the honourable Member talking strongly against any support, in any form whatsoever, for the sugar industry. In fact, the first speech which he made on price support, three or four years ago, was a speech highly critical not merely of the mechanism which Government was using for maintaining the industry, but of the very principle of giving price support in any form whatsoever.

If we are informed by history, as the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) so quite rightly reminded us, history has shown on numerous occasions that the sugar industry, since its introduction into Barbados in the early 1640s from Brazil, has always been confronted with these cycles, a cycle in which the industry has gone to high feats and another cycle in which the industry has come almost into bankruptcy. In fact, at the turn of the 19th century it was because the industry was in its downward cycle that we found a recapitalisation of the industry taking place, new managerial techniques being brought in and new ownership patterns evolving in the sugar industry.

I believe that we are in another such cycle. I believe that what we as policy-makers have to recognize is that we must now grapple with the problems which have been thrown up and try to address particularly those three major planks of structural adjustment: recapitalisation, management and ownership. They are not going to be easy issues to grapple with in many respects, because sugar has been associated with the slave trade in this country, it still remains an emotive part of our history, and those emotions are deep-seated and deep-founded. We as politicians and policy-makers have to recognise this. But

we have an equal duty, while not forgetting, in my submission, the, history of this subject, to educate our people to the other side of its history, the manner in which, by its being the main crop in Barbados, we have been able through the use of sugar to industrialise our country and then to assist with raising the standards of living of Barbados.

Sir, it is significant that in the 18th century, the British Government, then the imperial overlords, was not prepared to trade an island such as Barbados for Quebec, almost half, or at least a significant part, of Canada. The simple reason was that Barbados was not a place that the English looked on simply for touristic reasons. The presence of sugar made it a prized crown for Britain, and indeed I am never tired of reminding British Ministers and those who come out here about this - not only were we contributing to making Englishmen wealthy at home, but we were in the forefront of the industrialisation in Britain. I believe that my friend from Christ Church East Central, who has done a lot of history in this, understands this message - I heard it loud and clear coming through in his speech in here - and, therefore, we must recognise, and we must not be sidetracked, that it is an industry, in the words of the present Chairman of the ADC, and I listened to him very carefully, which has to be preserved. 3.45 pjn.

I do not believe that we are going to get very far if we are going to attribute the blame among the political parties for every ill that has befallen our country. Part of the present difficulties of sugar — and this subject has not yet been addressed, as far as I have heard, in the speeches of many Members — is the almost protectionist attitude of the major industrial countries with regard to their own sugar industries. There is no doubt in my mind that the European Economic Community, despite guaranteeing us a quota under LOME, because of the protectionist agricultural policies which they are following, and have followed, in relation to their farmers and beet sugar, have seen to it that the sugar industries of the former colonies are now in very precarious positions. Not only that, Sir, their consistent failure, including the United Kingdom Government, to subscribe to a viable international sugar agreement has undermined the international pricing arrangement which would have given sugar in the Caribbean a strong foot on which to stand. And the United States cannot go unscathed from criticism. Our farmers are still producing sugar at a lower cost per tonne than sugar is produced in Louisiana, the Corolinas, or in Florida. But yet the United States considers it to be good politics to maintain a price support system that is discriminatory against the freedom of movement of the major product of the under-developed countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. That is the first point we must make, and make strongly. We are, therefore, forced to sell sugar on the world market at a price certainly lower than the cost of production.

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

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

What are we offered in return? We are offered food aid, as though that is the answer and the cure of all our problems. We are occasionally offered loans, and now we are being told not even on concessionary terms. The whole purpose behind this is to ensure that the southern part of this world will not develop at the rate of the industrialised countries. In short, in some respects, in economics we are still fighting the main aspects of our imperialist past, and sugar is one of the major areas that we must recognise in this Committee.

I am sorry, Sir, that time prevents me from going further.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I am going to wind up this Head. The length of this debate and the quality of the debate from both sides of the House has demonstrated in no uncertain terms the concern that is abroad for agriculture in Barbados, particularly at this' time with the problems of sugar, and I want to assure this Honourable House that the present Minister of Agriculture does not in any way believe that the problems of agriculture are small problems, or that they are few.

To give an illustration of my concern and rny resolve to tackle the problems, when I came into the Ministry, obviously there was a sector plan in operation, and the first thing I sought to do was to amend the sector plan by way of an interim plan, which we are using at the moment, and I will give some indications for the honourable Member for St. Thomas's information about the allocations of lands about which he sought to get information.

While we were working on the interim plan, to further fine tune the plan, we held a weekend seminar of all the technocrats in the Ministry, CARDI, the University of the West Indies and IICA, under the heading, Programme Planning for Agricultural Diversification, where we sought in all the papers to identify the constraints of every individual crop that we examined to look at solutions, set targets, look at its possible contribution to the gross domestic product and to see how we can solve the obvious problems that have befallen them.

That seminar was a success, and in order to complete the consultation programme to finalise our policy,

we have since then had, on March 6, a review of the seminar findings. On March 20, we are going to be having a briefing of technical staff for preparation of the public sector project. On April 3, we will have the first meeting of the co-ordinating committee for the preparation of the plan. On April 6 - 17, we will have meetings of the sub-sector committee. On May 8, we will have a second meeting of the co-ordinating committee. On May 16, we will have a farmers' forum, realising that the farmers are the people to implement the plan. We propose to put the draft plan to the farmers in a forum for a feedback. On May 29, we will have our third meeting of the co-ordinating committee. From June 10 - 12, the interim technical committee will report on the draft plan and by June 26, we will have the complete preparation of the draft plan.

This indicates that the Ministry realises the tremendous problems ahead of us, and we are looking at all of them. I have taken very careful note of all the contributions. It has been a long debate, and I only want to give the assurance to this Honourable House that we in the Ministry will examine all of the constraints before the Ministry, all of the problems, and there are many^ — the problem of financing, long term credit, the problem of rainfall and the problem of irrigation. But one thing that we are resolved about in the Ministry is that the agricultural sector has to play a more meaningful role, and we will make sure that it does play that role.

I want to put on record my appreciation for the contributions to this debate.

The question that Head 25 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 27 - METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES - $1 212392

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 27 stand part.

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

The question that Head 27 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 74 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES - $22 844 588

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, in moving here on this item, under Professional Services of $80 000, and the amendment will go right through accordingly.

I now beg that Head 74 as amended, stand part.

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

3.55 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, there are a few issues under the Capital vote of the< Ministry of Agriculture which we wish to debate. The Capital Estimates are, of course, the principal instruments by which a Ministry can give effect to its development policies.

A lot has been made in this debate about the broad policies of the Government in regard to agricultural diversification. We welcome this opportunity to begin to explore whether, in fact, there is any reconciliation between Government's stated commitments to certain lines of agricultural diversification and Government's support for agricultural diversification by way of resources, because the proof of the pudding really must be in the eating. We would expect that if Government is really whole-heartedly committed to agricultural diversification and has really selected certain lines of emphases, it would be reflected in Government's public investment programme, particularly in regard to research, to ensure that its money is put where its mouth is. One has to go through Head 74, Sir, very scrupulously to make sure that the House is supporting agricultural diversification, so that at the end of the day, after we have left this debate, we would have equipped the Ministry of Agriculture with the necessary resources to give full effect to what we are asking' the Ministry of Agriculture to accomplish.

Subhead 4 of Head 74 proposes a 50% cut in the subvention for Crop Research and Extension, and in this Head provision is normally made for the undertak ing of research in matters such as potato production, onion production, peanut production, sorghum produc tion and other such research activity. Today the hon ourable Member for the City was citing how very important.....

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Subhead 4 of Head 74 - Crop Research and Extension. If the Honourable Minister for Tourism and Industry is seeing the numbers for the first time, and for the benefit of the House, Sir, last year whereas we projected expenditure of $740 000 to support crop research and extension, to expand the research capabilities in the area such as sorghum that the honourable Member for the City spoke about, potato, onions, peanuts and so on, this year it is proposed to spend $383 000 on related activity. The question I really want to ask the Minister is given the expanded scope of diversification that the Ministry is contemplating, particularly in light of the reduction in sugar output and a reduction in sugar production, can this reduced projected expenditure on crop research could truly serve to realise the objectives of agricultural diversification in this specific area?

The Minister has promised us as well a fairly massive expansion in flower production, so much so that within two years' time, the country should be realising $14 million worth in export earnings from the export of flowers. The provision under Subhead 10 for flower production makes allowance for only a marginal increase to cover the operating costs of the projects related to expanded flower production. Again I am asking the Minister whether, in the light of the provisions that are now being made, it is not more proper to say that the Ministry of Agriculture is over-estimating the potential output that can arise in these important lines of activity, precisely because these lines of activity that have been accorded the very highest priority by the Ministry at the policy level, are not being supported on the ground in terms of resource commitment.

Under Subhead 12, and I am being very specific, Sir, I want to deal with Livestock Development. Two years ago, the Barbados Labour Party established a Livestock Development Fund, and we developed the Livestock Development Fund, because Barbados is naturally a grass growing country, and we realised that if there is going to be any massive diversification around or away from sugar, a large part of that diversification has to take the form of diversification into livestock production.

You will recognise, Sir, that in the Approved Estimates for 1986-87 a $1 million expense is shown, which reflects the funds voted by the Barbados Labour Party Government for the establishment of a Livestock Development Fund. We anticipated that the bulk of diversification into livestock production would have to be carried by the private sector, and as a result, it was the initial intention of the Barbados Labour Party to continue to replenish the Livestock Development Fund, to build it up, at a rate commensurate with the need to have expanded private sector production in the livestock area. As such, Mr. Chairman, we would normally expect that if a continuing emphasis and impetus were to be given to livestock development, again as warranted by the shift of land away from sugar, that additional provision would be reflected in the Estimates, geared not so much towards activity by the central Ministry *per se*, but to provide funding for private sector-oriented livestock development purposes. But when we peruse these Estimates, we really are alarmed that the Ministry of Agriculture seems to have backed off the commitment to continuously build up a Livestock Development Fund in Barbados, so now, as more and more land is taken out of sugar, more difficulties will be experienced in making an easy transition into livestock development.

The Estimates of this year do not at all reflect any funding by the Ministry of Agriculture to replenish the amount of money available for private sector-oriented-expansion of livestock development in the country. I would be glad if the Minister could give us his views as to what is the Ministry's overall medium and long term policies in regard to the Livestock Development Fund which was established by the Barbados Labour Party, and if the Ministry of Agriculture has any intention of putting into the Livestock Development Fund, at least a million dollars each year so that this country can^back its commitment to livestock development by the committal of resources on the ground. I think it is very unsatisfactory, Mr. Chairman, that we should be criticised for showing a lack of a commitment to private sector development, that we should be criticised for doing nothing whatsoever for the livestock industry, and that we can have in this House a set of Estimates which reflect the fact that last year, we in the Barbados Labour Party, ' put a million dollars of seed capital into a revolving fund for livestock development and that $60 000 is now being put in, obviously not into the Fund, to buy at the most, 20 cows for the Ministry of Agriculture. 4.05 p.m.

I want to know whether, in the light of the fact that Structures costing $825 000 are provided for, there is a change in the emphasis of policy by the Ministry of Agriculture away from having the private sector itself lead in the livestock development programme in Barbados towards one where the Ministry itself will be taking a more active role in this country. Has there been a change in emphasis and policy away from one in which the Ministry allows the private sector to deal in actual production by providing the seed funding in a development fund for the purpose, towards one where the Ministry itself wants to become the major entity in this programme? We must deal with this particular matter, because the two areas which recommend themselves as providing potential multi-million dollar solutions, multi-million dollar production programmes in agriculture, apart from sugar, are cotton production and livestock • development, and, obviously, Mr. Chairman,-the purposes of livestock development in Barbados could be frustrated if, in this initial period, we do not continue to build up a livestock development fund so that potential investors in the private sector do not suffer from lack of financing to buy animals and also to improve their pastures.

This is too serious for us to gloss over in passing. I would really welcome an exposition on the part of the Minister of Agriculture in regard to exactly where we are going with livestock development, since there is tremendous potential, as cited by the honourable Member for the City, for us to shift a lot of land in Barbados into animal production, with a sanitary benefit on our food import bill. The Government, obviously, has to put its money where its mouth is, and the money under Structures cannot be for private sector structures.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I will ignore the .honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) who has absolutely no understanding of agriculture, has never shown any appreciation whatsoever of agriculture, except in 1974 when he set out to destroy the sugar industry.

Mr. Chairman, I have already adverted to the National Fruit Orchard Project, but I really must come back to this project again. It is under Subhead 11. I want to say again that I am concerned that the Government of Barbados is this year reducing the amount of funds that we are committing to the National Fruit Orchard Project. I have not made that point before.

Last year, the Barbados Labour Party committed $400000 to this project, and it was anticipated that the expenditure on this project would be accelerated and increased after the first initial steps had been taken. This project is supposed to become national in scope. It is not supposed to be a project that is to be restricted only to the Scotland District area, and it is, therefore, logical to presume that after the project?s first initial period of development, the expenditure on the orchard development would be expanded to reflect the fact that it moves beyond the parameters of the Scotland District. The reduced subvention to this project would seem to suggest that the pace at which the National Fruit Orchard Project is being developed has departed from the original conception of the project, and I really must enquire of the Minister of Agriculture what are the operational and the managerial kinds of problems which put us in a situation today where we are spending even less money on the National Fruit Orchard Project.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one minute to frame the next question to the Minister.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I will be back.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Chairman, Subhead 4, Crop Research and Extension. The answer to that is that previously the Ministry was responsible for the purchase of materials for planting potatoes, .peanuts and onions. The research has now reached the stage where it is a policy decision that the growers in Barbados, through their overall governing body, would now purchase instead of our purchasing the seed stock for the white potatoes. We are satisfied that it has reached the stage that it can be passed on, so the farmers themselves will be purchasing their own planting stock. The same thing applies to peanuts and onions. We are still doing the research, but before part of the fund involved providing planting materials for the farmers, but we now pass this on, since we are satisfied that it has reached the stage of commercialisation where they can take care of that.

Flower Production, Subhead 10. The Flower Production programme, Mr. Chairman is going ahead. I have heard the figure of $14 million in two years used before. If that figure was mentioned before — I was searching my record here for a projection — we certainly cannot hope to achieve that. That might well be the five year projection that we had. At the end of the five year programme that we are looking at, we are hoping to have about 800 acres in ginger lilies and 200 acres in heliconias, and we are now working on that.

Of interest is that the Barbados Horticultural Society, as you know, has been going in for a loan for the expansion of the co-operative in the ginger lily programme. There are playing a big part of that at the moment.

Because there is a reduction in the National Fruit Orchard Project, that does not mean that the programme has slowed down at all. We have already spoken about the shifting of the programme from the Special Projects Unit to the general service, and I assure the Opposition that that does not mean any lack of, or less, management control than existed on jthis particular one.

I need to spend some time on livestock development. First of all, the revolving fund. The revolving fund was put in place, it is true, by the Barbados Labour Party, but no regulations were put on the books for the proper working of the fund. We have only recently taken to Cabinet a set of proposals for the regulation of the revolving fund.

There is a remainder of $490 000 in the Dairy Revolving Fund, of which we have agreed to on-lend to the Barbados National Bank $245 000 to assist the farmers in the purchasing of some dairy cows that they are now negotiating.

There is $1 million for the new Livestock Development Fund in the Treasury, for which guidelines were recently approved by Cabinet. 4.15 p.m.

On the whole livestock industry, I would like to update the House that there is a tremendous amount of private enterprise money going into the livestock industry. At the moment, very close to agreement is a very big project and a forecast to spend $23 million by a private enterprise being funded by one of the agencies. This is the Staple Grove Project, with which you should all be acquainted. I am assured that they are very close to finalising the $23 million loan. There is also another farmer who is negotiating, through the European Development Fund, for funds, also supported by the Ministry, so there is a lot of development going on in livestock development by private enterprise, which has seen that the beef industry can very well earn a lot of money.

The amount under Structures that you see is for a new abattoir. We have identified that one of the constraining factors to the development of the livestock industry is abattoir facilities, and we have put in that money for a new abattoir, which would allow us now to provide the inhouse facilities to support expansion of the livestock industry. We will monitor it from time to time to make sure that funds are available in the livestock industry.

The Ministry, as you know, will also put in a 250 feed lot at Greenland to prove that the feed lot system can work. We are also on four small farms providing feed lots of 15 heads to see how this will apply on a smaller scale among the smaller farmers.

Our livestock policy is such that we have now decided to carry the result of research work into private lands. We believe that if it can be proven to be successful by private persons doing it, it is more likely to act as a catalyst than if we do it ourselves, because people are likely to say that Government have funds and that is responsible for it. I can assure the Opposition that we realise the tremendous potential for growth and our programme is well tailored to continue this growth in the livestock industry.

I think I have answered the queries.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, it is against the rules to read a newspaper, but I have my Estimates in front of me. Now the Honourable Minister said that he did not say on January 17 this year that he had projected that in two years the export earnings from cut flowers would be $14 million. This was a one day meeting that the Minister had on January 17. He was delivering the feature address, because there was a meeting between the Ministry and the flower producers at the Hilton Hotel, and the Minister said he expected $14 million in two years. He went so far as to say that in the first year he expected $6.4 million. I really think the Minister forgot he meant to say five years, but he said, and was accurately reported as saying, two years. After today's debate — and the Minister I must say has been most responsive and amenable to suggestions and points made and I compliment him on how he has handled himself in this very long important debate - he has had to revise from two to five years.

I cannot accept what the Minister of Tourism has been persistently saying. Whenever we say that a Minister on the other side said something and was quoted as saying it and we raise it in here, we are hearing the Honourable Minister of Tourism say that it was misreported by the Press.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I have not spoken in this debate. How can the honourable Member be quoting me? The honourable Member cannot go on doing this. If he wishes to make the point, let him make the point and end it, but he cannot go on quoting every Minister over here now. If the Minister said five years and the Press said two years, the Minister's word is what is authoritative in here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member proceed?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He does not even realise that I put the question, made the point and got the Minister out of it by saying that the Minister thought that he had said five years. That was a slip of the tongue, obviously, on the Minister's part.

I do not understand why honourable Members want • to hustle this debate to a conclusion when points are made and not followed through.

The honourable Member for the City was talking about an agro-processing plant, and he does not even know that under this Head, the Minister now has an opportunity to tell us about that under Subhead 5 (iii), where we see some funds for agro-processing laboratory. I would be grateful to hear from the honourable Member for the City, since he knows it, or the Minister of Agriculture, about exactly what this is. I am sure the country would want to know, and I am sure the farmers would want to know if Government was thinking of setting up an agro-processing plant, where, what size, what capacity, is this the yam thing all over again, and things like that.

Sir, I think that under LOME there was a possibility that the Barbados Labour Party could have had a central agronomic laboratory. I am not sure if it actually went through, but I remember some discussion during my time and I saw a paper on it, and we had decided on a central abattoir. The Minister did make a point about the abattoir, but again he left it there. Where are we going to have the abattoir? The decision in our time was to move it inland somewhere around the Lower Estate area to link up with the new highway and so on. It would make sense.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am glad that the Minister says it is about the same place, and we look forward to that.

Sir, on processing generally, I have a view that perhaps processing of vegetables, agro products, should properly reside in the private sector, and perhaps Government's proper role would be one of supervision. Let me put it this way, Government's proper role should be one of quality control, with the private sector putting in the capital and running the plant. 4.25 p.m.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I hear what is being said on my left by the honourable Member for the City, and I would say that this is part of the philosophy that both parties will share. If the private sector is showing an unwillingness to do these necessary things, then Government has to do them. But we have the experience of BARPAC. HOJEG, fflH and the others, all doing very well. Government now, through BNSI and so on, should be looking at the areas of quality control and establishing standards and so on. I do not know if I am right or wrong. I am no farmer, but I am not a dummy.

We started the cotton debate and stopped. I think the Minister said that there is to be seminar on February 21 or 22, or some such date. I believe that he is projecting a seven fold increase in the acreage devoted to cotton up to 5 000 acres, but the cotton ginnery can only deal with 2 000.

(Aside: Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: We are putting in a new ginnery.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh, you are putting in a new ginnery.

The honourable Member for St. Peter has spoken about the National Fruit Orchard Project, which, in terms of personalities, is a triumph for one person over another, and the one who has triumphed is not held in the greatest esteem among his peers in the Caribbean. He is a special type of person.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Subhead 16, Sir. As to the repairs to Cheapside Market, I wonder if the Minister has formulated any plans for the construction of a new market or the total redevelopment of Cheapside Market. Again this is something that had been on the drawing board — and the Minister is agreeing — of the Barbados Labour Party. We had intended to rebuild and refurbish the Cheapside market for, I believe, about $4 million or $5 million.

Aside.

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

Design Collaborative had developed the architectural drawings and the project was almost ready to get off the ground as soon as funds were available. We also wanted to redo the Fairchild Market to harmonise with the new bus terminal.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I cannot tell you about Eagle Hall. I am only talking of things that I remembered, that I saw during my time.

Under Subhead 23 is a very important matter, in my submission, the Rural Development Project. We can say that the RDP under the Barbados Labour Party was phase I. It was a project which catered to between 700 and 1 000 small farmers, certainly covering about 1 000 acres. It brought a number of benefits, agricultural as well as structural, to the farming communities in the various areas. I have one in my constituency at Sturges and there is one in the honourable Member for St. Philip's South constituency at Heddings, and one at Kirtons. But my concern, Sir, is that the extension staff who had worked in the RDP seemed to have been sent home. I believe there were about 12? I wonder if Government has any plans for carrying on that development. If so, how do you account for sending home 12? Are you just going to recruit them again when you are ready to start up?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: These are important, exciting projects. You all want to get down on police and who beating who, but these are very important nationally.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We spent $2.2 million on the RDP in 1986-87. This is drastically cut this year to $1.2. So I am driven to the conclusion .....

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: We do not have to spend the same amount.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not try to fool anybody that you do not have to spend the same amount, that you are so good at cutting out waste.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member forget the asides?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Government just does not have the money.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Forget the asides. Proceed with the debate.

(Aside: Mr. B. M. TAITT: If we do not have the money, how can we do it?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You do not have the' money because of misguided fiscal policies which are now catching up with you.

(Aside: Well, say so.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am glad that the Honourable Minister of Tourism is shouting for me to "say so." You agree with it.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You never agreed with the Minister of Finance!

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The two of you never got on!

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You did not agree with him in the first instance!

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Two Members are on their feet. I refuse to give way, Sir.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am on my feet and holding my ground, Sir.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: A point of order is being made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is that an order, Sir? I have to give way.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I draw to Your Honour's attention that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas may be transgressing the Rules of the House in that, in debating this Head, extraneous matters are being brought into this debate. I do not know if he has some reason for delaying the House, but if he wishes to say some things about the fiscal policy, he should have said so when the Ministry of Finance was being debated. It is now ten months since we had the Government. What could be catching up with the Democratic Labour Party in ten months? The people had an opportunity ....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is a speech, Sir.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am on my feet on a point of order. Do not be disrespectful.

The honourable Member is delaying the House, and I feel that he knows better, because he has been in the House in and out and he should know better. But here he comes trying, on the advice, apparently, of his Leader, to mislead the House with a lot of foolishness. Let us get on with the debate. If you have things to say to us, say them.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the record will show that we three on this side have not 'missed one single sitting, so seriously and assiduously do we attend to our responsibilities and public duties. We make it a point of being here every time this House has been called. In and out of the House? We have always been in the House!

Laughter

(Aside: I hope you all keep it up for five years.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We have always been in the House. We will keep it up for five years. I was concerned on the night of the elections as to how things would operate.

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They like that!

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They like that! But now I see it, Sir. There are only three of us, but they do not want to give us a chance to speak, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is giving you the chance.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Not you, Sir. I said, "they", Sir. You have given us full range. You would like to hear us make a plea for them to take on instead of sending home those 80 people from the Soil Conservation in your constituency, Sir, bring them back on and help you. They should be talking about those things in here.

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They have no sense of gratitude. They do not care. They do not know anything about being their brother's keepers. They should be looking after you, Sir. You cannot even take part in the debate. I am going to look after you. Sir.

Laughter

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would be grateful.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I want to hear what is going to happen, Sir, if Government has any plans for the RDP Phase II.

I have made a plea for development in the Scotland area to help the people of St. Andrew. The Government got in on a premise of employment but are sending home home 80 people from your constituency.

(Aside: Not true!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Thirty-five from your constituency, Sir. That is not good enough. Those 35 would be coming to you every day, and you do not have a Ministry, or even a board, to give them a little thing. Ungrateful!

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, under Subhead 26, we heard an excellent speech yesterday by the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne). He is now walking out with my compliment, Sir.

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ..... Opposition warmly complimented him. It had a lot of native common sense and a high degree of expertise in it. It reminded me of the late Captain Fergusson, whom I had the fortune to hear for a couple of months in 1976. But for all that the honourable Member for Christ Church East said about fishing, there is concern among the fishermen about fishing rights. 4.35 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can you make the point in another minute's time?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, in a minute I can make the point, Sir.

Last week a fishing boat was alleged to have been arrested in St. Vincent. A few weeks ago in the Ministry, first of all, the Permanent Secretary had the meeting with - fishermen, and then the Minister, and he is alleged to have told the fishermen that they must only go 95 miles south of Barbados.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: St. Vincent South. Where is the sun setting, Sir?

I believe that Tobago is a little bit south of us, and there is a problem with our relationship with Trinidad. I understood the Minister in August, when there was a meeting of FAO here, to have said, albeit Mohammed was then the Minister responsible for Agriculture and Fishing, that he had negotiated some kind of agreement with Mr. Mohammed which they had hoped to get implemented, I believe, by November 1986. There has been a change in Government in Trinidad, and, obviously, the Opposition would not be unreasonable to wish to tie the Government down to that situation. But I would like to know what is the state of discussions. If the Minister thinks that a disclosure may prejudice discussions, obviously we will not expect him to say anything, but I think the fishermen want to know what are their rights, how far can they go out of Barbados, if there are any arrangements with Tobago and so on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think this concludes your contribution.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let the honourable Minister of Trade make sport at people from St. Thomas. Come up there to the next meeting.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I really must say that I am a bit sad by the Government's attitude in this matter. This is really the first Ministry on which we have had the opportunity to discuss a capital programme. You really cannot truly say that it is much of a capital programme, of a productive character, in the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office. Some of these capital projects are fundamental to Government's policy, and we cannot bend to the idea that we should just quickly gloss over, for example, Government going into the RDP phase 2 which we have not heard of before and would like to know of, how it will affect our respective constituencies. There are a lot of us here from rural constituencies, and I would, for example, love to know if the RDP Phase 2 is going into the north — the south east has benefitted already. I would like to know, and if Members on the Government side are prepared to abdicate their responsibilities, both in relation to the national issues and in relation to their constituencies, they must not feel that we in the Opposition are going to be stampeded when we are discussing a substantial capital programme which has in new activities, and we want to discuss them. I hope the flippancy of the honourable Member for St. Michael West would not stop us from discussing these things. These will affect the whole society.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir! I think that the honourable Member is entirely out of place. He arrogates unto himself that he can speak for 24 Members in here. The honourable Member has spoken on this Capital Head, he led it, and he has no currency to come here trying that. If he has something to say, he should ask the Minister the question.

wft

I have a fishing community in my urban constituency, and if I wish to talk about it, I will talk talk about it. No little individual from any little constituency anywhere else can come and discuss my constituency and tell me when I am abdicating my responsibility. I think the honourable Member is quite rude.

If he wishes to speak about St. Peter and delay this debate so that the Press will not be able to talk about the Police in the next debate, if that is the Opposition's tactic, say so. But do not let him get up in here with any righteous indignation trying to give the people the impression that he is discussing and we are not. We have heard about the Rural Development Project from the Barbados Labour Party in season and out of season, and that is why we are not spending any time on it, because you have nothing new to say. You wasted the money, and we are refusing to spend the same amount of money.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am glad that I have at last captured the righteous indignation of the Government side precisely by drawing attention to the fact that their Minister of Agriculture obviously had spent some time to construct new project activities, if they seem not to be aware of it, as they were not aware of an Appendix G, and that we on this side would like to investigate what these things mean from a national point of view and what they may mean from a constituency point of view.

I come back to the RDP Project, and I will not be deterred by the honourable Member for St. Michael West, who, obviously, has no interest in a Rural Development Project, because his constituency is an urban constituency. I must have an interest in a rural development project.

The first Rural Development Project, was a project designed to bring benefits to farmers in the south eastern part of Barbados.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Vic Johnson killed off the development.)

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: It was the intention, Mr. Chairman, that with further extension of this Rural Development Project, regions in other parts of Barbados would benefit from the same kind of support services and the like that were put in place in areas like Kirtons and Heddings, Gibbons Boggs and other parts of rural Barbados. The Government is now committing itself to what appears to be an extension of the Rural Development Project. On this side we would like to hear the Minister elaborate as to where will be the geographical area of focus of this new extension, and whether the composition of the project will be of the same character as the composition of the first Rural Development Project. Are we talking, as well, Sir, about an extensive programme of irrigation, feeder roads, farm credit and things of this character for people, for example, of the northern constituencies, in the same way that we have had it for 1 000 small farmers in the south and central part of Barbados? We need to know that. We need to know how large is the concept that the Government has in mind. The Minister of Finance has already made reference to it, broadly speaking, in his second reading speech. I represent a rural constituency and I must have an interest in rural development, and I want to know what are the perimeters of the project. I will not be deterred by the honourable Member for St. Michael West who is comfortable in his urban constituency, Sir, and has no interest whatsoever in rural matters.

Asides

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Miss Leacock nearly beat me the first time — yes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are still on agriculture, Head 74.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am not, Mr. Chairman, going, as the representative for St. Peter, to delay the House even with any discussion on Subhead 27, where it is quit£ clear that Government has now formally abandoned all plans to develop the Speightstown Fishing Harbour. I am not even going to delay the House on that, because the Government has said that the fishermen in Speightstown do not want the fishing harbour, and, in due course, that will be put to the test. But it obviously will be beyond all conscience, for there to be a subhead reflecting upon my constituency and the honourable Member for St. Michael West would want me to skip over it.

I want to talk a little bit about Subhead 15, the Agricultural Development Corporation. I. am concerned with certain developments which have been taking place at the Agricultural Development Corporation. In the first place, the Agricultural Development Corporation, immediately after.....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I cannot go back further. I was moved from there to the House of Assembly. But that is a different point.

The Agricultural Development Corporation, immediately after the May election, put out a tender for persons interested in undertaking a consultancy to draft a plan for diversification on lands owned by the corporation. When I was the Chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation in 1983, at that time 5% of the Agricultural

Development Corporation's lands was in non-sugar commodities and the rest of the arable land was used for sugar. Between 1983 and 1986, I am advised that the ratio of sugar to non-sugar production on the ADC's lands has been drastically changed from a 90 to 95% production ratio in favour of sugar to a 30 to 70, I think, and it could be as much as a 40 to 60 ratio, as between non-sugar and sugar production, and that there was a deliberate strategy in place, Mr. Chairman, where the Agricultural Development Corporation was using its lands to spearhead not only the diversification project — remember that corporation went back into peanuts, we did a lot of experimental work in sorghum, the corporation developed the work in tan dew melons, we tapped the waters of the Bath Plantation to start the initial work in growing for the winter vegetables market — we were not only just going into expanded non-sugar production, but the corporation was required and mandated to treat those projects as experimental projects so that we could build up, in-house, a set of realistic costs in regard to a wide range of alternative commodities to eventually begin to reflect on which crops were and could be viable as part of an expanded diversification project for the country. 4.45 p.m.

The development of a costing system for a wide range of non-sugar commodities was part and parcel of that process whereby the Agricultural Development Corporation moved from being a 5% producer of non-sugar commodities to a 30 to 40%. That is a fact. It seems, therefore, very strange to me that if the ADC had started that initial work to build up an in-house capability not only to produce alternative crops, but to systematically begin to cost alternative non-sugar commodities within different ecological zones, the corporation should now find itself in a position where it has now to enter into a contract with an international lending agency to do for us what we had started doing for ourselves. The Members of the Government have made a big issue that where we have a domestic capability to do things for ourselves, the last thing we should be interested in doing is seeking foreign funding to carry out tasks that can be done by Barbadians, and I want, Sir, if necessary — I say if necessary — to start the debate on the Agricultural Development Corporation by asking the Minister to explain for us why it woul have been necessary for us to "ignore the experience that has been developed within the corporation over the last four years. To what use does the corporation intends to put the valuable research work that has been done in expanding tan dew melon production, experimental work on sorghum production and the work on peanuts and cotton that came out of the corporation?

There are other matters within the Agricultural Development Corporation which we could make matters of controversy. There are matters pertaining to staffing, there are matters pertaining to contractual relationships which we could make matters of controversy. But I prefer to keep the debate this evening at the level of enquiring seriously of the Minister in regard to the new direction that the Agricultural Development Corporation intends to take with diversification relative to the direction along which it had been set, and which had yielded a vast amount of production results and a vast amount of cost data that could be of benefit to the country as a whole.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, it never ceases to amaze me when I hear the honourable Members from over there speaking. The honourable Member who just sat down is giving the impression in here that this present administration seems to be bent on the idea of closing down the Rural Development Project. From what I have seen in this copy of the Estimates.....

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: That was the impression you were giving. That was the suggestion that you were making. But when I read here, I see: "This Subhead provides for the continued operation of the Rural Development Project designed to improve the living standards of rural tenants and small holders."

What has been happening with the Barbados Labour Party since they have gone out of office is that there is an inherent fear that most of the projects, and ill-conceived projects, of that Administration are going to be stopped by this Administration. When we look at any of the projects and we decide that the projects were ill-conceived, we will stop them. Have no fear about that. If we are convinced that they are workable and sensible, we will let them go on.

I am going to say very few words about the Rural Development Project as far as it concerns St. Philip South, because a lot of song and dance was made in here today about the Rural Development Project in the East. No person in Barbados would ever understand how an administration could contrive to get a Rural Development Project, the irrigation, running through St. Philip South only where Barbados Labour Party supporters live, and what I am telling you is John 3:16. I know St. Philip. Do you want me to call the names where it runs? Hold on a bit.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member should be on his feet.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The same thing happened in Christ Church. Only where you have your supporters you ran the irrigation. What makes it amazing is this, there are only a few Barbados Labour Party supporters in St. Philip, and do you know they found them? They found them to run the irrigation, and if you want me to

call the names of all the people, I will call them. Do not let me call the people's names. It started at Marshall .....

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Nobody knows who is Marshall, anybody is Marshall. I am not calling names. It started at Marshall, went across by Jones, went a bit further across by Burgess, across by where Lindsay Bolden used to live. That is where you ran the thing. And where the majority of farmers in St. Philip South live, in Foul Bay, where John lives, Lionel Greenidge and all of them who do the most small farming in St. Philip live, there was no water at all!

You are all getting up in here and giving the impression that this is a big, grandiose scheme, a magnificent scheme, and therefore we cannot do anything about it. Most of the schemes that you all put up were ill-conceived and were done purely on a political basis. I thought I should put the record straight, because you keep talking about the south and in the south east.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Well, he was a bit fortunate, because I do not know where it runs in his, I know where it runs in mine.

I thought I would set the record straight, because you keep harping on this fact that it was for the south east and it was this great scheme and al| of that. But where the majority of farmers live in St. Philip South, in Foul Bay, it does not run that way at all. Honourable Members in here will realise that the scheme you are shouting about was not the scheme that you are making it out to be. 4.55 p.m.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I was .....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We will hear the honourable Member for St. Peter,

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I was the Chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation and the Rural Development Project put in the irrigation facilities in the honourable Member's constituency, and it is characteristic of how wrong the honourable Member is that he said that I entered, in my previous contribution, the viewpoint that the RDP was to be closed down, and his inaccuracies continued throughout his entire speech.

The fact of the situation, for the records, is that the Rural Development Programme could not, obviously, cover every part of the particular districts running through St. Philip, St. Thomas, and so on. What we did, in order to effect the economies in the project, was to go to places where there were wells already in existence, because for us to spend a limited amount of funds as widely as possible, it was, obviously, more economical for the corporation to bring back into active production wells which had formerly been used for irrigation.

This is the first time in my entire experience that I have heard this scandalous and scurrilous accusation being made, which does not only reflect on the corporation, but it reflects on the professional integrity. In relation to irrigation, I have never heard any nonsense about politics being used as the basis upon which irrigation wells were chosen. I can give the Minister the assurance that Kirtons and Heddings were chosen as two of the bases on which we would extend irrigation because there were two of the major unused wells in St. Philip, and it would have been cheaper for the corporation to go and reactivate the wells gone out of active production than to spend a large amount of new money to go and dig wells merely to please the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands.

Asides.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: But I am not saying that you are not only reflecting on me, but your Minister ought tp check with his professional staff, because you are reflecting on the professional integrity of a lot of good professional people who worked very hard to spend a limited amount of resources over a wide area of land to bring as much benefit to as many people as possible.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am hearing three speakers.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Why would we go to St. Philip, as he said, and put irrigation in such a way to help BLP supporters in St. Philip South and put it in to help DLP supporters in St. Philip North? The honourable Member for St. Philip North knows that the areas in which irrigation facilities have been extended in his district are areas which are generally, in support of him. So if you bring it down to a question, therefore, of political criteria, the Member would have a tremendous difficulty in explaining how a political judgement would say that you should put in irrigation facilities to help the BLP in St. Philip South and the Dems in St. Philip North.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am embarrassed for you.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, am I going to get .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please continue. Forget the asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I really thought I would set the record straight where that matter is concerned.

In addition to the discussion of the argicultural programme of the Agricultural Development Corporation, I said earlier that I have a number of concerns pertaining to the Agricultural Development Corporation which ....

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, I think this is an appropriate time at which we should take a break. We are seeing some very strange tactics in here on the part of the Opposition.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I only said "strange tactics." That is all. I have not characterised them yet.

I beg to move, Sir, that you do now report progress to His Honour, the Speaker, and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): In seconding the Resolution for reporting progress, I can assure the Honourable Leader of the House that there are no strange tactics on the part of the Opposition. We are as anxious of the Government to make sure that the fullest debate takes place, but the honourable Members must understand that the honourable Member for St. Peter is from a rural constituency. There may be other honourable Members who do not want to raise, at this stage, which they are free not to, matters pertaining to their own constituencies and that affect them, but I think it is quite proper that the honourable Member should debate these Heads in full, and I am sure that the Minister welcomes the opportunity to put forward his .policies. His answers have been quite clear. He has not created all the fuss of the honourable Members who were making asides.

We are as anxious as the Government to probably get through all the Heads. I wish we had two weeks to debate the Heads. Unfortunately, we are limited to five days. History will show that since these new rules, there has never been any occasion in the House of Assembly, as the honourable Member knows, that we have ever got through a detailed debate of every Head of the Estimates. That is a fact, Sir, so there is nothing strange at all.

The question that Mr. CHAIRMAN report progress to His Honour The SPEAKER and ask for leave to sit again was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. I cannot put the question unless there is order in the House.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I will now facilitate you so that you can put the question.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended for 15 minutes.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended for 15 minutes was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 5.05 pjn.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply. Head 74.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, one or two Members seem a little bit impatient because the debate on the Ministry of Agriculture has taken some time. From the side of the Opposition there has been an intervention on several major areas by the Shadow Minister of Agriculture. The other two Members of the Opposition have each spoken only once on this Head, and the other contributions have come from Members on the Government side. I find it a little bit difficult, therefore, to understand why some Members believe that there has been any delay in debating this Head.

The honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller), for instance, Sir, whose only interest in agriculture could be that the Barbados Labour Party has

had the foresight to start the Bridgetown Fishing Project in his area, and secondly, the very personal interest in which, obviously, his family has made a significant contribution to agro-industries, has to recognise, and the others will have to recognise, that the Barbados Labour Party is interested in this subject, first because it is such a vital part of the livelihood of Barbados, and secondly, because a large segment of the supporters of the Barbados Labour Party depend on agriculture and look to agriculture, and it would be absolutely ridiculous if our party did not enquire of the Government, as I said in the very few brief words that* I have spoken so far, about the continuation of some of the very enlightened policies which we implemented during our stay in office.

Sir, I heard a lot being made of the fact that we had killed the small farming industry, we had done very little for small farmers. Yet, when you examine this Head and you look at many of the projects which are now being continued under this Head, you will see that they are for the purpose of making a contribution to the development of the small farming class in this island.

The honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. Arthur), spoke on the Rural Development Project, and this brought an intervention from the honourable Member for St. Philip South (Hon. H. A. Blackman), who, for the purposes of this debate might be likened to the Rambo of certain films that I have seen. He came in in his usual aggressive style and his only contribution to the debate, really, was that a pipe was run in his constituency for political reasons. Sir, I am not going to pursue that point because I believe that the statement made by the honourable Member for St. Peter answers that point.

There is no doubt that the Rural Development Project has been one of the best conceived projects in Barbados for helping a large number of small farmers. This has been acknowledged by spokesmen on the side of the DLP. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) has acknowledged this, the World Bank has acknowledged it, and the fact that the Government intends to continue with it and to complete Phase II is acknowledgement enough.

When we left office we were in process of beginning to negotiate for Phase II of the project, to extend its benefits into other agricultural areas of Barbados. What we want to know, if the Government is in a position to tell us at this time, is what areas it is going to be extended to. Is it going to be extended in St. George North and St. George South, for instance, where the Barbados Labour Party still has tremendous support, and which I intend to reclaim in the next election, I assure honourable Members? Is it going to be extended to St. John, for instance, the constituency in which increasingly the people are recognising in the rural areas that their hope will lie with Labour in the future? For instance, when I look around in my area of Society, I have not seen the Minister visiting up there, one can recognise the number of small farmers who have now gone into livestock development, both in relation to beef and Black Belly sheep, who, daily, are in need of some assistance. Since I have moved into the area I have not seen any person who has come around to offer assistance.

So when we are talking about these matters under livestock development, we are not talking about them because we are trying to delay the Committee in any way, but because we recognize how vital it is, and we, as I said, even in livestock saw the necessity to have a scheme to cater to the needs of the people who wanted to go into beef production. The Minister ought to be aware that not all of the small people, particularly those who are interested in livestock, have joined the Breeders Association, and there must be some mechanism, maybe through using your extension officers, to find out what are the needs and to cater to these persons who themselvas have not gone in to a particular Association, or who themselves do not know how to go about obtaining loans for themselves.

Sir, the Rural Development Project I believe, per-, haps offers the best opportunity for infrastructural development coupled with agricultural development and diversification, and it is important that it is particularly geared to the small farmer. The honourable Member has seen the benefits of it in areas like Hanson. March field is not in his constituency, but Marchfield in the south has benefited as well. We have not extended it to St. Peter nor to St. Lucy, but when I drive through areas of Christ Church, like in the constituency of the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne), in areas like Gibbon Boggs, where 'you have farmers such as Mr. Maloney, who has farmed there from the time I was a child, Mr. Callender and a few others who have had the benefit of the project, already I can "see the tremendous improvement in yields and eood farming habits which have been brought to these small farmers. I can also talk about the benefits that they got in infrastructural development, and that is why we would like to see the scheme not only continued into this year, but expanded into another year as well.

Sir, I want to talk about fisheries. I am sorry that I had to leave the Chamber — not the House, because I was in the precincts of the House — when the honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke, but I heard that he spoke very movingly on the problems confronting fishing, particularly on the need for fishery conservation and the link which it has to the environmental protection called for in the south coast. He spoke about the damage by chemicals to our reefs and, therefore, the removal of the feeding grounds for the sea urchin.

Some years ago, the then Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Lindsay Bolden, had proposed a closed season for the sea urchin, the sea egg, and a lot of people at the time thought that he was adopting a dictatorial attitude. It shows how times and moods change. People now recognise that the interest which he had then was in the long term necessity to conserve the fishing banks of Barbados, whether it be for the sea urchin or for other pelagic species of fish that we have within our waters. 5.30 p.m.

We also have to recognise the need to protect our own fishery zone and to negotiate fishing zones outside of our own exclusive area. Very early in the first Labour Party Administration, in 1976, we brought legislation to this House extending the territorial zones from three miles to 12, and extending the exclusive zone to 100 miles. Because of the Caribbean archipelago, we can only go to the east of Barbados as far as we like without any restrictions — we then come to the high seas. But when we come to our south and west, we have to share those zones with our neighbours, St. Lucia, Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, and it is necessary for the CARICOM Ministers to negotiate, either in some multilateral way outside of the Law of the Sea Convention or on a bilateral basis, the exploitation of the sea arrangements around us. I would hope that these negotiations can make some progress. I do not know what stage they are at now.

I recall that when we were in power, one of the difficulties confronting the fishing industry was trying to persuade countries further south, countries such as Venezuela, Cayenne, that is French Guyana, Suriname and Brazil, to permit our fishermen to fish within their zones. You will recall the problems which our fishing boats, the shrimp boats to which the Honourable Member for the City referred yesterday, had within Brazilian waters. Indeed, it was only after the Brazilians and the Guyanese failed to negotiate a fishing agreement with us, that we were forced to curtail the fishing industry as it then existed.

Honourable Members have made points that we closed down the shrimping industry. An objective analysis •would show that there were two problems. One was that there was not in place any agreement with neighbouring territories to permit our boats to fish within their waters, territorial and exclusive. The second was that the rapid rise in oil prices made it uneconomic for the shrimp fleet to operate out of a Barbados home base while fishing off the banks of Suriname and French Guyana, with whom we eventually got an arrangement through the European Economic Community. That is now history, not to be rewritten by anyone who would flippantly say that we were intent on removing a developing industry such as we had.

When I hear the Minister say, whether at conferences, or while addressing groups, that it is vital to secure the position of fishermen, it not only lies in improved ice boats which we gave, it not only lies in the improved fishing facilities which we had begun to provide, as witnessed at Oistins and in the ongoing fishing development that is taking place at the Bridgetown Harbour, but it also will lie in our ability to "negotiate a satisfactory system of treaties within the Caribbean. And on this subject, let me deal with those who fish in our waters and give us no compensation therefor.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We must not only negotiate to share joint fishing grounds, we must also negotiate for the protection of those fishing areas. I am still not satisfied about the fact that the Japanese almost callously came into the fishing waters of the Caribbean and to some extent, the South Koreans, collect the fish in the Caribbean and make no contribution therefor. They have fished the waters around St. Vincent, Barbados, Grenada and off Guyana, to .some extent with some agreement of the Guyanese. But the Japanese have been making no contribution, either through concessional aids, or in any form, to the Caribbean countries. They are the worst example of a very selfish group of people who believe that all thjey can do is sell us their motor cars and manufactured goods, and when it comes to our cotton, negotiate a price and then renege on it. That is the sort of issife that we should be standing jointly on.

The battles which we have are sometimes very difficult battles, and on this the Opposition joins in the Government, because the national interest of this country comes before party.

(Aside: Hear you!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We must make the point over and over. Any muscle the Government can put in order to make it clear, particularly to the Japanese, that they should keep out of these waters to protect the poor fishermen of this country will be muscle to which we will lend full support.

My time is up on this Head, so I have to curtail my speech.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, I just want to give some support to what the honourable Member for St. Philip South (Hon. H. A. Blackman) said in the area of services being rendered because of particular alignments. I am not necessarily saying that this is unexpected — it happens. Certainly in my constituency of Christ Church East Central, that kind

of configuration was clear. The choice of Packers and Fairview as areas for extension schemes and so on happen to fall very clearly in areas where the vote used to be very, very strong for the Barbados Labour Party.

I believe that one of the components of any rural development scheme must be in the alienation of lands for those persons who are landless. But what we find is that you have the rural irrigation scheme superimposed on a situation where people have micro spots, extremely small spots, which cannot really be farmed economically. To me, extending irrigation services at a great cost to those micro spots is really a waste of funds, and I am sure that the Opposition in supporting a scheme which has potential for transforming, our society and the economy, would not support that kind of development.

I see in the neighbouring constituency of Christ Church East, in places like Gibbons and Pegwell, where there are sizeable lots, and I watch over time the movement from wooden houses to wall houses, and from the kind of development in the lives of the farmers, perhaps there is certain good in that project. I cannot say the same for the extension into Christ Church East Central. I believe that that was politically motivated, and I do not think it was particularly wise.

The other thing I would like to talk about is the Oistins market. I think one of the difficulties in our country, is when schemes are associated too closely to political parties or are made to appear that way. One gets the impression that the Oistins Project belongs to the BLP, which means that some of the fish vendors from the area believe that they own the Oistins Fish Market and that they cannot relate to other persons. So if there happen to be fish people who support another party, they try to give them an extremely rough time.

I think we have to discourage this kind of development. When funds are taken from overseas organisations and national funds are used with these to provide facilities for the country, we must not give the impression that political parties own these institutions. It is a very, very bad development. We even go to the extent where persons who are still alive are putting memorials on tablets in the front of these kinds of developments - opened by the Honourable this person at a particular time - and so on making it seem as though it is some personal property belonging to them, it is not the normal kind of inscription one could see. I know to what I am referring, I do not need to go any further on that. The kind of inscription that is put in there is a tribute to the amount of work this person has done at such and such a time and that kind of nonsense. That is not the proper thing to do. You can put an inscription saying it was opened by a Minister, full stop. But not go on now to inscribe in any particular tablet any kind of record of achievement by a particular Minister who happens at that time to be the Minister associated with the particular project. I do not think we should do that sort of thing, because I think it is unnecessary and it is against the best principles of national development. 5.40 p.m.

Mr. Minister, I am concerned about some matters being raised by the users of the Oistins Fish Market in terms of the deterioration of the physical plant and facilities at that market. I am sure that you are aware of some of these things. I have spoken to you about it, but I think it has to be drawn to the attention of the Committee that in spite of the fact that that market has been put there recently, there are already some signs of deterioration in the plant and in the facilities, I hope that some attention would be given to this.

I think we are also hearing that the scales are a bit untrustworthy, if I may say that. People are not happy with the age of the scales. They are getting not exactly 16 ounces to the pound. That is something we may have to look at.

There has been some concern, too, that a lot of people are using the market for purposes other than trade. We have seen in our major newspapers that some old people congregate there and that some young men' with knives are in the area. I hope that the proper security precautions will be taken to ensure that those of us who want to use the market for purposes of purchasing can do this without being afraid to go there.

I raise these few points for the consideration of the Minister.

Thank you.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, we have had a rather long debate on this Head. I have made a few notes. I think the Committee rightly merits replies to most of the notes.

We are aware of the problem at Oistins Market. We have asked the police station at Oistins to make sure that there is ample patrol there. The reports reaching us are that the behaviour has improved considerably, and we are hoping that this will continue.

The matter of the scales is among a few things we are looking at. Provision will be made as soon as possible on this.

On the broader area of fishing, the point alluded to by the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) is a very vexing one, and that is the complete economic rape of these waters by the Japanese

and the Taiwanese. Because of this, we in Barbados have started an initiative, which we will continue at the next meeting, between ourselves, Trinidad, Guyana, St. Lucia, Grenada and St. Vincent - we have selected those, because outside of them we have some French islands — in which the proposals being^ advanced are that we will reduce our territorial waters to three miles instead of 12, and the area outside of that .would be common and could be harvested by all of those countries involved, without any interference or any licensing. We will seek to also protect those waters jointly in a way that we can be able to do that.

The behaviour of the Japanese is of deep concern to all of us. It is not only in respect of fishing but how they have behaved on the cotton price. You will be surprised to know that the same representative came down here, noted that we had cars from Korea and was highly annoyed that we should have cars from Korea, as if to say that we should not be buying anything from anybody besides the Japanese. This is a very, very sad story, and this is one of the areas where we find vast exploitation. And the methods that they use in their trolling are such that when they come through an area, it is a long time before that area recovers itself. Whatever pressures can be' brought to bear on that situation we will institute. We are really hoping to arrest one of them — that would take care of that situation.

The ADC matter raised by the honourable Member for St. Peter. It is not that we have shelved any works that you have done, but it is that we want to move ahead even faster than you. Part of the consultancy is to advise on bankable projects so that the ADC can even diversify faster, as well as look at possible distribution of some of the lands owned by ADC into family farms. All of these are being examined under the consultancy.

Phase I of the RDP, as you know, is at an end, and we are evaluating it. The position with the extension officer is not as easy as that. The extension officers working in the Rural Development Project were paid more money than their counterparts in the Ministry of Agriculture, and they were less qualified. It was posing a problem, and we decided that we would make the posts temporary and bring them into the Ministry of Agriculture. We are retaining "five of them, but the posts will be advertised, and if these existing officers meet the requirements, they will get back their jobs. If there are better people, the better people will get the jobs. But when they applied for the jobs, they got an additional payment above the regular salary because they knew it was a programme for a specific time, and that has created a lot of problems inside the Ministry of Agriculture with the people holding degrees from the University of the West Indies at Senior Agricultural Assistant level being paid far less than the RDP extension people.

As soon as the project is evaluated, we will have a look at it and make a decision on Phase 2 and the areas to be included. In the meantime, we will continue to extend those areas where there is already water available and bring on some more farmers.

The Market. At the moment we have not made a final decision on the plans we found for the Cheapside Market. There is some money in the vote because of the very poor state of the Cheapside Market to do some cleaning up, put in new ceilings, repaint, and so on. In the meantime, to make it a lot more respectable and less annoying. You would realise that that area has been developing fast, and I want to have the opportunity to look at the overall development plan for that area before we decide what we are going to do.

The agro-processing situation. I am pleased to tell you what is going through my mind. The lab is a research and development lab in the first instance, and the whole idea is not that Government would go into completely on its own, but there are certain products that we want to research and develop, and when we have reached the stage where all the work has been done, the products will be offered to private enterprise to commercialise. In other words, we are doing it the same way we are doing the other research work. We develop a product, and when we have reached that stage that it can go on the market, we will then, in conjunction with private enterprise, put it on the market. We believe that Government has to take the lead in this. In this respect, ADC has been asked to have a look, in the first instance, with the processing of vegetables, freezing and so on, using a plant that used to be in operation. Negotiations are going on to see if that plant can be made available so that we can get something immediately to take up the extras that we will obviously have with an increased production of food stuff.

On the point that was raised by the honourable Member for St. Thomas about the cost of labour in Barbados, we are quite aware that the cost in Barbados is high. But our approach to this is that I believe I can say that in Barbados we have maybe the best technical staff available to anv Ministry, and what we are aiming to do is to increase our yields in order to cut down our price.

Let us take tomatoes. The present average production per acre is about 6 500 pounds, but we know that there are some farmers who get as much as 50 000 pounds an acre. Because of average cost of production, the price is 38 cents a pound, but we believe that, as we bring the other farmers up to the higher level of efficiency, we could reduce it to about 17 cents or 18 cents a pound, by increasing yields to spread the overheads a lot more. Sweet peppers, cost about 50 cents a pound. We believe that we can get the yield up to

about 35 000 pounds an acre, which would reduce the cost per pound to about 20 cents. At present, the cost of carrots, is about 27 cents a pound and we believe we can bring it down to 16 cents a pound. So realising that we have a disadvantage in labour cost, because of our better technical ability we are concentrating on variety testing, efficiency and improved methods of planting to give us an increase in yield to compensate for overhead costs. 5.50p.m.

Mr. Chairman, that brings me to an end.

The question that Head 74 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS - $2 759 365

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, the appropriations under this Head are required to cover the services provided by the Ministry of Legal Affairs, covering the Central Administration, Legal Services rendered by the Ministry, Registration Services, the Administration of Justice, the Immigration Services, Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property. The last two that I have mentioned are two new additions to the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Immigration Services and, Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property, which was administered before by th* Registration Department.

I do not propose to dwell at any length on this Head, Mr. Chairman, but if there are any matters which Members would wish to raise specifically under the Head, I will be prepared to respond to them. But there are a couple of matters which I believe were enquired of by — I think it might have been the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) - in a debate on the International Transport Division in relation to the laws, because this is one of the areas for which the Ministry has responsibility, and a couple of questions were raised about problems connected with the publication of the laws, the cost of the laws and about the publication of the Law Reports.

There is no problem with the printing and publication of the Laws of Barbados, because the Third Supplement to the Laws of Barbados is now available. That updates the laws up to the end of 1984. The cost of that supplement, which is in four volumes, is $800. The other supplements, the consolidated edition which ran up to 1966, and the First and Second Supplements are all available, so that the complete set of the Laws of Barbados is available for purchase at between $1 800 and $2 000.

The subsidiary legislation has been published., to date, in three volumes up to 1978. That is being updated gradually, and the supplements to that up to the end of 1984 should be ready quite shortly. The cost of the existing three volumes of the subsidiary legislation is $750.

In relation to the Barbados Law Reports, approximately ten volumes of those reports have been published, at a cost of $50 each. There is no real problem with the cost of the last volume which has just been published, except to say that Cabinet had fixed the cost of the earlier volumes but no decision has yet been made on the cost of the volume which has just been published. That cost will be fixed shortly and will be made available to the public.

I move, Mr. Chairman, that Head 28 stand part.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE (St. James North): Mr. Chairman, I second the Head. I know the honourable Members on the front bench will not mislead me.

In speaking on this particular Head, I would like to focus some attention particularly on the administration of justice, and I want to refer specifically to the matter of the magistrates' courts in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that all of us will agree that the magistrate's court is an institution where the poor people of this country resort to ventilate their grievances' and seek justice, and I believe that this is an area to which Government should focus some serious attention. Most people who come into contact with the law find themselves before a magistrate in this country. If it is a traffic offence, you will find yourself before a magistrate. If it is a matter involving persons who are seeking to get liquor licences, they find themselves in the magistrate's court. If it is petty crime or serious crime, people find themselves in the magistrate's court. If it is a young mother who is seeking to get maintenance for her child, she finds herself in the magistrate's court. If it is a small debt, people have to refer to the magistrate's court. So I believe that this is an institution which we must continue to support and see that it does not fall down in this country.

If we look at the manner in which this particular matter has been dealt with over the last ten years, we will find that from 1976 Legal Affairs and Foreign Affairs were held under one Ministry, and I am sure that the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) would not disagree with me if I say that during the period that the two Ministries were joined together — that is, Legal Affairs and Foreign Affairs - the respective Attorneys General who held that Ministry concentrated a lot of attention on Foreign Affairs and Legal Affairs was practically neglected, particularly, Mr. Chairman, when we come to the question of the magistrate's court. We have to look at this matter against that particular background. We had the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr.

D. A. C. Simmons), who recently held the office, but certainly he was not there long enough to get a bite to get things moving in that particular area. The electorate did not give him the opportunity to get a bite in that particular area. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that we can probably now say that we have an Attorney General who would be dealing with this matter very seriously, and certainly everybody in this country is looking forward to see him get things moving in this particular area, particularly with regards to the magistrate's court. 6.00 p.m.

One of the things that I want to raise, particularly, is the conditions that exist in this environment. We have a situation where there are seven magistrates and one Chief Magistrate. We have one of those magistrates presently acting as Registrar. There are four magistrates' courts in Bridgetown, one in Oistins, one in St. George, one in St. Philip, one in St. James and one in St. Peter, so those are nine, but we have seven magistrates functioning. This .will tell you, Mr. Chairman, that there is need to increase the number of magistrates who sit in those particular courts. As a matter of fact, there was a fire at the St. Peter court some time ago, and we find that all the cases from St. Peter and St. Lucy are tried at the court in St. James, and one of the worrying things about this matter is that the conditions at the Holetown Court are so terrible that even the female clerks at the Holetown Court have to go over to Sunset Crest to use the toilet facilities. The situation down there is as bad as that. Many of these courts have served this country for the last 50 years and more, and the time has now come when this Government will have to take some serious steps to improve conditions at these courts.

We have typists at these courts using manual typewriters. They have to type out depositions, they have to type out statements for witnesses and that sort of thing, and the equipment which they have to use is outdated. TV ere is need for Government to look at these particular areas, and the cost involved in providing these things is peanuts compared to what we are talking about in respect of some of the other areas of Government and some of the other Heads.

We have a situation where the magistrate has to write out the evidence in longhand. If we look at the situation around the world, we will find that most countries now have machines which are equipped for taking evidence. These are things that, no doubt, this Government will seek to implement. No doubt we have a provision in our manifesto to implement this particular provision.

One of the areas that worries most of us who are involved in the courts is the long delays and the adjournments which we have in many cases. We find, in many instances, that matters take two and three years before they can be completed before the courts, and this is so, despite many appeals having been made over the many years to have this matter improved. I think that we have come to a point in our magistracy where we have to face this problem head on. We have to deal with it now, because if no action is taken at this time, I believe that we can have a breaking point within another four or five years, and it is a matter which Government should look at with some priority.

The magistrate's courts do not have sufficient storage facilities for records. We have many young women in this country who obtain orders for the support of their children. Very often, they have to visit the court to collect this money on behalf of their children, but when they get there, sometimes the records cannot be found. I believe that in this age of computerisation, we should be looking very seriously at improving the record keeping system, because it is very hard on a young lady who has to bring up a child to leave home and go to the court to find that they cannot find the record, or whatever the problem is. All these things are bringing hardship to the poor people, the people who have to frequent the magistrate's court.

This matter, Mr. Chairman, will have to be dealt with. This is an area of life hi this country which has been neglected over the past many years, and we cannot continue to have it neglected. We will find that if we do not take some action now, we may reach a point when we will not be able to remedy the problem. The lack of a proper magistracy and the proper functioning of the magistrates' courts is a blight on any society, and we have to look at it from that point of view.

I think that we have everything which should make our magistrates' courts function properly. We have a Law Faculty. We have a Police Force, which, in my opinion, is one of the best in the Caribbean. We have an Immigration Department that functions well. We have all the supporting services, and I believe that if some action is not taken in this regard, we will find that there will be a collapse in the administration of justice and a collapse in our society, because when people have grievances and cannot have their grievances properly ventilated in the courts, they will resort to other methods of sorting out those grievances, and a developing society cannot afford to have a subject as important as justice neglected to the extent to which we have been neglecting our judicial system and the administration of justice, in particular. The new Attorney General, the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, will, no doubt, be taking some action in this regard.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I am not responding overall at this stage, but I am responding to the specific issues raised by the honourable Member for St.

James North (Mr. J. J. Payne). It might be convenient to respond to the many issues as they come. 6.10 p.m.

In any debate on the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the concerns which have just been articulated by the honourable Member for St. James North are concerns which one hears articulated every single year during the Estimates, not that they are not important, because they are terribly important, and the sad thing is that year after year, nothing seems to be done about them. I remember that when I was in Opposition and speaking from the other side, whenever there was a debate on the Estimates and I made a contribution under this Head, that would be the type of contribution I made certainly in relation to the magistrates' courts. I do not believe that it is an area where there is any difference of opinion between honourable Members on this side and members of the Opposition.

In the Opposition, there are two honourable Members who served in this position which I now hold. They know what the problems of the legal service have been. There are a lot of administrative problems which have to be dealt with, and one has sometimes to draw a very narrow line when you are dealing with these problems, lest you be accused of interfering with the administration of justice.

In the area, for instance, where you complained about delays in the court system - and let me admit at this stage that all of us who have anything to do with the court system would readily admit that there are considerable delays in the "magistrates' courts - I cannot tell a magistrate, for instance, that he must deal with this case expeditiously or that case expeditiously. A magistrate, once he is appointed, has a judicial function to perform, and once you recognise the doctrine of the separation of powers, it would be improper for me, constitutionally, to interfere with a magistrate in the performance of his duties as a magistrate.

I think that the Bar Association and those who are directly involved in the administration of justice have got to bring pressure to bear on magistrates to ensure that they do what they have to do. I hear complaints, for instance, that magistrates do not sit from 9.00 ajn. to 4.00 p.m., and people might ask me what I am doing about it. There is nothing for me to do about that, because the law says that they should sit from 9.00 ajn. until 4.00 p.m. It is for the administration of the courts and those who administer the courts, and for the profession, to bring pressure to bear on the magistrates to demand that they sit from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. if the work is to be done. If they do not do that, there is a Judicial and Legal Service Commission which is responsible for discipline of the judicial and legal officers, and it is for that body to take the appropriate action in connection with matters of that kind. If magistrates sat the hours which they are required to sit and do all the work which they are required to do, perhaps the work can be completed.

The honourable Member raised complaints about the number of magistrates. I believe that there is one magistrate short on the establishment at the moment. You can correct me if I am wrong. The position as far as the filling of vacancies on the magisterial bench is concerned, is again not within the province of the Attorney General. It is certainly within the province of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, which is the commission which is constitutionally charged with appointments, promotion and discipline. If I sought to intervene in the area of the appointment of magistrates, the first thing you would hear my learned friend say is that you are interfering with the appointments in the Judicial and and Legal Service. The judges themselves would come down on me, and I would be accused of acting improperly. These are areas where we have set up constitutional arrangements for dealing with those issues, and somehow we find that they are perhaps not working satisfactorily, but in my view it is for the profession, largely, to bring pressure and influence to bear on these issues and try and deal with them.

There is a vast number of areas relating to the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the magistrates' courts and the Supreme Court which need attention. My friend, the honourable Member for St. James North, talked about the problem of judicial officers having to write everything in longhand. It is not only the magistrates who have to do that. The Supreme Court judges have to do that as well. It is a very archaic procedure. A lot of us feel that modem methods should be used to assist the judges in making notes far more quickly, and my Permanent Secretary always tells me that several years ago, there was a number of persons trained in palantyping and that the machines were actually bought, but the machines are lying down somewhere in some Government office and that nothing has been done about it. Those are the type of things which happen. You say the judges do not use them. And people have been trained, marked you.

Mr. Chairman, a lot of the problems which you are talking about are problems which, essentially, the judges and the magistrates themselves and the profession have to deal with. I know that the new Chief Justice, who was recently appointed, is very concerned with some of the very problems of which you speak. I know he is presently engaging his attention in considering some of the very precise matters which you raised, and I believe that with an effort on his part, and with the co-operation of the profession and all those who are involved in the need to see the administration of justice develop the way we

would wish for it, with goodwill and with the effort on all sides, we can make the progress that we need.

But the effort has to be made. At the last meeting of the Bar Association, which I was invited to address, I did make reference to the many problems which concern the provision, and I did ask the profession to let me have documented details of the areas where they thought that, as Minister of Legal Affairs, I could be of some assistance. I am not being over critical in this matter, but that was since, I believe, some time last year. No response has yet been received. I had asked them to give me specific problems which the profession encountered and areas where they felt that I would have been of some assistance, and I asked them if they could perhaps detail the ways in which the Ministry of Legal Affairs could assist the profession in dealing with the many problems which the profession has. That meeting of the Bar Association was on October 25, 1986 and I have not got a specific reply from them as yet.

Let me assure the honourable Member for St. James North and the Honourable House that the concerns to which he has spoken are the concerns of us all, all of us who are concerned about the law and about ensuring that the administration of justice is well ordered. 6.20 p.m.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS (St. James South): I want to make a few brief comments on the magistracy, and I do so because I have had the privilege of sitting on the bench and I have had the opportunity to practise in the courts as well.

There is the belief throughout this country that a magistrate's job begins and ends on the bench, and therefore, a number of people have the misconception that the magistrate only works when he is sitting. First of all, it is impossible to sit daily from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., especially in the magistrate's court, and more particularly if you are working in a country court, because the variety of cases coming before the magistrate in the country, requiring, so to speak, a quick decision, will make it impossible for a magistrate to do justice as it should be done.

Secondly, after the magistrate sits, there must be some research. If he has appeals against persons, he must write reasons for those appeals, and unless people are asking the magistrate to go home and continue his work, then he must do it there.

A lot of blame seems to be placed at the feet of magistrates, and I am not defending magistrates, I am just giving you the facts. But we have lawyers who, more often than not, especially if it is a country court, phone in the same day to ask for adjournments. On the one hand, if the magistrate does not grant the adjournment, the lawyers get down on him to say that he is preventing them from earning a living. If he does not grant the adjournment, the client feels that he has been done in by the magistrate who is probably taking sides with the other person. So the only thing to do is to grant the adjournment. In many cases, the lawyers are at fault. I probably was guilty myself at some time or another, because, if you are busy, you cannot go to five and six courts at the same time, and some clients want certain lawyers. That is part of the problem.

As far as the number of magistrates is concerned, I do not think that we need any more magistrates. I believe that the distribution of work is not as good as it could be. But that is for the administration. I do not want to get into that.

The conditions are atrocious, and the physical conditions do not encourage magistrates to work very long. If I were to speak, for example, of St. Joseph, District F, I believe that until lately we had a female magistrate there. There are no toilet facilities for her at all. What does she do? What can she do? There is no lunch room for magistrates in this country at all.

(Aside: Other than at Oistins!)

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Other than at Oistins. Oistin is super. All the money was spent at Oistins, apparently, so we have not had money for the last ten years.

There are no books at the magistrates' courts into which a magistrate can do research. He has to come to town if he is in the country, and even if he is in town, he has to go up to the Law Library to do his research. Again, that is restricted by the fact that there are civil servants who work certain hours, and after 4.30 it is finished for the magistrate. Even the Law Library is limited in the books it has. All of these are limitations placed on the magistrate.

The only other area which concerns me, quite frankly, is that I think the jurisdiction of the magistrates could be extended. Too often magistrates have to hear cases which must, of necessity, go to the Supreme Court, but which could easily be dealt with at the magistrates' level. This is something which I would like the Attorney General to look into because it saves time. There is no more work. You have to do it in the Pis anyhow. You could as well finish it down there one time and get it over with. I believe it would give the judges, as far as the Appeal Court is concerned, less problem.

As far as the taking of notes, I think it is a necessity for magistrates to take notes by hand, because the matters are so repetitive at times that, if you were to rely on a machine, half of the time you would go to

sleep. If somebody breaks into a house, it is only another name, a speed case is just another name, and unless you are taking notes to keep your concentration going, then, you will never get properly adjusted.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, I should like to speak to the subject of the system called justice in Barbados, my experience is not the experience of the last three speakers, who have practised in that place.

I am very afraid of it, and I hope to let my fear so show itself that I keep distant from it.

I have heard those people who should know, and no less a person than the Right Honourable Prime Minister, advise, not only in here but in other places, that if you have any sense at all, you would keep far from the law courts. It seems to me that at the back of that comment there must be a recognition which the people of Barbados have about the law courts, not just the magistrates' courts, but the law courts generally. I think that we need to recognise that, and recognise in it that there is a certain rebelliousness on the part of our people, especially our younger and disadvantaged people, towards the legal system. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, the impression one gets is that if you are poor, you get locked up. It is not necessarily that that is true, but it is a perception, and one is forced sometimes to view the court as being a place that has nothing whatsoever to do with one's just desserts, or with justice or with fair play but, rather to view it as a place where there is a big game between attorneys, in which the most skilful attorney will win the day.

When once that becomes the perception, one then ought not to be surprised and one ought not to think that it was mere vagabondage which led a young man, a couple of weeks ago, to wear a T shirt with some obscenities in the court and exposed the obscenities before the leadership in the court. It may very well be that that may have come from a mind that was cracked. It may very well be that it came from a mind that was high, beyond the limitations of poor, simple persons like ourselves. But if one were to listen to the voices of the people in the street, one gets the distinct impression that there was a loud orchestration of hurrays and applause from the man in the street at that action.

I beg, Sir, to suggest to you, that there is or there may be a growing lack of respect for tne court system and the court process system. If we recognise that there are questions in that direction, we have to ask ourselves, are we to blame? And if we are to blame, or if we are not to blame, what can we do to remove those perceptions? Perhaps the lawyers have a role to play in this area. Perhaps the police has a role to play in this area. Perhaps the legislators have a role to play in this area. The question of perception regarding what is fair and what is not fair is a serious matter, and if the disadvantaged person, the poor person, already without money in his pocket, begins at the same time to believe that his lack of money leads to. an unfair court process system, then our whole establishment, as we understand it, our whole system of justice and fair play, as we believe in it, is going to deteriorate all around us. 6.30 p.m.

One hears, Mr. Chairman, of stories like the following one, that there was a young man trying to earn a living, perhaps he had locks, on Broad Street, by selling nuts, but having the misfortune of not having a license, and one hears the story that he was sent up for 14 days. I know of a story of a young man who was caught with one - I think they call it a spiff - I do not know these things, Sir, because I would not recognise it if I saw it — one marijuana cigarette, who got convicted and lost his job in the Public Service. But I have read of stories in the Press of other persons who were not caught with a cigarette, but caught with packages who were reprimanded and discharged. I am saying, Sir, that inherent within that apparent contradiction, are the seeds of the destruction of our society, and we as legislators, and those who assist us as lawyers, police persons, welfare officers and counselors, need to recognise that that kind of problem is one that we are not going to be able to remove from our society unless we are able to face that kind of problem frontedly and try to correct the impressions which there may be.

There are stories of officers in the court processing system who are pressured when they try to do their jobs properly and have been pressured when they have tried to do their jobs properly. As a representative of such persons, I am aware of the difficulties that some of those persons are faced with, and have been faced with, from time to time. I am concerned as well, Sir, and I believe you are equally concerned, about the number of cases which are thrown out, especially in the magistrates' court because of faulty prosecution of those cases. From what one reads in the Press, one gets the impression that the cases were not properly presented, and so no case submissions have been upheld.

One therefore, is forced to come to the conclusion that there is a certain linkage between escaping from the system and the earnings of the individual. I do not know of any specific names that I wish to call at this stage. I am merely throwing out there is a problem and that there is a serious perception by our grass-roots brothers and sisters, and they do not have to be called by any Ras Iley or Ras other name, and I do not mean a particular calypsonian when I use that name. I am saying that they do not have to be associated with a brotherhood to have that perception, and we have got to be very careful to deal with that problem.

I think that in this Honourable Chamber on some previous occasion, a suggestion was made that it is time for us to recognise that skilful attorneys, especially

when there are four or five of them, cannot be allowed to face one simple — and I do not mean that disparagingly prosecutor for the Crown. I do not know if that is a cause, because, as I have said to you before, I do not know that place. I was invited to go there once to give evidence, and I was so afraid that I am not too sure what kind of evidence I gave. More recently, I almost got invited by a certain politician to appear again, but the case has not yet appeared. I am trusting that I would not be forced to appear before the court, because I happen to be a;-poor person, and unfortunately, the perception that the other poor people have - that if you are poor, you are locked up — has begun to translate itself into my consciousness, and I would want, therefore, to keep as far as possible from the courts.

Mr. D.A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): We will have lots of occasions to speak, Sir, both tonight and tomorrow. You can sit down and relax, as they say on the aircraft.

I heard most of the speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman). He raised a number of fundamental matters which are rooted in jurisprudential considerations, the whole relationship of law, morality and the function of law in a society. I am sure that honourable Members do. not wish a discussion on jurisprudence or philosophy tonight, Sir, but I will try to address some of them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I hope not. We should keep close to our subhead within the ambit of the debate.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We will stick to the hard matters before us, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We operate in a system which is unlike the perspective that Marx had for the role and function of law, that it was an instrument of oppression to" do down the less well off in society, and I understand the perspective from which the honourable Member spoke, that of the worker. We have a different system, which through the years, has admitted of the right of society, reflective of a common and shared interest and perspective, to have that perspective reflected through legislation to mark down a certain core of mores and behaviour, and as legislators, from time to time we have had to respond to what is happening in the society at large and to recognize that certain conduct in the •society has been at a given point in time been deemed deviant or anti-social and thought-worthy of being pre-. scribed by legislation.

Take the problem of drugs. Up to 1974, there was in place the Opium Act of 1936. Marijuana smoking was not a problem in this society indeed in international society. Even in Jamaica, they used to wink at it and it was associated with a cult. Gradually, there was a body of medical opinion which said that marijuana smoking was deleterious to your health. It was found that it was an opportunity for persons to profiteer on others in the society by the proliferation of marijuana, and it was having a consequential deleterious effect on members of the society. So you had the health problem, you had the social problem, and the commercialisation, for wrong purposes, of marijuana.

The Opium Act in Barbados was found to have a loop-hole that, I think it was the female part of the plant, the pistalate part of the plant, was the offensive part to the law, but not the male part. So if a person was found in possession of the female part of the plant, he was liable to conviction. But if he had the male part of the plant, he would escape. I did three cases, the last one involving two jockeys, in 1974. We asked the analyst one question: Can you say with certainty whether the exhibit is the male or female part of the plant? He said he did not know. He could not say with certainty, he had a doubt and the case went through the eddoes. 6.40 p.m.

The Government of the day in 1974 — Dr. Caddie, I think, was responsible — changed the law in recognition of the development of the social ill which was starting to feed on this society, and said cannabis by whatever name called, whatever part of the plant, once it is cannabis sativa L., male or female, guilty if you are in possession. So here was society responding to a problem that was taking root in the society, and I do not think that the honourable Member could criticise that rationale for the introduction of the law and the stiffening of the penalty that was introduced for marijuana in 1974, because it was a response by the society, acting through Parliament, to a social problem. It has become an even more serious problem now, and will have a lot of opportunities to discuss drugs, but I was only using that as an example of how the law operates in relation to society. The law is also dealing with individual human beings who have all kinds of predilections, prejudices and idiosyncracies, and if you have 1 200 men in a Police Force, you cannot expect that all 1 200 are going to be upright, you are going to find bad eggs in there. In the larger society, the majority of society will want to conform to the norms that are set down for the general good of the society at large, but within that society you will find people, for various reasons, explainable on criminological grounds, which we are not going into, who will be at variance with society and operate contrary to the established norms of society. What is society to do? Does society have a responsibility on behalf of the majority who are conforming to say that those who are not conforming have to be dealt with in a particular way?

Allowing for the particular idiosyncracies and so on, you will have cases where, for reasons of prejudice, those in the law enforcement agencies, reflecting as a micro-cosm the larger society which has the same prejudices, will pick on a clearly identifiable group, such as the Rastas, and perhaps not mete out the fairest justice to them. • But that has been going on for a long time, and all we have to do is to ensure, as far as possible, that those

prejudices and those people who hold prejudices and who do not act within the norms that apply to their own organisation are weeded out and dealt with, But you will have them, they will pick on the poor. In England they pick on the blacks, because they are in the minority. In truth, everywhere!

Barbados is a strange society. In England the blacks are in the minority and they are worse off, they get the worst treatment. In Canada, the blacks are in the minority, same thing. In America, same thing. In Barbados the blacks are in the majority and worse off. We are truly a singular island. Whoever said that is very accurate in his description.

As I say, in every system you will have weaknesses, and you will have people who operate on whim, caprice and prejudice, but I do not believe that, generally, any group is singled out in Barbados for particular attention. When I was Attorney General I had no evidence of that, but one also has to recognise that within that minority group - take the Rastas - there are elements who pretend to be, as we say, true-true Rastas but are not, and are using the cult as a camouflage to criminality, and one has to be supportive of the law enforcement agencies when they root out those elements who are only masquerading but are not truly honest to the beliefs of Rastafari. I do not like to sound too law and order, Sir, but I think one has to have a balance, and if one is in a responsible position, one has to see both sides of the picture. That was only in response to the honourable Member.

He said that there are differences in the tariffs of punishment. True. It is a problem that is not easily understood by the man in the street, and, perhaps, there may be ways to deal with it. The actual fact of reporting crime can help to control levels of crime. People see what is happening, people see who is being convicted for what and some will say to themselves 'I do not want to get myself in the position of the fellow who got sent up for three years yesterday.' The actual fact of reporting of crime can play a positive role in the control of crime.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do you mean reporting in the newspaper?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I mean reporting in the newspaper, yes.

Before a person is convicted, there are a number of processes that are gone through, and upon conviction, one other. Antecedents are called for, and if he has form like a race horse, if he has been up two or three times, you are obviously going to punish that person difterently from ' a person who comes up for the first time.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: How about if you are 17 and you get 12 years?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Member is speaking about if you are 17 and you get 12 years. This will develop as we go along. But again in Barbados, I have found, and I will say it, a judicial unwillingness to pay regard to other systems which have refined the sentencing process. There was a time when you could not attempt to cite D. A. Thomas' book on sentencing policy, you would be brushed aside, but that book provided a certain level of sophistication that could be a guide to us operating in a very unsophisticated way, and you will get differences where people do not pay enough regard to what is happening in other jurisdictions and inform themselves as to tariffs and levels of punishment. You will find somebody getting 12 years for rape and somebody getting eight for manslaughter. It is hard to justify, but the sentencer is a human being, and do not forget that the sentencer who is dispensing justice and dispensing that sentence can very often be reflecting his own value judgements and his own conception of how a particular thing should be punished.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has almost exhausted his time.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, in the few minutes which I have before you break, there are a couple of points which I need specifically to respond to. I will deal firstly with the points made by the honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne). He made the point that in some courts there were not even. toilets for the magistrates to use, and he said that at District "E", Speightstown, the people who worked in the court did not even have access to toilet facilities. The problem of accommodation in the courts is a long-standing problem which definitely needs to be addressed. I think successive Governments have recognised that this is a problem which needs to be dealt with. One of the problems is that it needs a lot of finance to address the situation. 6.50 p.m.

Asides

Hon. M. A. KING: Right. It needs a lot of money to deal with the problems in the circumstances of the tight financial controls which the Ministry of Finance is exercising at the moment, and has always been exercising, particularly when it comes to the courts. Those finances are not readily available, but wherever possible, we will take steps to redress some of the more aggravated problems which exist in the magistrates' courts. We will try and make them as convenient and effective as possible for those who have to work in them and who have to use them. There have been a long litany of complaints in relation to the condition of the courts and it is something which we definitely have to come to grips with.

I believe provision will be made shortly for some attention to another one of the magistrates' courts. There is some development in relation to the Glebe Polyclinic in St. George. I believe strong consideration is being given to providing a magistrate's court in the St. George area.

I am strongly of the view that the Holetown Court, for instance, needs to be rebuilt. You need a whole new court complex and police station in the Holetown area, just like you have in Oistins. My view is that the same type of facility which has been established in the Oistins area for the Southern Division should be established in the Holetown area to cover the Holetown and the Northern Division area.

I would like to turn now quickly, Mr. Chairman, to the comments made by the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman). It was, in a way, an unusual presentation, if I may say so. Let me say at the outset that I think I understand the sentiments which have urged the honourable Member to speak as he spoke.

He started, for instance, with a reference to a point which is usually made by the Right Honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow), that you should keep far from the law courts. That is not necessarily bad advice. It is the same advice I give my clients.

Asides

Hon. M. A. KING: It is the same advice which I, used to give my clients — that is quite correct. It is advice which lawyers generally give their clients, because if you can settle matters outside of the court without going to court, you have a far more effective arrangement, and there is a saying which lawyers have — a bad settlement is better than a good law suit.

Historically, you have heard the types of criticisms made about lawyers and about the legal system as have been uttered by the honourable Member for St. Michael Central. There has been the suggestion that if you are poor, you never get justice. This is not a sentiment with which I necessarily agree. It is true in some cases, and attempts have been made to deal with the problem, like, for instance, by the provision of assistance of legal aid, where legal aid is provided for people who are not able to afford payment to lawyers, in the hope that, by providing lawyers for people who cannot afford it, they would better be able to get justice. This does not necessarily lead to justice, as my colleague and friend said to me, because, in many cases, the people who participate in legal aid schemes are not necessarily the big, sharp, bright lawyers whom you have to meet on the other side. But the fact is that we recognise the imperfections in the system, and attempts are made from time to time to deal with some of the most difficult and offensive parts which create problems for the masses of people.

I think the honourable Member for St. Michael Central would recognise that, in so many areas, justice and injustice could be done to sectional interests in the community. The honourable Member has a background of representing the working class people in the trade union movement. It is a movement with which I have been associated for a long time, and I have been privileged to represent many of the working class people in litigation before the courts.

The honourable Member for St. Michael Central would recognise that, historically, from time to time, the courts have tended to lean in making decisions against the interest of working class people, courts which have largely reflected the interest of persons who have had an anti-working class bias.

Asides

Hon. M. A. KING: Judges. I am talking about judges who, by their training, upbringing and their experience, have been anti-working class. There is a series of cases right down through history, and we are dealing with decisions of the House of Lords in England where, from time to time, you have decisions made against the interest of the workers. By the time the Labour Governments have come in office in England, you would find that, whenever those decisions had been made in many trade union cases, Labour Governments found it necessary to pass legislation reversing the effects of the decisions of the courts. Even before the 1919 Trade Disputes Act, reversing the Taff Vale case was an incident to that, and in the whole period of the 1960s', from 1960 right down through 1965 - 1967, there were a series of trade union cases in the House of Lords where a learned author on Industrial Law commented as follows: "that the House of Lords had driven a coach and chariot through the Trade Disputes Act in Rookes V. Barnard" with the result that what the Labour Government did on coming to office was to pass legislation which reversed the effect of the decision of the House of Lords.

It is not only in this society, but in all societies, are situations where, even at the highest level, the courts, by virtue of the bias which — not unnaturally, I am not saying it is through any cussedness — rests in the breast of those who administer justice, are wont to look at decisions from a, perhaps, biased, myopic point of view. So our mission has to be, from the point of view of looking at law reform, always to look at these matters from a perspective that we would seek to right the wrongs wherever they occur, to recognise that the problem of dealing with decision-making in law suits is not an easy problem, and that judges, whether you believe it or not, are still human and that they, as human beings, tend to be influenced and biased by their own personal considerations, not out of any spite, but by virtue of everything that goes to make up a person. 7.00 p.m.

In societies like ours, where social mobility becomes easy, with a system of free education by which people from the lowest economic order in society can ge|; education and rise to the top, it is important that that kind of

social mobility be available so that those persons who spring from the lowest economic groups of the society can have opportunities to rise to the heights and be in position themselves, sooner or later, to dispense justice, and in dispensing justice to view justice from the perspective of the background from which they have sprung. So I do not think that we should despair in dealing with this problem about the administration of justice. We recognise that it is a problem which we have to deal with and cope with from time to time, that we need to talk about it when we see problems exist, and that, wherever possible, we need to keep talking and to address the issues with a view to dealing with them in the most effective way possible.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

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

The question that Mr. Chairman report progress and ask for leave to sit again was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 7.55 p.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 7.55 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When the sitting was suspended, we were considering Head 28. Are there any other speakers?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to the Honourable Attorney-General for giving a brief conspectus of some of the difficulties that confront the Attorney General. It is perhaps one of the weaknesses in our system that there is still great public ignorance of the role and function of the Attorney General and the parameters of his authority, having regard to the fact that we operate a constitutional system that is written, and we also accept some of the established common law principles which are set out.

It is one of the conundrums of the office that today we are in here debating a number of matters from general administration of law and justice, justice at the magistrate's court level, legal services, registration services, magistrates' courts, legal aid, and the whole range, police, prisons, and correction services, and the politician has to come here and vote money for a department to be run under the sovereignty of the Attorney General who is a political figure. On the other side, there is the Director of Public Prosecutions who is exclusively responsible for prosecutions, but the Attorney General comes and supplies are voted under his responsibility for all of them.

The Constitution says that the Director of Public Prosecutions is totally independent of the Attorney General except in certain limited areas — there are about seven — chiefly to do with external matters and matters of security. The Attorney General would have to sit with the Commissioner of Police and hear that he needs new stations and better conditions for the men, because we are still operating under an archaic system of police accommodation. He wants all types of equipment, and he will also need equipment to detect drugs, but if the Attorney General had information about crime, the Attorney General, under our system, would be totally out of place to attempt to give a direction to the Commissioner of Police.

In fact, there was a lot of talk earlier this week about hands being tied. In many respects, in relation to the police the hands of the Attorney General are tied. Mine were tied. Do not say "no". I am sure that the honourable Member who now occupies the office will find his tied in many respects. Let me elaborate. We could not detail any officer in the Police Force to go and check on any report that may have been made to the Attorney General. That is where the public ignorance is, that it is assumed that because you are Attorney General, because you have responsibility for the proper administration and good government of the Police Force, you can do as you like with police officers and give instructions and say who to search and who not to search, and this, that and the other. 8.00 p.m.

It does not work that way. It would be a trespass on the proper function and province of the Commissioner, who is responsible for matters of

day-to-day operation. That was explained in 1979 in a similar Committee by my friend the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. And despite the very clear exposition of the two separate and diverse roles, that of Attorney-General and that of Commissioner of Police, and indeed a third one, that of Director of Public Prosecutions, there has persisted in the years from 1979 - 1986, at the level of malicious rumour, the belief that members of Government, or Cabinet or the Attorney General, were interfering and could interfere in the proper administration of the Police Force. It is not true, and I want it to be recorded for posterity that it never happened in my time. I know from the files that the lines of authority between my predecessor and the Commissioner of Police were clearly set out and minuted.

The public of Barbados ought to be aware that in criminal matters, the Attorney General has a very, very limited and prescribed, circumscribed area of operation. He can deal with policy, and even there, he has to rely very heavily on the Commissioner and his men who would feed up at times of Estimates meetings the types of areas for activity.

I also wish to say that since Section 16, whatever it is, 5,1 believe, of the Constitution, says that Cabinet is the policy making body under the Constitution for this country, that Cabinet is entirely within its province in responding to the problems of criminality in the society to say that we feel there are too many drugs coming in the country, therefore, we need an attack on drugs, that the minibus men are running roughshod over the traffic laws and we need to tighten up there, we need a greater emphasis in terms' of coastal patrol and that is a proper area for Cabinet to set down policy. The ramifications, the mechanics, the details, are matters best left to the judgement, experience and expertise of the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I take it that the honourable Member will be tying this in under this head.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Central Administration, I believe it is.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is straying a little bit.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am on Head 28, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: There is a Head for the Police.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If I say it now, Sir, you will be spared my having to repeat it subsequently.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are relying on the Rules.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I am trying to be very relevant, Sir, to General Administration. What I am dealing with is the role of the Minister of Legal Affairs who was, under the Constitution, designated the Attorney General.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. It is not necessarily a brotherhood, but one has to be realistic, and one has to let the public — I hate to use the word 'understand' — understand where the various responsibilities shade off between the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Police.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Press has a role, but the Ministry of the Attorney-General is not traditionally vote catching, and it has been treated as a poor relation in regard to the delivery of money for necessary services. It is incongruous, Sir, that under the DLP 1961 — 1976, under the Labour Party 1976 - 1986, the Ministry of the Attorney General was never voted the kind of the quantum of supplies- in the Ministry of Legal Affairs really to modernize the system in Barbados.

I hear complaints from the honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne) about facilities in the court.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That means it never had a modernizing Minister until now.)

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am told that we have a modernizing Minister. The Honourable Leader of the House obviously wants this debate to be protracted until 3.00 o'clock tomorrow, because he has now ensured that I will talk at least four times on Capital. The modernising Minister cannot modernise the services for which he is responsible unless he gets money, and money for this Ministry has always been a matter of a very low priority with all Ministers of Finance. And that is why I say I will have to speak on Capital, because the budget is cut.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But one must not start in the Estimates, one must go back to the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party.

Aside.

'Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Time? Time what!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When the umpire tells me I am out, that will be time.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: One must go back to the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, which did not have one single developmental project in it for this Ministry. Not one!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Leader of the House is only making sport when he talks of "a modernising Minister."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: While I am enjoying the dissertation .....

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Sir: I have not spoken in this debate. I do not know why the Member for St. Thomas is referring to me.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Maybe he could not influence the Minister of Finance to provide the money for him.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Wind up now, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Leader of the House's *sotto voce* remarks should not be made in such audible tones as to make me respond into the record.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The point I am making is that when we come to Capital, I cannot talk about modernising the courts, probation services and so on in Barbados unless there is a substantial provision of money. Successive Governments have refused to give the money, and this Government is doing the same thing. They feel that the police, the workers in the Ministry of Legal Affairs, all of them in the various departments, have got some money in their pockets and that is good enough to keep them quiet. If you are getting it in your pocket, you cannot get it in physical structures, too. These Estimates show that, because 109 million has gone elsewhere. You have got to find that $109 million to help you do the capital development that is necessary to provide proper police stations, fire stations, equipment, and so on. We will argue that. 8.10 p.m.

I will stop now in deference to your ruling, Sir, by saying that it is a mistake and it is shortsighted to suggest that law and order does not have a developmental side to it. We sell ourselves as a tourist country. Do you believe that tourists will come to Barbados in the numbers that we would desire if they knew that they can walk down any street in Barbados and be easily mugged or crime will be visited under in its various forms easily? I will develop that later on.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): In the House we have a wealth of experience of persons who have held the very high office of Attorney General — the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, the honourable Member for St. Thomas, and myself — and, in a way, I think it probably gives the House an opportunity to, in a very non-partisan manner, express its views on this Ministry, and probably to respond in an equally non-partisan manner to some of the statements that have come from other honourable Members, some with legal qualifications and others without.

I am pleased that both Governments, the BLP and the DLP Governments, have now decided that the post of Attorney General should not possibly be lumped with responsibility for another Ministry. We followed the* precedent of the Democratic Labour Party in lumping the post of Attorney General with that of External Affairs, and I must say that when I was first appointed, I did not conceive of that as being a wrong decision. But the reality is that the person who holds the office of Attorney General has a tremendous overseeing responsibility conferred on him by the Constitution. In fact, he is the only Minister outside of the Prime Minister who is specifically named in the Constitution of Barbados, and I had the opportunity, when I was Attorney General, to advise my Prime Minister that although in the absence of any other Minister being available, the ministerial powers, including that of the Attorney General, resided in him, as soon as he has appointed an Attorney General and other Ministers he should wherever possible, not act as his own Attorney General.

I think there is a special role for an Attorney General to perform within the Government, in that he will at times have to disagree strongly on fundamental principles with other Ministers. It is bit unfortunate that we continue to give him responsibilities for the Police Force and some of the other services which are more correctly placed in a Minister of Home Affairs or Minister of Justice, because at times he can find himself challenged with a dichotomy of views and choices between his role as Attorney General representing the Crown and standing above everything else and his duty as a Minister in charge of the Police Force.

Part of the confusion which has crept into our view of civic affairs has arisen from the fact that the Attorney General at times, as the Minister of the Police Force, seen by the public as the Minister who must adjudicate over the police, and how the police conduct themselves in relation to the public at large. That issue, Mr. Chairman, presented itself in a stark form in my case certainly when I held the high office of Attorney General at the time of Pele. Those who take the care to read these debates will find the very strong stance which I took then on the issue, despite what has been said by people both in public and in the House on the matter. It is a role for which I make no apologies to anybody whatsoever. If I had to make the same decisions again, I would make them in exactly the same way as I made them then. I believe very firmly that the best legal views within the Commonwealth and elsewhere recognize that sort of stand. I was pleased, therefore, to hear the present Attorney General explain[1] quite explicitly the limitations which there are on his powers in so far as he must act *vis-a-vis* the judiciary and *vis-a-vis* the police, and *vis-a-vis* his Cabinet colleagues. There are times he may have to say to the Cabinet that his action is in conflict with the Constitution.

There is another stark example which occurred in this House, Sir, and I think when the legal history of our country is analysed for this period of our development since Independence, it is going to be quite significant, and that was the time when a person holding the high office of Speaker, exercised what he considered to be his rights under the Standing Orders of the House to expel a member of the Press. You had two conflicting views there that challenged the Attorney General. There was the need for the Attorney General, as the adviser to the House on matters of the House's privilege, to defend the privilege of the House if it became necessary, and there was the Attorney General's position as the person with responsibility to appear, if necessary, as *amicus curiae* before the courts, defending the fundamental privileges under the Constitution of Barbados. In that particular case, my advice to the Cabinet was quite clear. There was no way that the Attorney General, or a member of the Attorney General's Chambers, could be allowed to appear before the law courts representing His Honour the Speaker. The proper course would have been for His Honour, in those circumstances, to be given independent legal advice at a cost to the Crown, since he was acting in a parliamentary ' sphere. The Attorney General's clear duty was to appear before the courts, preferably, in this case, in person, or if he was ill, his Solicitor General, and give the court his independent view, even if it was against the Speaker of the House. 8.20 p.m.

In the political atmosphere in which we operate, it is quite possible that, had that case been fought out to a conclusion, the role of the Attorney General could clearly be misunderstood. I am pleased to see that those of us who have held the office — and I am sure the current holder will be no exception - have had the fortitude to withstand the public's tauntings and criticisms in relation to this point. The maintenance of a system of order and justice and the rule of law is too critical and fundamental to this society for us to make any compromise on it, even if it means we must fall in public affairs, and in choosing an Attorney General, one must look for a person with strength of character in this regard, because there is no use having a person who may be a mere party hat or who may be so motivated by partisan political considerations that he is not able to maintain the sanctity of the Constitution and will yield quite easily to temptation. The benefit in having people from the Bar, like my learned friend to my left and my learned friend across the table from rrie, who have had a long exposure to the law courts and to our system of justice, is that we have learnt in many ways to understand these principles, and we have learnt too, Sir, to understand the dichotomy of which the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) spoke today, that the view of the public, sometimes is that the course of justice is almost one-sided.

What we must understand is that we do not operate in a perfect world, although most of us are idealists at heart that we must eventually rely on men to operate rules and orders and systems, and sometimes these men see things from different perspectives. That is why we have an appellate system, which in itself is not perfect, because sometimes at the top is the very imperfection, and that is why we also have a chance among our legislators, drawn from all sectors of the public, to correct here in Parliament some of the difficulties that occur.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am being reminded by my friend, the honourable - I would say learned, not meaning learned in the law - Member for St. Michael South (Hon. L. E. Sandiford) that I must include women in this. Whenever I use "men" here I also include women, of course.

The point has been made, and it is a valid point - I am glad the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) is in his seat, because it is a point not easily understood by Ministries of Finance — that law and order do have a developmental aspect. It is difficult to get this through to Ministries of Finance. The problem is not only at the level of the Ministers of Finance, although I think a consideration of the Estimates in Barbados for the last 30 years will show it is at that level as well, but it is at the level of the officials who also advise. The fact that we have made little progress in modernising our law courts is in a large measure not due to the fact that Ministries of the Attorney General have been devoid of ideas and have not seen the necessity for reform and change, but whenever we get at the top in the

Estimates Committees we are told quite clearly by the officials who are advising the Minister, if the Minister is presiding over Estimates, that there is a choice between building another 800 houses and giving you a law court for the lawyers, you will never see that that is really the choice, but how they have conceived of it. Therefore, we have not gone as rapidly in making the infrastructural changes in the area of law and order as are required in our society.

Before we built the Oistins Court, the last major court development in this country took place somewhere in 1952 when there were some changes made. I believe the Belleplaine Court was the last court, and the last police station was Hastings in 1952. After that we never had anybody really getting any money for the court. Let me be frank and admit that the only way it was possible to persuade the developmental planners in Finance of the necessity to have a court structure at Oistins was because of the whole Oistins development, in which administrative offices were being moved. You had to come in under this rubric to get people to accept the necessity for the change.

I hope that out of this debate we can get home to people that if law and order crumble in a society, economic development cannot follow.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The problems that have come up, the problems of drugs, and increased crime, only become the concern, it seems, of the society when they are liable in the public's mind to stop economic development. During my time as Attorney General, the hoteliers only became concerned when they recognised, for instance, that the watchmen whom they had around their premises and the wrought iron bars were not enough to prevent crimes against visitors. It is only at that point that the planning officials react to the need to treat law and order as part of the developmental process. So I can understand the problems which my friend is going to have, they are not new. I think that if former Attorney General Moe, former Attorney General Senator Smith and the now deceased Attorney General, the late Honourable H. A. Vaughan, were here, the sentiments which my learned friend and I have expressed, are sentiments with which they would readily concur.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has obviously sought to drag me into this debate.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: With respect, Sir, I did not even recognise the honourable Member.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: When I am finished, you will recognise me. He knows that any time you mention anything that is vaguely related to my constituency, I will share my views on it.

I want this Honourable House to be apprised of the fact that I have some very strong statements to make, but I want to put them against a very serious background. I happen to be the son of a policeman. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition has raised the issue of Pele and the police, and I intend to deal with it. I want it to be absolutely clear that he was a former constituent, his family still lives in my constituency, his father happens to be one of the people who campaigned with me and I am duty bound to raise the issue.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable Member want to deal with it now or under Head 30?

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I want to deal with it now, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, because the issue was raised by the honourable Leader of the Opposition under this Head.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Only as a passing remark.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: It also has to do with the role of the Attorney General. The image of the police in. Barbados needs to be restored. What I am saying is not my personal opinion, it is in a document which is a document of this House, and it was the subject of an enquiry which was started under the Leader of the Opposition, who was then the Attorney General.

Mr. Chairman, in the Caribbean today we are faced with the most serious problem that mankind has ever been faced with, and that is the problem of drugs, and it has some very serious relationships to the whole issue of this case as it will unfold. The young man that I am talking about, as I said, was a young man who was unfortunate to have lost his life, and he, along with other unsolved murders, was investigated. An enquiry was called, and we have with us, the results of that enquiry. 8.30 p.m.

I want to share some of the very scathing comments that were made in that report, because they are very, very important. It is the Malone Commission into Unsolved Murders, and on Page 37 of that report, which is the first page to do with the murder of Victor Parris, it says:

> "We have been the recipients of anonymous communications confiding where Victor Parris was shot, by whom he was shot, for what reason he was shot and by what means it had been intended to dispose of his body."

The Commission, therefore, makes it absolutely clear that they had information as to how he died and why he died.

On page 45 of that document the Commission goes on to say:

> "In due course, we shall state our reasons for the findings we shall make that, *prima facie*, there was a conspiracy involving both civilians and some members of the police to conceal the identity of the person who shot Victor Parris."

It goes on, Mr. Chairman, at page 150 to say:

> "Having again brought together the three police conspirators, we turn to examine *inter alia* in this and the last chapter, the additional evidence which applies to each and it is in our opinion of such weight that, if in itself insufficient to make them out to be conspirators, which we think it is not, at least support strongly the finding made that they are conspirators."

This report is saying that there are policemen that they identified who were conspirators in a murder case.

The report goes on to say:

> "What was the nature of that association, we cannot say, but as it would involve both civilians and some members of the Police Force who were willing to pervert the course of public justice, it probably would be an association for illegal purposes, for example, an association arising out of drug trafficking."

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Yes, I.want to reinforce it.

The Commission did not stop there, it went on to make recommendations:

> "The motive or motives that bind the conspirators together might be resolved by initiating a prosecution for conspiracy as we have advised the Director of Public Prosecutions on the 3rd March, 1980. The resolution of these question should not be overlooked as they affect the integrity of the Police Force as a whole."

Mr. Chairman, what the Commission said in no uncertain terms was that unless action was taken, the integrity of the Police Force in Barbados would never be the same. One, therefore, can understand why there is disquiet in this country over the Police Force. One can understand, therefore, why in call-in programmes and in conversations in people's living rooms, fingers are being pointed at the police.

I have been very careful, Mr. Chairman, not to mention the names of any policemen. The names are contained in the report. I have deliberately done it but those who want to read the report can find the names of the policemen. One has to ask, if we are serious in this country, how we can call a Commission of Enquiry which can identify policemen as conspirators in a murder case, who they say to be probably associated with drug trafficking, and these very policemen can have promotion after promotion? As a matter of fact, I understand that one policeman is so strategically placed that he now recruits policemen for entry into the Police Force.

We have to be very serious people in this country if we have this sort of a public report. There is big outcry in the Caribbean and in other parts of the world about a report in Trinidad called the Scott Report. We had our Scott Report going back to 1978. We have done nothing about it. We have to be very, very serious.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about security in this country, and security as it relates to the police and drug trafficking. I have said before that there was some attempt to create the impression that -this serious drug problem only was taking place after May 28, 1986. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition got up in this Honourable Chamber yesterday, I think it was, and said that information has now been coming to him about people who have been involved in bringing in drugs at the airport and the seaport, and, as a matter of fact, he had given the information to the police, as though it was happening for the first time.

I want to read from the debates of this Honourable Chamber of Monday, March 17, 1986. The then Attorney General was speaking, the honourable Member who now sits to the left of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and this is what he said in this Honourable Chamber:

> "The point that I am making is that I think that despite the number of times I have spoken publicly about what the Government is doing in terms of the control of drug abuse, there still seems to be an area of obscurity in people's minds. I am going to go slowly.
>
> "First of all, there is a Task Force that was appointed in September 1985, It is not comprised of any politicians at all.
>
> In the nature of things, it will report, and does report, to the Prime Minister and the Minister responsible for Defence and Security. Its composition is inter-departmental and inter-disciplinary, it functions on a very confidential basis and, as such, no member would expect me to divulge the membership of the Task Force. The function of the Task Force is to co-ordinate a national plan for the

eradication of the drug menace, drawing on the work which is being done in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and putting together all the threads."

When the Opposition formed the Government of the day, they used to say that drugs was not a problem in Barbados. Time after time when the issue was raised, they said that drugs was not a problem. In that debate there was supposed to be a committee set up. I want to know how often that committee met and what recommendations the committee made. You are a member of the Opposition and you are interested in this country, and if you now have knowledge that you got from that committee, we would like you to put that at the disposal of the Government. I think it is difficult for anyone to find any report that was made by that committee, you said that it was confidential, and therefore, the information was probably fed to a particular group of people. We would like, in the interest of the country, that the information gleaned from that Committee be passed on to the present Government so that we can use it for the benefit of the country. 8.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, we have to be very serious about the things that have been going on in this country. I know that whenever we get to the issue of discussing drugs, it is going to evoke a lot of hard feelings, but one has to be brutally frank, because the drug problem is a menace to the future of this country, and especially to our children. If we are to fight that problem, which is the biggest threat that this country has ever seen, we have got to call a spade a spade, and we have got to tackle it forthrightly. We cannot hide it under a bushel. There has been a lot of filibustering in this House for the last couple of days, because there are people who feel that there are skeletons in their closet that have to be exposed and they do not want to face them, but we have to face them.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: the honourable Member cannot make that sort of speech about Members of the House filibustering. You were in the Chair and nobody filibustered, and nobody has any skeleton, unless the .honourable Member has knowledge of something. He cannot use that sort of language, implying that Members of this House were filibustering because they are hiding something. It is a reflection on the Chair and I ask that you rule on the matter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, if you wish that I withdraw the remarks, I withdraw them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are bordering on your time. You can make the point you are making now.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I will come back again.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, when we began earlier tonight, I spoke of the anxiety to explain carefully, for the education of the public, the proper role and functioning of the Attorney General in relation to the Commissioner of Police and in relation, for example, to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Little did I think then that I was being prophetic about ignorance, but the honourable Member who just sat down has displayed a profundity of ignorance bordering on insipidity, stupidity, that angers me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can this be said about an honourable Member of the House?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will withdraw that from the record. I will not withdraw profundity of ignorance though.

He reads the Pele Report and he complains that the three policemen who were alleged to be conspirators were not dealt with, and he was seeking to blame the past Administration that went out of office on May 28 last year, without telling this House — he, the admitted son of a policeman — that that report went to the Director of Public Prosecutions who refused to prosecute, and no politician or political party can interfere. Why did he say that? If it is not ignorance, it was deliberately seeking to mislead this House. He talked about the three police conspirators, that nothing was done about them, and that until action is taken, the integrity of the Police Force will not be respected. If the argument you are trying to make is that the men were promoted, he ought to know better, and know that the Police Service Commission was independent of the political administration. He sought to associate the political administration with it, and it was a smear.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I am hearing about six voices, but there is only one person on the floor.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If he is not attacking the political administration....

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You see? More ignorance now!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Forget the asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tell him to keep quiet. If he is not attacking the political administration but he is complaining about promotions, it is an unwarranted attack on the integrity of the Police Service Commission. Because men were promoted, nobody has yet credited

the Police Service Commission with any sense in this matter. All the honourable Member is prepared to do is to accept the findings of the Commission. The findings were based on levels of probability. Malone said "probably conspirators". At that level, you expect the Director of Public Prosecutions to take action. The DPP search would have had access to the minutes, would have had access to all the evidence and had to make a decision.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Since the academic lawyer on the other side, the Minister of Tourism, is pretending to be knowledgeable of these things, he ought to know that before the DPP thought of prosecution, he had to consider the burden and standard of proof. He could not operate at the level of probability, he had to operate at the level of proof beyond reasonable doubt. You should know that. You knew that, but you forgot it. The DPP still has to look at the chance of success of the case, and if it is weak, sending it nowhere.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is why he did not prosecute, but that is not why he promoted.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The DPP did not promote, Sir. I really feel that Members should be restrained. I will not be restrained in asking honourable Members to be restrained for the reason that if we speak intemperately, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South East did - he was carried away by his own rhetoric — the effect of the speech is an implied attack on an independent Service Commission. We have to be careful. The mere fact that they are questioning the independence of the Service Commission tells you that they are • prepared to make any wild allegation. 8.50 p.m.

Anybody can be attacked on the basis of evidence.

(Aside: Precisely!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There is no evidence! Before the honourable Member could seek to justify the charges he has made, he would have to go a lot further.

The three men, I think in 1981 or 1982, somewhere around there — I do not remember .....

(Aside: 1971.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. Eighty something. I seem to recall that the three men were suspended and the charges were investigated, and I believe they answered disciplinary charges.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I believe they were subsequently transferred from various duties to other duties which would not necessarily involve heavy policing.

(Aside: Except Legall.)

(Aside: Poor Legall!)

(Aside: But Legall went down.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know that one of them apparently told lies to the Commission, and subsequently, I believe it was 1985, was involved in shoplifting at A. F. Jones in High Street and should have been dismissed from the Police Force, and he might have been dismissed. He should have been charged before the court. I do not know. I believe A. F. Jones and them were trying to persuaded that they should make up the case. He was ' nobody to make up a case with, because that was his second chance. But he was involved in some shoplifting and I do not apologise for saying that, because earlier tonight I said every large group of people will have some bad eggs, and he was certainly one.

(Aside: There were three!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Attorney General perhaps may want the opportunity generally to explain the system of promotions for the police, but it is done entirely in-house by the Commissioner and his senior officers who....

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are bringing the Commissioner in this now?)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Ignore the asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:.....recommend to the Services Commission that the following officers are deserving of promotions. The Ministry of Legal Affairs is only a conduit pipe. We only hear of the promotions, but we have no input to make into the merit or otherwise of the promotions.

(Aside: How did you get "we"?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, let me withdraw that. Not "we".The Ministry of Legal Affairs and the office of the Attorney General. That is the procedure. So there is little possibility for political contamination. It is entirely done by the Commissioner and his people.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I think that generally there is. But what happens is that sometimes you see people promoted and, to you, they may appear to be surprise

cases. But it is a matter of the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police and his people.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You see, I cannot as a lawyer impute improper motives to the Police Commissioner and his senior men Jn recommending people, because they would have the facts that I do not have. I am not prepared to get here and make unfounded allegations and statements against them. I will have a lot to say about the police in this debate, but it is going to be based on hard evidence and facts within my possession. I am not prepared to say that because a man was recommended for three promotions or whatever that there was no factual or meritorious bases for those recommendations. It may appear so to the public, but you must find out from those who had to do with the recommendations what were the bases of the recommendations.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chair man, the sobriquet "academic lawyer" has been applied to a number of eminent people who have had the experi ence in the study of the discipline described as law.....

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT:..... and it has not been held offensive by those who understand what it means. The honourable Member may refer .....

(Aside: Do not run. Come back.)

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ....to me as an academic lawyer. I accept that because he is not able to say anything else about me, except that I understand the law. I am not going to stand here, however, to defend myself as an academic lawyer. I am standing here to defend a member of our team.

This political party that forms the Government understands very well the nuances which exist in this society and we will not be put off by any kind of sophistry, whichever form it takes. We have to understand the framework within which the Malone Commission operated. And lest anyone should forget, let us get the fact clearly established on this table.

Mr. Chairman, the honourable member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) raised questions of morality. He raised questions that had been raised by every single thinking person in this community, and I will never be able to sit in an Honourable Chamber like this, or anywhere else, and have him, or his character, impugned because he raised questions that, without more, fall within the category of common sense.

These are the simple facts. After tremendous persuasion by public comment, there was a Commission of Enquiry into the death of Victor 'Pele' Parris, and to make the Commission of Enquiry appear within certain constraints, it included other unsolved murders. There was

3 *

no doubt that the unsolved nature of the Victor 'Pele' Parris murder was the dominant factor in the Malone Enquiry.

The Attorney-General - and that is the Head under which we are speaking, Sir, and that is what gives us the right to speak about this — of the day had a sharp difference of opinion with the Prime Minister of the day. I was in the House on the occasion when the Attorney-General and the Prime Minister came to a sharp difference of opinion, in which the Attorney General's credibility was put on the line by the Prime Minister. To the eternal credit of the Attorney General, ...

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: He resigned from the back bench!)

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ....in a very emotion packed situation, the Attorney General allowed the Prime Minister of the day to know, in the presence of the House of Assembly, that he, the Attorney General, had a position which he would take and he would not deviate from that position. The Prime Minister of the day, God rest him wherever he is, persisted in his position, and in the context of that — Sir, I do not wish to go through the whole thing — we have to understand the point which the honourable Member is making.

This is what he is saying! He is saying that in this small Barbados, with its small Police Force and with its small everything, and in the context of that enquiry, Commissioner Malone and his colleagues presented very clear, unambiguous positions — they made recommendations to the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Director of Public Prosecutions in this country holds a unique position. The Director of Public Prosecutions, as we have heard, is the one who determines whether to prosecute or not, and this House cannot question him, the Attorney General cannot question him, except in a few particulars since we amended the Constitution, and, indeed, no one in this country can question him. That is not what the honourable Member for St. Michael South East sought to do. He did not question the Attorney General. What he is saying is what manner of country is this where a report goes to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who determines, for whatever reason — and I will take the legal position which the honourable Member for St. Thomas takes — the

probability that the high requirement of proof for a prosecution might be more than the requirement of a Commission of Enquiry? 9.00p.m.

Let us take that. A Commission of Enquiry is for the people, and in the court of the people, the Commissioner of Enquiry had said that these three persons had sufficient questions about them as police officers that they ought not to be relied upon in the future. The question he is asking is one of morality. Subsequent to that, the three officers were promoted, one of whom the honourable Member for St. Thomas says even today was a miscreant. Even today he is saying that one of those police officers was involved in shoplifting. I do not know. He is saying, furthermore, that the same police officer was a perjurer. I accept his word on that. So when we question that, if one or any of those officers got promotion, we are not casting any aspersions on any individual. We are dealing with a system under which we all exist, and to say that it is the Commissioner of Police and his internal officers who promote them is only to cast aspersions on the Commissioner of Police and/or his judgment.

There is a myth in this country that Services Commission cannot be criticised. That is not true. There is also a myth in this country that the courts cannot be criticised. That is not true. Every citizen in this country has the inalienable right to question not only commissions, judicial or otherwise, but to question the courts. If a decision is made by a court, anyone of us in here or elsewhere, as long as we understand the framework in which we question it, can question that decision, and the honourable Members know that lawyers, academic or otherwise exist, on the questioning of the Tightness or otherwise of a decision.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I hope the honourable Member understands that there is a difference between the right to criticise and the right to invade against integrity.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is a point which must be taken, but inherent in a criticism is the questioning of integrity. It all depends on what aspect of the integrity you are questioning. You may question the integrity of a Commission without questioning the integrity of the individual Commissioner. The honourable Member knows that. I am prepared to question the integrity of any decision that is made without casting aspersions on the integrity of the decision-maker, and that is a fine point that distinguishes between those who examine matters in their entirety and those who superficially examine them. That is what the whole question of learning is about, and that is why when we question that three persons, or one person, in the context of this report were or was promoted, we are not questioning whether the Commissioner has the right to promote them, or we are not questioning the Judicial Service Commission or the Police Service Commission, which, incidentally, is made up of humans. One of the myths that needs to be exploded in this country is that politicians are humans but others who make up decision-making agencies are angels.-A Service Commission is made up of people from this society who have all of the prejudices of other people in the society and who may not have been exposed to the sensitivities of the population as has been any politician, aspiring or otherwise, to say nothing of those who, by virtue of their ability, managed to capture a majority of votes in any given election. I have a lot of respect for the honourable Members who get elected. I do not like all of them, but I have a lot of respect for them.

Asides

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, I like him. If you wish to put a wedge between me and the Prime Minister, let me say this on the floor of this House.

Aside

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, I am going to say it for you. But you know me. I am good at that. I like the Prime Minister. I do not like everything that he does to me, but I like him.

Laughter

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I like the Prime Minister. You know me. I like the Prime Minister.

The fact is though, Sir, that we have to understand that we must question the decisions. The Police Service Commission in this country has made a decision which is not acceptable to us, because what they are saying is that if you go before a Commission of Enquiry and you tell lies, if you go before a Commission of Enquiry and you perjure yourself, if you go before a Commission of Enquiry, made up of prominent men, and you behave in such a manner that they say you may be a probable conspirator, you will then be held up as a shining example of a disciplined force. That cannot be so. It cannot be so if you are functioning in a disciplined force and you go before a Commission, perform in that way and then get rewarded, and this is the key point. If in the light of all that — and everyone agrees that the logic of that is clear — you then get promoted, then one starts to look for a motive for the promotion, and if one is told in the same report that there is a probable relationship between the drug administration, drug trafficking, the officers and anybody else concerned, then one has to start questioning if the promotion forms part of the totality of the charge inherent in the report.

He that has ears let him hear. I am not embarrassed to talk about drugs in this House. I have been pilloried in this House for having the courage to say what I thought about drugs. They say that if you talk about drugs in this country, you are going to get killed. But you get killed for less than that, so it does not matter. One does not go around inviting that you will be killed, but one has to ask the question — who directed that who should be promoted? That is the question, and that is-the gravamen of what the honourable Member for St. Michael South East is asking in this Honourable House.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Are you telling me to answer it? I have not the answer for it. The Saviour came on earth and asked questions for which he did not provide the answer. You know that. He said, "He that is without sin cast the first stone".

Aside

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is not a question.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get involved in trying to answer questions that have baffled people greater than I am.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Within which I will say that we have a responsibility in this House on certain matters, as you are constantly saying, to join hands, and on matters of this kind where the morality of this country, where the examples are going to be held forth for our children and our children's children, are the issues being discussed, we have no dividing line between us. If there is a dividing line between us, then I would wish to be on the side of the angels. There can be no dividing line on the question of morality. There are certain aspects of our life that will not admit to partisan division, and the promotion of officers who behave in that manner falls outside of the purview of partisan division, I submit. It is my contention, Sir, that the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, even though he may seem to be persisting in a lost cause, is fighting the kind of battle in this regard which we all must applaud rather than ridicule, and I salute him for having the courage, from time to time, to raise the issue in the face of the certainty that not much will be done. 9.10 p.m.

It is for the Democratic Labour Party, however, to establish, Mr. Chairman, that even if we cannot make decisions about who should be promoted and who should not, we can pronounce on our complete revulsion of certain decisions which have been made to the detriment of our moral integrity as a community.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am very, glad in several ways that the first speech I made has provoked the responses from the three honourable Members on this issue, because it is one which will rankle for a long time and in which there will be quite a lot of misunderstandings, and, in some respects, quite a lot of strong feelings.

As I recall the events of that period, there were certainly very strong feelings expressed in the community, some of them sometimes very partisan, some of them based, at times, on the strong issues involved. That is why in my contribution on the role of an Attorney General I said that one had to keep one's cool and be very objective where in a difficult area of law and order you are called on to exercise the role which the Constitution has thrown upon you.

My friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael, West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), made the point that at that time there was a disagreement on the floor of the House with the then Prime Minister and myself on a particular issue relating to the Pele case. I want to place in the records of the House the clarification of that issue.

There was a very strong clamour from the public that the Government should direct the Commissioner of Police of the day to bring in Scotland Yard and direct how to investigate this case. That view was expressed in the debate at the time very strongly by Members, particularly on my side of the House, and particularly some of the Members on the back bench. The reason is that the Government felt that the Government was under attack. An allegation was being made that a Government member was in some way connected with the death of the young man, Pele, and the Government felt, therefore, that if it responded immediately to the public's pressure, since it had nothing to hide, the Government would be let off the hook.

I took the view - and I made no apologies for it then, I make none now and I make none in the future, except the good Lord tells me I am wrong — that the Government must understand that there are times it has * to take pressure from the public, pressure that is not well founded, but it cannot act, merely because it is under political pressure, in the way to satisfy the public willy nilly, without regard to the overall major considerations that apply. I said that to the Prime Minister, I said that to some of my political colleagues, who disagreed most

violently with me, as indeed the People's Pressure Movement and the DLP at that time, from some of the statements which were being made, disagreed with my stand.

I did, however, in my minutes to the Commissioner of Police, draw to his attention the public considerations which he ought to take into account in looking at the matter. Those minutes are there, they are in the file. The Honourable Attorney General has access to them. They are clearly written. In many cases, my Permanent Secretary, a very outstanding administrator, Mr. Corbin at the time, was able to take down in shorthand my conversations with the Director of Public Prosecutions and commit them for the benefit of the file and whoever would want to investigate, and I did have the courage to say to the Prime Minister that if he was prepared to react to public pressure, and even the pressure of the political party, I regret that in the best constitutional tradition I would leave the Cabinet on that issue. I think the Prime Minister very wisely heard the words which are in the debate of this House. This is nothing new.

I went on to consider all the matters, and it is in that context that the Malone Cpmmission was set up. When the Report of the Commission reached me, I not only had a copy of the Report, but the Commissioners, very properly, saw me on the matter and they expressed their views, as indeed they expressed their views to the Director of Public Prosecutions, and that is recorded in the Commissioners' Report, a copy of which the honourable Member has just lent me to refresh my memory. They thought that a prosecution was called for.

Once again, the Minutes in the Attorney General's Chambers will reveal that I advised the Director that it was within his province, totally within his province as to what action he thought, but from the perspective of the Law Officer for the Crown, it was my view that he had to give his own independent and objective consideration, but very serious consideration, to this recommendation. The Director of Public Prosecutions took a long time and eventually minuted to me and said that he had made up his mind that he was not going ahead with the prosecution. There is no Attorney General who has any character who will go behind that decision and seek to do anything else he could have done.

The matter was also drawn to the attention of the then Commissioner of Police, not the present Commissioner, so that he could raise the matter with the Police Service Commission and see whether disciplinary action was called for within the terms of our Constitution. Some disciplinary action was taken. I cannot recall in detail who was disciplined or what — I would have to refresh my memory on my files, because I have kept some of this filed in case it ever became necessary — but they acted as they saw fit in accordance with the constitutional conventions of Barbados.

Many people may disagree with that, but at the end of the day I am satisfied, having been the Principal Law Officer of the Crown, that, in terms of the propriety that was called for, we did everything that we could do and left the system to decide how to discipline people and how to deal with that. I am satisfied, from my own perception, that no political interference took place in the decisions either by the Director of Public Prosecutions or indeed by the Police Service Commission.

I want to counsel about one thing, Sir, because there are a few things that are worrying me here. I think it is quite proper for any Member of the House or the public to question the wisdom of the various Commissions and the wisdom of the DPP even, but we have to be very careful in our society.

Passing reference was made to the Scott Drug Report and to the issue of drugs which was highlighted in the Pele Report. We are very concerned about drugs. I like any sensible Barbadian, particularly a person who has young children — and one is always concerned as a father, as a family member and a member of this society — is interested in making sure that we can stamp out drugs.

I have another fear, though, Sir, on the other side, as a person with a strong and deep conviction in human rights. I feel that we may tend to go overboard at times, and without criticising the neighbouring Government in Trinidad and Tobago, I am concerned, as a strong human rights person, about the situation where in reports, as happened in the Scott Drug Report, persons are named, they are not given an opportunity of even appearing before a Commission, the report is published and made public and they are tainted forever and ever, regardless of what they say, in the minds of some people as being stained with having been involved in drugs. I am also bothered about the position that the publication of names in those circumstances could prevent positive action being taken. 9.20. p.m.

We must be careful in this society, and that is why I say that sometimes it is very, very difficult. I would prefer to go out of public life, standing up on principles such as these. Probably, I am stupid in this regard and not a political animal, as people say, but I believe that we must safeguard certain aspects.

I am as concerned as the honourable Member that the decisions which were taken by the Legal Service Commission were probably along the lines they took them, but I am not privy to all of the facts. We were never given the reasons why the Police Service Commission or the Legal Service Commission came to their particular findings, and I am quite sure that we would express, and I believe, we have expressed, our concerns from time to time on these matters. The

honourable Member has expressed them most forcibly, although he drew the immediate retort from the honourable Member from St. Thomas (Mr. D. A, C. Simmons), because at one time I did get the impression that the honourable Member was almost going *ad hominem* and looking at the political aspects of the matter.

I have spoken on this because I am sure that this will not be the only occasion that this type of issue will confront our new democracy, and we must always be able to get the principles straight. We are not always going to come to the right decisions in this issue, and the question will always be a sore one for us. But let me say that the Honourable Attorney General has access to every file, every note, and every minute, the same information that I had. Let me say for the Ministry of the Attorney General and the officials who service it that I found them to be people of the highest standard. And although I did not at all times agree with every judgement expressed by the then Commissioner of Police, or in fact, his successors, I personally found them of the highest integrity, people who saw their duty in what they conceived as the right terms, and I never attributed at any stage a lack of *bona fides* to them.

In the last resort, we all must strive in the Caribbean, in our anxiety to ensure that we do the right thing, at the same time to maintain principles and try to prevent any injustices. If there is an injustice in this case, then I would like to see that anybody who wants to follow it up, if he can, find out where that injustice has occurred, but I believe that we ought to get our principles straight.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), for coming to the defence of what he thought was an attack on me personally, but I can defend myself. I practise medicine as a profession and I am not surprised at the response I got from the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons). His attempt to say how ignorant I was did not surprise me.

When I started, I said that I had a constituency interest in this matter. I also have another interest in this matter. The coroner of the day happened to be my blood brother, and I want to deal with that aspect. I want to bring in the political aspect, because the coroner of that day was pressurized into saying things that a coroner should not have said, and it is a fact that the then Prime Minister of this country, the late Prime Minister, called a political meeting in this country, during which he lambasted the coroner.

No matter what the Barbados Labour Party says, the Malone Commission was a political commission. They set out the terms of that commission and I want to further read from that report, on page 38. This is what Malone says:

> "From our observations at the public sessions held by us and from the above mentioned experiences, we think it is exaggeration to say that the death of Victor Parris has affected the body politic of Barbados as an abscess affects the human body. That circumstance did not make our task in this case any easier. Rather, it compounded the difficulties and made it the more necessary for us to stick strictly to our terms of reference, so as not to be drawn into matters outside of these terms. For that reason we declined to pursue two allegations that were voiced. One was that a speech delivered by the Prime Minister in the middle of 1979 was an interference with the police investigation into the death of Victor Parris."

Asides

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Yes, I am still reading. This is what Malone says. The other allegation that they were told that they could not pursue was:

> "That attempts allegedly made to influence the coroner who presided over the inquest into the death of Victor Parris were also interferences with that investigation."

The point I want to make is that where there was possible political interference in that case, the commission was told that those areas could not be pursued. This is a public document, and when people read these documents, there are certain inferences that they will draw, and if you set up a commission and you specifically say to that commission to investigate that the coroner was pressured or approached, it gives the impression that he was approached.

I know the intricacies of the case. I know that when my brother was finished with that case, I had to hospitalize him because of the pressures he went through. That is what I had to live through in that case. The case did not only affect Mr. Parris, the father of Victor Parris, who is a constituent of mine. It affected my family personally, and that is why I have the emotional involvement, and I have a commitment that I must carry out.

It is all right for people to sit out there not knowing the intricacies and talk in some detached manner. This case has been a very important experience in the lives of all Barbadians, and, as Malone says, because action was not taken, the police in Barbados have never been seen since as police to be respected. If we are serious about our people, and if the Police Force is to be taken seriously in this country, something is going to have to be done to upgrade the image of the Police Force in this country. It is a very, very important point, it is a fundamental point that we must not ever neglect, and I am pleading to this Government that something be done in

order that the people in this country can again have respect for policemen, because in any country where the police are not respected, you have a breakdown of law and order. I do not have the answer as to what can be done, but I am sure that, with the minds that we have in our party, steps can be put in place to put the police on the pinnacle in this society which they used to hold before. 9.30 p.m.

The question that Head 28 - Ministry of Legal Affairs - stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 29 - PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS - $61 280

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $61 280 under Head 29 - Public Prosecutions — stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 29 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 30 - POLICE - $8 706 302

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, Head 30 relates to the Police. It seems that we have had an abundance of discussion on this Head under Head 28, and, with your indulgence, there are one or two small points I would like to slip in, despite the lateness of the hour.

The police are always under fairly heavy attack when it comes to the problem of dealing with the prevention, detection and investigation of crime, so whenever we find that there is a chance to, I suppose, compliment them in a way, on ensuring a decrease in the incidence of crime, we should take the opportunity to do so.

I should like very briefly, Mr. Chairman, to refer to the crime statistics over the past year as compared with the previous year, 1986 over 1985. Although there has been an overall increase in the incidence of crime in 1986 over 1985, it is significant that the increases in .crime took place in the months of January, February, March, April, May and June, and there were some very dramatic increases in those months. For instance, in January 1986 the increase over January 1985 was 92 cases, in February the increase of cases over the corresponding period for 1985 was 45 cases, March one; April, 41; May, 87; June, 47. In July, Mr. Chairman, there was a decrease of 29 cases; August, a decrease of 58 cases; September, a decrease of 29 cases; October, a decrease of 43 cases; November, a decrease of 13; December, a decrease of 31 cases.

Asides

Hon. M. A. KING: Someone said there was a new dispensation. I do not know what that means.

That trend, Mr. Chairman, seems to have continued over into 1987, where there has been a corresponding reduction in the months of January and February even over 1986. I will try to find the exact figures for that period.

In relation to the general Police Estimates, Mr. Chairman, I want to make the point that there is clearly a lot of money which is still needed to bring the Police Force to the level of efficiency and sophistication which we would like to see in a well organised and ordered Police Force. As one would expect, the stringencies of the financial and economic situation would not allow us to do for the police exactly what we would like to do for them at this time, but I can assure the police that we will make every effort to make them as comfortable as we possibly can in the coming financial year, and gradually we will try to get the capital works programme which we have all but committed ourselves to, except for the finance, underway.

I believe that in the course of this financial year, we will probably be getting the St. Cecilia Barracks built, and we will be doing some much needed repairs to the Central Police Station, and wherever possible, we will try to upgrade the facilities at the various police stations to make them as comfortable as we possibly can for the policemen who have to use them.

I beg to move that the sum of $8 706 302 under Head 30 — Police stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, it is very interesting indeed to hear the figures for 1986 over 1985 and to compliment the Commissioner and his men on the reasonable reduction, I did not get all the figures, which vary between 20 and 47 per month. Criminal statistics are of course, a special area for criminologists, and they can paint very, very strange patterns. It is known that one has to judge criminal statistics in relation to what Radzinovicz calls "the dark number". There is an area of criminology in every society that does not get into the official criminal statistics, for one reason or other. It may have to do with reporting. I am assuming that those are the cleared up rates that the Honourable Minister gave us. For example, a lot of rape is not reported to the police. But I am not going into an examination of the weaknesses of the criminal statistics now, I just want to say that one has to be careful in reading criminal statistics not necessarily to draw conclusive trends from what the bare figures say.

Let us accept that there has been a reduction in crime in 1986 over 1985. One still has to look to the reasons that may have conduced to the reduction in crime.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There has not been an overall reduction? Anyhow it does not matter. Some good attempt has been made.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There has been a partial reduction, but an increase, as I understand it, from January to June. It does not matter. 9.40 p.m.

The point I want to make is this. There were a number of things put in place, devices, stratagems and so on, in the fiscal year 1985-86 which have to be examined to determine whether they were efficacious or not. They may have had a bearing on the reduction in crime for part of 1986. Let us recall.

In December 1985, there was an increase in men in the force. I think we were able to achieve the satisfactory minimum of 1 200, or got very close to it. If we did not get the 1 200 in December, within a couple of months, maybe six, we would have brought the other recruits in and got the full strength of the Force at 1 200. So there was an increase in police manpower in the year that I was Attorney General, 1985-86.

There was an increase in necessary vehicles, including the four Granadas, which were specially equipped and delivered during my time to render the Force more efficient and mobile. I am glad to see that this year, I believe, we are going to have another eight motor cars for them. Motor cars are a serious problem for the police. They do not last beyond two years. They work very hard. It is not a question of care this time. It is the constant use at high pressure and so on. So we increased the fleet.

We improved the telecommunications system. We finally got the new type of equipment that was to be set up in that fiscal year. Particularly in the area of drugs, for those who were saying that nothing was being done. Special units were set up in the tourist season of 1985 going into early 1986, where we were using policemen, not necessarily in uniform, patrolling the south coast and west coast and working in harmony with the NCC wardens. The result of that was known even before elections. It had the effect that the drug operators moved from the beaches into the roads, for example, St. Lawrence Gap and the back streets of Holetown. They were run from the beaches and came inland to do their operations. We kept up the police surveillance throughout the tourist season. Honourable Members who were here last year would recall that one of the last items that I came for was a supplementary to give the police some specialist equipment particularly to work in the area of drugs, and we got that in place.

At the crime prevention level, the Juvenile Liaison Scheme was working then in high gear, and that scheme was reporting a reduction in juvenile crime, particularly in terms of statistics. This is why I say you have to read the statistics carefully. A lot of crime that was formerly reported was being committed by juveniles and it does not now get into the criminal statistics, because it is dealt with by the Juvenile Liaison Scheme, where youngsters who would be sentenced the first time, or probably after the second time, are now being dealt with in terms of counselling through the scheme by police officers, people from the Probation Department and others. So we were removing from the area of criminal statistics a body of persons who, otherwise, would have got into the statistics.

Of great importance, we improved and tried to expand the Resident Beat Officer Scheme and by the time the Honourable Attorney General became Minister, it was virtually only left for him to open the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. All the preparations had been done, all the material had been got from the Metropolitan Police in England before I left the Ministry. It was only a question of identifying specific areas for the start-up of that scheme and how we would put it across to the public. I remember seeing the Minister somewhere in Bank Hall, I believe, on television starting it. I believe it started in the Bank Hall area.

All of those crime prevention schemes were going. The honourable Member for the City functioned very well on a voluntary — I do not think you got any money Peter? — scheme with other businessmen and concerned citizens on a crime prevention panel and made very important and useful inputs. The panel was set up by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition -when he was Attorney General. So there was an amalgam of different stratagems and devices in place in 1985 that - I better speak as somebody who writes criminology would speak — could have predisposed the reduction in crime. I cannot say it necessarily did it, but I would say it could have had a positive effect on the reduction in crime.

When the Honourable Attorney General speaks, perhaps he could tell us about something about what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East had raised. I did put in place a directive of the Prime Minister of September 1985 to set up a task force on drugs superimposed above what individual Ministries — Health, Education, Legal Affairs — were doing in terms of drugs. We needed a central organisation to pull together the various strands and threads from the other Ministries, coordinate a plan and get it out. We had Cabinet approval for a plan on drugs, and the principle function of the task

force was to co-ordinate that plan and put it into effect. It was in operation for eight or nine months by the time of the election. I hope that if the Government does not continue with the task force, some central organisation should now take on, as a separate area of responsibility, the whole business of drugs.

This leads me to a point also made by the honourabe Member for St. Michael South East, with which I agree. Towards the end of his second speech, he said something must be done about the image of the Police Force. For him the Police Force started to decline after the Pele business. I cannot say that. I am not prepared to make a judgement like that in the absence of very careful study. I agree with him that the image of the Police Force is bad, has been bad for a number of years, because of a point that was made very early in these debates — in every organisation you have bad eggs. The police have been too soft on their own. When they catch them, they would not send them out of the Police Force.

I am very disturbed about the level of homosexuality in the Police Force.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS? Did you not read the paper? A man is on charge. It is not the first time. There was one with a prison warden some months or years ago. We have to be very careful about who is coming into the Police Force.

(Aside: Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: There is a very bad selection.)

(Aside: Do you know who selects them?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, no! You have always had them. You have always had problems with recruiting. We tried before I left. Once of the things we agreed to do, and had in place, was to get a psychologist to interview the new recruits to look at their stress levels and so on to see how they would react under pressure and all of that. That was in place when I was Attorney .General. But I mentioned the point about homosexuality to just let honourable Members be aware that you have all types. 9.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am raising the question of time. One more minute, Sir.

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

We had some who were charged for involvement in drugs. We had some who stole guns. We have some who are in prison now. You will get that. It is a function of society to throw out these odd-buds ever so often. But the police must deal with their own.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is not only that. Do you know one of the reasons why people do not have respect for the police? Soon after I became Attorney General, I saw the Commissioner at a function. We had just caught four or five dangerous criminals and we had a little hospitality for the unit that worked and pulled in that crowd, and something I have observed in private practice and observed that afternoon, and drew to the Commis sioner's attention, was CID men with their shirts open down to here .....

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: .... with four or five gold chains around their neck. I cannot afford to wear one. My wife gave me the one I have on. I cannot afford to buy them. The public knows that they work for $1400, $1300, $1000 whatever, and they are wearing five and six gold chains around their neck and have their shirts open down to here showing off. There are thefts of jewelry in this country and the people have never heard anymore about them. The fellows in prison admit to breaking and entering and then they will tell you that they took the money and the police took the jewelry.

I will come back, Sir.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I am not making a final reply. I am just intervening to respond to a couple of points made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas. He raised questions about the Task Force on Drugs. The honourable Member for St. Michael South East also raised questions on that. I was aware that this task force had been set up. I was aware of the Constitution of the task force which had been set up. We were not entirely satisfied that the way in which the task force had been set up was the most effective way of dealing with the problem, because some of the officials who were required to man the task force and to lead in dealing with the problems were heavily overworked public officials, and, in my opinion, setting up a task force on drugs and having someone to co-ordinate and really deal effectively with the problem would require someone with much more time than was available to the public officer who was dealing with it. He has tremendous responsibilities. We felt the matter has to be looked at again. I can assure honourable Members that Cabinet is seriously considering this matter and has, in fact, taken certain steps towards dealing with the problem. In the fullness of time, you will hear more about the arrangements which are in place for dealing with the whole matter relating to drugs. It is being co-ordinated in connection with the activities of the

Ministry of Defence and Security and all the vital Ministries which are connected with the matter.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas has made some rather serious allegations against the members of the Police Force.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am not saying this pejoratively.

You said that there is a high incidence of homosexuality in the Police Force. You talked about their having their chains all over the place and about some of them being involved in shoplifting and that sort of thing. I have made the point from time to time that in any organisation, and you have made the point yourself, you are going to have bad personalities in it. In a force of over 1200 men, it would be a miracle if you have 1200 extremely perfect persons. You are going to have some bad people in the force, there is no question about it. You will also discover that if you have one, two, three or six bad ones, it is going to be the effect and the influence of those bad ones which is going to contaminate the body politic, and people are going to talk at length about the problems, the viciousness and the badness of those who tend to contaminate the whole system.

I am not going to sweep anything under the table. I think we are all aware that there are problems in the Police Force. The Commissioner of Police himself is aware that there are problems in the Police Force, and I am happy to say that the Commissioner of Police is taking steps to deal with the problems which exist in the Police Force. I have been in discussion with him on this matter, and there are certain positive steps which he has taken, of which I approve, which will deal with the problems about which you are concerned in the Police Force — problems about bad policemen. The proposals which the Commissioner has in mind are obviously designed to weed out of the Police Force the bad persons who can contaminate the whole Force.

I have always made the point that if you have bad people in any organisation, particularly in the law enforcement agencies of your country, and you have to deal with the problem of detecting and investigating crime, particularly in this area of drugs with which we are so seriously concerned, if you have policemen in the Police Force who are suspect and on whose integrity you cannot rely, your whole programme in relation to the interdiction and control of drugs is going to be totally ineffective. The Commissioner of Police understands our concerns in connection with this matter. He understands that something has to be done about dealing with problems of this kind which can come up in the Police Force as can exist in any force of this magnitude. I want to assure honourable Members that matters of this kind are being dealt with.

While I am on my feet, I would like to take the opportunity to respond to a couple of comments which have been made earlier.

Aside,

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I will pause at this stage.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to note the words of caution which I issued earlier, and which I thought were receiving censure from the honourable Member for St. Thomas when he lectured me on the tenets of criminology, are now being recognised by him.

Aside.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: That may have been the problem, that he heard only part of the speech I made.

One of the issues I raised related to the perceptions the public has about justice or the lack of it, and I raised the question as to whom exactly is to blame. My suggestion then was, as it is now, that all of us have got to raise the question as to whether we, as individuals are the persons to be blamed. The Member for St. Thomas earlier indicated that an individual group of persons can only be seen as being a microcosm — I think that is the^ right word. I am not too sure, Sir, what it means, but it sounded good and I want to use it — of the wider community and within that context I understood him to be saying that whether we were talking about the magistrates, magistrates' courts, judges or, indeed, the police, they can only be seen as a reflection of the wider society. 10.00 p.m.

I go beyond that to suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that individual policemen by and large are simple persons, as I am a simple person, and that many of them will have taken role models from the community around them. So when we raise the question as to who is to blame — and I raised groupings of persons, I said lawyers, I said police, I said legislators — and we isolate them, whatever their tendencies might be in terms of their sex habits, we isolate them and believe that, because they are policemen, they are going to behave any differently from the rest of society, I am suggesting that we are making an error. We must recognise that policemen might, in fact, be looking up to lawyers, perhaps to trade unionists and to legislators as their role models and when they see a very poor politician who, overnight, assumes conspicuous consumption patterns, you cannot ask them to be any different; or when they hear a politician on the floor of the House say that not even God can break him again, as I understand a politician has said in recent times, then we do not leave them — I do not mean since 1986 May, I mean in recent times before May 28, 1986 — with good role models. When those kinds of comments are made, we are putting ourselves into difficult positions.

I am not prepared to make out any case for policemen, Sir, because those who cannot make out their own case have got to do what has to be done, and I repeat that the legislators - that is to say, all of us — have got to recognise that we have a role to play and we have an example to set by the lives we live, by the patterns we set, by the examples we give to our community. Other leaders have a similar role, and if the policemen are made to see an example, and if we are leading by example, we might be able to pull them up because of our own examples.

I am not suggesting that the honourable Member for St. Thomas is not a prudent person and that he misleads anybody, but what he has said has led me to look to another area of difficulty he has described, the area of rape, as he has mentioned it, which may, in fact, be played down and may not be mentioned as a statistic. You know, Sir, as well as I do, that part of the perceptions of the problems we have in society are to be identified in rape cases. A woman, or indeed a man, gets raped — I understand both sexes are getting raped, Sir — and when that person is encouraged by public spiritedness, or whatever motivates the individual, to go before the courts, especially in the case of the woman, thanks to the* system of justice that we are supposed to have in this country — I do not say thanks to the lawyers, Sir, thanks to the system - that rape victim is made to appear as though the person is a prostitute who seduced and otherwise forced the man or the men or the women to rape the person. And then we talk about systems of justice! We are being hypocritical when we do that, I submit to you, Sir. Not his Honourable House, I would never accuse this Honourable House of being hypocritical, I mean societies that do not realise the contradictions. We are digging our own graves by the double standards that we seek to establish.

In the labour movement, when a person does wrong we are enjoined by the rules and the roles by which we are governed not to hide behind technicalities and say that the individual is not wrong. When we go to church, as all of us love to go to church, especially before elections — not anybody in this Honourable House, I mean other people — I would never cast aspersions on the characters of honourable Members, especially since some of them go to church and preach, and are joined by other Ministers sometimes singing before the cameras — we are not allowed to use the Good Book which contains rules and to use technicalities to get around them. But when it comes to the rules that govern the society, the mores — I think the honourable Member for St. Thomas used that word — I like that word, too — the customs and the practices which help to make up the society, we allow ourselves, on the basis of frivolous technicalities, to allow criminals to walk free out of the courts and little people, who have done nothing whatsoever, to go to Glendairy and spend time. It is true -it is in my constituency, Sir, but when they go there, they cannot vote for me.

Whatever the minuses that we may have against the Police Force, I wish to compliment them in two areas. One has to do with the Resident Beat Officer Scheme, which I think has been a source of very great consolation, comfort, solace to people living in districts, especially where many of the people, the bread-winners, have gone out to work during the day and their children have gone to school. It is, as my colleague said, an innovative piece of crime prevention. It allows us to believe that the policeman is not a big, black, ignorant person, as the concept used to be about 20 to 30 years ago, but that he is an integral member of the community in which we exist, even if he may open his chest wide to show his gold chains and to show that certain politicians have nothing on him.

I would wish as well, Sir, to compliment the Police Force on the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme that there is. Bank Hall was one of the places where it was started. I was not invited to the initial ceremony in that area, but I understand that the Honourable Attorney General stood in quite well for me, and the Bank Hall persons who are involved in that have been keeping me informed. Since then, Mr. Chairman, we have attempted to commence another such programme in another part of Bank Hall, in the Kew, and we wish to thank the police officer who has been involved in lecturing to the people and trying to get the programme started.

I believe that the Scheme is rooted in the correct concept because it takes us back to first principles, the first principle being that we are in fact our brother's keeper, and that if each of us recognises that an injury to one of us in an injury to all of us, then we will be able to make our society a better place.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, it is not very often that I speak on this particular subject in this Chamber, and if I strike a different note from some of the speakers who have preceded me, it is perhaps because I believe that our society depends upon a number of institutions for its stability and that we all have to weigh what we say about our institutions very carefully, lest, in an attempt to highlight the difficulties or the shortcomings of those institutions, we do not in that process and by our criticisms tend to destroy the very thing that we wish to preserve. 10.10 p.m.

All of us in life seek peace, security and a safe environment, and all of us in times of difficulties, trials and tribulations turn to the Police Force to assist us when we are threatened, or when we are actually

attacked. I believe that whatever progress we make in this country will be dependent upon the extent to which we maintain and support a Police Force that is capable of carrying out in an efficient manner the functions of law enforcement and citizen protection that must be carried out. It is against that background that I wish to view our Police Force.

We can all find areas in which we can criticise the institution. I, as an ordinary citizen in this country, am somewhat puzzled by the operations of the Royal Barbados Police Force. Sometimes I attribute it to the fact that I have not had the training in the required discipline to understand, sometimes, how they operate. For example, I have heard that in a recent case before the courts involving drugs, in which there was another country involved, I believe, St. Vincent, up to this particular point in the investigations, while the attorneys operating for the defence have been able to visit that foreign country or to send investigators into that country in pursuance of their defence in order to ferret out or to obtain evidence, our own Police Force, which was doing the prosecution up to this particular point, has not thought it necessary to send anyone to investigate the case at that point. I attribute that to my own lack of understanding of the way in which such investigations should be conducted, but, as a citizen who takes an interest in what goes on in the country, and as one who knows that the Police Force itself is very much concerned about the control of crime in this country and about fighting against drug use and drug abuse, I would, perhaps, be a little puzzled as to why that further step was not taken. Maybe there is an answer to it which would clarify my own concerns in that particular case.

I just use that as an example to show that we can all have criticisms to make. But, having said that, I would wish to make the point that this country owes a considerable debt of gratitude to the work that is done from day to day, and night by night, by the Royal Barbados Police Force. The work that is carried out by that Police Force calls for a lot of courage. It is work that is dangerous, it is work that some of us will say we will not do under any •circumstances, and I think that sometimes in our criticisms we should temper our attitude and our criticisms against such a background.

I believe if we take into account that our Police Force is a product of our own society and that the members of the Force have been exposed to certain experiences, to certain levels of training which may not be adequate for the tasks involved, for a number of reasons maybe the lack of resources - maybe physical conditions, maybe other matters - we may be more temperate in the kinds of criticisms that we make.

It may be also that there are other areas which we can take into consideration. For example, in the area of prosecution — I make no apology for the statement that I will make — I do not believe, and I am speaking now as a citizen also, that where we have serious cases in this country in which the defence is able to recruit, hire — you are not a hireling, are you?

Asides

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They like the nice word. They want to use the word "retain", that is, retaining at that price commanded by distinguished counsel with many years of experience in the law and in defence procedures behind them, and with letters of the alphabet behind their names, a Q and a C, LL.M., B.A., M.A., and all kinds of designations. You do not find anyone with those kinds of experiences and qualifications on the other side prosecuting.

I am one of those persons in this country who believe that at the disposal of the Royal Barbados Police Force, there should be a team of highly trained and experienced prosecutors. I know the policemen are trained and experienced, but do you believe that I would have a case against David Simmons, Q.C. I do not believe that where we have cases of a grave nature that we should have, on the one hand, a highly trained cadre of attorneys and, on the other hand, have, more or less, a highly trained cadre of policemen. I believe that that is not the kind of balance that we should have in this country, and I hope that we can get a team of attorneys-at-law to bring some balance into those kinds of situations, because the police may, in fact, do very good police work, the investigations may be perfect, the detection adequate, and then through the skills of an adept attorney-at-law, through some technicality, through some legerdemain — not of the lawyers, let me make it clear — it all falls down in court. 10.20 p.m.

I was strongly advised that I should study law. The former Attorney General, the Leader of the Opposition, and I were members of a Sixth Form, and we used to have our debates in the Acton Club at Harrison College. The one position I held was - misguided, perhaps, you may say, as I was then - that I would not study law, not even to be an academic lawyer, because I had, and still have, difficulties, and I believe I would continue to have these difficulties, in understanding how as an attorney-at-law, in cases where my own conscience may tell me or I may feel or believe that some breach of the law may have occurred, I can still come and defend a particular person, and I felt that if I had that kind of attitude, I could not make a living at the Bar. Maybe that was ignorance, but that is how I felt about it, and that is how I feel.

I am nevertheless, making the point that I really believe that this is a matter to which very serious consideration should be given so that the work of the Royal Barbados Police Force, whether in detection, investigation or whatever it is, may not be frustrated at another level because they lack the necessary resources or expertise at that level.

I do not wish it to be thought that everything is well within the Royal Barbados Police Force. None of us would make that particular point, but I certainly think that whatever we may say in debate in this country, we all wish to see an improvement and development in that force, and as legislators we must seek to work towards achieving that objective.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I am not winding up. I just want to take a few minutes to respond very briefly to a few points which have been made by my distinguished colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford). It is not very often that I have a difference of opinion with him. I do not think I differ substantially with him on this occasion, but when the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Hon. P. M. Greaves) on my right, was moved to make a comment which I do not think reflected too favourably on my friend the honourable Member for St. Michael South, I think I had a little problem. I tended to agree with the honourable Member for St. Michael North.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South was concerned about how could a lawyer, who perhaps feels that a client is guilty of an offence, proceed to defend that person. This is a matter which has confused and confounded a lot of persons. I do not think it is worthwhile even to attempt to go into it now. Suffice it to say that once a lawyer makes a decision that he is going to defend a person because he is guilty or not, the lawyer is not acting as a lawyer in that situation, but as a judge. The lawyer is deciding and judging that the person is guilty, and the moment you take that decision, if you take that decision, clearly you have a responsibility not to defend the person. If you feel that a person is guilty, you have a responsibility to yourself, to your conscience and to your client not to defend the person. There is a lot more to it than that, but, of course, I cannot take •time to deal with it.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South raised the question of police prosecutors in the magistrate's court, and the gravamen of his statement was that in this kind of situation, there might be persons charged with offences who are able to retain high priced, experienced and able lawyers, and that these persons may be pitted against a police prosecutor in the magistrate's court. This, in a way, raises the same kind of question which the honourable Member for St. Michael Central raised earlier in his statement what price justice? Because if, on the one hand, you can have a person being able to afford expensive and good lawyers and, on the other hand, have what you perceive to be a simple police prosecutor, you are saying that justice cannot be done. 10.30 p.m.

I do not necessarily and entirely agree with that one hundred per cent, because from my own experience in the law, I have been able to witness police prosecutors who are just as able and competent as experienced lawyers, and who are, in some circumstances, more competent than some of the very experienced lawyers who operate in the courts. Some of these cases are won and lost not because of the nature of the person who prosecutes, not because of the ability, or lack of ability, of the person who prosecutes. There is a maxim in law that justice must not only be done but must also be seen to be done. Appearances tend to matter at times, and I think there is an easy tendency to feel that if you have four heavy lawyers on one side, to counter balance that you have to have four heavy lawyers on the other side. But it does not necessarily follow. I do not know what were the total circumstances of this case and whether it had anything to do with the nature of the prosecutor, but I believe the prosecutor who was involved in this case was one of the more experienced, and one who, from my experience, was quite competent to deal with the matter.

The point has been made, and I have no difficulty with this, that perhaps someone from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions should have been there to prosecute that case. But you have this caveat that doing that does not necessarily solve the problem, because what you have to recognise also is that the persons who serve in the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and those who make up the Attorney General's Chambers are not all, necessarily, senior and experienced lawyers — they are in at all levels.

The position has been taken that, in all the Magistrates' courts, prosecution should be taken out of the hands of the police and be placed in the hands of counsel. A position will have to be taken on whether Government is in a position and is willing to pay the - price of employing lawyers to prosecute in all the magistrates' courts. But in a lot of the cases, you are going to find that persons who, in the final analysis, may be called on to prosecute in the magistrates' courts may not necessarily be persons of the length of experience, if nothing more, as those at the private Bar. Still, in cases where serious matters are involved in the magistrates' courts, particularly where you need to make a point in relation to offences like drug offences, like the case which has attracted so much popular attention, it would perhaps be more desirable that an officer from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions be asked to prosecute. I have no difficulty with that.

Mr. Chairman, at this time I would conclude my remarks. I am not closing the debate. We will resume tomorrow.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 10.00 o'clock, March 20, 1987.

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

question that the sitting be suspended until 10 a.m. on March 20, 1987, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 10.38 pjn.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

When the House was suspended last night we were on Head 30.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Chairman, a lot of honourable Members have had a lot to say about the Police Department so far in the debate. Some of us have been able to identify the problems that obtained. I believe it was the honourable Member for St. Thomas who said that with a force as large as 1 200 men, correctly so, one would expect that there would be rotten apples or bad eggs.

I was also heartened that the Leader of the House, the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford), was very good in pointing out that though we recognise and accept that there are very serious problems in terms of the personnel and the Police Department, it is necessary for us as leaders in the socie'ty, while encouraging the members of the Police Department to improve their image and to make a stronger attempt at doing a better job, to also make sure that we do not mislead the public into not giving the police the correct type of support. I believe that is the impression I got from the speech made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. I got the impression that he was making sure that while we are saying that the police are doing a lot of things with which we do not agree, we are not saying that the whole Police Force has gone bad. But we are, in fact, saying that the Force must examine itself and weed out the bad eggs quickly before the contamination becomes acute.

I want to deal with a few of the areas where I believe it is necessary for the Police Department, and, in general, the whole judicial system, to be careful of how they are perceived by John Public, by the masses. I believe my colleague, the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman), made a similar point yesterday, that if the police are going to truly improve their image, the attitude they adopt towards the more unfortunate among us, or the ones who are less able to pay for proper defence, they are going to have to give a little equality to the treatment they mete out to the public.,

I would like, first of all, to touch on something that I have always been very concerned about. I have been told that I am whipping a dead horse, but I will continue, in the event that the horse may still have some life left in it and I will be able to get it to move, and it is to do with the whole question of rape. I am talking about rape against women, I hear people talking about rape against men, but I am not too concerned about that, really.

Laughter.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I have heard Members, and certainly members of the public, criticise lawyers for the way they handle rape cases, particularly defence lawyers. But I will say that the whole attitude towards a woman who has been raped in Barbados starts at the level of the policeman. I recall vividly that some two or three years ago, there was a young lady who was working at a factory on a night shift. She came from what is properly called a rural district and was going into her first job, all excited. Unfortunately for her, she was put on the night shift, and probably did not recognise some of the problems that come along with working on the night shift. She found herself heading to go to work at 11 p.m, I think, walking down Cheapside to go to one of the plants at the harbour, and she was attacked and raped in the vicinity.

Mr. Chairman, I happen to have first hand knowledge of this because a relation of mine was the Personnel Officer for the company and had to be called out, and I accompanied them and got a firsthand report on how the police handled the matter. I recognised that, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South said, (Mr. L. E. Sandiford), I might not be too clear on how the police handle things and why they do certain things in an effort to get the evidence they need, but I thought that the way in which the lady was questioned was crude. After admitting to all of the things that the police asked her, and after explaining exactly what happened, the police officer continued to get more specific, to the extent that the young lady, as she said, started to feel as though she had caused herself to be raped. The result was that the young lady eventually had to attend a psychiatrist, and the psychiatrist, in the end, even recommended to her lawyer that it would be better that she did not go to court for her own sanity. So irreparable damage was done to that woman, the kind of damage that is, of course, not visible, mental damage.

I think that in some way — I do not think that I am flogging a dead horse — the police can be given the type of training that is necessary to make them deal witri the public in a more humane and sensitive manner. It is not good enough, Mr. Chairman for the Public Relations Officer of the Police Department to continually appeal to the public to assist and be co-operative and the policemen themselves still adopt an attitude, what I call the old police boot attitude, of being so dogmatic in some cases. I am not saying that everyone in the Force behaves like this. You still have some of what I call the old fashioned policemen, who are still very polite and they warn you or make suggestions to you ten times before they report you and so on.

It is this same kind of attitude, Mr. Chairman, that was causing what could have eventually been a serious problem with the vendors in the Swan Street area particularly and generally around Bridgetown. I am sure that the Police Department must have learned something from that whole incident, and it is something that all of us can learn. The attitude in the beginning was one, as I said in this Honourable Chamber, of harassment. I was told by some of my colleagues that that may have been too strong, but I was saying exactly what the public said it was. The public out there was saying it was harassment, and it was serious harassment, because when I tried to ascertain why the chaps and young ladies had to be moved, there was no answer forthcoming. It was an attitude of "because we say they have to move". And when one tried to ascertain why there were other people, particularly of other ethic origins, who were allowed to be vendors anywhere in Barbados and they were not being stopped, the attitude was one that they did not have to answer that either. 10.10 a.m.

On the other hand, when all the fuss had died down, I had to, and I must, commend the senior officers in the Police Department for the effort they made. When the dust had all settled, the Police Department came together with what is known as the Vendors Association, because the vendors in Bridgetown have formed an association, a legal body. As a matter of fact, as a result of their forming an association, for the first 'time in the history of Barbados there is something called the Swan Street Merchants Association. When it was all said and done, and they all sat down together, in a spirit of co-operation now, we have come to the state now where more than one store owner in Swan Street has told me that things are better in Swan Street now that everybody has settled in and now that it is organized.

I used that example, Mr. Chairman, to show the effect if the right approach is used. We are all human beings, and, as I always say, the policeman is your cousin, or a friend of your friend, or the fellow who went to school with you. He is not an alien, and though he has to maintain law and order, he does not have to do it in a manner that makes him appear to be a bulldog. So with the proper approach being used in Swan Street, the result is there for everyone to see. All the fears of purse snatching and piling up of garbage and all of these strange things that would have happened did not happen. I do not have any statistics, but I would risk a bet that the incidents of purse snatching over the Christmas period was reduced. I am always in touch and I have not heard that it was any different to that in previous years. In fact, there was not the escalation that was expected.

Another area which I believe we cannot hide from but have to face it head on is the area of the whole question of drugs. As the honourable Member for St. Thomas said yesterday early in the debate, I was a member for several years of what was known as the Crime Prevention Panel. Basically it was, as I learned for the first time yesterday, the brain-child of the Member for Christ Church West.

Aside

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: It was a police idea. I see. It was a laudable thing, no matter whose idea it was, and if it works well, it can be of tremendous assistance to the Police Department, and it has been.

The Neighbourhood Watch is an idea that came out of the Crime Prevention Panel. Those of us who have lived abroad, more particularly in North America, have seen the Neighbourhood Watch in operation, and people like Mr. Fields at Transport and myself were the two people who went to town on this Neighbourhood Watch idea. I heard yesterday in the debate that it is working in places like Bank Hall, and I am hoping that it will be extended.

The Resident Beat Cop as they are called - we call them policemen. I do not know where the American term "cop" came from — the Resident Beat Officer idea was another one that was discussed in the Crime Prevention Panel, and there were many, many discussions on drugs and enforcement of law as it relates to illegal drugs. I will not go into details now, because I do not believe it would be right for me to discuss things that were probably discussed in a confidential area.

But, Mr. Chairman, I will say this. I happen to represent a constituency where everybody in Barbados believes all the drugs are sold, apart from the few that are sold on the beaches. Everybody seems to believe that Bridgetown is the centre for drugs. It is Crack Street or Rock Street.

Asides

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: New Orleans is a nice area, man. I can defend it, because what you will find in Bridgetown is like in most major cities in any country, even a small country like ours. People from the rural areas who want to get involved in these kinds of activities - prostitution, .drug trafficking - converge. People from everywhere come to Bridgetown. It is a centre. If you look at our communication, all the buses come into Bridgetown. So it is a point where people can converge and do most things, most trading, including trading in illegal drugs.

What I am dealing with here, Mr. Chairman, is that when you go into an area like Emmerton Lane as a policeman and you know that you are looking for an individual who you believe is trafficking drugs - and when I talk about trafficking drugs, I only mean small quantities. We are not talking about the fellows bringing in containers now, as the honourable Member for Christ Church West alluded to earlier in the debate - the attitude is one that if you believe he is in the neighbour's house, you will rip off the door. I do not believe the same thing would obtain if you had to go into Sheraton Park or Regency Park. This is the kind of attitude that the Member for "one Central" spoke about.

Laughter

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is this a new constituency?

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: The honourable Member for St. Michael Central. As the Member said, there are two different types of approaches the police are using to the haves and have-nots. But the policemen, to a large extent, come from among these same people, because I do not see any wealthy Barbadians in the Police Force. I do not know if any got wealthy after they went into the Force, but I do not see any going into the Force wealthy. That does not happen much nowadays. I know there were days when we had white Police Commissioners and so on, but that does not happen anymore. So it is the attitude. If the police really expects the public to accord them the kind of respect that they once had, they are going to have to understand that when they do these kinds of things the word gets around, and even decent, God-fearing, law-abiding, whatever you want to call them, citizens are getting very sympathetic to these people who are trotted upon by the heavy police boot. And if the Police Force wants to clear up their image, this kind of attitude, as I heard the honourable Member for St. Thomas talk about yesterday, and I agree with him — the police coming in with shirt flying and the chains on, the Dirty Harry image, the television image with the screaming tyres in the middle of the night and you know who is getting ripped off in Emmerton Lane — all that will have to stop if we are going to return to the Police the kind of image that all of us in this Honourable Chamber, Sir, would like to see the police have.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has one minute.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I recognise that I have run out of time, Sir. I believe that I may have to speak on this again.

I am obliged to you.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to con tinue in the same vein as the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller). I think I can give the Police the assurance that they will have the wholehearted support of the Democratic Labour Party. I remember listening some time ago to a debate from this Honourable Chamber when there was an unwarranted attack, and this has to do with the image of the police the people have, levelled against the Commissioner of Police, and I remember a Minister of Government making the statement .....

Aside.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: .....the then Government, yes.....that if the Commissioner of Police mashed a crease, he would give him out. People in authority should be very careful about what they say, because these are the kinds of statements that lead to the perceptions that we have out there, so I want to give assurance to the Police that they will have the wholehearted support of the Democratic Labour Party. However, I think that the police themselves will also have to work on their own image.

Getting to the area of drugs now, people in this country are pretty well assured that in order to really handle the drug problem that exists in Barbados, "there is one thing that has to be done, and that is, that we have to track down the big people who are involved in drugs.

People are saying that the majority of big people who are involved in drugs in this country do not look like you, Mr. Chairman, and I. A few days ago a container came consigned to a company in this country, and I am quite sure that the drugs that were found in that container were not going to the mechanic or the messenger assigned to that firm. I do not know who they were going to. My latest knowledge is that the container is now sitting at the port. 10.20 a.m.

We in this country have to be very, very careful about this kind of image. We know, we have enough information, that Barbados is part of an international ring, and this goes back a long way. We have experienced over the last few years in this country a very serious phenomenon where there were a number of young women found dead in canefields, and I venture to say that these deaths had to do with the drug trafficking in Barbados, because we know that there is a serious link between drug trafficking and pornography, that drugs were used, and drugs are used, as part of the pornographic mystique, and one of the possibilities exists that some of these women died from an overdose of drugs during the, pornographic experience. That is my theory, and I want to document some of what I have to say.

In the Advocate newspaper of May 23, 1984 there was a headline *"Police detect Barbados cocaine ring,"* resulting from a story out of the 5th Interpol Caribbean Central American Conference, which took place in Barbados, in which one of our most respected policemen, Charles Lunn, was making some observations about drug trafficking in Barbados. What I am saying is nothing new to the drug world. This information has been given to Interpol, it is a document of every country that is a member of Interpol, and therefore it is important that Barbadian citizens apprise themselves of the situation as it applies to Barbados. That is one of the reasons I am going to share with this Honourable Chamber what he had to say at this international conference:

> "An international ring of cocaine traffickers is operating out of Barbados. According to the police, it is well organised with good connections in banking and other legitimate business enterprises throughout the Caribbean."
>
> "Barbados was first identified as a transit point in trafficking of cocaine in 1981.
>
> "Since then," he said, "trafficking has increased considerably with couriers arriving in Barbados to collect shipments out of Peru, Columbia and Bolivia for Canada, the United States and other European destinations."

He said that within the last year there have beerr interceptions of cocaine out of Barbados at Heathrow, Mirabel, Curacao, Bonair, Port of Spain, Amsterdam, Brussels and Zurich.

> "We also have reasons to believe that persons who enjoy special privileges because of their offices — students, athletes and visiting sports personnel — have been used in moving this drug in and out of Barbados.

He said that the international ring of traffickers has recruited a number of Barbadians capable of influencing decisions favourable to their criminal activities, which include trafficking of arms, prostitution, pornography and forged documents."

Mr. Chairman, those statements must not be taken in isolation, because those of us who followed the Caribbean Heads of Government Conference which was held at Sam Lord's Castle in Barbados in 1985, would have observed that the then Prime Minister^ Mr. St. John, made comments substantiating what Mr. Lunn had said. This is what the Prime Minister of the day said, and I am quoting from the Advocate of Tuesday, July 2, ,1985:

> "In addition, there is evidence to suggest that there are links between the trafficking of drugs and the International traffic in arms. The vast sums of money involved in drug trafficking have led those involved to seek at whatever cost to protect their investments. The implications for the security of our nations must therefore concern us. The time has come for concerted action to be taken to deal with this menace to our hitherto relatively stable environment."

So the then Prime Minister of this country was substantiating what Mr. Lunn had said, that the people who traffic in drugs, people who traffic in arms, had had enough money and that they were influencing decisions in this country at a very high level. One therefore has to be very, very serious about how we attack the drug problem.

We know - and I have said this in other forums - that before there were lights at the airport in St. Vincent, light aircraft used to fly out of South America and land at St. Vincent at night and then the cocaine used to be shipped into Barbados. This is information which I think the police are fully aware of. I have also made statements in other places that we had information that people travelling to St. Vincent had passed through our airport with guns and we have had to give information to the political directorate in St. Vincent to have those arms intercepted.

This is a very serious problem, because the trafficking of those guns through the airport in Barbados was facilitated by people who were working at the airport, so we have to be very, very careful. This is one of the reasons why I say that this Government must put its wholehearted support behind the police, and I would go further to say that the drug problem that is now entrenched in Barbados is so big that it is beyond the

scope of the police to handle by themselves. I think the time has come when the Government of Barbados has got to seek international help to try to fight off the drug problem. Some of the people who traffic the drugs through Barbados, the rings which traffick the drugs through Barbados, have more money at their disposal than the Government of Barbados, so if we are to fight this problem, we will need all the international support that we can get. I want to assure the Police Force that this Government will put all the resources necessary so that we in Barbados can fight the drug problem.

The drug problem is also a threat to this country because the drug traffickers target the young people of this country. They feel that if they get the young people in this country addicted, for evermore they will have clients, so our young people face the greatest threat. A society is an abnormal society when a child who is going to school cannot go to the nutseller and buy a • pack of nuts, or a pack of dunks, or tamarind balls, or whatever. That whole issue of tamarind balls and nuts is doing something else in Barbados. The poor people in Barbados who used to be able to sell at the school gate and make a dollar to sent to school their children, because of this whole mystique -that the people outside of the school gate are now contaminating our young children, are finding it very difficult to make a living. The honest people whq are selling have been lumped with the drug pushers, so we are creating a serious problem in this society, where our grandmothers and our mothers who used to sell the nuts and the sno-cones, are now finding it difficult to make a living, because we have got to say to our children "don't eat anything at school."

This is a very, very complicated problem that we are facing, and every Barbadian, at every level, must give the police their wholehearted support. As I said before, I do not think that we, in this country, can fight the drug menace by ourselves. The great country, the United States, has found it necessary to team up with other countries. They have had to send people into the Caribbean and South America, to try to stamp off the menace as it comes into the United States. We in Barbados, a small country, will never have the monetary resources, the physical resources or the scientific expertise to fight off the drug problem, but we can assure the police and all the agencies that are prepared to fight with us against the drug problem that we will put the little that we have at their disposal. 10.30 a.m.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the honourable Member who has just spoken for his statement of support for the Police Force and for his recognition that this Government is committed to supporting the Police Force.

On the occasion of a debate on the Estimates, you are always inclined to have open season on the Police Force, and on other major institutions of Government. We recognise the right to criticise, and the right to criticise is a right which should never in any way be blunted. But criticisms have to be reasoned, they have to be tempered, they have to be based on fact and they have to be constructive. Especially when we are criticising in an area like the Police Force, which is responsible for the maintenance and the preservation of law and order in our society, and which is an institution in which we all depend if democracy in our country is to survive, we have to ensure that whatever criticisms we make are criticisms which, in the long-run, are designed to be constructive, so the assurances of support from the honourable Member who has just sat down have been quite welcome.

I would like, first of all, Mr. Chairman, to respond to one or two points which were raised yesterday evening, and in respect of which I have had an opportunity to speak with the Commissioner of Police since we last met.

In relation to the allegation by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) of homosexuality in the Police Force, I understand from the Commissioner that there is no high incidence of homosexuality in the Police Force. I understand that there has only been one incident which has been brought to his. attention. That matter has been taken before the court.

One of the problems in dealing with matters of this kind, and this is going to relate to the other matter about which the honourable Member spoke as well, the matter of shoplifting in Swan Street, is that it appears as if the persons who are involved on the other side are always reluctant to come forward to give evidence. In relation to the homosexual charge against the 'policeman who was involved, it appears that there has been a great difficulty in getting evidence to support a charge before the court, to support a charge before the internal police disciplinary authorities and before the Police Service Commission itself. But the matter is still pending, the matter is not yet resolved, and the police officer, as I understand it, is on suspension at the moment.

In relation to the allegation of the police officer being involved in shoplifting on High Street, again a similar problem has arisen with that, because the person — speaking generically, it may be a corporate institution — who was involved and whose property is supposed to have been shoplifted, has been very remiss in coming forward to give evidence to support the charge, with the result that that matter cannot be proceeded with in a court. This one is also still before the disciplinary tribunal of the police and this matter is pending as well.

The important thing to note in all of these matters is that wherever allegations of this kind come to

light — and I would invite honourable Members, whenever they are aware of any positive allegation which can be made against individual members of the Police Force, to give us the information on which the matter can be dealt with — I give the assurance that the matters will be dealt with. I know that the Commissioner of Police is quite anxious to ensure that all the negative influences which tend to distract from the good name of the Police Force are once and for all removed from the Force.

When we criticise the police, we have to recognise that at the root of all the criticism that we utter, the police are, after all, products- of the society in which we live. I think that point was made by one honourable Member yesterday. They come from among us. When we accuse them of bad manners, they are part of our society. I am not saying that we are all well-mannered but if you look at the very society in which we live, you will find that bad manners is not confined to the members of the Police Force. When you go into some stores in Bridgetown, for instance, you sometimes see the negative approach which people who have to serve you adopt. Sometimes you wonder if they are really interested in their employer's business, in serving you properly. In so many areas of public service in this community you still find that there are occasions when citizens of the country do not get the respect and the attention which they deserve, and which we as citizens expect.

So the fact that you see some of this in the Police Force, in my view, is not unusual. We do not like it, and we would like to stamp it 'out wherever it exists, and the police, being a disciplined force, should themselves understand all the more, even moreso than ordinary citizens, that there is a way they must deal with people, there is a way in which they have to deal with problems, and there is a way, obviously, in which they have to communicate and what they want to communicate to people. But it is a long process. It is not a process which we are going to solve overnight. Fortunately, we are, in this day and age, in a position where, unlike the past, those who administer the Police Force are not from a completely different social background and orientation from the masses of people who make up the Force. The leaders of the Police Force, the officers in command, are largely of the same socio-economic background as those in the rest of the Force. This should make for a harmonious building up of good relationships among the Force itself and between the Force and the members of the public, who, after all, are part of the same body politic.

But yet we have the problem between the police and the public. But the essential point that I want to make is that it has to be a two-way street. The police need to co-operate with the public. The police have to present a good image to the public as well. Unless you have this empathy, so to speak, between the police and the public where the public do not see the Police as the enemy and the police do not see the public as the enemy, unless you have a development and a relationship where each one sees the other as their brother's keeper, so to speak, all the negative things of which we speak, and which we are wont to criticise the police for from time to time, will continue to haunt us as long as we go on. 10.40 a.m.

In spite of all the criticism which has taken place, and I do not shy away from criticism, I do not think the police need to be daunted by criticism. I think the police need to take criticism to heart and try to respond in a positive way to all the negative statements which are made about them, because there are a number of areas in which members of the Police Force can do something positive about their own image. They have to be concerned about the public's perception. You cannot say the public is saying and doing this and that about us and there is nothing you can do about it, because the public is not going to do that just for no reason at all. We have to ensure that in our own society we develop among ourselves a willingness, a conscience and a desire to be law abiding, because if the body politic does not want to be law abiding, you really cannot impose law abidance on people. You cannot impose it from on high unless you create a police state, and then you have all the problems that police states create. What is necessary is that in the body politic itself there has to be developed a willingness and a desire to co-operate and to be law abiding.

This is very critical when you come to deal with the problem of drugs. If you have a society which has become so corrupted that it does not want to beat the drug problem, then you are going to have one tremendous difficult problem on your hands to lick it, and as good a Police Force as you have in your community, if the community itself does not want to beat the drug problem, the chances of success of the Police Force are going to be reduced considerably. In dealing with the drug problem, the problem of getting home to people the dangers of drugs is going to be terribly important/The problem of developing in people the understanding that it is something which is dangerous to the community, dangerous to health and something which has to go at all cost has got to be ingrained in the body, soul and in the spirit of the people of our community, because unless and until we can achieve that, the police are going to have it extremely difficult.

That brings me right back to the point where I started, that the police have sprung from our society and they are part of us, and if the society is a corrupt society and is entirely dependent on drugs, the police, too are going to be dependent on drugs and are going to be equally corrupt. If the police see that the body politic is not interested in going that route and that there is no possibility of support from the body politic, in any

nefarious activities in relation to drugs, the chances of the police dealing effectively with the drug problem becomes more and more real.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I wish to intervene in this debate.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I recognise the honourable Member for Christ Church West. I may have looked in your direction, but after I had looked at him.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member may be assured that even if I may make some suggestions first and he adopts them later, he will get the headlines. So he need not worry, he can wait and come later.

Sir, I have intervened in this debate because I believe that the debate has revealed a very genuine concern on all sides of the House for the rule of law and order, and particularly for the pivotal role which the police must play in the society in which we now exist. I note, however, that the Estimates which we are voting on this occasion show no increase in the supplies which we are providing for the Police Force this year. There is a decrease both on Current Account and on Capital Account in the Estimates, and this is despite the fact, of course, that one would have anticipated that with the increase in wages to the members of the Police Force, statutory expenditure .would of necessity increase. There appears to me, from the summary contained at the beginning to the Head of Estimate, to be a decrease in the sums being voted.

I think we have to recognise that we must continue to place more resources at and behind the work of the Police Force. As I see it, there are three main areas in which we have to begin to look at organising the police forces of this country and dealing \vith the problems that come before them. First, there are the infrastructural needs of the Police Force, and infrastructural in the physical sense. There is a continuing need to upgrade the physical facilities which the police occupy and use. Some attempt has been made in the last few years with the construction of the District "A" compound and the construction of the new Oistins Police Station to upgrade the infrastructure, but there is still a lot more to be done.

I recall very graphically that when I took over responsibility for the police, policemen who were on duty for sometimes as much as 86 hours — they could not leave the compound, particularly at CID — had no beds on which to sleep, and many of them were then sleeping on their kits. There was no money in the Estimates at that time, and at least one institution, Barclays Banks, readily donated some money to relieve the problem until the public purse could take up some of the slack. It is true that throughout the Force at that time, almost at every compound, the conditions were cramped and furniture was run down, and it seemed to me then that one had to develop a plan over a period of years for the regrading of the infrastructure of the Force, and some attempt was made in the Capital Estimates down through the years to attend to these problems. They have not been completely solved. 10.50 a.m.

It was necessary too, to look at the deployment of some of the infrastructure of the Police Force. It still is necessary. I recall very well developing with the then Commissioner and the present Commissioner, who was then his Deputy, a programme for the removal of the police headquarters, their main operational line, from Coleridge Street, where for security and other reasons, it is very badly located to a position along Wildey near to the television studios to have a new headquarters. Obviously, that has not matured, although we had got reasonably far in the planning, with the assistance, of course, of the British Government. It will be necessary for whatever Government is in power to attend to that problem, to try to make resources available for redeployment of the headquarters of the Police Force in addition to building new stations in areas like St. Thomas, District D, upgrading stations, such as the one in St. Peter, and relocating stations such as those in St. George and maybe those in St. Philip.

I am conscious of the fact that in the Capital estimate which we will come to later, there is provision for continuing fiscal development at the Police Band Headquarters. I am also aware of the fact that during the honourable Member for St. Thomas' year, as Attorney-General, he ensured that the Ministry of Finance provided money for the proper maintenance of police stations. I note this year that the Estimates continues that policy, although the amount being granted is a reduced amount. So the police do have a case, and have had a case for a long time, well before 1976, and even now that we have been moved out of power, for giving them better facilities. Unless their workplace is made commodious, satisfactory and suitable, some of the attitudes of which we complain, can be explained against that background.

There is the other aspect of police development, the personnel aspect. It is very much related to training, it is very much related to deployment. The point is that we were very slow in Barbados to recognise that economic development of the country will bring with it problems that could affect the very body politic. We were slow to

recognise that law and order were as much a part of the developmental process as were manufacturing and tourism. It is a lesson that has not yet been fully learnt by the planners who advise the Government sometimes, as well as by Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Economic Affairs, who make the final decision.

We found that rather than the police merely looking after, a population of a quarter of a million people during the year, they were having to cope with that quarter million doubled by tourism, and now more than doubled by tourism. This threw up new problems. It threw up problems of the attitude of the society towards our visitors. It threw up the problem of the visitors bringing part of their mores and conduct to Barbados, whether it was a problem of homosexuality or of drugs. It also threw up the problem of the conflictural relationship which can arise between visitors and the host country.

In the last resort, the police had to cope with all of this. Some of the private sector planners in tourism, did not anticipate the problem. There was very little provision made on hotel premises for adequate security. Very few of them, in planning their plant, consulted with the police on the needs which they had, or would have, and they waited until the problem manifested itself in its ugliest forms to demand on immediate solution and blamed the police for all their ills. In planning, one has to take a long term view, and certainly it would take more than a year, or three years, to answer that problem.

In 1976, when I took over responsibility, I recognised that the pleas of prior Commissioners of Police had not been favourably met, and I started a process of trying to convince the planner, particularly the people in the Planning Unit and the Ministry of Finance, that this was an area to which they had to respond. We were fortunate to get the assistance of the British. We had a very high-powered adviser who came down here and worked together with the Commissioner of Police. Let me say here that, even at that time, the present Commissioner showed the foresight and the ability which he had, because a lot of the concepts in that report were not the concepts of the outside adviser, but his concepts and those of others in the department who could recognise what they needed.

Against that background we were able to start increasing the Police Force until today, I believe the establishment is somewhere between 1 100 and 1 200 people. I have not looked at the recent report, so I cannot give the exact figure. But even then we recognised that merely increasing men was not the total answer but it was necessary in the developmental process to look at the question of training as well. We had gone through a period where training overseas was not really pursued very seriously, and where no attempt had been made to grapple internally with the problem of training by upgrading our Regional Police Training College. Policemen were thought to be people who only had to get some boots and a hat on and march down the road, after probably, an initial probationary period. We started to institute within the police service a higher grade of training at the level of sergeants and, I believe now inspectors at the Regional Police Training College. We saw it necessary to send persons overseas in the specialties and the skills that did not exist here. We pressed the British Government, through the ODA, the Canadian Government and more laterally the United States to help us with specialised training.

We also recognised that at the command level, it was necessary to equip our policemen with the maximum available skills. The Commissioner, who is one of the best Commissioners, let me say, that we have in the Caribbean, showed his expertise in criminology arid what not in the course that he went to, and is respected in international circles for his contribution in that area. It is not that we have not got the talent. It is largely a question of resources here. Therefore, when I hear us talking about the police, I think we have to begin to look back at the problems that they were identifying and realise that we, the policy makers, were, in many respects, too late in responding to the needs which they were so clearly saying to us had, of necessity to be met.

We have had an effort to retrain them. In the field of drugs, you will recall, Sir, that, I believe because of the politics of the day, we had discontinued having police dogs. In 1976, when I came in, it was recognised that police dogs were necessary for helping in detection. But you do not just buy dogs and put them into quarantine. A police dog responds to the person with whom he has been trained. They are trained side by side. It was necessary for us even in that field to begin by sending two or three people overseas, and then they came back and started helping training others. We went along those lines. 11.00 a.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member las another minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: All right, Sir. I will have to come back.

Let me in this last minute look at another aspect that was so important, the area of equipment. When I became Attorney General in 1976, I discovered that the police were badly served in some areas by the operational equipment and aids which they needed. I think that at that time they had less than 20 walkie-talkie sets in the Police Force, and the recommended level that you needed as a minimum was that one-third of the Force had to be adequately equipped with walkie-talkie sets. It took us some years to start getting this into the Force. I do not know what is the level now. I know that in these

Estimates I see that we are only providing seven or eight for them for this year, which may well be just scratching the surface in this case. Those were the sort of problems.

Unfortunately, time has run out for me on this segment. I hope to continue to show that whilst we have a genuine concern, we must now, as legislators around this table, put our money where our mouths are, and we have to emphasise in the planning that it is necessary, if the Police Force is to be brought up to the maximum level, for us to recognise their needs in time and respond to them in the way in which responses are called for.

Hon. B. M. TAITT and Hon. W. W. HALL rose.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I just wish to ....

I beg your pardon. I give way to the honourable Member.

Hon. W. W. HALL (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Chairman, it is quite obvious to me after five days in the field, as it were, that we will hardly get to my Ministry. I am telling you that this one is going to take a long time, and since I have never played in a five-day test match and not bat or bowled, I think I have to make a contribution this morning. I know that especially Members on that side, will be upset by my sartorial splendour this morning, but it has nothing to do with speaking.

On two days of our debate, we were more or less on the very important issue of agriculture, and so it should be. I would like to make a plea on behalf of the women of Barbados in relation to matters that affect them very dearly. I would like to let all honourable Members know that the women of Barbados want changes in the laws to help the police to help protect them, and as a consequence they have been coming to my Ministry daily, and phoning me daily and nightly, on these issues, and I would like to share them with you.

It is true that people resist change, we know this, but I am hoping the Attorney General, Sir, in his reply, will be able to tell me, all of us, what the plans are. I say so because anything to do with the women of this country, cannot be taken lightly, could never be a nebulous issue, for we must understand that the women of this country are the household heads, some 43%. We need therefore, to look at it very seriously.

I alluded to agriculture a few minutes ago. Although we debated agriculture for two days, it is passing strange that no one in that debate mentioned women, when we know that throughout the whole world, more women are working in agriculture than men, and if you go to India, Latin America, or Africa, Sir, you will find that women are the main workers in the field. I believe that although this is not so to such a large extent in Barbados —women have gone a very long way in Barbados in the field of agriculture; for instance, there are agronomist, veterinarian scientist, animal nutritionist and pathologist —it is also true that the women in Barbados, by and large, have been crying out for change.

In the Senate, Senator Forde tabled a question asking for the cases to be tried in-camera.

Aside

Hon. W. W. HALL: She was well tutored, he said. That is true.

A big question, a burning question, with the women of this country, and indeed, some men, is that they feel rape cases should be tried in-camera. The Ministry responsible for Women Affairs have sent an enquiry up to the Attorney General's Chambers and we are eagerly looking for a reply. Although we realise that there are some difficulties, I still feel that the women of this country need to know something about this very vexed question.

Sir, I do not believe that many people realize the traumatic experience that women who are raped go through. I say so because it seems that in Barbados, unless someone is of your own kin, we do not pay a lot of attention to it, although we had the situation' a few months ago where we had a fairly large demonstration throughout Bridgetown. We also had seminars and meetings where women were encouraged to come and tell of their experiences. I went along, because I was interested. As a family man, I wanted to know exactly what was happening. I must say to you, Sir, that there were many incidents where the ladies of this country have been made to sweat it out, and I feel the time has come when the entire country, all men and women, must look very seriously at this situation. If we do, then we will be able to give the police the type of co-operation that we really need.

In relation to the problem of people having cases tried in-camera, I do not believe that all the cases in Barbados have to be tried — I do not know if it is against the law — in Coleridge Street. There was a time when juvenile cases were held at Wesley Hall School — most of you will remember that — in the 1940s and 1950s. I feel that we need to have some statement on this so that the women of Barbados will be able to understand the problems that beset us, so that they will be able to take remedial action and they will understand that we are doing the best in the circumstances.

I went to see a film the other day. It was really relating to the way women react in cases of rape, and even though the man was sentenced to ten years in jail, the woman was still afraid. She was saying that ten years

would soon be up, that man would be let loose on the society again, and she feared for her life.

I agreed whole-heartedly with the Member for St. Michael Central when he talked about all of the pointing, mobbing and all of the things that are said about the victims which make them look as if they are the villians. I believe that this sort of attitude has done untold harm to the women of this country. 11.10a.m.

He also alluded to the fact that people seem to regard the victims as prostitutes. But if you went further than that and a prostitute was raped, is not she a human being? Does not she under the law deserve the same type of concern and consideration as any other woman as decent as she may be? One has to remember the woman at the well, who, when she was told of all her exploits ran into the village and said, "come, see a man that told me all things". We must not cast aspersions on people and make them feel dirty just because they are not as sanctimonious as we feel we are. We have to look at this very serious question.

I had the opportunity only this morning, Sir — I cannot make it a document of the House, because I have not actually got to a point of reading it in its entirety — of getting the report, "Physical Violence Against Women in Barbados from 1977 to 1985." This lady, Miss Myrna Jordan, was commissioned to do this work for the Women's Affairs Department and the findings are rather startling. It is ridiculous that, in some of the cases, you find not only a rape, but indeed an indecent assault. Men who have married women have beaten them to a point that when they have left home their mothers then say, "You have a husband now, so you cannot come back home to live." That is the predicament in which some of our young women are finding themselves today.

We also have the case, Sir, of a young woman finding herself at the door of a man who was supposed to be a repair man, introduced to her by a friend. The man came with dirty hands, so perhaps she thought he had been working all day, or perhaps he was looking after the - engine of his car. Having shown him the electrical appliances that she wanted fixed, she turned away feeling comfortable and is suddenly locked around her neck. As an asthmatic she began to choke, and when she fought back she was beaten unmercifully. That is the position in Barbados.

Those types of experiences last the lifetimes of women. There is no doubt in my mind about that. They last a lifetime and I have to ask the question, how long must women bear the unbearable sorrow? When I say these things, I want the women of Barbados to understand that the Ministry responsible for Women's Affairs is > trying to look at all these problems and to make sure that we are able to help the police in these matters.

We do not only look at the cases of rape in terms of the police doing a good job, we have to look at the case of child abuse with the young daughters of this country. Only the other day I could not restrain myself when I went to investigate a case and saw a 12 year-old girl holding a baby in her arms. I said, "Is that your sister?" And she said, "No, it is my child." Twelve years old, Sir! I could not believe my ears, and when I stepped up the investigation and said that we must find this man, I was told that he had gone to St. Lucia with a 10 year-old.

These things upset me, and I want people to understand the stark reality of the problem. The people in .the Child Care Board have done a mammoth job, I must say, Sir, but I want everyone to understand that we need to help the police in the investigation of these cases. No longer do we need people to point their fingers at our unfortunate women and our unfortunate little girls. No longer must we sit idly by and let the men who are employing women sexually harass them and then we see all sorts of molestation of our women in this country. I feel that we just have to look at it very seriously and do something about it, and give the police all the help that we can in this.

Of course, Sir, there are cultural factors where in Barbados one believes that to beat your wife is the norm. It is something handed down, and it is nobody's business if you hear the next door neighbour beating his wife, even unto death. I understand that in the Laws of Barbados there is still a law which says that a man can administer corporal punishment to a woman. I wonder if that is true. I hope the Attorney General will tell me that that is not true. It implies to me that women are our property, which is no longer the case. If that was so a few centuries ago, it is not true in Barbados. If that law is still on the Statute Books, I say it is time we completely remove it, and we should once and for all remove the phobia that if a man loves a woman, he has to beat her. I do not believe in that, and I think that all people in Barbados must understand that those days are long past and we need to look after our women folk.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has a minute.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Already? J am sorry, Sir. I will have to come back on this.

We have to think in terms of toilet facilities in the fields for the ladies, and the men, too. I feel that it is really against the law for one to sort of use our streets

in this way. I feel that if you are working in the cane-fields travelling on the buses and using terminals, we have to look after our people.

I also agree that the police can do a good job in the Neighbourhood Watch Programme - the Resident Beat Officer's Scheme and things like that. I too, am a product of the Police Boys' Club, and I thank Inspector Kenneth Murphy for that fatherly influence he actually exerted over me in the 1950s.

Sir, I think I have to get back to this, because I have not even touched drugs. But I feel that the women of Barbados deserve a better deal, and we need to come forward and help them in cases of rape so that the entire nation should walk against it. When we are doing walks against rape, there should not be 200 people, there should be 30 000 people.

Aside

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), must not talk women's rights, he must practise them.

Mr. Chairman, I should not be long, but I want to take this opportunity under the Head of Police, to thank the Royal Barbados Police Force for the contribution which it is making in the administering, promotion and orderly movement of the tourism industry in Barbados. There is no doubt that with over 370 000 people coming into the country on an annual basis, the resources of the country are stretched, and one of those resources is, of course, the Police Force.

When I took responsibility for Tourism, one of the things which we did was to place a representative of the Commissioner of Police on the Board of Tourism because, as I have said elsewhere, I believe that tourism really is everybody's business, and that all aspects of our administrative system that have to deal with or impinge on our tourism, or the other way round, ought to participate in the decision making of this very important and vital industry, and so the police participate in the decision making at the level of the Board. We are in constant contact with the Attorney General, and through him, the Commissioner of Police to step up and to refine some of the techniques for the prevention of crime moreso than the cure of crime.

11.20 a.m.

It has been seen before — and we have asked that it be intensified that where there is a high visibility of the Police Force in certain areas, especially on some of the beaches, the incidence of dope peddling and other related activities are reduced considerably. We know that the police will feel from time to time that they have a never ending spiral of repetition on a daily basis, because those who peddle dope, especially, and others who perpetrate certain kinds of visitor-related crimes, change their techniques almost from day to day. Many of them have developed expertise which requires the Police Force to match them on an almost on-going basis, but the fact is that there has been a substantial improvement in the crime related activity on the beach, thanks to the co-operation of the Police Force. Both the uniformed police and the so-called plain clothes policeman have been active on the beach. From time to time, I am reminded that the Mounted Police have also been visible on the beach, and this combination has been making itself felt on the beach.

That is not to say that we have licked the problem. It means that we have, and we have been discussing this, the Attorney General and myself, constantly to intensify patrols, because the numbers coming into Barbados are increasing, and if we are fortunate, they will be coming all year round, in 1987 again. I say "if we are fortunate," because, as I have said before, I believe that tourism development involves every single person in Barbados, and, therefore, the plans which we make depend, to a large extent, on the co-operation of almost every person in this community. But I have reason to believe, and the prospects suggest, that we are going to be having a sustained visitor population throughout the year, and, therefore, we are going to be requiring the Royal Barbados Police Force to function at a very high level in this regard throughout the year.

I think that, to the extent that it is humanly possible within the context of our total resources, the Minister has been given, to my understanding, resources to allow for redeployment, where necessary, of the Force to accommodate visitor related problems. We have certain built-in difficulties. For example, there are still areas in Barbados which require additional lighting, especially in the northern and western areas of the country. We may need to have a review of some of the wooded areas and improve the lighting, and — this is an area that is inherent — we may need to step up the patrols in some of the more isolated and exclusive areas, not necessarily because they are entitled to any special policing, but because criminality is attracted to those areas with more profusion than some of the other areas.

The crime statistics of personal crime against visitors have shown increase in the winter time. This is expected, because, as I said earlier, criminals understand the movement of people and they understand the tourism industry as well as anybody else, and if the visitor is their victim, they will tend to congregate where there are large numbers of visitors. Even so, it appears as though the police have been stepping up their vigilence in that regard.

There is one kind of crime which has raised its head, it appears to be on the increase, and I put it on the record for what it is worth. The Attorney General is already aware of it. There are small groups of youngish people who lurk in some of the lonelier 'areas of Barba dos, like Cherry Tree Hill, and certain areas of Bathsheba, and they wait for the visitor, who, obviously, would not know the roads as those of us who live here, and some of the new techniques have been, especially in the open moke, to board the moke .....

Asides

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am being told by the former Attorney General that it is about five years old, but it is intensifying. They board the mokes and, in some instances, terrorize the visitors. They engage in some snatching and the usual problems associated with this.

Each opportunity we get, we point out the information which comes to us to the police, and it is my understanding that special steps are being taken to deal with these areas, especially areas such as Cherry Tree Hill and Ragged Point. The idea here is to. make these places safe for Barbadians and visitors alike, because Barbadians are now doing almost exactly the same things that visitors do. Many of us get in our respective vehicles and go and explore the country as we invite the visitors to explore the country, and I think it is well known that my views are that we must have ah[1] of these facilities, not for the tourists but for our country, so that all of us are beneficiaries, but we would be burying our heads in the sand if we did not recognise that, by their very nature, visitors would tend to attract certain kind of criminal activity.

The question of drugs has been aired clearly and steadily in this House during the last few days. I do not wish to re-establish the debate, but I think that visitor-related drug crimes operate not from the point of view of the Barbadian, but from the point of view of the visitor. There are many visitors who come into Barbados who bring their supplies with them. At the same time, however, it is well known that there are points in Barbados where any visitor who comes in knows where to go and get his supply, and if he does not get it immediately, there is always somebody on the beach who invites them, as I understand it, to get their minds blown. That is the phrase they use. Almost everybody on the beach knows who the pushers are. If you work the beach long enough, you soon get to find out who the pushers are, and this is one of the areas in which I would invite the Attorney General to invite the Commissioner of Police to spend a little more time.

I believe that a special examination of the known pushers in Barbados has to be done. There is no point anybody asking me to supply the names of the pushers. I do not know them. What I am saying is that there are people who will tell you that people know them, and, therefore, if they will tell me, if they will tell the Attorney General, if they will tell the Commissioner of Police, they obviously will tell other policemen where to find them. I am recommending that that is an area that should attract some additional attention. 11.30a.m.

We have been getting some very complimentary letters from visitors who have come to Barbados, who have had either prompt or courteous reaction from the police, and who have taken the trouble to write to the Ministry and to record their appreciation. Invariably, the kudos which we get are about young constables. So for what it is worth, since we are constantly complaining, and I am one who will complain when we have reason to, I feel it is only fair that I should put in the record of this Honourable Chamber that we are receiving on a fairly steady basis complimentary comments about officials in Barbados, including the Royal Barbados Police Force, and I would say that the compliments are outweighing the complaints by something like three or four to one. We take the complaints very seriously, but we take the compliments equally as seriously, and I would like to publicly thank the police for their assistance in this regard, and to hope that we can continue to have the co-operation that will see us all benefiting from the efforts concerned.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I will be short in this intervention, but I do so because I think that it is necessary to emphasise the positive, and one would not want to convey the impression that there is everything negative about the Police Force. I am not at all suggesting that this is the view which is coming from both sides. I recognise that what has happened is that the police has been brought under some fairly negative scrutiny, and I am satisfied that as a result of the spotlight which has teen put on the Police Force, efforts would be made to rise to the challenge which has been thrown out to the police in the execution of their duties.

I want to take a slightly different angle, though, and to speak more in terms of the kind of vein which the Honourable Minister of Tourism spoke relative to the Police Force. It is my belief that the Police Force has a role to play in the community in terms of becoming involved in community-type activities, and one can see this trend gaining ground more and more. If one could refer, for example, to the occasions on which the police are called upon to speak to various community groups and to speak at schools, one would recognise that there is a general appreciation in the community for the kind of role of community involvement that one would want to see members of the Police Force embark on. I think that this is a step which ought to be commended and certainly encouraged.

My main purpose for intervening in this debate today, as I did yesterday, is out of a recognition of the fact that we may not reach some of the other Heads, and I want to speak to the question of co-operatives and to emphasise the role which the Royal Barbados Police Force has played in the development and promotion of co-operatives, both consumer and credit union co-operatives, in this country.

Sir, I think that the stage is set in this country for a take off in the co-operative movement. The Royal Barbados Police Force can be considered a path breaker in this particular area, indeed, in the area of credit unions, it can safely be said that the Police Force has one of the strongest co-operatives in Barbados. If you talk to a number of members of the Force who are members of that organisation, the police co-ops, you would readily see the kind of contribution which the credit union has been able to make towards their life in terms of facilitating the purchase of land, house, motor car or the kinds of things which they wanted in order to improve their quality of life. Within recent years, the police have been able to extend that area into the area of consumer co-operatives so that they are part and parcel of the growth in the co-operative movement which we are witnessing in this country.

The Democratic Labour Party, recognising that this was an area where not only the savings of the working class people, and other people generally, could be mobilised in the society for their own personal development, and possibly for other developmental purposes within the economy, placed a considerable emphasis on this in its manifesto. Indeed, Sir, I have been charged with the responsibility for Co-operatives, having been associated with the formation of one from the floor level, that is, the Barbados Workers' Union Co-operative Credit Union Limited, one which in a short space of time has accumulated capital in excess of $1.5 million, and the projection suggests that by the end of 1987, the share capital would be in the region of $4 million, because of the rate at which it is growing.

I think that what is happening is that one has seen a renewed interest in the co-operative movement in this country, and in an effort to encourage this, the Democratic Labour Party, made a number of pledges, which we will implement during the course of this period that we have at our disposal. We committed ourselves in our manifesto for the 1986 election campaign, at page 26, to a number of policy measures. We said that we would "revise the Co-operative Act so as to bring it in line with modern trends in the Co-operative Movement," and we are working very closely towards that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are also paying tribute to the police who contributed.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Of course. As a matter of fact, some time ago when the first effort was made to discuss modernisation of the legislation, the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris), and I participated in that. Representatives from the Police Co-operative Society were present at that meeting.

We also had promised and pledged to restructure, re-organise and expand the Co-operative Department and strengthen its operation under the direction of an appointed Registrar of Co-operatives. Indeed, Sir, the representatives of the Police Co-operatives have been stressing the need to restructure and re-organise the Co-operative Department, and also the need for the appointment of a Registrar of Co-operatives. We are working towards that particular objective.

We said we would encourage the development of consumer, producer and industrial co-operatives. We are seeing today a number of people and groups enquiring about and venturing into this particular area, and we want to provide the kind of environment and give the kind of encouragement for them to become involved in that area. 11.40 a.m.

Fifthly, we said that we would use moral suasion to encourage private enterprise to provide check-off facilities for Credit Union members at their work-place. I think that if there is one area which demonstrates very clearly the wisdom of this particular move, it is in the Police Force, because they have instituted a ready check-off system. I believe that that is one of the reasons why their co-operative was able to grow in the way it has grown in the years of its existence, and other co-operatives with access to this facility, have also shown a similar growth.

I could go on to indicate and make the linkage between the co-operative movement and police department. I do not think that we need to further substantiate the point which I am making with the evidence that I have at my disposal. I want to give them the assurance, as well as other co-operatives and potential co-operatives, that this Democratic Labour Party Government will, sixthly, "seek funding to help co-operatives to purchase land for use in agricultural diversification and provide technical and marketing services for these co-operatives." We are at the moment talking with a number of agencies who are willing to offer assistance towards the full development of co-operatives in this society.

We would also be providing funds and seeking international assistance for continuous training of personnel involved in the co-operative movement. That is the seventh pledge under the Democratic Labour Party-s

manifesto. We have said that we would provide tax concessions for properties and training establishments owned and controlled by co-operatives registered under the Co-operatives Act. We will also develop a special programme the establishment of co-operatives amongst the school population. We also indicated that we would increase financial and other assistance to the National Association of Co-operative Societies. All of these are commitments, which we have made, recognising the importance which the co-operative movement can play in the development of this society and as evidenced by the kind of contribution which the Police Co-operative has made to the development and well-being of the members and the beneficiaries of that society.

I think that you ought to be aware of the fact, Sir, that the movement has shown, and continues to show, positive growth. For example, in 1985 the membership of the co-operative movement was 18 741 spreading over credit unions, consumer co-ops, farmers co-ops, fishing co-ops, savings co-ops and transport co-ops. In 1986, that membership grew to 23 268. The savings in 1985 were $23 825 055 of which the Police Co-op had a substantial amount. In 1986, this grew to $36.6 million. The assets in 1985 were $29.3 million, and in 1986 grew to $44.9 million. I am saying all this, Sir, to demonstrate that by taking the lead and by being successful, the police co-op was able to impress upon other groups in the society that this was a way to go, a positive way. The Democratic Labour Party, and certainly the Ministry which has the responsibility for co-ops, and for which I have the constitutional responsibility, will do everything to encourage the formation of co-operative societies, and will certainly also ensure that the Police Co-operative continues to grow in the way it has been growing.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE (St. James North): Mr. Chairman, we have had some very interesting contributions from all the other Members. The Minister of Tourism dealt in some detail with visitors and crime. I believe that that is an area to which the police need to pay some attention. We have a situation where there are some difficulties faced by the police in carrying out their duties in this particular area. We have a situation where sometimes visitors come to this country for three or four days and there may be a crime committed against them. They leave the country two or three days after the incident and the accused person feels confident that he will not be convicted because the police will not be able to present the evidence before the court to secure a conviction. This is an area which has been causing some concern in the legal circles, because many people who come here and become the victims of crime, recognise that they leave the country without justice being done to persons who are accused in these matters, and this is a matter which I believed has to be thoroughly looked at. We have to devise a system where perhaps we can have a speedy trial before those persons leave the island, to bring these persons to justice. I know there are many cases where the visitors are asked to return to the country to give evidence, but this has been creating expense for the taxpavers, because the Government has to pay the cost of bringing the visitors back here. I believe that if this matter is carefully looked at, we would be able to tap some of that crime and stop some of those people who use visitors as a source of creating crime in the country.

I think we also have to look at crimes committed by visitors. I remember that when I began to practise law some ten years ago, whenever you went in the court the majority of persons who would be present in the courtroom would be locals. If you saw any visitors, most of them would be visitors attending court as witnesses. But today we have many instances where visitors come to the island and get involved in crime and have to be brought before the court. I do not know if the Honourable Attorney General would have any figures in this regard, but it has been recognised that there has been some increase in crime by visitors. 11.50a.m.

I believe that we have to watch this particular matter very carefully, because this is a matter which can create a lot of adverse publicity for the country when these visitors return to their home countries. We may find, for example, that a visitor may come here and may become involved with some matter with the police and he may be dissatisfied with the outcome, or may be dissatisfied with the way the matter is handled, or may be dissatisfied with some aspect of the matter, and then returns to his country and creates bad publicity for this country. We had a recent case involving a visitor which has created a lot of bad publicity for this country. I believe that in that particular case, the police did everything and that the legal system worked to the best advantage of that particular person, but nevertheless this country suffered a lot of bad publicity. Therefore, we have to look at a lot of aspects of this matter to see how this matter can be dealt with without creating a situation adverse to our tourist industry.

In this particular case, there was a complaint that the person was kept in police custody under inhuman conditions. We hear complaints from time to time about the conditions which exist, and which persons who are waiting trial have to undergo and under which they have to succumb. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that whether the allegations are true or not, it is a matter that creates bad publicity for the country, and it has to be examined. First of all, if this allegation is true, I believe it is a matter that should be investigated by the Ministry of Health, because even persons who are awaiting trial, even persons who are convicted have rights, and persons should not be subject to certain conditions. I think we should have a minimum standard to which people should

I want to make a brief intervention on a matter which I think is of great concern, touching a large number of persons in the community. I speak to the subject of praedial larceny. I have a great deal of sympathy for the primary producer in our country, whether that primary producer is the owner of a sugar estate or is like the Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), a person who owns one lime tree, or somebody like myself, intermediate, who used at one time, to keep a kitchen garden on about an eighth of an acre.

I believe that we have to be very careful about a crow philosophy that can develop in our country — the crow, 1 think, is the bird that allows other birds to build a nest and then he decides to live in that nest — or the Robin Hood mentality that was created in our minds as youngsters when we went to school through stories about that person who was supposed to haunt Sherwood Forest to steal from those who had accumulated, allegedly to pass it on to others who had not. I have never been a firm believer in that mythological person, a hero of the British certainly not a hero of mine. I believe that when persons take the effort to develop their crops, they have a right to be able to reap the crops that they have sown, and praedial larceny is a real concern.

I am aware of historical periods where there have been increases in the incidence of praedial larceny because of recessionary or depressing periods, when people were almost forced at times when there were shortages of food, for one reason or another, to try to get food from a source to maintain their lives, their livelihood. I do not think that that can be the situation today. I do not think that those who engage in praedial larceny are really engaging for survival. I think this is out and out stealing, and it is being organised, it is becoming a way of life for some persons. Before a vigilante concept is developed further, where the owners of land will take guns and wait for them and shoot them — we do not want that to develop in this country — we have to signal as a legislative body to those persons who practise that kind of activity that we consider this to be an extremely serious matter.

We have to use several areas to approach this problem. We have to make direct appeals to householders, for instance, to stop buying from persons who they know did not plant, did not cultivate, but only reaped and are selling to them. There has to be a consciousness among wholesalers that they cannot look only to making profits, and in doing that they will suborn the entire morality of this country. We have to appeal to housewives and ask them to check, first of all, the source of their purchase, because there is a real danger, too, in that a person who is out to steal crops will not necessarily seek information about whether any of the dangerous 12, the 12 dangerous pesticides, has been used on that crop — Aldrin or one of them — and used in very recent times, so that when they purchase from the persons who are purporting to be able to sell these crops, they may be endangering themselves and their families, they might, in fact, be encouraging the ingestation of poisoned food, and I believe that is another problem.

I have heard of cases, Sir, of farmers who lost as much as five tonnes of yams to praedial larceny. I have heard of some farmers who can lose up to $200000 a year. I believe that this must be treated as a very serious matter. There are now some persons who are cutting canes and carrying away half a field of canes to sell in areas distant from where they normally live. I believe that we have to give a great deal of attention to this matter. I believe the police will have to think hi terms of how they can counter that problem.

We heard the Honourable Minister of Trade mention co-operatives. There is one area of co-operatives that is not developing, I believe, because of this particular problem. The area of producers' co-operatives. We have the Credit Unions and we have one or two consumer co-operatives, but you are not going to get producers' co-operatives when there is the real risk of going into crop development and not be sure that you will be able to get the benefits of that type of development.

My final point, Sir, is that I would like to congratulate the Royal Barbados Police Force on one area of their activity. It seems to me that, in recent times, they have been able successfully to bring cases of white collar crime before the courts, especially white collar crime relating to civil servants, in a number of areas. In the National Insurance Scheme I think there were some problems and in the Post Office. These are areas where a lot of money is generated, and one can expect the temptation will be great, and it seems to me that they have been able to investigate these cases and bring them to court. I think the courts have not always been able to successfully prosecute the cases, but I think the police must be congratulated for their very proficient work in this area.

i thank you.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I intervene at this point because a lot of questions have been building up, and I believe in duty I should respond to them.

First of all, let me just offer a word of recognition for the compliments paid to the Police Force by honourable Members since I last intervened in this debate. The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), the honourable Member for St. Lucy

be subjected. We cannot have people leaving this country talking about their being put in a hell hole, urine, and all that sort of nonsense. I think this kind of publicity is bad for a country if the information is not true, and I believe that if the matter is properly handled by the authorities involved in this matter, it can be straightened out. I do not think it should only be in respect of visitors, but people in general, because people in general should not be submitted to inhuman conditions.

There is no doubt in my mind, Mr. Chairman, that all people who visit this country have heard of the very high reputation for human rights that exist here. I believe that if the Honourable Attorney General was asked to give the figures of persons who now make applications for residence in this country, we will find that applications come in from people all over the world. Barbados has been one of those countries which can boast of a high level of respect for human rights and it is a matter which we should not allow to get out of hand by this bad publicity.

We have heard it said that there has been a lot of criticism levelled against the police. I believe that any individual or any organization would get criticism. They have criticised lawyers, they criticise doctors, they criticise trade unionists and they criticise the police. I believe that the criticism which we heard today was constructive criticism, given in the spirit of improving the system of policing in this country and improving the level of efficiency in the Royal Barbados Police Force. I believe that all of us should take the comments which were made here today in that spirit, with the knowledge that persons were seeking to look at methods and means of improving the general efficiency in the Barbados Police Force.

But we get a criticism constantly from persons who are detained by the police for questioning, that they are refused the opportunity to consult with a lawyer. We get the criticism that when their relatives go to the police station, they are denied the opportunity to get information of their whereabouts, and that sometimes they are shifted from one police station to the other to prevent attorneys from consulting with their clients. These accusations are heard every now and again. Some of them may not be true, but the fact is that they are levelled at the police and should be dealt with. What I am saying is that if the public relations aspect of this matter is properly dealt with, and if the police can give information to counsel and to the relatives as to the progress of their investigations, in many of these instances that would assist. I believe that this is a matter which should be looked at, because we cannot afford to have the Police Force run down by criticism which is adverse, and some of which may not be true.

Another area is the question of the length of time that persons are detained before they are brought before the court for trial. There are allegations that persons spend sometimes more than 24 hours in a police station assisting the police in their investigation. We are talking about the constitutional rights of people, and when we are talking about constitutional rights we should take a very serious view of these matters, and when persons are detained, whether they are assisting the police in the investigation or whether they are arrested by the police, the Constitution provides that they should be brought before the court as soon as is reasonably practicable. These are things that have to be dealt with and looked at very carefully, because it is this kind of publicity that runs down the Force and creates a bad image, and not only for the Barbados Police Force, because when a person criticises the Police Force, they criticise all of us, because all of us belong to this country. I think that we have, therefore, to look at the question of public relations.

Someone dealt with the Resident Beat Officer Scheme as a method. I think the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) suggested that they can speak to school groups and that sort of thing. I believe that these are areas where the police image can be improved. If we can have the police involved with church groups and others, it would go a long way towards improving their image.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute to wind up.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE: I will conclude in a very short time.

In conclusion, on visitors again, some information has come to my attention. I was talking to one of our insurance consultants only recently, and he was telling me of occasions where visitors come to this country and report robberies and go back to their home country to make claims on their insurance companies. This is also a matter which should be looked at very carefully, because, in some instances, we may believe that persons in this country are committing crimes, but the visitors, due to their sophistication, are creating an environment of mischief. 12 noon.

Mr. Chairman, I may want to come back on this particular subject a little later. Thank you.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church Easi Central): Mr. Chairman, from the length and the breadth of this debate, really there is a concern about what the police can do. It seems to me that the Honourable Attorney General might be getting ready very soon to tell us what his perception of what the police can do is.

(Hon. E. E. Greaves), and the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) all spoke in praise of the police. The honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne) spoke in praise as well, although interlaced with his comments on the Police Force were some areas of criticism.

Let me respond to a point raised by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central in relation to praedial larceny. The statistics on crime for the years indicate that there has been some decrease, marginal albeit, in the incidence of praedial larceny. In 1986, the reported cases of praedial larceny were 42 as against 46 1985, 88 in 1984, 71 in 1983 and 51 in 1982, so there has been a marginal decrease in this area and I suppose we should compliment the Police Force for securing that marginal decrease.

The points in respect of which the honourable Member for St. James North was critical of the Police Force largely related to the manner in which the police carry out their investigative and detection duties. This is a point about which all lawyers complain from time to time. It is not an area in respect of which I, as Attorney General, could interfere, if you bear in mind the relationship between a Minister of the Crown and the Police Force. If persons' rights have been infringed by the police, I think the law provides that they should take the matter before the courts, although I know one of the problems about doing this is that persons always find it difficult to establish proof. 12.10 p.m.

A substantial matter which the honourable Member for St. James North raised related to the condition of the cells at police stations, and about the negative publicity which was given to Barbados as a result of a recent incident where the person involved was placed in a cell. I know that from time to time, when I was a member of the Opposition, I had spoken of the bad condition of the cells at Central Police Station. Since I became Minister responsible for Police, I have visited the Central Police Station and noted the condition of Central Police Station and of the cells. They need a lot of work to be done on them.

I know the Minister of Finance wanted to speak before me, but I thought that I might provoke him to do a little more from a financial point of view for the Police Force. We need to tug on his coattail a bit to ensure that we get some financing for some of the capital works programmes so that the accommodation of the police can be enhanced. The point made by the honourable Member for Christ Church West that successive Governments, successive Ministers of Finance, have always been - I do not want to use the word "mean" in respect of my good friend - watching the budget quite closely, particularly when it came to areas of the police. But since there is such national concern, there seems to be a consensus of concern for the Police Force, and so the Minister of Finance, who is now in his seat, will take to heart the concerns which the general public and the Members of this House have for the Police Force and will loosen some strings a little bit.

I would like to deal a little though specifically....

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: All Ministers of Finance do. The strings have always been tied.

I would like to deal a little specifically with the comments of the honourable Member for St. James North when he talked about the negative publicity given to Barbados. He talked about visitors who come here, return home, report robberies and make insurance claims on them. What can we do about that? I do not know that there is anything that we in Barbados can do about a dishonest visitor who has been robbed and who goes overseas and makes a big fuss and hullabaloo about it and begins to file a claim.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE: On a point of clarification, Mr. Chairman: The point I was trying to make is that local Barbadian people get arrested and interrogated in respect of these matters, and that aspect of it should concern us. If a visitor comes here and tells the police that he has been robbed, when, in fact, there was no robbery, and the police go and question people and keep them in a police station, that should concern us.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, it does concern us, because if a visitor, a Barbadian, or anybody else goes and complains to the police that he or she has been robbed, do you not think that the police are in duty bound to investigate? If the police do not investigate, you will hear another criticism against them that they called the police and the police did not turn up. All I am saying is that that is not a fair criticism of the police or of our system if you say a visitor who is dishonest goes overseas and does nonsense, who makes false accusations against persons, irrespective of who they are. It cannot be a fair accusation against anybody to say that somebody is responsible for that other than the dishonest visitor.

In respect of the other matter, the one in respect of which there was recent publicity, what can we do about a person going abroad and spreading false rumours about us? I have some information in respect of that matter which indicates that the person concerned seemed to have been given reasonable facility. The person, whether Barbadian or non Barbadian, was a prisoner, was placed in the cells at Central Police Station where a person from the constituency of the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller), would have been placed if they were arrested in similar circumstances, but she was given even better treatment than before. So what you

are having is a situation where people from different environments come here, want to be treated differently from our own local people, and then because they do not get the kind of treatment and the recognition which they want, begin to complain about it. And because that they have access to the news media, are articulate, well off and can afford it, they are in a position to spread negative comments, whether they are true or false, about our country, I do not think we need to worry unduly about that. The person involved came to the country and was charged with possession of drugs. She had a fair trial, as far as I know, and that was the end of the matter. I do not think that we should make too much heavy weather about that.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. W. W. Hall), managed to get into this discussion on the question of women's rights, and he voiced some concerns for the women in the society. He wanted a response from me on the attitude of the Government, I believe, largely to the problem of trials in camera for persons charged with offences against women.

There has been a very strong lobby on behalf of those who support women's rights. I believe the point was made by another honourable Member about the embarrassment and the humiliation which women undergo in cases where they are required to give evidence before the courts, cases of rape and other sexual offences against women. This is a matter which has concerned us as a political party. I am sure it has concerned members of the Opposition as well. It concerns the courts. It concerns the whole judicial system. It raises some very basic and fundamental questions about the right to a fair trial and about the administration of justice.

There are two competing schools of thought, two competing concerns. First, there is the concern about the innocent victim of crime and that every facility should be given to the innocent victim of crime so as to enable that victim to do everything to assist in the proper dispensation of justice. On the other hand, there is the other basic fundamental constitutional principle, that anyone who is charged with an offence is presumed to be innocent until he is found guilty, and that that person has a right to a fair trial before a jury of his peers, and to a public trial as well.

The Constitution of Barbados — and this is one of the entrenched provisions of our constitution — in Section 18 of the Constitution, the marginal note to which states:

"Provisions to secure protection of the law", says:

(1) If any person is charged with a criminal offence, then, unless the charge is withdrawn, the case shall be afforded a fair hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial court established by law." ,

There are a number of provisions which follow, and at subsection (9), we have this very important constitutional provision:

"Except with the agreement of all the parties thereto, all proceedings of every court and proceedings for the determination of the existence or extent of any civil right or obligation before any other tribunal, shall be held in public." •

So there is a mandatory provision that all trials must be held in public. Section 10 goes on to place a reservation on that:

"Nothing in subsection (9) shall prevent the court or other tribunal from excluding from the proceedings persons other than the parties thereto and their legal representatives to such extent as the court or other tribunal —

(a) may by law be empowered so to do and may consider necessary or expedient in circum stances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice or in interlocutory proceed ings or in the interests of decency, public morality the welfare of persons under the age of eighteen years or the protection of the private lives of persons concerned in the pro ceedings; or

(b) may by law be empowered or required so to do in the interests of defence, public safety or public order."

That does allow for the enactment of provisions which would justify judges, in special circumstances, excluding sections to the public, and let me say here and now that I agree that there is room for improvement in the arrangements for the trial of persons where sexual offences against women are concerned. There are concerns about the attendant publicity. I think something should be done about that. Perhaps the judges could exercise an inherent jurisdiction which they have in limiting the type of questions which could be put to the victims of crime who are giving evidence before the court.

The point I am trying to make is this that it is not an easy matter to resolve, because there are important constitutional principles which have equal strength on both sides. At the same time, there is room for an improvement in the existing arrangements, where, perhaps, some consideration could be given to Umiting the quality of questions which are put to witnesses and, to some

extent, in restricting qualitatively the number of persons who may be involved and who may be present at the trial. But it is a matter which needs a lot of investigation. It is not a matter on which you are going to get easy agreement.

Trials in camera is not a matter which judicial officers like very much. Bear in mind that secret trials and trials in camera are things which have been condoned in the common law world because of the injustices which, historically, have been meted out to people who were tried in secret trials. In the old days, there were courts like the Star Chamber. The Star Chamber was the most heinous of the courts where trials were held in camera. The whole concept of holding trials in camera is something which jurists tend to view very warily. But it is a matter which is being looked at, and in respect of which a conclusion will be reached in the fullness of time.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, a lot has been said this morning, to which I can give my support, in relation to the many compliments that can be paid to the Police Force. It was also shown that there are some skeletons in the cupboard of the Police Force, but I am not seeking the opportunity at this stage to lay blame or to be even critical of the Police Force, although there are a few observations which I should like to make in the hope that our society, in general, can benefit from it.

I am influenced by a discipline which forces me to abhor sin, even violently, yet retaining the capacity of love and concern to the sinner. In that regard, even though one can see that there are problems in our society, one has to realise that there is a measure of maturity that is necessary for us to be able to look at these matters in the way that I shall look at this one.

I believe that we are all agreed that the members of the Police Force, men and women, are the mothers and fathers of our society, and even the members of the Police Force have been complaining of the use of children in crime, and there have been some rumours that children have been used in the trafficking of drugs. My call, therefore, is to the adult population of our society as it relates to their responsibility for the young men and women of our country. If even we look at the matter relating to the number of children who are on the streets in the City of Bridgetown just before, during and just after school hours, we can see that there is a budding problem if there is not some check carried out on these children. 12.30 p.m.

Not very long ago, Sir, in one of the Bridgetown stores there were three young boys, I believe the ages would have been about between 12 and 13. One of them was apprehended in a Bridgetown store - the other two scampered out — only to find that one of these youngsters had in his possession the property of. the store owner.

I believe that there is a responsibility not only for the parents of our society, but for all grown-ups to take a responsibility for the proper training and care of our young people. I do not wish to dwell on the rumours that we have heard of children trafficking drugs. But if there is any truth about it at all, I believe that parents in the home must be in a position to detect changes in the behaviour of children. There is no use waiting until the horse gets out of the stable, then to try to close the stable door. There is no point pointing your finger at the Government, at the police, at the courts, at anybody if at the very beginning of our influence on our families and the young people of our country, we find it difficult to give them a sense of responsibility. My call, is that the adults of our country take their responsibility seriously, and that they assist whenever possible not only the police, but other parents in trying to bring under control the matters of juvenile crime and juvenile involvement in the trafficking of drugs.

There is also a responsibility for the school teachers and the headmasters in this matter of boys and girls not attending school during the hours that they should be attending school, and in so far as where that responsibility lies, I believe parents should be made aware of the« absentees from school during times that they are supposed to be in school and to have some sort of interrelationship in the management of the children of our nation.

I do not know what the statistics are, whether the police have made any improvement since the complaint about the use of children in crime, but where you find adults have been taking the small hands to get into small crevices to take out what they want for big hauls, I think the blame must be placed fairly and squarely not on the children, not on the police, not on anybody else but on the adults of our society. There is a sort of mirror reflection of parents and adults when you look at the lives and the behaviour of our children. Therefore, I would call on all parents, all adults, to give the police, to whom we have paid some compliments today for the manner in which they have been carrying out their duties, all the assistance that is necessary to bring these matters under control, and to help as far as in them lies, to assist in the orderly development of the young people of our country.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS and Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I recognise the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

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

Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a couple of points. We have a lot more to do. We have not got to Capital yet. I will ensure that the Honourable Minister of Finance gets a chance.

I want to put something in perspective. I am very indebted to the Honourable Minister of Health and the honourable Member for St. Peter for drawing to my attention, on entering the House this morning, that CBC, of course, distorted my speech last night to one leading headline that suggested that there is massive homosexuality in the Police Force. No wonder the police at Holetown this morning were very upset!

(Aside: They approached you?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Who approach me? I am like Tommy Miller — I do not know that word!

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will wait and see if, CBC has the courage, the honesty and the decency to carry the appropriate correction this evening.

Sir, each one of us who has spoken in this debate, some explicitly, others by implication, have sought to make it clear that none of us is against the Police Force. All of us recognise the difficulties under which the police have to operate. We have, where praise was necessary, handed out liberally, all of us who have spoken, that praise. But all of us have also recognised — I made the point and was followed by the Deputy Prime Minister, the Member for St. Michael Central and the Honourable Attorney General - that the police, as 1 200 men, is, as I said, a microcosm, a small group, of the larger society, and one can expect that all the prejudices and problems which exist in the larger society would be in some way reflected by the smaller group. I said that there have been times when policemen were charged for stealing guns out of the armoury, police have been charged for homosexuality - and I am not going to talk about the private complaints I had as Attorney General, about the matter •of homosexuality, both in relation to the police and prison officers — and policemen have been charged with drugs. We have recognized the shortcomings, spoken honestly about them and have hoped that the management of the Police Force, who are themselves aware of the problems, will be encouraged to deal with them.

I did not get a chance to say it last night, but I was particularly pleased that in one or two cases of criminality within the Force itself, the Force is showing a willingness to deal with its internal miscreants through the court system rather than hiding it up. There are two views even in the Police Force. Some feel that they should deal with it as an internal departmental matter, perhaps disciplinary, and let the fellows slide out. I think it is better to expose them and make a public example for the public. But I do not think any of us who spoke gave or sought to give the impression that there was large scale infelicity in the Police Force of one criminality of any kind.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is not an infelicity, it is criminality. No one Bought to give the impression that it is something that is burgeoning and it is uncontrollable. I only hope that the people who carried the misleading report will correct it, 12.40 p.m.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is true. I must say that I have been hearing that the reports on the radio and television have been very fair and balance. I cannot say the same thing for the Nation Newspaper, but we will deal with that in another place. I have another role. I have never yet exercised my rights as a shareholder in the paper that I formed. I was one of 11 who sat down in the old Press Club on Bay Street and decided we were going to chip in $2000 and start a newspaper. I have never been to a meeting. I get the dividend cheque when the year comes for the account and that is the extent of my involvement. I feel that I am going to one this year, though.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No Collin Williams.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not let us get into that. The reasons for starting it are not important. It plays some role in reporting crime and it is an outlet for people who are fixated about communism and all other things to write. One would hope that it would become accurate. I will have something to say about them later on this evening. I might have to say it to the Speaker as a matter of privilege. I am getting it checked inside.

Having regard to what the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller) said, the Nation Corporation, which publishes these reports of crime, is, I am proud to say, a very good example of a successful black business, with a shareholding of less than 50 black Barbadians who

own a newspaper, radio station, travel agency headquarters on Roebuck Street, and so on. They are well off.

Getting back to the Head under discussion, I am glad to see that the Police Band is getting some new instruments, which they deserve. I do not think that any of us has paid tribute yet to the Police Band and the great work that they do locally, and particularly overseas, in contributing to the tourism effort. Of course, as a bit of a musician myself, I was very interested in the kinds of equipment that they are getting.

Last year, there were criticisms, when I was Attorney General, from knowledgeable musicians that the band sounded flat and something was wrong with the instruments. It is clear now, from the types of equipment I see set out in the note to Subhead 4, that they are modernising the horn section of the band. But I think we have to go a little further in the future and develop the string section of the band. We need a synthesizer and other modem bits of equipment, like electronic bass. But the start with the modernisation of the horn section is very important.

I am very glad that the Honourable Attorney General has indicated that the development at St. Cecilia ought to get off the ground in this financial year. I think the plan had been to start probably about September 1986, but for reasons of money, we could not start it early in the financial year. The plans had been ready when I addressed the Police Association in December 1985, and I left copies of the plan with them. I have no reason to believe that the architectural drawings have changed, and when completed, the facility, even Phase 1, will be something of which the police, the bandsmen in particular, can be proud. Right now the conditions up there are very, very awful. I am not going to use any stronger language, because that may make a headline, too.

Sir, I have not said anything in this debate about drugs. I want to speak at a level perhaps different from the usual. Both parties recognise there is a problem with drugs. But I want to counsel .Members, particularly the former Opposition who now finds themselves in Government, that great damage has been done to the body politic and the reputations and characters of politicians by unwarranted and baseless rumour which was spread about, I believe, in a lot of instances for the sake of political gain. One of the most unhappy episodes during the time I was Attorney General — and in my life this is something I will never, never forget — was the nasty and scurrilous document that was put abroad on the weekend of October 6, 1985 headlined, "Attention All Intelligent Barbadians", and distributed all over this country by persons known to honourable Members and by some not known to honourable Members. It was criminal libel. It was a public mischief. It was everything that was bad. It was a contempt of court. It reflected on a case that was then before the court. The only truth, as I said to CBC at the time, was the first sentence of it. I remember when I called the Acting Commissioner of Police and showed him. He said to me it was the worst thing he had ever seen in his life. There had never been anything like that in Barbados during the. 30 years or so he had been in the Force.

It is also a matter of regret, not rancour with me, that I will never forget that the police did not pursue that matter as they could have. It was entirely possible for the police to get to those who were distributing apart from the man down by the Mutual Building. The police did nothing to allay the fears of this community, and they had a duty, where the Honourable Leader of the Opposition at the time, now Prime Minister, on the Saturday that the man who distributed down by the Mutual was taken in for questioning, went on television and attempted to disassociate the Democratic Labour Party from that document. It was he who said that it was criminal libel, a public mischief and a contempt of court. And for all that, the efforts were less than satisfactory! 12.50 p.m.

I will never brook any kind of explanation from the police that can satisfy me that they did their duty* in regard to that matter. I have a document in my personal and secret file that said that they did not want to do anything until after the Juman case was heard. That was heard. The man went to prison and still the police did nothing about it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the honourable Member has almost crossed the line.

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

I just want to say that the way the .drug issue was played in this society, was destructive of us, politicians and black people. There was a time in the Fifties when it was popular to accuse any black man who started to rise in this society of being involved in homosexuality. In 1986, let it be recorded, we have forgotten homosexuality and have now started to accuse each other of being involved in drugs when the facts do not merit such an accusation.

On May 25, the Commissioner of Police made a statement that there was no evidence that any politicians were involved in trying his hands, or — I forget what one of the honourable Member's circulars said — that the Commissioner, on his own admission, said that he was thwarted — the same word that was used in the DLP manifesto in respect of drugs — from prosecuting persons like politicians. I feel that we have carried it too far and

have started to drag down the good name of politicians in Barbados.

The point the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made last night is very apposite. We have now seen what has happened in Trinidad. A lot of people in Trinidad, have been destroyed, their reputations have been destroyed, by a report which merely smeared them, without giving them the opportunity to defend themselves or give their own side of the story, on the accepted evidence from well-known criminals, and published. I am amazed — yet it is Trinidad, so in certain respects I am not amazed — I am really shocked that our jurisprudence has come to such an all time low in the Caribbean that we can merely on, the say-so and whim of certain people in the society point fingers and write that down without giving the person a chance to deal with it, and destroy that person once and for all, Sir.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), is a very clever lawyer, and he cleverly juxtaposed the idea of the word "thwart" used in a, scurrilous document, which we all admit was circulated somewhere about Barbados, with the word "thwart" used in the manifesto, to give the impression that there is the link and here is the evidence, that that document was written either by or with the authority and approval of the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: You did not say it, but the way you used the word "thwart" would give the impression to any person who is thinking that that is precisely what you were doing.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: I did not accuse the Democratic Labour Party. What I said was that, in the manifesto, the Democratic Labour Party published that the Commissioner was "thwarted." I cannot remember if the document itself said thwarted. What I said was that the honourable Member for St. George South (Mr. R. P. Byer) in his election circular, said that the Commissioner of Police, on his own admission, said that he was thwarted. That is what I said. I did not call the honourable Member for St. George South.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: You said it was in our manifesto.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The word "thwarted" is in your manifesto, and the same words that are in your manifesto were in the circular of the honourable Member for St. George South.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I hope you are not now identifying the Member for St. George South as the author of that document. I sincerely hope not, Sir. "Thwart" is no unusual word — it is a word in everyday use — and just to state that the word "thwart" was in the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party or the circular of the Member for St. George South, only conjures up in the person's mind an association. I assume he is saying now that, in fact, he is not so doing.

I want to state here categorically that the Democratic Labour Party does not have, or has not had, anything whatsoever to do with the printing, publishing or circulating of that document. I will not say that it was not found on certain persons, Bs and Ds. Members of the Barbados Labour Party had the document in their hands, members of the Democratic Labour Party had the documents in their hands. Someone put a document in my car and I threw it out because I did not want that document. It was read to me in my car and I said "Get that document out of my car." I did not want to have anything to do with it.

That is the position of the Democratic Labour Party, and that was even before the present Prime Minister, then Leader of the Opposition, made any disclaimer as regards the party, because I realised what kind of document it was.

Sir, it was my intention to speak at this time and 1 had no intention of opening my response in the way that I did.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER, and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: This is an opportune moment, Sir, for the House to take its luncheon break.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2 o'clock today.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 2 p.m., was *put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.*

1.00p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When the sitting was suspended, the honourable Member for St. Michael North was speaking. He may proceed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, at the suspension I had disposed of the point which I considered to have been an attempt to link the circulation of a document to the Democratic Labour Party. I move on from that now, Sir, because I had really risen to acknowledge the assistance and co-operation that the Police Force has given to my Ministry in a number of areas. I think it should be publicly stated. It is their job, it is true, but at the same time I think it is right that the work of the Police Force should be acknowledged.

The Police Force has a difficult job to do, and in carrying out that job, it requires the co-operation of us all, but I do not want the police to believe that in my books all is well, and I hope that they feel the same about themselves. There are some negative things about the police which I do not want to talk about now. I will merely mention one, and I refer to a photograph that appeared in last week's newspaper of a house and items in that house showing bullet holes. I think the police are going to have to look at themselves and their image. It does not look good. I know that they are doing a difficult job, but the execution of their duties must be done -with restraint and with common sense. It would appear to the casual observer that both might have been lacking when a raid was carried out on a home in Brittons Hill. That was a negative aspect of it, and that is one of the unpleasant duties of the police, but in operating in difficult circumstances, they must know within themselves how far they should go.

Mr. Chairman, we have problems at the Ministry of Transport and Works, and it is in this area that I have been acknowledging the work and the role of the police. They assist us on the highway. They assist us in keeping order among those drivers on the highway who would like to do things as they would want to do them. I cannot but speak about the driving habits of several drivers on the road, particularly the drivers of public service vehicles. The principal culprits are the minibus drivers, not to mention the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Hon. L. E. Sandiford).

Laughter

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I have observed several infractions of the highway code. I have taken it upon myself to address letters under my own hand as Minister, to persons operating minibuses, because their habits were not only infractions of the law as such, they were positively dangerous. To give a simple example, minibuses plying the Pine route from the Pine to Bridgetown had a habit of driving northwards along the St. Barnabas Highway and turn left by the Parkinson School to go down' East-West Boulevard, which is very dangerous, and they would stop right in the bend and take up or put down passengers, when in fact, there was a bus stop by the entrance to the Parkinson School only 30 yards away.

I made a note of the number of the minibuses, the date and the hour at which I saw that occurrence, and I myself wrote the owners of those minibuses and warned them that such behaviour could only lead to a suspension or possibly cancellation under our laws, the Road Traffic Act, of the permits under which they operate. I think I could not do less than that, because they were a threat to persons using the highway in a legitimate way.

I have witnessed a minibus travelling down Collymore Rock in the area where the Alexandra Club is or used to be, stopping at the bus stop. At that point a long line of traffic was going towards the roundabout • by the Pine and Culloden Roads. The minibus took the left lane right down to the roundabout, the lane which is for traffic turning left along Colly more Rock, and at the roundabout, instead of turning left, it cut in in front of the vehicles ahead of it. I witnessed it two evenings ago leaving here, and I have also witnessed an identical thing at the same roundabout, but going in the opposite direction.

These are some of the problems that the police have to grapple with, and I would like them to be more vigilant and exercise more watchfulness on the roads for this kind of behaviour. I am not saying that-the minibuses are the only people doing it, I am using them as an example. It is possible that it is being done also by other users of the road, but I think they are doing it more than the others. They are the biggest offenders, and I am happy to see that the President of the Minibus Association this week, I read it in the newspaper a couple of days ago, has appealed to them to exercise good judgment, and he gave the police 100 per cent support in the action that they have been taking against persons who use the road in that way.

On the other hand, we as a Cabinet have gone ahead and agreed to allow the minibuses some standing passengers. We allowed it to the Transport Board and we allowed it to the minibuses. We have agreed that we will give the minibuses additional areas for parking, because where they park now over by the Empire Cinema is nothing but a death trap. Sooner or later, the way in

which that parking area is used will result in the death of someone, and I am asking the police to observe what is going on there. It is not far from the Harbour Police. Sometimes one will find that Probyn Street is almost blocked off by minibuses where next door there is the fire station, and I am sure that, in the event of a fire, they might get in the way of the fire engines. They also block the road between the Plaza and the Tempro Building, which is called Jordan's Lane. I would be happy if the police would open their eyes for that kind of infringement.

Also, Sir, there are what we call the maxi-taxis, those vehicles that carry the licence plates beginning ZM. They, too, are violators of our highway code and also of the terms of the permit under which they operate. I also want the police to keep their eyes out for those vehicles.

There was a time when the functions now carried out by the Licensing Authority were carried out by the Police Force, and they would understand precisely what goes on in the Licensing Authority. There are a number of vehicles on the road that have not paid their road taxes or their insurance, and I noticed that in recent times, the police no longer checked the vehicles on the road for that purpose. I am here appealing to the police once more to check the vehicles on the road so as to ensure that the vehicles on the road should be legitimately there and take action against those other vehicles that are not properly using these roads. Those are the ways in which the police can co-operate with us further in making sure that the laws of this country are obeyed.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, when I listened to the Honourable Minister for Transport speaking, it occurred to me that it is a pity that this new threat to road safety has been growing at the rate at which he has described it, because during his administration, although he was only there for a matter of a few months, we have been able to increase the levels of safety of those persons travelling on the roads substantially, because today in Barbados there is such a substantial reduction in the number of pot holes which can be seen. There can be no question that an effec•tive road maintenance programme has been put in place at a reduced cost, and we are already seeing this reflected in the smooth roads available to the motorists of Barbados and the absence of pot holes, which were such a feature of the last Administration.

The second point I wish to make, Sir, is that what we are witnessing during this debate is a landmark in parliamentary democracy. Recognising that there are only three Members on the other side, we have elected to allow them to speak on all matters by not intervening. We have sat down and we have allowed them to thoroughly examine the Estimates as presented by the Ministry of Finance. This is the first time that this has happened in this Parliament, I think, since I have been in here, where the Government has called the Heads in order. We have not picked out any Heads, we have allowed the Heads to be examined by the Opposition and we have sat back and allowed them to speak. This, Sir, is testimony to the commitment of the Democratic Labour Party to democracy in this country.

The third point I wish to make on this matter of the police is that the Ministry of Finance is very sympathetic to the appeals of the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Police for an improvement in the physical environment in which they work. I have explained that, because of the very heavy capital programme which the Government faced last year and will face during this fiscal year, it will be difficult to meet all their requirements in one year. But we are going to start in these Estimates, as has been explained earlier by, I think, the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), in terms of the band, and I think the Leader of the Opposition recognises that we are making some kind of an effort.

I give this firm assurance on the floor of this House to the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Police during the Estimates, that as soon as this hard core of heavy expenditure has flowed through the system the police will have the highest priority in terms of claims against the resources of Government in respect of capital expenditure for the improvement of police stations and the other matters that have to be developed. This is consistent with the general policy of the Government, that in the next fiscal year, for sure, more resources will be placed behind such activity as building police stations, improving fire stations and improving the physical environment in which public servants have to work in this country. I think that that has been an area of neglect over the years, from what I can see, and there will be a very positive policy on the part of this Administration to put its money in that particular area. It will also be a part of our job creation programme which we will put in place.

I go further - I said the exact thing to the Attorney General and to the Commissioner of Police — if later this year I see an opportunity to expand on our capital programme, then the police would have the highest priority in terms of any supplementaries coming before this Parliament. I do not think that I could give a firmer commitment to the Attorney General. I told him that I would not necessarily go back on my promise, and I thought he could have accepted what I told him before without calling me on the floor of the House as well. I will stick to my firm promise.

It is a problem, and there can be no question from what I have heard — I have not visited those places — that there is an urgent need to upgrade the conditions in which the police officers have to work in Barbados. It is not only the physical environment, but a case has also been made out for the acquisition of equipment since we are now moving into the area of high technology, computerisation and all these things. I am fully supportive of these and, as I say, I will be allocating a very high priority to the police in terms of expenditure as soon as it is possible.

The second thing I would like to refer to is this question of drugs. I do not wish to prolong the debate. I think most of the points have been made, except that it should be recognised by all of us that the single greatest threat to the security of this country, to the security of this region, in fact, comes from trafficking in illegal drugs. When we think in terms of security of the country, we should give the highest priority to dealing with this particular problem, because it is not only the social impact that it has on individuals in the society, in terms of expressing itself in terms of crime, adverse health and a whole range of other ills related to it, but it is a breeding ground for corruption in the society. I think that we certainly have to strengthen the Coast Guard in its capacity to assist in this area and also to involve the police more in the protection of our coastline. It is not only the airport and seaport that the drugs come through. Remember that there are other places where drugs can be landed in Barbados. I think we are going to have to put money behind the police and the Coast Guard if we are going to deal with this particular problem. 2.20 p.m.

I am drawn to the debate on drugs because it also affects an area for which I have responsibility, the area of Customs. Make no mistake, there is a close relationship between tax avoidance, drugs, bribery and corruption. I will go no further than that. What I am convinced about is the money spent in dealing with stopping illicit drugs from entering this country would be reflected pretty rapidly in increased revenues to the Treasury of Barbados. When we think of containers that contain large amounts of drugs, you can be quite sure that some arrangement will be made whereby the Government will not get the revenue due to it, as well, because you will find that the same characters are involved in the entire exercise. What we are talking about really is a question of protecting the integrity of this society, because, as I mentioned earlier, Government's revenues are being undermined by this — you are getting severe distortions in the trade patterns — and then you are getting drafted on to that the ill effects of drugs in terms of crimes and other undesirable manifestations within the society. So from whatever perspective you look at it, it is mandatory that this Administration should continue and upgrade its efforts in dealing with the illicit drugs in Barbados, because they have a serious effect on this society.

I want to draw something to Members' attention. It is one thing when parts of a country like the United States can be taken over by drug peddlers, whether it be Miami City or Atlantic City. It is another thing when you have a small geographical land mass. What is going to happen to us? In the United States, you can move from one part of the city and cede that to'the illegal operators, or you could move to another state. In Barbados, we all have to live here. There is no territory which we can cede. Indeed, the character of this entire drug operation spreads like a forest fire — it gains momentum as it goes along — and it rapidly overtakes the forces of law and order in the society, and can exceed, in many cases, the resources that the country would have available to it, either in monetary or in human terms, to deal with it. So we have a very serious problem on our hands.

All I can say is that the problem manifested itself during the period of the Barbados Labour Party Administration. It grew substantially during that period. There is no question about it. When we were in Opposition, we repeatedly pointed out that the question of illicit drugs was becoming a serious problem in Barbados, and I recall the head of that Administration on more than one-occasion saying that automobile accidents were a greater problem than the drug problem. That is a fact.

(Aside: True. That is a fact.)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think that we lost the opportunity in the mid 1970s of dealing with this problem when it first started.

A side

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: About 1976 and beyond.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: The late 1970s.)

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The late 1970s and beyond. But I believe that if we make a major effort at this stage, something can be achieved. For example, just the appointment of the special inspectorate within the Customs Department has led to an increased detection of marijuana and cocaine coming into this country, particularly in containers.

I think that we all have a major duty to recognise that this is now a major national problem, that it is the greatest problem confronting the security of this country, using the word, "security" in its widest sense, and therefore, it is a duty of this Parliament to recognise that it should be accorded a very high place on the agenda not

only for discussion, but also for action, and not only by Parliament but by the Administration.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a few other points I was not able to develop this morning on the police. On the Head of Training, you will recall, Sir, I made the point that it was necessary to develop mechanisms of training at all levels of the Force and at probably areas wider than what are strictly called police duty areas. In this regard, I am pleased to see that the Regional Training College - Centre - it is still called - has extended the range of courses now available at the college and has also extended its training facilities to a wider number of segments constituting the Police Force.

The intention had been that this centre would eventually be upgraded into a genuine police training college for the whole of the Eastern Caribbean. We have been very unlucky in the Caribbean at some of our efforts at regional co-operation. Time was when the Regional Police Training Centre drew support from almost every country certainly in the Eastern Caribbean, and-sometimes as far afield as Jamaica. Now, I believe that other than for the remaining British colonies in the northern Caribbean - Cayman Islands, probably Virgin Islands, Anguilla — most of the people who come to the college, certainly at the primary training level, are our own policemen. I am conscious of the fact that in some of the recruiting stages we have not always been able to extend places to other countries, but it is an institution that could do with increased resources on a regional basis, and it is the sort of institution that should derive funding from those friendly countries and international organisations which wish to really contribute to crime detection and crime prevention in the Caribbean. 2.30 p.m.

I would like to use this opportunity not only to ask the Minister what progress is being made with developing the college still further, but also to appeal as much in me lies to friendly institutions to come to the aid of this organisation. I am aware of the fact that the British Government, through its assistance to the Eastern Caribbean, •does contribute by way of technical assistance and in other concrete forms to the centre. But I think that much more can be done for us in this regard by the Canadians and by the United States Government, particularly the United States Police Training Forces, and by other Commonwealth countries as well.

I am pleased to see, Sir, that the University of the West Indies has assisted a great way in the training courses now being made available at the Regional Police College. I know that the Commissioner, as Commandant of the College, has from time to time expressed his own personal view, which he holds quite rightly, as he sees the Force developing down through the years, of the necessity for upgrading this institution to a full-fledged Police Training College. It still needs new buildings. The present building available was at one time very adequate, but when I had responsibility for this subject, I had envisaged one of two developments, and I favoured the second one which I will mention. At one stage, we gave consideration to using the U.S. Naval Facility at St. Lucy whilst expanding into a proper Police Training College, and then when we started to develop the concept of the new Police Headquarters at Wildey, we gave consideration to having a Police Training College there. I was certainly convinced by the arguments brought by the policemen that that would have been an ideal site for it. I think Government still has about 12 or 14 acres in that area, and I hope that, in the physical planning of the development of the facilities, we will earmark and keep that area for the expansion of necessary headquarters for forensic and other operations as well as for an expansion of a genuine Police Training College.

There is one difficulty that I was unable to solve and which I hope this successor might be able to solve, and that is the position of the legal status of the college. The physical facilities are owned by the Government of Barbados, although it was built initially with a grant by the United Kingdom Government. We seconded some members of the staff there and we paid the bills, recruiting part of the finances from the Eastern Caribbean Countries. But we have a category of staff who appear neither to be employed by the Government nor any of the Eastern Caribbean countries, and I think the Commissioner's Commandant finds himself exposed to the fact that he may be adjudged in law as the employer of these persons. Another problem we have is that their genuine rights have never really been properly established. When I demitted office, I was trying to pursue this, but we never seemed to have come to a conclusion, and I hope that the Attorney General, with the admirable assistance of his Permanent Secretary, who has had exposure both on the Establishments side and in the Auditor's General and the Accountant General's Office, would be able to come up with a satisfactory solution to this problem.

The other aspect of training that I would like to emphasize is the necessity for us to continue and develop relationships with those countries which have training facilities geared to the type of Police Force to which we are accustomed. I am not talking about some police forces in parts of South America and even in Europe who carry guns in full public sight and display 24 hours of the day and who are more militarised than being a civilian force. I believe that within some of the countries of the Commonwealth, particularly Canada, Australia, New Zealand, England and some of our own Commonwealth countries near our home, we have the sort of training that our policemen need. We must expose them

to training, as I said before, not merely in strict police subjects *per se*, but in all of the related disciplines: the discipline of industrial relations, so that they will be able to understand the nature of trade disputes if they are called out in cases of picketing to have to deal with that sort of problem; in the discipline of psychology, particularly in the area of family disputes and also in the area of drugs; in the related discipline of the health services, where particularly in the area of drugs they are called to give not only strict police enforcement duties but considerations to the problems that come before them; in the area of law, and there is no reason why the training facilities cannot now be expanded to encourage more policemen to qualify in the area of law; in the area of chemistry and the sciences, particularly having regard to the emphasis which we must now place on developing the forensic facilities here. Successive Governments for the last 30 years, have been talking about the need to establish a forensic laboratory in Barbados, but that has not come yet on stream. The result is sometimes that when a case is lost, it is not because the police have not investigated the matter as thoroughly as they can, but it is because the facilities for investigation are lacking. There is a whole field, as I saw it, ahead of us for exploration if we can get inculcated in our minds that the police services and the whole area of law and order are parts of the developmental process.

I am pleased to hear that the Minister of Finance has now committed himself and his Ministry to making more resources available. Sometimes I have heard those promises from successive Ministers and have had to face the fact, as the Commissioners have said, and I think the Minutes will reflect if you dig up the files from even the time of the Ministry of Home Affairs, that you have not seen the promises come to past. I hope, however, that the concern of the legislators of this country - and this is where Parliament can make its voice firmly heard, particularly now that we find that there is not as much partisan controversy on an issue such as this, but there has been a really objective analysis rather than our trying from both sides of the House to blame each other or to find scapegoats for these sort of problems — I hope now that the voice of Parliament is speaking, and speaking so clearly, that we would have a re-orientation of how we place our resources and make sure that this area gets its due of resources. 2.40 p.m.

The last point I want to make, Sir, is about the relationship between the police and the other quasi-military force. There must be a clear demarcation of the lines between strictly police duties and the area in which the military must operate. In my view, there is room for both. In my view, they are sometimes complementary and sometimes supplementary, but we are basically a democracy based on a civilian approach to law and order, and we must be able to devise mechanisms to make it quite clear that the military role is not the day-to-day manning of law and order.

This is a matter that is very touchy, Sir, and at times, as we were building up the Defence Force, it almost became contentious. It is not an area, in my view again, in national affairs for there to be a division between the two political parties. God knows there are many other areas on which we could divide, but this one is fundamental to the structure of the society, and certainly, as one of the people who happen to have to pilot and plot the future development of this country, for as long as God will allow me, and I am sure the constituents of Christ Church West will listen to God's call in this respect,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will allow you just a little extra time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE:.... for as long as that time, I would like to say that I hope my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael South, as one of the major political thinkers in the Democratic Labour Party, and who I know is responsible for a lot of the thoughts and ideas of that party, would be able to see this as an area, that we can conjointly develop, so that the military is brought within a regulatory framework, that the country will have no fear that it will ever be pre-eminent to the civilian forces and overstep the bounds between itself and the day-to-day maintenance of law and order by the Police Force of this country.

I am much indebted to you, Sir.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, my intervention at this point will be relatively short because I will more or less be wrapping up on the points I was making earlier. Let me first of all say that, as I indicated earlier in the debate, part of the problem that the Royal Barbados Police face in the City of Bridgetown - one of my colleagues laughingly called it Crack Street - is the fact that there is a large number of — I would have to say deserted — properties in and around Bridgetown, in the urban constituencies, and this is something I would like a joint effort between the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Health to do something about solving it. I recall, I believe it was in the 1976 Manifesto of the Labour Party, that Government has been promising the citizens to do something about taking up plots of land that have been deserted and deserted places, and I am sure that this Administration is as concerned with that sort of thing, and more so, because at any rate it would be a means of providing housing lots that are so badly needed at this time. So I would like to impress on those two Ministries to really pay some attention to that area.

It could, in a sense, be a great help to the Police Force, because in fact only in today's *Nation* it is reported that a chap from King Edward Road, Bank Hall, was charged for possession of marijuana, and he was charged as living in Ashby's Alley in the City. In fact, he was living in what I call a commune, because there is a large number of people — some look like Rastas and some are not — who live in this area and they are from all over Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move on to an area that I believe is going to cause, or has already begun to cause, the Police Department some serious concern. The Police Force has been successful — this has been reported by the Minister of Tourism, and I have to accept his word — in removing a large percentage of the drug traffickers off the beaches. I believe another honourable Member indicated that while this is true — I believe it was the Member for St. Thomas — these traffickers have found themselves on the roadways, particularly in St. Lawrence and the Holetown area. I now point out to you, Sir, that some of these people, to my mind, have also found themselves in the area of Bridgetown.

We all are aware that what I think is a very ' desirable development has taken place in what is known now as the waterfront area, that part of Cavans Lane where there used to be warehouses, and which now houses a number of small shops, restaurants and night clubs. I have received a letter signed by all of the proprietors and proprietresses of the shops in that area indicating that a very serious problem is building up there. I noticed on the letter that I received that a copy was also sent to the Commissioner of Police, so I would assume that the Commissioner is now aware of the problem, and that, in the interest of all of us, we would probably be getting together and looking at ways that we could probably resolve the problem before it becomes a crisis.

The letter indicated that there is apparent drug trafficking taking place in and around that area during the day and at night. The proprietors indicated that the persons they believe are trafficking the drugs are coming •in under the guise of selling costume jewellery, and that seems to me, Sir, to sound very much like the crowd that sold jewellery on the beaches. There have been incidents of bag snatching, purse snatching and break-ins into cars of patrons who patronise these places at night, and they said to me in the letter that people have been charging what they call protection fees to patrons to park in Independence Square car park. They charge them $10 to park the car so that nothing will happen with the car. This problem is obviously a problem that should concern aD of us in here, the Police Force, the proprietors of these businesses and, in general, the public. I am sure that, like other problems that will arise from time to time, sober minds and level heads will come to terms with the problem and try to deal with it.

The other problem that was identified is that car washing has developed at night. I was never aware that the Independence Square car park was so well lighted that you could see to wash a car at night, but apparently these gentlemen believe it is. But the proprietors have indicated that when a person is approached to have their car washed at night and they say no, there is some harassment or molestation taking place.

That brings me to a point that maybe the Minister of Transport can examine. This whole question of car washing in public car parks, and even, to some extent, in private areas - even in the yard of Parliament — is one that I believe we should deal with head on. I am not saying that we should prohibit these people from trying to earn a dollar from washing cars, but I believe it has to be regulated in some way. I know, and I believe there are others in here who know, that these fellows have, almost charted out territories for themselves, and fights can break out when fellows go into other territories to wash cars. 2.50 p.m.

The signs that the MTW have put up about a year or two ago have not really worked. On the one in Independence Square, where it says "No Car Washing Allowed", someone painted out the "No" and it now says "Car Washing Allowed". I just thought I would draw that to your attention, because that is another problem that the police are encountering. The washers tend to want to encourage you to park in prohibited areas so that they can get the job to wash your car, and some unsuspected drivers go along with them and end up going before the police.

I want to draw one more thing to your attention with regards to the problem across the Chamberlain Bridge, and this is where now I will have to reluctantly agree with the Member for Christ Church West when he was critical of the private sector. He does say sensible things sometimes. The approach that those proprietors over there are taking to the problem, to my mind, is wrong, and it shows the sometimes callous way that segments of the private sector adopt in dealing with problems that they believe are social problems. On the one hand, they are telling us in a letter - I believe the Minister of Trade got a copy also, I think I saw his name on it — that we, the Government, should do something about it now, because it will stop us from collecting taxes, and on the other hand, they call the persons collectively, whether they are washing cars, genuinely selling costume jewelry, or even peddling drugs, "social pest".

This is where they and I will start to disagree because I really am not going to stand idly by have anyone, I do not care who you are — lumping everyone and calling them social pests. They are not people from the City that are selling dope. As I told you before, they are people who come from everywhere. But I am not defending necessarily my constituents now. I am defending Barbadians in general, underdogs or whatever you want to call them. They call them social pests.

I will tell you, Sir, of an incident that took place on that very waterfront, and this is why I am saying that that segment of the private sector who run those operations down there have to be careful how they approach this problem. As I said earlier in this debate, the problem in Swan Street with the vendors was solved because the Commissioner and his senior officers used a sober approach to the problem, and it was solved. If they had started off on the wrong foot, the solution would have taken longer to come, no matter how hard the police tried to bring a resolution to the problem.

I was sitting there one night in the company of a number of people, including the present Prime Minister of Barbados — I am not talking about recently — since May 28. There was a group of young Barbadians who got together and were playing some music, and we went there to listen to them. I did not see the honourable Member for St. Thomas there. I thought he would be interested in.....

A sides

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, this is a very serious point. While we were sitting downstairs, a young, white boy hung over the balcony of the club upstairs. I believe it is called the Warehouse. He started shouting obscenities to someone below, and he was told by someone below to behave himself. It was even pointed out to him that there were people there sitting, including the Prime Minister, but he carried on as he did before. As a matter of fact, he started shouting to one particular young woman and indicating to her what he would like to do and not to do.

Asides

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: The point I am making is that he went on like that for a good 15 minutes and no one went to stop him. I am talking about management. No one asked him to leave. To me, he sounded like more a social pest than the others outside.

The other point I want to make before closing on this, and it is a very serious case, and it is going to build up as a problem out there if you do not deal with it right away, is that the only time I believe you will find people trying to trade in any goods is if there is a ready market for them. If you are going to find a lot of drug trafficking in that area, it appears to me as though there is a market out there, a serious market. I would like to suggest to this honourable House that the people who are the proprietors out there have to play their role in making sure that they assist in stopping this same market that I have just identified. They have to work hand in hand with us and the Police Force to make sure that we can stamp it out.

Mr. Chairman, I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, a lot has been said about the Police Force, but the one area I have heard nothing about is the recruiting of policemen, and this concerns me a lot. There was a time when people wanting to enter the Police Force would be investigated at length, and it seems to me that at this present time this method is lacking. We might say that that was the old way of doing things, but I can assure you that the calibre of people who enter the Force, to my mind, was slightly different to these who are now going in.

I want to give an example of what happened and why I am mentioning it. When I was on the bench, I can recall quite vividly one morning seeing a number of young^ men and a couple of young ladies waiting, I believe to collect uniforms. The Clerk of the Court came to me and said, "I want to discuss something with you urgently." He said, "You see those people out there lining up, three of them should not be in the Police Force." I asked him why. He said, "I know for sure that one has had a conviction. I know for sure that one is in a serious charge at the present moment with grievous body harm." The other one was in another category I would not mention it. I immediately went and I called the Recruiting Officer, and I indicated to him what I had heard, that I did not know whether it was true or not, but that he should check. When he checked, the information was correct and the three men were withdrawn. Those were only three of that group. No one knows how many others in that group or other groups could have been in that category.

I have mentioned it, too, because I have had to complain to the police about people I know from St. James going into the Police Force. I have had a lot of dealings with the young people in St. James, and I have been startled at times to see some of the youngsters who are taken into the Force. At one stage, I even asked the police if, occasionally, they could come and ask me a couple of questions, because I felt I knew most of the youngsters from Prospect down to Road View, but at no time did anybody ask me a question. One or two of them had to be dismissed from the Police Force within one or two years of going into it, and it seems to be a waste of money if you are going to train people for six months, as

it was then, probably four months now, only to find two or three years after that they are useless. 3.00 pjn.

I would like to see them revert to the system of going into the districts and trying to enquire about people. It is all right to have a psychologist or sociologist inter view people....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: the Honourable Minister of Health may not be aware, but this is one of the things I checked on in my time. The police, in fact, do say that they carry out security checks in the neighbourhoods from which the recruits come, and they check their families and so on. I have had to investigate one or two that were drawn to my attention. I believe that this was during my time and after your time on the bench, but in those years they had been applying themselves very diligently to checking out the antecedents and family contacts of the new recruits.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I think it is probably a case ' of checking on the checkers, because I am not satisfied that the people who are supposed to check do any checking. I try to go around the Bajan community as much as possible. You can find me any place any time of the night or day.

Asides

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: There is nothing wrong with Nelson Street, it is the people who go in Nelson Street that corrupt it. There are a lot of good people who were born in Nelson Street who are now holding top jobs in Barbados. If you are to be a politician, I think you have got to try and reach people at all levels, and I try to do that, although I may not be very successful. I am still saying there is something wrong in how we recruit people.

On another aspect of people who go into the Force, I think the Commissioner of Police might recall that when we were in England studying together, we had long discussions on this. My view is that five "O" levels or two "A" levels do not necessarily make a good policeman. Secondly, because there are certain levels of policemen required, you should not only put five "O" levels "as one of the requirements for the Police Force, because anybody with five "O" levels is looking to be Commissioner of Police, and everybody cannot be Commissioner of Police. There must be a man who feels that when he goes into the Police Force, even to join the Police Force is an achievement. We need people walking the beat, and no youngster with five "O" levels and two "A" levels want to walk the beat more than six months, because he feels that the Superintendent has not got anything and he should be Superintendent and he is waiting until he gets to that stage.

Asides

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Having five "O" levels does not make you produce a sensible statement either. If you see some of the fellows with five "0" levels attempting to write a sensible statement, you would be shocked. The thing is that you must have interest in the job you are doing, and you must have commitment and dedication to the job. However intelligent you are, however educated you are, if you have not got a feeling for the job, you will not write any statement at all, so that is not a point about writing a statement.

I can remember that when I was in the Air Force in Germany, I was amazed at the fact that some of the English soldiers could hardly read and write, and I wondered how a place like Britain could have in the armed forces a man who could hardly read or write. But when I came home and I thought about it carefully, it occurred to me that you pick horses for courses, and if you have an infantry, you do not want a chap in there who is going to question the officer's order or command. So you have that calibre of person there as well who, when you say go in the trenches, go and shoot, goes in the front line and either takes the bullet or gives one, as simple as that.

In the Police Force, I find that at the present moment when you talk to youngsters, everybody is talking about not wanting to walk the line — the line is when you walk the street - and it is important that we see our policeman in the communities and get them involved with the people. It is also true if you recruit a person like that, obviously there might be some promotional opportunities. Maybe he could reach the rank of Sergeant or Inspector if he turns out to be reasonably good, but at the same time we need that group of people in the Police Force.

A lot was mentioned about drugs, and I think the time has come when we have to look at those persons who are supposed to investigate the trafficking of drugs. They should know that some person or persons are overseeing them as well. It seems to me that if a man knows that he is working for $1 500 a month and that somewhere along the line he goes and builds a house for $500 000 and he would be investigated, he would take care. We must look at those persons who are investigating the drug peddler, if these persons are making much more money than they should make. Drugs are big money and people are easily corrupted by that money, and in any part of the world you must have built in systems, hi England in the Police Force, in CID, you have people who are specialists in looking at the people, keeping a watch on those who are in sensitive areas. I can remember asking at a seminar whether there was anybody from police to police who was investigating matters, and I think I was told it was none of my business. They should know, and we should know whether or not this is so.

In mentioning CID, I think one of the problems is that in sensitive areas, we should not keep people for too long. There are some people in the CID who, I believe, have been there a bit too long. I do not want to dwell on that, but I think we should try and shift them occasionally.

It also seems to me, from talking to a number of policemen, that sometimes the Criminal Investigation Department feels that it is a separate and distinct department from the other parts of the Police Force, and that their duty is to really catch the bad fellows, it is not the linesmen's duty. There is therefore, a distinct demarcation between the men in uniform and the men not in uniform, and we have got to do sorriething about that.

The Minister of Finance is not here, but I was happy when he said that, if possible, he would make funds available for the upgrading of stations. I believe my brother, the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, mentioned that our father was a policeman. I can remember that way back in the 1940s he was in charge of the Holetown Police Station, and the Government of the day said in those days that the Holetown Station should be renovated. We are now 42 years after and the Holetown Police Station is still the same building, but it is falling apart. You cannot renovate it now.

Asides.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I am asking because I am part police, I am asking for the police, my blood is still there. I do not want an agreement, I want to know when we are starting, not to renovate it, to build a new Holetown Police Station. It'is in a very special area, and I am still calling for it. I am calling on myself to do something for the Holetown Police Station, not only as the M.P., but I grew up in Holetown and all my best days were spent in Holetown, and I am interested in that area. I hope that when the first set of money is handed over, we will get it for the Holetown Police Station. 3.10 p.m.

In relation to the car washers, I believe that the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller), made some very valid points. Where people in Barbados try to be self-employed, all concerned should try to make it possible that those persons remain self-employed. I would not deny the fact that some of the car washers might behave badly, but then we can control them. To say that we should get rid of the youngsters washing cars in the car parks is to deny some of them making a dollar.

What I suggest is that the same way we register people on the beaches, we can register people working in the car parks and they can have their tags. The fact of the matter is that if they do not work in the car parks, they have to go and look for something else to do. There are some fellows in the car park to whom you can give your car keys and tell them to wash the car, that you will be back in 45 minutes. The guy will wash the car, clean out the inside, keep your keys and give it back to you. Therefore, we should be looking past lumping all of them as social pests.

I looked at that thing which was signed, and it is sad to say that the names which I saw on it do not look very much like Bajan names to me. I detest people coming to this country talking about social pests. I have had this argument with people on Swan Street, and I have had to let them know that they are minorities in this country and there is no way they can come here and tell the majority of people how they must live.

Swan Street, as far as I can remember, was a mall, way back, with people with their fancy baskets. I can remember coming to town when country boys felt it was an excursion to come to town. It was a big day, and I can remember people having their fancy baskets. Now people, half of who were not even born in Barbados, can come and tell me that people cannot have malls in Swan Street, and now people, again whose names I cannot recognise, are going to come and tell me that Barbadians are pests. I will not stand for it and I hope that those who are looking into it will not. Fortunately,' I believe the Commissioner of Police and the police officers understand Barbados and Barbadians, and I think that sense will prevail. But I think we should send a warning to these people that they will not in any way prevent Barbadians from making an honest living.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you.

Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH (St. Joseph): Mr. Chairman, a lot has been said over the past few days about the police, some complimentary, some otherwise, and most of what I have been thinking has bee.n said mostly on the complimentary side.

I should like to pay tribute to a group that is not exactly policemen or policewomen, but are closely associated with the policemen, that is, the Association of Police Wives. These women got together at a time when the Police Force was going through its most critical time, when people were seeing the policemen as inefficient and that sort of thing, and they have done a very significant job, in my opinion, in raising the morale and the image of the Police Force.

My second point is to do with the Police Band. Many of us in here are very fortunate in that we can go to our concerts and go around to our various engage ments, but in the constituency which I am very proud to represent ....

(Aside: Hear, hear!)

Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH: .....there is very little entertainment, and I must thank the Police Band, which have started a series of concerts in the outlying districts in St. Joseph. I have attended a few of those concerts, and if you see the excitement and the joy of the country people when the band comes up there, it would warm your heart. I am here this evening to just pay tribute to the Police Band and to say that I am very happy that my Government which has always encouraged and complimented the police when it was necessary, has been so far-sighted as to spend some money to provide instruments and training for the Police Band.

The Police Band used to get a lot of its musicians from the elementary schools of the former days, when we used to go to school until the age of 14, and there were several teachers who were very instrumental in helping the young people to get through their music. Nowadays, I know that in secondary schools, there is some attention paid to music, but I would like to see more attention paid to it. As I said before, I am very happy that we are going to give training to the Police Band, so that they can make the people in the outlying' districts in the country happy.

I think that a little sharper watch could be kept on the vehicles transporting tourists in the city. We Barbadians are not allowed sometimes, it is against the law, to stop in various parts of Broad Street and other parts of the City, and we have to be very careful that it does not seem as though people who are foreign get a little more leeway than we do.

Hon. M. A, KING: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church West had raised some questions on the issue of training of police officers. He specifically mentioned the training school. I think the point of enquiry was in relation to what was going on relative to assistance from Governments or agencies which could assist us in developing the training school. I think the honourable Member probably knew the answer whilst he was speaking, because he did advert to the fact that discussions had been going on with the British and the Canadians with a view to seeing what we could do about the training school. There are ongoing consultations with the British High Commission.

I am of the view that the sooner we are in a position to upgrade the training school into a full — fled fledged police training college, the better. Within the scope of that development, I would also like to see provision made for the establishment of a forensic laboratory where the police forces from the region could perhaps participate in sharing the use of that facility. The fact is that ongoing discussions are still going on with the British High Commission and with the Canadian Government, with a view to seeing the extent of the assistance they can give in upgrading the Regional Police Training Centre and the facilities there.

The honourable Member also raised a question about the pension rights of certain members of staff of the training centre. This is a matter which I have had occasion to look at only relatively recently. I can assure honourable Members of this House that steps are being taken in consultation with the Establishments Division to settle all the personnel matters involving the staff of the Regional Police Training Centre. In looking at this issue, we will try to resolve this outstanding problem of the pension rights of the civilian staff. We hope to reach a solution on this matter in the very near future.

Honourable Members have spoken on the problem of drugs coming into the country, not only through the port and the airport but also through other areas of Barbados. We are an island entirely surrounded by water.

Aside

Hon. M. A. KING: We are an island. I am informed by one of my honourable colleagues that there is an island that has no water around it. But we are an island, a lot of visiting yachts come here, ships come here and fishing boats come here, and we get information from time to time about transactions at sea. Comments were made yesterday about Japanese fishermen fishing in the area, and comments were made about how fishermen leave these shores and buy fish in neighbouring areas. Fish may be bought and other things may be bought as well. So what is necessary is that the capability of the police and the Coast Guard to deal with interdicting any sort of traffic in drugs in this area relating to shipping in the in-shore areas of Barbados, is something which needs to be looked at and developed. We have been having a look at this matter. Friendly Governments have made definite offers of assistance to us in this regard. I believe boats have in fact been offered to the Barbados police, and we are in the process of re-establishing the Harbour Police, so patrolling the in-shore waters of Barbados, will be back in the hands of the police, although not entirely. The Defence Force is still there. Presently, the police patrol the in-shore waters with the Defence Force. But with the addition of two ships hopefully to the police, we will be in a position to re-establish the Harbour Police, as we had it before, and enable the police to patrol the in-shore areas of Barbados. This would go a long way towards assisting in curbing this aspect of crime. 3.20 p.m.

It is just left for me, Mr. Chairman, to thank honourable Members for their contributions in this area. There have been criticisms of the Police Force, constructive criticisms in many areas, but it is important that we benefit from the criticisms which have been made, and this is the forum and the time for criticisms which are relevant. I would encourage the police not to be disheartened by the criticisms which have been levelled against them in this forum, but to take the opportunity

to reflect on what has been said, to recognise the areas where action needs to be taken, to redress some of the negative comments and impressions which the Barbados public has about them and to make a true and valiant effort to provide the service which we as citizens of this country expect them to provide.

Thank you.

The question that Head 30 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 31 - PRISONS - $1 796968

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 31 stand part.

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

^

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Perhaps the Attorney General will help me, Sir. Some-time ago, an enquiry was made into certain events at the prison. I wonder whether, within the limitations that may be placed on him so far as security and other considerations apply, he is in a position to say how soon, if at all, the recommendations of that commission will be followed up, and if so, what measures are likely to be taken. I recognise that the Attorney General will no doubt have to bring the matter before his Cabinet colleagues. I do not know what are the recommendations, of course, but if there are any recommendations for disciplinary or other action, he will wish to deal with those matters without at the same time prejudging any cases.

Having asked him that question, let me say that there are some aspects of prison life in which a good deal of progress has been made. By and large, the prison officers have been undertaking a difficult, but in some respects, a very successful task. There have been some problems from time to time, but I think they have brought an innovative approach to deal with the question of rehabilitation of prisoners.. I know that now the prisoners are self-sufficient in several ways, for instance, in eggs. I am not sure what the position is in milk, but they are also self-sufficient in vegetables. Also, some of the work which has been put out by the prisoners under the training which they receive from prison officers, has been of an extremely high standard. Some years ago, we used to have an exhibition, it became an almost annual exhibition, done by prisoners. I do not believe that that exhibition now takes place, but I know that progress has been made beyond that in the way in which they have been reacting to the community.

Sir, whenever you are punished, you are asked to pay a price to the society, and there are some of us who

may believe that if you punish a person who has transgressed society's norms, that person should be written off for all times. But a society with conscience, a society with feeling, a society with humanity also looks towards those who may err or who may deviate, the deviants, as representing the failing of the society itself sometimes, and as an opportunity for us to help rehabilitate the weaker part of our community back into normal life.

I wonder if the Minister can say what other rehabilitative programmes there are taking place at the prison. I wonder whether private individuals have been participating, as at one time some of them did. I can think of the contribution made by people like Mr. Alfred Pragnell. There was, I recall, the introduction of the arts at the prison teaching people dramatics. I even recall persons being taught to enter City and Guild examinations, "O" Levels, and various other skills. So it would be interesting to let us hear about that.

I wonder what progress is being made in reforming legislation to keep out of prison, people who now go to prison simply because they cannot pay their debts. We had had some legislation for reforming the criminal laws, and one aspect of it was to prevent people from having to be imprisoned if they found that they could not meet their debts.

The last query that I would like to ask the Minister under this Head is, what progress has been made with legislation to wipe out old convictions? If a person in his teens, in his youth errs, unfortunately an old conviction is kept as a public record for all times against that person. Perhaps we need a provision similar to that contained in the English Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, so that after five or ten years, no reference can be made to those convictions in public documents except where, for security or for some other reason, it becomes necessary. One does not tear up the record completely, but one limits its use so that it cannot be used against a prisoner, for instance, in future sentencing policy, or to prohibit the person from obtaining a job, or as a record demanded sometimes by foreign embassies to prevent the person from transiting their countries. 3.30 pjn.

I am talking about even minor offences, which is really one of the things that is so bothering about such offences. I know that we are getting late in this Committee and some of us, if not all of us, are anxious to deal with other Heads, but I would not like us to believe that those who are less fortunate in this society and err should be forgotten by this House in the submissions which we make to this Committee about their plight.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, I have been in the fortunate position of having

visited the prison over the last 10 to 12 years. I think it is common knowledge, however, that our prison is sort of a model for Caribbean prisons. Indeed, the executives of our prison have had to give advice to most of the eastern Caribbean countries on the development of their prison systems.

Those of us who have had the opportunity to visit the prison within the last ten years and have gone there recently would be able to see the great transformation that has taken place at Glendairy Prison, and I think it must be a credit to the people who recognise how important it is to transform prison life. There is a very interesting book called "Assylum" which deals with the addiction of people who become involved with institutions, prisons, hospitals, any kind of institution. It is therefore very, very important that when we look at prison life, we plan for the contact of people within the prison with people outside of the prison so that they do not become addicted to prison life, because we know that one of the biggest problems with prisoners is the recidivism, people having to go back to prison, because it is a life on which you can become very dependent.

I must compliment the people at the prison who' have not only transformed the environment of the prison, but have embarked on a very fundamental change in prison, and that is the involvement of prisoners in the development of community projects outside of prison. Those of us who have lived in New York, or who visit New York and drive around and see the sombre atmosphere of prisons, must be proud of our prison environment. We must understand that if our concept is to rehabilitate people who get involved in crime, the environment must be such that it lends itself to bringing people back out into the world.

I would like to see the Government, which I know it will, put more resources to the prison. I am quite sure that we will see more and more people who are in prison get involved in community projects, and therefore when they finish their prison sentences, they will find it much easier to fit into the life outside the prison.

Mr. C L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr, Chairman, the residents of my constituency, in which area Her Majesty's Prisons fall, have advised me that they have no problems whatsoever in sharing certain facilities with the prison officers, more particularly, the playing field that is now in its developmental stages at Station Hill, but they have asked me to ask the Attorney General to advise them that they have very strong objections to having the prison officers play football on that field and lose 7—0, 8—0, 9—0 and sometimes get into double figures love.

On a more serious note, Sir. We thought for one moment or so that we were going to have a problem because of the burgeoning population that appeared to have been involved with the prison from time to time, and we have been concerned inasmuch as we have had a problem of complaints being made regarding the drainage facilities coming out of the prison and the impact that this drainage problem may have had on the area of Deane's Village.

My understanding from the Attorney General was that, as a direct consequence of that drainage problem, it may have been necessary for him to give consideration to the kind of remedial action which may have resulted in the destruction of a playing field, a small playing field nonetheless, in the Deane's Village area, which is of tremendous use in maintaining the harmony that there is in Deane's Village as a community. I wish to express my appreciation to the Attorney General for having heard my request for their using alternative measures and I am pleased to note that he advised that they are now going into a different arrangement where they will concentrate on drainage within the compound of the prison and that the playing field at Deane's Village will be left intact. On behalf of the Deane's Village residents and my tremendous support in that area, we want to express our appreciation in that regard.

From time to time, Mr. Chairman, I have gone to prison as a visitor. I heard a certain aside which suggested th'at they should have kept me, and on one occasion, they did suggest that they would have kept me if I did not very quickly move out of the company of a certain very charming person I had been talking to from a certain constituency that has a little fishing harbour somewhere in the region of St. Michael West. But I have visited the prison from time to time, and on those visits, Mr. Chairman, one matter that has caused me some degree of concern, has been the long waiting period that there has had to be, between the time of arrival and the time of getting inside the gates to visit with the particular prisoners that I had gone to see. I have no doubt that there needs to be some delay because of security purposes, but I am concerned that the delays have been in some cases very long, and on some occasions when I have gone to the prison, again I repeat, Sir, as a visitor, I have heard several people expressing very stringent criticisms about the hours of waiting that they had to endure while they have waited to be able to see their relatives or their friends or what have you, and I would like to suggest to the Attorney General and to the administration of Her Majesty's Prisons that something should be done to expedite and to facilitate the visits that people make to the prison.

I understand from some persons whom I have visited at the prison, that they would be quite happy to see me visit more frequently, but I must confess that I am not minded to visit a place and have to wait that long to make an entry. Somebody said that if you are

more intimately involved with the prison, you would not have that problem, but I do not want to be that intimately knowledgeable in terms of the prison as my colleague is suggesting.

I am concerned as well, Mr. Chairman, with a matter that must cause concern to Barbadians generally, and that has to do with the frequency of escapes that there has been from the prison. I have no doubt that this matter has been looked into at length by the administration of the prison, and perhaps by the various administrations that have had the good fortune to have been the Government of this country. Nonetheless, it has to be said that although the prison walls seem to be very high, complete with barbed wires and the rest of it, and if one goes into the maximum security areas, one has the experience of having gates opened and closed behind one both on entry and exit, for someone like me who has gone into the place as a visitor, it becomes a matter of very great surprise that I can learn of relatively frequent in our terms, Sir, escape from Her Majesty's Prison. I hope that we will be able to do some thing about those escapes, to the extent that we will be able considerably to reduce that particular problem. 3.40 p.m.

In terms of the matter of the persons who go to prison, I support the view of the Leader of the Honourable Opposition where he makes the comment that every person who goes to prison is not a criminal. This is a view that the Barbados Workers Union supports very much, a view that I am very much in favour of. There are many people who go to prison who may have committed some misdemeanour for which they may have to serve time, and it would be a very useful thing if it is recognised by ah[1] persons in our community that sometimes the first offence is not what makes the criminal, but it is the attitude of the public at large towards the person after his first misdemeanour and he has paid for that first offence.

Sometimes the problem is that when once the powers that be, or we ourselves as a society, recognise that a person has gone to prison, we treat him in much the same way that we treat the dog. We believe that if eggs are missing and a dog is in the vicinity, the dog has sucked the eggs, and if we have found that dog sucking the eggs on one occasion, any other occasion on which we found that eggs had been sucked, then that particular dog was the one to have sucked those eggs. To put it in another language relating to human beings, the feeling is that because a person was convicted for a specific offence, at any other time that that particular offence has been committed, that same individual has been the one to commit it.

I wish to have us recognise that because a person has committed an offence on one occasion, it does not necessarily follow that whenever that same type of offence has been committed, the same person has committed it. I have no problem in understanding that when we are trying by a process of elimination to determine who may have been responsible that that individual may cross our minds, and I am not suggesting for a minute that we may not have an initial suspicion, but, however, we must not believe or act as though that suspicion is, in fact, a reality, and we should not find ourselves harassing an individual purely because that person has spent time before at Her Majesty's expense.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, I would like to think that we would take time as a community to work as hard as we can to make sure that during the time that persons are in prison, working through the Prison After Care Committee and other volunteer committees, we establish opportunity, so that when they leave the prison, persons not only have some amount of money from the efforts that they might put in during the time they are at prison, but may be able to have access to employment after they leave prison. By so doing, we would not get a situation where the minute some individual leaves prison, he sets out to go and commit another offence, purely because, first of all, he feels insecure outside of prison and, secondly, he knows that when he leaves the prison and goes to look for work, nobody is going to offer him work. Therefore, he is going to find himself either having to starve or being completely disregarded and rejected by our society.

I feel that our society has to change its views and its attitude towards the committal of misdemeanours. There must be a difference between a person who commits an initial misdemeanour and a hardened criminal. I am not too sure of what the criminologists would say about what constitutes the difference between one and the other, but I believe that laymen like myself would be able to recognise that if there is a difference in the treatment of the first offenders, then those first offenders could be made to change their ways to improve their actions and can, in fact, become very useful contributing members of our society.

I believe that many of us have committed such first offences, but have escaped because the law was not harsh. I am sure that some of us, for example, have stolen apples at one time or another. I received an apple two days ago and I have the feeling, even now, that the person who gave it to me did not buy it. I now ask the honourable Member for St. Michael West, by what means did you secure the apple you gave me?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, just for the record, it was from a dear lady who loves me very much.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I will not pursue that at all. You see what I mean? We now will believe him, because we trust him, that it is a dear lady

and she loves him, even though we know it was not his mother who gave him the apple.

When we were much younger, many of us did, in fact, steal apples, or sometimes threw stones across the street, or something like that, and a number of persons who have gone up to the other place have committed offences just as simplistic as such offences, except that they have been less fortunate than we were. We therefore, must, as a society, make for lines of demarcation between those persons and the person whose psyche, whose whole attitude and frame of mind, is against the society, and who will not respond to any treatment that we may try to give to him to make a better person out of him.

I would merely wish in closing, Sir, to repeat the comment I made now that the Attorney General is back in his place, to ask him please to ask the persons who represent the prison and who use the facilities which we are now happy to have at Station Hill not to go and get beaten 7-0, 8-0 and 9-0 in football.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), raised a number of questions in relation to this Head. He asked about the enquiry into a matter relating to the prison. The report of that enquiry has been completed. It has been considered by the Cabinet and it has to be laid in Parliament eventually. But there are some disciplinary aspects of it which need to be considered, and in relation to those disciplinary aspects, the departments concerned have been asked by the Ministry to deal with them. The matter has been asked to be referred to the appropriate Service Commissions which have jurisdiction to deal with it, and we feel that the matter should not be laid in Parliament, thereby becoming a public document, whilst disciplinary proceedings are pending in relation thereto. 3.50 pjn.

The honourable Member also raised certain questions about what rehabilitation programmes were being done at the Prison for prisoners. There are a number of programmes which are in place. There are trades programmes, academic programmes and community programmes. The trades programmes include teaching the prisoners skills in tailoring, masonry, carpentry, joinery, plumbing, electrical wiring and in animal husbandry. I think most of us who have seen the work of the prisoners at exhibitions would recognise the very good work which they do in the area of joinery. They produce some excellent furniture. You will find that some of the Government Departments even use the furniture done by the prisoners. Their tailoring work is also very good, and I believe some of the uniforms you see in some areas are done by the prison's tailors.

The academic programmes which are in place for. the prisoners include tutoring them in subjects like mathematics and English, and part-time tutors go in from outside to assist prisoners in this regard.

In relation to the community development programmes which are in place, prisoners, who have learnt their skills as a result of the trade programmes which are done within the confines of the prison, go to community related centres to assist in the work of those centres, like at the Blind Workshop and at old people's homes. In all these areas where the prisoners have skills, they reach out into areas of the community where there is a genuine need, a need which all of us will immediately regard as urgent and important, like repairing old people's homes and working in the Blind Workshop.

Prison Officers who have skills go to the National Training Board and learn to impart skills which they have to prisoners. So there is an on-going programme of work within the confines of the prison.

I think I have heard a former Leader of the Opposition speak in very glowing terms, I think it was Mr. Frederick Smith, of the pastry which the prisoners make. Anybody who has a chance to visit the prison can see the animal husbandry which they do, the pigs and chickens which they produce. In fact, they produce a lot of food which the prisoners themselves consume, not only meat, but also the vegetables, the eggs. All the protein needs of the prison can practically be provided by the prison, and we try to do everything we can to make this possible, and where possible to expand the areas in which they can do this kind of work. So in relation to producing meat and vegetables, very good work is being done by the prisoners up there.

The honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman), spoke about the frequency of escapes from prison. I do not have the actual statistics before me, but I believe that the problem of escapees is one of those problems which looks greater than it really is. A lot of the escapes of prisoners takes place not from the prison itself, but from areas like the hospital, police stations and the courts.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am not saying it is the doctor's fault, do not be ridiculous.

I was responding to the question of the security of the actual physical facilities of the prison, because I believe that this was the point which the honourable Member for St. Michael Central was addressing. I do not believe that many escapes take place from the institution itself. I believe that last year there were two escapes from

the actual institution, and one was an occasion where a prisoner, I believe, climbed up the antenna and managed to get over the wall. That having been done, of course immediate steps were taken to remedy the possibility for another breach of security in that area. There is continual inspection of the security of the prison and wherever there appears to be any breach or defect in the security of the physical arrangements of the prison, immediate steps are taken to deal with it. There has been no escape from the maximum security area of the prison.

In respect of comments by honourable Members about the plight of first offenders, I am at one with you on this. There needs to be a special arrangement for first offenders, there needs to be special arrangements for young offenders, and this is a problem which successive Governments have been looking at, but have not been able to come to grips with. But I can assure honourable Members that it is a question which will be receiving my attention.

Equally important is the question of imprisonment for debt. We are looking at it. We have not come to any definite conclusions on it, but from a theoretical point of view the imprisonment is not for the debt itself, it is for contempt of court. One of the reasons for imprisonment is that people who are required to attend court to answer the claims for debt, in fact, do not do so, and in theory they are imprisoned for the contempt of not responding to the order rather than for not being able to pay itself. I think that is all I need to say at this stage, Mr. Chairman. 4.00 pjn.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, obviously, I will not get involved in the Agard Enquiry Report, out of deference to the procedure which Government has, I think, properly adopted. If there are certain recommendations or certain aspects of it which may bear in a disciplinary way, I think we ought to avoid comment, lest persons who may be affected are in any way prejudiced. However, I am very pleased that the commission has reported, and I am satisfied that I did the right thing in setting up that commission when I did, because there is no way that a human being could die in prison in circumstances which caused the coroner to state that there was a conspiracy of silence on the part of certain officers at the prison and that that matter could be swept under the carpet. The public interest, in my view, was paramount that the matter be properly investigated.

Having said that, Sir, we took steps to try and remedy the physical conditions that may have contributed to the demise of Mr. Agard. Prior to last year, prisoners who were in Glendairy for civil debts, not as a result of conviction but because they had not paid a firm in town and they had been persistently in default, or for whatever aspect of civil debt, were housed in the same cells as, those who were sent up for criminal offences, and that could not be right. So a decision was taken to build a separate unit for civil prisoners, and I think it was also agreed that, while in prison, they should wear their own clothes. I cannot remember, but I think that that may have been the decision. But the point of substance is that we tried to house the civil prisoners in an area separate and distinct from those who were in for criminal offences.

In addition to that — I do not know to what extent the Attorney General has alluded to it — the prisoners contribute to the fact that you will see in these Estimates a comparatively small amount voted by way of capital, because it is a question of a pool of free labour, if you like, and at the same time as they are providing labour, they are also upgrading and enhancing the physical facilities of the prison.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The former DLP Minister who said that they should be beaten with a bull pistle years ago in the 15 year period of the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That also found some support with members of the Barbados Labour Party, to be fair.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Not me! I never said beaten with a bull pistle.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Wait. Wait! Let us go through it carefully. The Member who said that that was a proper form of punishment will find himself at • variance with me. I believe in 1967 or 1968 I wrote an article for the *Advocate* on corporal punishment. One oi" the things that I said was that like the death penalty, I saw no harm, and I mean this, having been exposed to all the theories of criminology and penology in a very intense way up to 1970. I read those areas now regularly, but I cannot pretend that I am as up-to-date as I was in those days. I know what the theorists say, but I was not persuaded that in our society it necessarily meant that because Britain had in the Cadogan Committee Report of 1948 abolished corporal punishment, we should *ipso facto* do the same thing in our society.

I really feel that for certain types of offences which outrage public decency, and our sense of morality,

especially offences which defile women, the country should have the residual power, in addition to imprisoning and feeding him very well, to order some lashes. I am not saying it should be so in every case, I am saying it is a matter of discretion for the courts. I do r.ot want to be misquoted on this either by any of the people who have a habit of misquoting me.

I have to address a conference in Rome in May on the death penalty. My position is quite clear. I am satisfied with what we have in Barbados, that we reserve the death penalty for the very worst murderers which offend. We leave it as a discretionary penalty which can be reviewed by the Mercy Committee, and taking all the circumstances into account, if there are extenuating circumstances well, we give a reprieve. But where people, gangs deliberately go around the society and terrorize people, as happened two or three years ago, when my neighbour's house was set alight and burnt down about 3.00 o'clock one morning by two men, one of whom said that he had heard that my neighbour had money and he was waiting for him to come home intending to kill him, and he did not know the man, I really cannot find myself in sympathy with those who may want tp adopt a soft attitude towards those kinds of offenders. Where murder takes place in a domestic or quasi-domestic situation, a man and his wife and so on and there is some heat, what the French call the time of passion, in those instances, I think we are sufficiently mature now that we recognise all the stresses and strains, we look at the extenuating circumstances and reprieve. But for the calculated, planned, organized, vicious types, I do not see anything wrong in having the death penalty on the Statute Books and reserving it for those serious ones which offend.

Sir, it will take some time, I do not expect that this Government will be able necessarily to do it in this its first and only term, but one has to look at the whole question of prisons and punishment in the total context of correctional services and a social development policy, and you have to start at the bottom. We have things going, as I said last night, like the Juvenile Liaison Scheme. We need to do other things, and I will say some of the things without any fear of the ideas being stolen. They are all in the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, and this aspect I wrote myself, "Youth, Community Development and Sport" going on to "War on Drugs". 4.10 p.m.

The aim must be to prevent the youth, the children — let us start with them — from getting into crime. You have to have a whole set of crime prevention policies aimed at keeping the young children out of crime. Then you have to deal with those who would beat the system of prevention for all kinds of criminological reasons and find themselves as juveniles in crime. You then have to cater for that group by, in my submission, two tiers — a kind of institution like Dodds, but with some refinement where you commit the youngster for an order of training and discipline with a sentence that is indeterminate, and as he responds to what he is being taught, the training the'* he is getting and the discipline being imposed, then you consider his possible release, and release him at an appropriate time. But you will find adolescents between 16 and 20 who are not suited for that particular type of institution and you have to provide another type of institution, such as the borstal in England.

We have had calls from every Chief Justice and several judges over the years asking for the construction of a borstal type institution in Barbados. But as the Attorney General and the Leader of the Opposition were at pains to say last night, and I find myself on the same side with them, these matters seem to have a low priority with the Ministers of Finance, even those three Ministers of Finance have all been lawyers. They have a low priority because they are not seen as vote catching, but as we said last night and today, the importance of maintaining law and order demands having proper systems in place from a developmental angle. I do not wish to go over that.

Asides

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What is that? The Honourable Leader is asking me about how many people we should build the borstal for. I would not risk to guess at it, for the reason that before you took the decision you would have to look at your criminal statistics, look at your age ranges and see how many in that group were going to Glendairy, who you want to keep out of Glendairy and give a different type of training to, and how many in that group was in Dodds, and then you would get the recidivism and the length of sentences, the types of crimes and so on.

There was a time when I had recommended to the Barbados Labour Party Government when it was in power that the building at Carrington which formerly housed Cable and Wireless would have been an ideal set of buildings to be used for borstal — type training. They were set apart from the immediate community. You had established buildings and you had endless land which you could have acquired, good farming land, on which the people who had been committed to the institution could have been engaged in productive agricultural work in addition to the other trades that you would teach. I remember that in the early days of Rastafarinism and the drug problem and so on, I was saying send these youngsters there. They are talking about itals, they want to grow vegetables — send them there. Do not necessarily send them to the mental or to prison. But that property, I believe, slipped out of Government's grasp and we lost an opportunity. We may have to build something.

I have said several times before, and I would throw it out again, that we also need a system of remand home or attendance centres, and I do not believe.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: .....that it will require a vast amount of money or capital to build new pkces. Every police station in this country outside of St. Michael has attached to it a building that formerly housed the Station Sargeant of the station. At District 'C' there was a building. We are using the one at Holetown now as an additional accommodation for the police. At District 'D' at St. Thomas there are sargeant's quarters. If these were properly renovated at less cost than you could build, each of them set out in a dormitory situation, with a house mother and one or two other support staff of maids and so on who could attend to the needs of some of our juveniles, you could dot them about the country. You can probably have two remand centres, one in St. Philip let us say, and another in St. Peter and rather than a youngster being charged and sent straight to Dodds, he would have the opportunity of going into this kind of intermediate situation and brought up in a kind of home atmosphere where he is getting this discipline. You are close by the police station and you could arrange for some discipline to be brought in by the police from the station next door.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: About school? No problem. When my father was In charge of Dodds, a lot of the boys from Dodds used to go to Princess Margaret and emerged with "O" levels.

The question that Head 31 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 32 - FIRE SERVICE - $960 104

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 32 stand part.

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

Mr. J. J. PAYNE (St. James North): Mr. Chairman, before we pass this Head I would like to ask a few questions, because the Fire Service is an area that falls under the Ministry of Legal Affairs, about which I do not have a lot of information, and I would like to ask the Honourable Minister a few questions because, as a man from the north, I recognise that there is only one fire station which serves that complete area. There is a station at Weston, and I would like to know to what extent he is satisfied that this one station can serve all these parishes in the north of the country. I know that station very well, because it happens to be in my constituency and I have visited that place on many occasions. No doubt I play a little dominoes with the boys sometimes on Sunday mornings.

With the number of house fires, cane fires and vehicular fires that we have in this country, there is some concern in the community as to whether we are doing everything possible to eliminate this blight on our society.

We have, Mr. Chairman, a situation where every year many persons lose their homes in fires, in circumstances where there is no insurance, and for that reason I would say that it could not be possibly said that the house owner set the house on fire deliberately. But since many people in the country live in chattel houses, and I would think that it would be necessary for us to ensure that if there is a fire in a district or in a little community, that fire could be eliminated at the earliest possible opportunity. 4.20 p.m.

We do not exist in an environment like some of the larger countries where if a fire starts in a particular district, you can just go and press a button and alert the Fire Service. I believe that the Fire Department has to depend to a large extent on telephone calls to become aware of the fact that there is a fire in a particular district. I am concerned, from that point of view, Mr. Chairman, that we should look at this particular matter, and I should like the Honourable Attorney General to give a little information on that.

I am not going to deal on this occasion with the conditions of the fire station at Weston, although I must say that, from my observation and from discussions with persons who work there, there is a serious need for improvement of those facilities. I would just like to know at this point if the Honourable Attorney General is satisfied that that particular station is adequate in 1987 to serve the northern parishes of this country.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Sir, the first thing I would wish to do — and I am sure I speak for all honourable Members in this House on both sides — is to compliment the fire officers for the excellent work that they do in Barbados on behalf of the community. To some extent they have been treated like poor relations or foster children in regard to other disciplined forces, but I believe that they recognised, as it were, that help wa^ coming, and from the days when the Democratic Labour Party was last in power and they were working 80 and 90 hours a week, by the time the Barbados Labour Party went out of power those hours had come down to 56.

The problem of the Fire Service is like the problem of the police stations and the courts. There is need for modernisation, and again it is a question of whether

Government is committed to putting some money in this area of, as it were, social need and development, or whether they are going in other areas to channel the, let us admit, scarce resources of Barbados.

It has always been my contention that one could solve some of these problems over a ten year period with careful planning. I do not believe that one has to build any fancy buildings. Buildings in Barbados, some of these massive buildings, can be done quite quickly by putting up the steel structures and then building around the steel, and if both Governments were determined to put some emphasis in these areas, there would be nothing to stop a development where, let us say, every year you could make major improvements to police stations or build a new one and build a fire station or upgrade a facility. But we tended to do something all of a sudden and stop for eight to ten years before we went at it again. If we had a properly co-ordinated policy phased over a period of years' time, I think we could modernise both the police stations and the fire stations, recognising that one does not need to build those many fire stations.

Before I left the Ministry, I had invited the Fire Service the previous November or December, when I addressed the Association, to assist in helping us prepare a development plan. The input had to come from them. I was not prepared to lord it over and say to them this is what we must have, I wanted to hear what the men wanted. The Association was able to put up a plan which we looked at in the Ministry, which tended to coincide with what we ourselves were thinking.

We needed a fire station in the St. Philip area, perhaps around the Six Roads area. Land had been identified there before, just I think west of Mr. Frank Springer's gas station on that road going to Foursquare. That would have served St. Philip, it would have been close to Woodbourne in the event of a fire in the oil fields and it would have been a back-up for the fire station at Grantley Adams International Airport, and Worthing would have been upgraded.

The airport station itself needed upgrading. One did not have to build a new station there, the Canadians • had been willing to help, and did in fact help, and all we needed to do was to carry on that programme. In fact, perhaps the Honourable Attorney General would be able to tell me whether he was able to get the improvement done at the Grantley Adams Fire Station to allow the vehicles to come straight out of the station on the runway. We had been trying to get the people who were rehabilitating the runway at the airport to cut a road off the runway straight into the fire station. What happened was that the appliances had to come out straight, turn sharp right and go up to the runway instead of going straight on to the runway. They had to make a turn, and of course, in turning one day, one of the things turned right over and mashed up. We want to avoid that. It had been agreed, but I do not know what happened, but it would have been neat to do that little road at the same time you were rehabilitating the runway. If it has not been done now, you will have to do it again.

That would have taken care of the southern area, bearing in mind that when the new court was built at Charles Rowe Bridge in St. George, the present Boarded Hall Station would have been converted into a fire station. You would have had quite enough presence in that part of the island with the station at Four Roads continuing, so the south eastern and eastern parts of the island would have been pretty well serviced, but you would have had gaps in the central parishes and in the northern parishes. There would definitely be a need for a station in the St. Thomas area to service St. Thomas, St. Joseph and perhaps part of Belleplaine, St. Andrew, even though that would be hard pressed. We were also prepared to put another station out in the north, in the St. Peter area, which could back up to Belleplaine and also the station at Weston that the honourable Member for St. James North spoke of. That is how we were planning to ring the "island, as it were, with fire stations. I think that it is workable, and once the money and the commitment is there to do it on a phased basis, we could fulfil the needs and satisfy those desires.

Sir, the Honourable Attorney General would also be able to tell me whether there is any provision in these Estimates to build the 400 houses for the fire victims that the Honourable Prime Minister spoke of when he was in St. John delivering a stove and a fridge to two of his constituents.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Now you are getting mischievous). 4.30 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I arn not getting mischievous. The Honourable Prime Minister said that they were going to build 400 houses for five victims. I will ask the Minister of Housing to speak with the Prime Minister.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will have to wait until next year. I wonder if that is the best thing to do. I am assuming that it is going to be done.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The problem that has faced the Ministry of Housing and the Housing Authority in the delivery of housing to people genuinely in need has been compounded by the number of units which have to be made available to house fire victims. If any of us has a

fire in his constituency, we have the greatest difficulty in getting spontaneous housing, because all the houses are taken up. There is a heavy proportion of people in the housing areas who are there by reason of being victims of fire, and they do not like to move. There is a way that you can encourage them to move and still provide housing, as we had set out in the manifesto — you build large, dormitory-type facilities which are designed to be there on a temporary basis, but which provide the basic needs — the people are well housed, they are well looked after — but it is not so comfortable or commodious as to encourage them to stay. Do you understand? That is one of the things that could be dealt with.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This is a problem. Despite all the publicity that there is on television by experts warning about the dangers of fire and so, it seems that each year it gets worse. Some honourable Member a few weeks ago called for an enquiry or an investigation to see if we can get at the reasons why there are so many fires. I have a lot of sympathy with that appeal. I think we have to look at it. We have to try and find out, because it is all well and good to do all these fine things that we are talking about, but we have to do them on the basis of known information, and you can only get that information by doing proper surveys and investigative studies.

Sir, I am proud of the record of the Barbados Labour Party in relation to the Fire Service Department. There is much left to be done which will provide an area of continuity for the present Government, and we look forward, in due course, when the Government finds some money, to seeing the area of the fire services developed and expand, and modernised to even higher standards than we were able to deliver.

I am grateful to you, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, I enter the debate to speak on an issue that is of national interest, and also to refer to a matter that is of constituency interest where I am concerned.

I also want to join with the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) in paying compliments to the tremendous work that the Fire Service in this country has done under trying circumstances, and without, until recently, having access to the kind of resources that would allow them to perform the kind of service that, I am sure, the Fire Service would wish to perform. I make that point as a general point, because over the last three years, despite the fact that things were fairly tight in the country and despite the financial stringencies under which we had to operate, the Barbados Labour Party, as a matter of deliberate policy, undertook to provide to the Fire Service, both by way of funds for current expenditure and capital expenditure, increasing amounts of monies which would allow the Fire Service to systematically improve its service.

The records would indicate to you that in 1984-1985, the Fire Service spent $2.6 million on Current Account and that its allocation was increased, Mr. Chairman, by an additional $300 000. In 1985-1986, it spent $2.9 million, and in the Estimates of 1986—87, we increased the amount provided to the Fire Service by an additional half a million dollars, despite the financial strineencies under which we were operating. I am, therefore, wonderine from a national point of view, whether we are not being a bit too stringent on control over these expenditures in halting the advances which had been made in regard to the commitment of resources to the Fire Service over the last three years. I was comparing actual expenditures 1984—1985 to the approved expenditure 1986-1987, and it would seem that, in the course of three years, the type of expenditure on the Current Account that we were allowing to the Fire Service was allowed to increase by $2.6 million in 1984-85 to $3.4 million in the last financial year, and this year, when one would be anticipating that that momentum would be carried through, there has been a very modest increase. It is symbolic of, perhaps, a policy which says that we are reversing the trend, but I want to suggest to the House that the requirements of a service like the Fire Service commands that, despite the financial stringencies under which Government is operating, we really ought to maintain the increased flow of resources that has been invoked over the last three years.

I am particularly staggered, and I only intend to speak once in this debate on the Fire Service, that on the Capital side there is absolutely no provision whatsoever this year for the Fire Service to carry on its capital development. Last year, an amount of $1.4 million was provided, and in 1985—1986 financial year, for example, Sir, the Fire Service was allowed to spend $1.5 million in capital expenditure to improve its fleet of vehicles and to improve its plant and equipment. I think it is rather staggering that at a time when we recognise the need to improve the Fire Service to deal with the increasing problems of fires in the country, we are being called upon to approve a set of estimates and expenditure which provide no capital projects at all for an important service like this.

I said that to say that I want to join with the honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J.J. Payne) in calling on Government to look at the improvement in the Fire Service in the north. It was, in fact, Sir, a manifesto pledge of the Barbados Labour Party to build a fire station in St. Peter. Indeed, that is consistent not only with Government's manifesto pledge, but it is one of the caoital oroiects which was included in the Speightstown Development Plan, and I am really worried that the failure of Government this year to make any provision for capital expenditure for the Fire Service will' postpone indefinitely the period when the people in the north, particularly, can expect to have those types of essential services put in the system.

I am, therefore, grateful to the honourable Member for St. James North for having brought this matter to his Government's attention, and in the spirit of neighbourliness, I want to assure him that he has mv full support in any pressure that he can bring to bear on his Government to continue the tremendous advance that has been accomplished under the Barbados Labour Party in improving this most essential service in our country. • 4.40 p.m.

I am obliged to you.

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne) raised the question about the adequacy of the fire station at Weston. In former years there was the availability of the US Naval Facility at St. Lucy, and that played a tremendous role in fire fighting in the northern parishes. With the demise of the US Naval Facility during the currency of the last Administration, there has been no provision made for replacement of the service which had formerly been provided by the US Naval Facility. All that there was then was that one fire station at Weston to service the needs of the northern parishes, so that the fact that this is the only fire station in the north is not something new. This is something which has been so for quite some time, and the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. Arthur) is aware that his Administration did absolutely nothing to provide for a fire station to meet the needs of the north. The honourable Member's Government did absolutely nothing to meet the concerns about which he is now so vocal.

We recognise that some effort has to be made to deal with the whole problem of security from fires throughout the country. It is a matter which we have been looking at, providing an adequate fire service for the northern region. Let me assure honourable Members that it is not a matter which has been swept under the carpet, but it is a matter which is being looked at in terms of the overall security arrangements for the whole country.

In relation to the fire station at the airport, a question was raised as to whether the access direct from the fire station to the runway had been accomplished. The road has not yet been constructed, but the department of International Transport had been approached about getting the link sorted out, and the department of International Transport is dealing with this problem in the context of providing overall security arrangements for the international airport. There is currently a study going on with a view to upgrading of the security arrangements at the International airport, and this is a matter which is being considered in the context of that overall arrangement.

In relation to the absence of provision in the Estimates for 1987-88, this is a matter which has been discussed with the Chief Fire Officer, when we were discussing the Estimates, and the Chief Fire Officer has agreed after consultation and discussion with us, to hold strain on the requirement for capital equipment in 1987—88, provided he can obtain the equipment which has been provided for in the 1986—87 Estimates. Arrangements are being made for the provision of this very essential equipment which has already been provided, for in the 1986—87 Estimates. Once that equipment is provided, we imagine that the capital needs in providing some major capital equipment which is necessary will be met, and the Fire Service will not be to any extent seriously inconvenienced or discommoded as a result of the absence of any provision in the Capital Estimates. But let us assure honourable Members that, having said all that, if there is during the year clearly a need for any capital provision for the Fire Service, that is a matter which can easily be dealt with.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The question that Head 32 - Fire Service - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 33 - PROBATION OFFICE - $107 180

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 33 — Probation Office — stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 33 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 75 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS - $3 000 000

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 75 - Capital - Ministry of Legal Affairs — stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, under Head 75, this is another one that all of us recognise as necessary, but it is a question of funding again. Is it true that the Government is negotiating to buy the Foundry/Home Centre complex for the Supreme Court complex? There are rumours in the wind. I have heard that Government was seriously considering the purchase of the Home Centre. I am not against it. I was not seeking to be facetious at all, Sir. Honourable Members will find in their papers that the previous Minister had also looked at the possibility of buying the Home Centre/Foundry complex for use. It had not been settled whether we would have the Supreme Court complex there or not, but it was recognised that the Government needed more accommodation, and there was a view that it could be used for Government offices. I would have preferred to have seen it modernised into a new Supreme Court complex.

The Ministry of Housing, I think it was, was to have gotten an appraisal of the value that Government should have offered, and by the time that was done, as far as I can recall, it had been sold by private auction. I do not believe Government got in a bid. Again, Sir, that represents a problem of money. 4.50 pjn.

I am not going to make a speech about the need for a new Supreme Court. We all know that. I know that the Attorney General, if it were at all possible to do it himself, having been a practitioner of many and outstanding years, and having been a victim of the run down conditions we have to practise, like every one of us who had been Attorney General before, would have wished to have done something for the upliftment of the profession.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, no. Do not get into that. No self-adulation. The one who speaks in self-adulatory terms has not been with us for a few days, thank the Lord.

I just want to know if the Government has in its contemplation the modernisation of the Supreme Court.

Under Head 75, a matter of some fundamental importance, I submit, is the figure for $1.2 million under Subhead 9. Last year I was able to get moved in $1 million for the Ministry with a view to doing the Ministry's own maintenance, repairs and development of our own existing stock out of the Ministry itself rather than relying on MTW. We would be what? The client Ministry rather than our being the client Ministry of MTW. I want to know if that is still continuing or have we gone back to MTW?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, I think a golden opportunity has been lost not to have tried to develop a unit in the Ministry of Legal Affairs to do its own — I use construction advisedly — construction and maintenance work. Education has its own, but we were not conceptualising of a department quite of the magnitude of Education. We did not see that the Ministry of Legal Affairs could build buildings, as you all have done in Education. What we saw was that if we controlled our own maintenance, we could have men at the direction and under the supervision of the Ministry in the police station, in the Registry or wherever, at a faster rate than if we relied on MTW. I wish to predict that we will have from year to year terrible complaints about the sloth — that is the word — is slowness a word? — the dilatoriness. The Honourable Minister of Tourism will call it sloth.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We will have the complaint, and the Honourable Attorney General will be frustrated, because he will be told that MTW is doing this and doing that, and when he checks, it would not have been done. Those systems are ingrained and would not change.

You will also find that the cost for doing the work will be far in excess of what you could do it for if you had it in house and if you were applying commercial principles to it. The Honourable Minister of Transport and Works would not have any say, because he cannot be behind them all day long. They will tell him that they have gone to do it, as has happened to me many times when we were doing the extension of the CID block. But when I passed down there deliberately, I saw shovels, hoes and steel, BRC, lying around, and when I looked for the men who were supposed to be working with them, they were in the Criminal Court District 'A' listening to the cases. That is what will happen.

(Aside: Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Tell the manager.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was heading up the team in the criminal court!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, I am blaming MTW.

What I am saying is that if the Ministry of Legal Affairs had its own supervisor, as we wanted to do, who could manage and pay attention and ensure that the work was done, and who would have to report on a two-weekly basis or whatever to the Ministry, I believe there would be greater efficiency and less waste. I predict that, under the system reverting to MTW, there will be continued waste, there will be continued inefficiency and there will be no production to assuage the demands of the departments within the Ministry of Legal Affairs, and there are many and long outstanding demands. I thought it was an innovation which could have been tried. We could have got the department properly set up by getting help from the Ministry of Education, which has years of experience on this. When next year comes, a lot of the problems that we have raised in these debates will raise their heads again and I will be forced to say, 'I told you so', because MTW will not deliver at the speed that you will want.

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do we have to take the break now?

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, but I want to just finish. I think it is an important consideration.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: As agreed, Sir, we have reached the time when we should have a refreshment break.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.30 pjn. today.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 5.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it must revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and 'the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When this sitting was suspended, the honourable Member for St. Thomas was speaking. Head 75.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I had spoken about the Supreme Court building, and I was trying to suggest to Government that perhaps there should not be excessive reliance placed on MTW to do the improvements by way of maintenance and so on for the various departments in the Ministry of Legal Affairs. I think that I had made all the points I wanted to on that.

I see we have $45 000 for the Probation Service to buy a vehicle. I would be grateful if the Honourable Minister would tell us what plans there are for the Probation Department. Again, I think that the Probation Department is one of these that has been treated a little bit like a poor relation to all the other departments in the Ministry. Undoubtedly, they are in need of new premises. There was some problem with the Country Road site. I believe the building started to shake when works nearby were taking place for the new headquarters of the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, and they could certainly do with a move into a new department, although there had been an acquisition of land nearby for the erection of a new Probation Department.

Apart from any physical improvements that there might be, I think it is necessary to look at the Probation Service itself and what we are doing for the probationers. In particular, Sir, we were trying to develop a scheme in fiscal year 1985—1986 under which persons on probation would, under the supervision of the officers in the department, be required to provide community service and work in the community as part of the punishment, but by way of a positive side to their punishment. We had thought of developing a lawn mowering service where a number of carefully chosen probationists would be taken by a vehicle — I do not know if it is this one we are now voting the $45 000 for — with lawn mowers and hedge cutting equipment and so on to do specific jobs for which there would be remuneration, not necessarily at the

market rate, and that once we got it off as a private project, we would look at it and see to what extent it could be expanded and developed as an extension to the community service or the system. I think it is something that is worth pursuing, of course, provided there is money.

Under Subhead 11, Sir, I feel obliged to draw to the Minister's attention that one of the problems that he will find that relates not only to the Police but also to Immigration, is the way in which these officers respond to rumours. I gave an example off record yesterday to the Minister, Sir, and I want to make Members aware of it. Barbados is a great society for rumour, particularly baseless and unfounded rumour. I had an experience a few weeks ago with a client. The gentleman is a foreigner who is in Barbados with a work permit, the blessing of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, brought here under the aegis of the CTFC and assigned in the manufacturing sector to provide technical specialist services. His work permit was a one year work permit, and it expired, for the sake of argument, let us say April 24, but in early February, because he had to be in argument with somebody — it is assumed that is the source — all of a sudden three immigration officers turned up and took him away physically with his passport, which had the stamp in it that he is permitted to be in Barbados on Work Permit, and kept the man for about three hours in virtual imprisonment. When the company for which he was working called me, I was able to call the Acting Immigration Officer. Both the Deputy and the Chief were certainly out of the office — I think they both were on leave — and I spoke to this other person, the third in command, and she was quite horrified. Happily, the matter was amicably resolved, but if the gentleman were litigious, he may well have considered an action for false imprisonment against the immigration officers. The man was legitimately in Barbados. His work permit had not expired, but on the basis of a phone call and a rumour, the Immigration Department reacted, to the embarrassment of the man and the department.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has a minute to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I think the department has to be more sophisticated than that, and be sure and satisfied when they are acting that they are acting on the basis of good information. Otherwise, the Government and the country can, be embarrassed, and none of us wants that, of course, for Barbados.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) raised certain questions in relation to the Supreme Court complex. Suffice it for me to say at this stage that the matter of a new complex for the Supreme Court is still being examined. No funds, as you will note, have been provided for it in the Capital Estimates for 1987—1988. Consideration is being given to the Home Centre property and to the acquisition of the property for that purpose, but no final decision yet has been made on it.

In relation to the Probation Service, the honourable Member made mention of the purchase of a .vehicle. If you look at the Capital Estimates carefully, you will discover that, in fact, no provision has been made for the purchase of a vehicle in 1987-1988. The scheme of which you speak, the lawn mowering, has not been abandoned, but it has not yet got off the ground.

There were comments in relation to the activities of the Immigration Department which could probably have been raised under the earlier Head, because we are dealing with the Capital Estimates at this stage, but the fact is that the point for which the honourable Member has made is well made. There are problems in dealing with personalities in personnel, and it is important for all departments of Government which actually have to deal with the public to ensure that, in dealing with the public, the best possible front is put forward and all issues have been gone into effectively before taking action which co ' result in embarrassment to anyone. 5.40 p.m.

We have recognised that immigration officers, like other public servants, need to be properly trained in the whole programme of public relations. In fact, recently a course has been done with immigration officers, particularly those who work at the airport, with a view to enhancing their public relations profile with the public. Hopefully, that will lead to a better relationship between immigration officers and the persons whom they come into contact with daily.

The issue of the development of the Supreme Court is really not a political issue. I think all lawyers who practise law recognise that a new Supreme Court is needed, but again I think this House, all of us who practise in the law courts and the whole country understands that the problem is essentially one of the provision of capital for constructing a Supreme Court building. This is nothing new, this is an issue which we raise from time to time, and within the limitations of what the Capital budget, the country, can afford, we will hopefully be able to deal with this problem as funds become available.

The question that Head 75 - Ministry of Legal Affairs — Capital — stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 34 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE - AS AMENDED - $81 228 312

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, we are virtually at the end of a very long debate on the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 1987-88, and the Head - Ministry of Education and Culture — is coming at this particular time when I detect that there is a certain lassitude. This Committee appears to be a little worn out by the toils of the week. Nevertheless, I am pleased that I have been given this opportunity to say a few words relating to this Head.

Let me start by moving that the sum of $81 228 312 for Head 34 stand part. In so doing, I wish to draw attention, out of an abundance of caution, to certain amendments in these Estimates. First of all, on the Summary page which gives particulars of service, that is the page preceding 88, under the Head 76. II. CAPITAL, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (A) Pre-Primary and Special, the figure $4 663 000 should be deleted and the figure $4913 000 be substituted.

Reading across on the same line under Increase, the figure 1 588 000 should be deleted and 1 838 000 substituted. There would be consequential changes for the bottom line where the total Estimate Other Expenditure Required now becomes $14 163 844 and under the Increase column, Total Estimate, that figure now becomes 4 116 860.

Again, Sir, out of an abundance of caution, I wish this Committee to be aware of amendments to the Explanatory Notes to page 91, Subhead 10. There should be a Roman iv in there and the words "LL.M' (Legal Drafting)" should be included, because there are sums included in that note to assist in the financing of the legal drafting programme leading to the Master of Laws Degree at Cave Hill. So it should be Roman iv LL.M. and in brackets "legal drafting".

Turning the page, Sir, to page 92, again on the Explanatory Notes opposite, Subhead 13, there should be a Roman v and "National Union of Public Workers" should be inserted there, so we should have Subhead (v) National Union of Public Workers.

Perhaps I could explain at this stage that that subhead provides subscriptions and contributions to a number of institutions, and I wish to indicate at this stage that, for the first time, the vote to the Barbados Workers Union Labour College will be increased. In the past the National Union of Public Workers, I believe, was given a higher subvention than the Barbados Workers Union, and we are now restoring the parity of esteem, I believe is the word. I believe the sum is $30 000 being paid. 5.50 p.m.

While we are dealing with amendments, on page 97, Object No. 23 - Structures, $250 000 should be added to that figure of $780 000. It now becomes $1 030000. In the note opposite the description should read as follows: "The function of this Subhead is to effect major repairs/ extensions to primary schools and to.....Delete the word "the" there and substitute the word "to". That wording is quite adequate and ample to deal with' the capital works to our primary schools, including major expenses, and we expect that work would include the Carringtons Village Primary School.

Under the subhead there, the figure $990 000 should be deleted and $1 240 000 substituted - that is consequential - and the overall figure at the end of page 106 should be changed. The figure $13 913 844 should be deleted and that now becomes $14 163 844.

Mr. Chairman, these Estimates provide for the work of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and it covers areas relating to the central administration of the Ministry, pre-primary, primary and special education. It makes provision for secondary education, for tertiary education, including the University of the West Indies, the Barbados Community College, Erdiston Teachers' Training College, local and overseas training courses, including scholarships and so on, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Government Industrial Schools, the Adult Education Programme and Occupational Training, and it relates to the other services which are necessary for the work of the Ministry, including the School Meals Department, the Audio Visual Aids Department, the Archives, the National Library Service and the Division of Culture.

Mr. Chairman, there is a considerable emphasis on the subject of education in this country. This has been so for a long time, and it is because education has always been considered as a vehicle for social and economic mobility in this country, by which the young people of this country might be able to achieve the kind of aspirations and hopes which parents and guardians might have for them, and which those who develop and see certain obstructions in their way may use in order to try to overcome those obstructions and make a better life for themselves and their families, and that is as it should be.

But I would like to take a few minutes to stress that for us the main task of education is the provision for our community of people of strong and exemplary character. Sometimes, in our task to talk about the world of work and to say that there should be a very high occupational content on education, I believe that we should stress that the production of character, if "production" is the right word, is for us one of the main purposes of education, and that character should shine through whatever occupation or pursuit an individual may follow or may choose to adopt, because, after all, in this

community and in any other community, individuals relate to one another through the quality or otherwise of their character. I consider, therefore, that education for the inculcation of values leading to people of character would be the hallmark of our educational system.

In order to do this, we seek to provide education from as early as possible. The statisticians and the demographers tell us that the school population will be decreasing, and if they are right and there is no reversal of that trend, it may be that space will become available in our existing institutions, and as our economy continues to strive now under the very abled direction of our Minister of Finance, we might be able to provide over time, and out of our own resources, additional facilities to provide the structural framework within which our goals for education may be achieved. 6.00 pjn.

We would hope to certainly make provision at the level of nursery education, early childhood education for children between the ages of three years old and upwards, so long as they determine that they are ready for an enriched and enriching environment.

We are placing extreme emphasis also on the provision and strengthening of primary education, because if that foundation is not well laid, then any superstructure we build on it would be like shifting sand. So there is provision for upgrading our primary schools, and I know that the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) is waiting to hear if there is anything going to service the St. Michael South area and the Christ Church West area, and I would like to give this Committee the assurance that we will be seeking to provide a new primary school to service the southern areas of St. Michael and the western areas of Christ Church and surrounding districts with a new primary school at St. Matthias.

Within the city of Bridgetown — I am not really going into the details of this, because my Parliamentary Secretary will have a few words to say in this particular regard — I have already mentioned the Carrington Village Primary School, which is a different one, but that is just an indication of our desire to improve education at the primary level.

I wish to take this opportunity to stress that we are developing in the Ministry of Education a programme of specialisation for implementation in a limited number of schools, on a project basis first of all, because we believe that if we are to strengthen the provision of education at that level, we must make maximum use of the teaching resources available. In due course, further announcements in this regard would be made.

I wish to make another statement at this stage, and it relates to some of the problems which we have encountered in the Ministry of Education, and the best way I can frame it would be in these terms: that when the change of Government took place, there were massive problems in the Ministry of Education. I do not think anyone would deny that. If you can deny it, you obviously have not been living in this country.

There were massive problems as far as teacher training and the aspirations of teachers are concerned. As from the year 1982 or thereabouts, directives went out from on high. I do not know if the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) had anything to do with the framing of these directives, but study leave and training leave were restricted, not only restricted, they were actually curtailed or abolished, and there were directives to that effect. There was a directive that study leave should not be granted to new applicants before the financial year 1983—84 and there were other directives in subsequent years indicating that there was no change in that policy on study leave. When we came into Government we found a backlog of teachers' requests for study leave, people wanting to improve their positions but not being able to get study leave, and hence morale was very low among those teachers.

We have been working on that particular problem.. We are unable at one fell swoop to grant all of the requests, but we hope that, over time, this will become a problem of the past.

There was another problem existing relating to the legal framework within which education would be administered. I am referring to the Education Act. Those teachers, including one teachers' union, which rushed and passed a Resolution stating that the policies as enunciated by the Barbados Labour Party in 1976 were exactly along the lines that that particular union wanted, by 1986 that union was saying they could not identify their employers and wanted to know who their employers were.

We are working on that particular problem. The first thing we are aiming to do is to seek to restore harmonious relations within the education community. That is a task which we have been working on systematically.

We have, Sir, other problems which we have to tackle relating to secondary education, to tertiary education. Most of these we have announced akeady, and these funds will help in the provision of those services.

One matter which we have been giving consideration to relates to making textbooks available to students at the Barbados Community College on a basis similar to the provision with the secondary schools. We have asked that institution to come up with proposals which we may be able to consider.

Sir, we will seek to provide during the year ample opportunity for the debating of this particular Head of Education, so if honourable Members do not have an opportunity now .....

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not able to make that particular judgment. The only member of the Opposition I did not see in here today was the honourable Member for St. Peter, so if you ask me so, I think I understand why he has been absent, and it has nothing to do with running away from the debate. I think his colleagues told me why he was absent from the debate today, so I really would not pursue that, but I am sure it had nothing to do with running away from the debate.

I give the assurance to the House that we will provide opportunities for discussion of educational matters, and we will keep an open mind on these issues. We will listen to the comments, we will listen to the criticisms, and we will listen to suggestions which are made. We cannot promise that they will all be accepted, but we will work in the best interest of improving and developing our educational system. 6.10 p.m.

I beg to move that this Head stand part. Hon.

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

Mr. C. V. WALKER (St. George North): Mr. Chairman, it is always that the guillotine is coming down.

Laughter.

Mr. C. V. WALKER: The time is short. I will only briefly review the contents of the plan which is embodied in the $81 million. We are looking at some enhancements and planning for education in the whole of 1987 and 1988 if funds are available. Indeed, as the Minister mentioned, in the area of Erdiston College, under Subhead 3 you will note that the teachers will once again be able to have their training. You have also heard about the three to five year-olds, and we now have approximately 8 300 of those in the island, and there are about 3 600 currently in school. There are education awards, approximately 217, that are provided for in these Estimates at universities overseas and in Barbados. You will note that some $2 749 000 is allocated to them.

In terms of the project which was debated in this House some time ago, in the primary school, area, there will be one at St. Augustine in St. George North, one at Bayley's, one at Selah and of course, the honourable Member for Christ Church West would already have been alerted about St. Matthias. In the secondary area, we hope to build a new Queen's College, to start that in 1987—88, and there will be equipment and furniture for Harrison's College. The overall plan for 1987—91 includes the additional schools that were discussed when we last discussed the project here in this Honourable House.

There is no need to stress the importance of education at this time. The Honourable Minister started to give a historical view about education. I would like to go back to 40 years ago, when we had what a few of us would remember as the Hayden experiment. You would recall that that was the first time that the sons and daughters of carpenters, masons and agricultural people started to go into such schools as Foundation, Combermere, Green Lynch and the now defunct Modern High School. That is now history and we no longer worry about the sons of these children getting into schools. What we are worried about today is the fact that we have to provide enough places to accommodate these children in the schools, because as we thanked the Democratic Labour Party in 1961, and again following deliverance day on May 28, 1986, we can be sure that the DLP will continue the forward thrust in education.

Mr. Chairman, we know that we are coming up to a period of time when we will be dealing with what is commonly called the Eleven Plus exam, and we will be dealing with that, realising that we have to get the children in school. As you already have been made aware on our last discussion on education, I think there were some 2 469 boys and 2 267 girls, giving a total of 4 736 pupils who took the exam. It is interesting to note that out of those, some 3 958 were successful and gained places in the schools. That goes to show that we still need a few more places and that is why in the Estimates of 1987—88, we are endeavouring to provide — and beyond I must say — places in the new schools — and indeed you will hear more as we come after this - at St. Thomas and Wotton. We will not forget.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am grateful to you.

Applause

The question that Head 34 stand pan was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 76 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE - AS AMENDED - $14 163844

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 76, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 76 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 35 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS -AS AMENDED - $10 116 101

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 35, as amended, stand part.

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

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

HEAD 77 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - AS AMENDED - $730 000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chakman, I beg to move that the sum of $730 000 for Head 77, Foreign Affairs, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 77, as amended, stand part was put and resolved 'in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - AS AMENDED - $69 192 439

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 36, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 36 as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 78 - - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - AS AMENDED - $19 245 443

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 78, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 78, as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - AS AMENDED - $10 175 181

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 37, as amended, stand part.

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

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

HEAD 79 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - $18 665 000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $18 665 000 for Head 79 stand part.

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

The question that Head 79 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 6.20 p.m.

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - AS AMENDED - $21 806 180

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to' move that this Head, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 39, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 81 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - AS AMENDED - $2 893 000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 81, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 81, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 40 - MINISTRY OF TRADE AND COMMERCE - AS AMENDED- $4413 565

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 40 as amended stand part.

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

The question that Head 40, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 82 - CAPITAL MINISTRY OF TRADE AND COMMERCE - $390 075

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 82 stand part.

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

The question that Head 82 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 42 - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, WORKS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS - AS AMENDED - $37 223 461

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Head 42, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 42 as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 84 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, WORKS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS -' $49 000 000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 84 stand part.

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

The question that Head 84 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 43 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INDUSTRY - $19 749 612

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 43 stand part.

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

The question that Head 43 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 85 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TOURISM - $19 749 612

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 85 stand part.

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

The question that Head 85 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 50 - POST OFFICE - $4 338 259

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 50 stand part.

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

The question that Head 50 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. HEAD 14 RECOMMITTED

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move, Sir, that Head 14 — International Transport and Telecommunications — be recommitted.

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

The question that Head 14 - International Transport and Telecommunications - be recommitted was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14 - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT DIVISION - AS AMENDED $8 074 862

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 14, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 14, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The Schedule - as amended - $533 767 467 - was catted and passed.

Clauses 1 and 2 were amended, 3 and 4 were called.

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee, as amended, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Bill as amended, was read a third time and passed. 6.30 p.m.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that we now revert to the Item — Government Notices.

MESSAGES FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER: Before we go on to that aspect of the business, I want to read Message No. 2/1987 from His Excellency the Governor-General to the Honourable the House of Assembly.

> "His Excellency the Governor-General has the honour to inform The Honourable The House of Assembly that he will be absent from the country during the period 23rd March to llth April, 1987, on a private visit to Swaziland and Britain.
>
> "Under the provisions of section 29(1)(b) of the Constitution, the Chief Justice, The Honourable Mr. Denys Ambrose Williams, GCM, will

perform the functions of the office of Governor-General during His Excellency's absence." PAPERS LAID

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

A Report on Education in Barbados for the period 1st September, 1978 to 31st August, 1982.

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

The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Amendment) Order, 1987.

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 1987.

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

The Organisation of American States (OAS) Report to the Government of Barbados on the 5th Actuarial Review of the National Insurance Scheme.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, 1983.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, 1983 be now read a first time.

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

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 58, asked by the honourable Member for Christ Church East is ready.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (RESUMED)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, earlier in this sitting we gave notice of a Bill to amend the Special Loans Act and that Bill was also read a first time. We propose to proceed with that Bill at this stage.

SPECIAL LOANS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Order No. 5 was called - To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Special Loans Act.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, this is essentially a non-contentious matter. The Bill seeks to amend the Special Loans Act in order to increase the limit of borrowings under that Act.

From time to time, in order to meet the demands of Government business, the Special Loans Act has been increased, and this Bill seeks to increase the amount that can be borrowed under this Act from $375 million to $500 million.

As usual, one has to point out to this Honourable House that this does not mean that you will use up that kind of money in a short period of time, because normally what happens is that these limits are raised every two or three years.

Mr. Speaker, with those brief remarks on this non-contentious matter, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE Mr. CHAIRMAN:

This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 were called and passed.

6.40 p.m.

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 tiill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Order No. 2 was called - To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the District Auctioneers Act.

DISTRICT AUCTIONEERS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Speaker, this Bill is designed to amend the District

Auctioneers Act, Cap. 114 of the Laws of Barbados, to increase certain travelling allowances which are paid to Government auctioneers. The amounts paid to the auctioneers, set out in the Schedule to the Act, have not been increased for some considerable number of years. The amounts are being raised from $5 to $50, so the object of this short bit of legislation, non-contentious, one would imagine is to raise the amount paid to the auctioneers.

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. M. A. KING, seconded by Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

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

On separate motions of Hon. M. A. KING, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

QUESTION TIME

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 58.

QUESTION RE PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN AREAS OF CHRIST CHURCH

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 58:

To ask the Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications:

1. Is the Minister aware that there is a pressing need for a regular public transport service in Parish Land and Fairy Valley, Christ Church, and, if he is not so aware, would he kindly give this matter his urgent attention?

2. Would the Minister direct some of the mini-buses, which crowd the shorthaul routes, to the Parish Land/Fairy Valley area and to the other areas of the country which are crying out for service and, if this cannot be done, would the Minister issue a'permit to a newcomer who is prepared to ply that route?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 58 is as follows:

"1. Yes, Sir.

2. The Transport Board is taking steps to improve the bus service to the Fairy Valley district and surrounding areas."

Mr. SPEAKER: Any Supplementaries?

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, no supplementaries, Sir.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the member for St. Thomas has a matter which he wishes to raise at this point.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, then leave is granted.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Speaker, I am indebted to you, Sir.

This is a matter of privilege. I draw attention to a report in the *Nation* newspaper on Thursday, March 19, 1987 under the by-line of Hartley Henry. It is on the back page, page 24.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that in the body of the article is a deliberate and comprehensive distortion of my contribution to the debate on CBC. I have had the benefit of the shorthand writers' notes of what I said, and virtually all of what was attributed to me was never said by me, and I ask Your Honour's leave to have this matter referred to the Committee of Privileges. 6.50 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take cognizance of the matter and I shall refer it to the Committee of Privileges.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I think honourable Members want some particulars. The part of it to which exception is taken, Your Honour, is where it says:

"Opposition MP David Simmons agreed with the Prime Minister that over staffing was one of the biggest problems facing the corporation. He explained that while the number of managers increased, the quality of management decreased and this resulted in the radio section having to reel under the progressive and innovative VOB. Simmons, himself a former Chairman of CBC, said the corporation made a profit in 1979, but a bad decision by the administrators who succeeded him dashed all hopes of further prosperity."

This little part seems to be all that is true:

"He said it was wrong to split the radio and television department as this resulted in duplication in many areas." He then said: "And the creation of a number of managers who were not trained or qualified for their jobs."

(Aside. A Voice: But that is true.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But I did not say it though. Sir, even if it is true, I am not into that.

Sir, my speech is in Hansard, I have got the draft and three of us have checked it, and it is a total misrepresentation, and I ask that it be sent to the Committee of Privileges for their adjudication.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: As I said, I will forward the matter to the Committee of Privileges.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of this sitting. It has been a very long sitting and we have been examining very serious aspects of the work of the Public Service and work of public affairs in this country, and I would like to thank all honourable Members for the contributions which they have made towards our deliberations during this sitting.

Your guidance, Su\ and the guidance of the Chairman of Committees, have been most exemplary, and it has enabled us as a Chamber to perform our duties in what can only be described as a creditable manner.

The Opposition, Sir, cannot complain that they did not have ample time within which to make their contributions. We know the distribution of seats in this Chamber, and when I do a quick calculation of the debating time taken up by both sides, I note that approximately 21 hours in debating time was used up by the Government side and approximately 15 hours 54 minutes used up by the Opposition. If we really balanced it out at 3:24 as opposed to 21:15, we can really do a comparison of the ratios there.

That apart, Sir, I would say that I have listened in to debates in many chambers within the commonwealth and elsewhere, and I say without hesitation that our debate on the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for this year and on the Appropriation Bill does our small Parliament great credit, and I would like to thank honourable Members for the contributions which they have made.

I would also like to thank the Hansard Reporters, Sir, the technicians and the staff of Parliament, the caterers, and all those public officers and all those who have made a contribution towards a very long and also a very tough week of debate.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, in seconding my friend's motion, I would like to concur in the comments which have been expressed, particularly the views about the high standard reached in the debate. I have been in the House now for some 16 years, and I can say without fear of contradiction, that some of the speeches made in this debate have reached the highest standards that I have seen in here going back to the time when I first came in as a fledgling Member of Parliament. I think, Sir, that it augurs well for the future of the country when Members can seriously debate issues of grave significance to the country in the manner in which they have been debated in this Chamber.

I was particularly pleased by the give and take which occurred in the debate. There were moments of very serious philosophical discussions, yet, always, I think people kept a firm grasp on the practical. There were moments of levity, Sir, which relieved us all. And what is most particularly refreshing is that none of us will be leaving around this table, despite our political divide, as enemies, but as friends. We have all conceived it as our duty to do our task from our respective positions and different perspectives.

Sir, for an Opposition, numbering only three, it is a formidable task to have to take on 24. But I feel pretty satisfied, that we have given a creditable account of ourselves in this Chamber. The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) can therefore be satisfied that when we do reach his Head on the next occasion, he can look forward to a very serious analysis of his performance, particularly since he goes away with the knowledge that the future of the parliamentary life span of my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) is in his hands, and therefore if he lets him down in any way, Sir,

we will certainly have to deal with him. But this is not the time for any notes of levity.

I wish particularly, if you will permit me, to congratulate the Acting Chairman of Committees who has had to sit there through 37 hours of debate. I must say, Sir, that he has conducted himself, I think, to the satisfaction of the whole House. He allowed sufficient latitude, yet he was firm. Nobody disrespected the Chair at any time. His rulings were promptly obeyed, and he brought a sense of humour and timely intervention.

Sir, you know that when I seconded the motion that Your Honour should be elevated to the high office of Speaker of this Distinguished Chamber, I said we had emulated the practice of producing our best speakers other than from lawyers. This is so in the Commonwealth. It seems the same will go for the Chairman of Committees, because the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Mr. C. A. Neblett) has really, from all the comments I have heard from honourable Members, performed extremely well in this Chamber.

I also wish to join in the comments made about the staff of Parliament, particularly the reporters, and also about a person who is not often noticed, since he sits behind all these electrical wires. I refer to the gentleman who looks after ensuring that the broadcast of this House is kept in a permanent form for us. 7.00 p.m.

So it has been a pleasant session. It has been a long session. I would just say that I think the public would have recognised that parliamentarians do work, and work hard and seriously.

It only remains for me to say, Sir, that, from the perspective of my role as Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the House has really, in my view, been most co-operative and this has certainly made it much easier for us from the Opposition side to be able to conduct our business on this side of the House.

Applause.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am certain I speak on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition, and indeed of all Members also, when I say that we thank the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force for their contribution to these debates.

Applause.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, we still have a few items of business before the end of the financial year to conclude, Sir, and I regret that we will have to return on Friday, March 27, to conclude our business for the Financial Year.

I therefore beg to move that this sitting be now adjourned until Friday, March 27, 1987 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

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

The question that the sitting do now adjourn until Friday March 27, 1987 at 12.00 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 7.05 p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting of

Tuesday, March 10, 1987 732

MESSAGES

Mr. SPEAKER..... 1019

Message NO. 2/1987 re absence from country of Governor-General from March 23 — April 11, 1987.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD.....1020

The Report on Education in Barbados for the period 1st September, 1978 - 31st August, 1987.

Hon. Dr. R. C. HAYNES.....1020

The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Amendment) Order, 1987.

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 1987.

Hon. W. W. HALL..... 732, 1020

The Report of the Task Force Committee on Employment.

Organisation of American States (OAS) Report to the Government of Barbados on 5th Actuarial Review of the National Insurance Scheme.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD 852, 1020

A Resolution to grant the sum of $12 980.00 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1986-87 Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1986—87, No. 27 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Bill to amend the Special Loans Act.

A Bill to amend the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, 1983.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD.....1020

A Bill to amend the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, 1983.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES 1021

Reply to Question No. 58, asked by the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS..... 733

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

APPROPRIATION ACT 1987 733

Dr. Haynes, 733, 759; Mr. Arthur, 744.

HEAD 10 - GOVERNOR-GENERAL

$369021 764

HEAD 11 - JUDICIARY - $17 664..... 764

Mr. Forde, 764; Mr. Barrow, 765.

HEAD 12 - PARLIAMENT 766

Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 766, 771; Mr. Barrow, 766, 769, 771; Mr. Sandiford, 766, 769, 772; Mr. Greaves, 767; Mr. Forde, 767, 773; Mr. Trotman, 770; Mr. Taitt, 772.

HEAD 13 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - $2 691 891..... 774

Mr. Barrow, 774, 786; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 774, 780; Mr. Forde, 776, 785; Mr. Trotman, 778, 782; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 779; Mr. Morris, 782; Mr. Brathwaite, 783; Mr. P. M. Greaves, 784.

HEAD 69 - CAPITAL - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - $3 900 002.....790

Mr. Barrow, 790, 791; Mr. Forde, 790; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 790.

HEAD 14 - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT DIVISION - $8 074 862..... 795

Mr. Barrow, 795; Mr. Forde, 798, 803; Dr. Haynes, 800; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 801,

810; Mr. Trotman, 804; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 807, 812; Mr. Morris, 808; Mr. King, 812.

HEAD 70 - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

DIVISION - CAPITAL - $1 658 000.....813

Dr. Haynes, 813.

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE - $22 848 876.....813

Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 813, 815,816,817; Mr. Sandiford, 815; Mr. Taitt, 815; Mr. Barrow, 816, 822; Mr. Forde, 817, 820; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 819.

HEAD 71 - CAPITAL - CABINET OFFICE - $909 600.....827

HEAD 16 - MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE - $10 148 555.....827

Mr. Arthur, 827,839, 842; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 829, 835; Mr. Barrow, 831; Mr. Forde, 834, 847; Mr. Trotman, 837, 849; Mr. Sandiford, 840; Mr. Morris, 844.

HEAD 72 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF THE

PUBLIC SERVICE - $400 000 850

Mr. Forde, 850; Mr. Barrow, 851.

HEAD 18 - AUDIT - $170 891.....852

HEAD 19 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE $2 049 677.....853

Mr. Forde, 853, 860; Mr. Greaves, 854; Dr. Haynes, 855, 859; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 857.

HEAD 20 - REVENUE COLLECTION $2 872 201.....862

HEAD 23 - LOANS AND ADVANCES - $1325616.....863

HEAD 24 - PENSIONS - AS AMENDED - $18 400 000..... 863

HEAD 73 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - AS AMENDED - $34 316 228 . . . 863

Mr. Forde, 863, 868; Mr. Barrow, 863, 867, 870; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 866,868, 874, 876, 880; Dr. Haynes, 868, 883; Mr. Trotman, 871, 881; Mr. Taitt, 873, 878; Mr. Arthur, 882.

HEAD 25 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES - $12 923 881.....885

Mr. Franklin, 885, 909, 913, 926, 940; Mr. Arthur, 887, 893,906,912; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 889; Mr. Miller, 891,917; Mr. Walker, 895; Mr. Morris, 897; Mr. Taitt, 900; Mr. Bourne, 902; Mr. H. A. Blackman,905;Dr.Haynes,915;Mr. Brathwaite, 920; Mr. E. E. Greaves, 921; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 922; Mr. Forde, 925. HEAD 27 - METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES -$1 212392 927

HEAD 74 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES - $22 844 588 927

Mr. Arthur, 927, 933, 936; Mr. Franklin, 929; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 930; Mr. H. A. Blackman, 935; Mr. Forde, 937; Mr. Morris, 939.

HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS - $2 759 365..... 942

Mr. King, 942, 943, 948; Mr. Payne, 942; Mr. N. K. Simmons, 945; Mr. Trotman, 946; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 947, 950, 956; Mr. Forde, 952, 960; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 954, 962; Mr. Taitt, 958.

HEAP 29 - PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS - $61 280..... 963

HEAD 30 - POLICE - $8 706 302..... 963

Mr. King, 963, 965, 969, 974, 985, 1001; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 963, 989; Mr. Trotman, 966; Mr. Sandiford, 967; Mr. Miller, 970, 996; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 972; Mr. Forde, 976, 995; Mr. Hall, 978; Mr. Taitt, 980; Mr. E. E. Greaves, 981; Mr. Payne, 983; Mr. Morris, 984; Mr. Brathwaite, 988; Mr. P. M. Greaves, 991; Dr. Haynes, 993; Mr. N. K. Simmons, 998; Mrs. Barker-Welch, 1000.

HEAD 31 - PRISONS - $1 796 968.....1002

Mr. Forde, 1002; Dr. E. A. Simmons, 1002; Mr. Trotman, 1003; Mr. King, 1005; Mr. D. A. Simmons, 1006.

HEAD 32 - FIRE SERVICE - $960 104.....1008

Mr. Payne, 1008; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 1008; Mr. Arthur, 1010; Mr. King, 1011.

HEAD 33 - PROBATION OFFICE - $107 180. . . . 1011

HEAD 75 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS - $3 000 000 1012

Mr. D.A. C. Simmons, 1012; Mr. King, 1014.

HEAD 34 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE - AS AMENDED - $81 228 312.. 1015

Mr. Sandiford, 1015; Mr. Walker, 1017.

HEAD 76 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE - AS AMENDED - $14 163 844..... 1018

HEAD 35 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - AS AMENDED - $10 116 101..... 1018

HEAD 77 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - AS AMENDED - $730 000.....1018

HEAD 3C - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, AS AMENDED - $69 192 439.....1018

HEAD 78 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, AS AMENDED - $19 245 443.....1018

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - AS AMENDED - $10 175 181 ____ 1018

HEAD 79 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - $18 665 000 1018

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOP MENT - AS AMENDED - $21 896 180..... 1018

HEAD 81 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF EMPLOY MENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - AS AMENDED - $2 893 000..... 1018

HEAD 40 - MINISTRY OF TRADE AND COMMERCE - AS AMENDED - $4413565 1018

HEAD 82 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TRADE AND COMMERCE - $390 075.....1019

HEAD 42 - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, WORKS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS -$37223461 1019

HEAD 84 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, WORKS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS - $49 000 000.....1019

HEAD 43 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INDUSTRY - $19 749 612 1019

HEAD 85 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INDUSTRY - $19 749 612 .. 1019

HEAD 50 - POST OFFICE - $4 338 259.....1019

HEAD 14 - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT DIVISION, AS AMENDED - $8 074 862. . . . 1019

SPECIAL LOANS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987 1020

Dr. Haynes, 1020.

DISTRICT AUCTIONEERS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987.....1020

Mr. King, 1020.

QUESTION TIME

QUESTION RE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICE IN AREAS IN CHRIST CHURCH ASKED BY MR. E. BOURNE (CHRIST CHURCH EAST) OF MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, WORKS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS..... 1021

Mr. Greaves, 1021.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE 1021

Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, 1021.

Re report in Nation of March 19, 1987, by ' Hartley Henry, re Mr. Simmons' speech on C.B.C.

SUSPENSIONS_____750, 774, 790, 813, 839, 852, 875, 897, 911, 918, 937, 950, 970, 991, 1013

ADJOURNMENT.....: 1022

Mr. Sandiford, 1022, 1023; Mr. Forde, 1022.

SPEAKERS IN THIS DEBATE

ARTHUR, O. S. (St. Peter) BARROW, Rt. Hon. E. W. (St. John) BLACKMAN, Hon. H. A. (St. Philip South) BOURNE, E. (Christ Church East) BRATHWAITE, L. L. (St. Michael North East) FORDE, Hon. H. deB. (Christ Church West) FRANKLIN, Hon. W. O. (St. Philip North) GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy) GREAVES, Hon. P. M. (St. Michael North) HALL, Hon. W. W. (St. Michael West Central)

HAYNES, Hon. Dr. R. C. (St. Michael South Central)
KING, Hon. M. A. (Christ Church West Central)
MILLER, P. G. M. (City of Bridgetown)
MORRIS, R. L. (Christ Church East Central)
NEBLETT, C. A. (St. Andrew)
PAYNE, His Hon. J. J. (St. James North)
SANDIFORD, Hon. L. E. (St. Michael South)
SIMMONS, D. A. C. (St. Thomas)
SIMMONS, Hon. N. K. (St. James South)
SIMMONS, E. A. (St. Michael South East)
TAITT, Hon. B. M. (St. Michael West)
TROTMAN, C. L. (St. Michael Central)
WALKER, C. V. (St. George North)
WEEKES, His Hon. L. A. (St. Michael North West)
BARKER-WELCH, M. (St. Joseph)