THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 - 91

Tuesday, October 13,1987.

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

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, J.P., (Speaker)
His Honour J. J. PAYNE, (Deputy Speaker)
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 Health)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications and Leader of the House)
Hon. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
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 Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development)
Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc,, (Econ.), (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Hon. 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)
Hon. C. V. WALKER, (Minister of State, Ministry of Education and Culture)
Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P.
Mr. E. BOURNE
Dr. E. A. SIMMONS, M.D.
Hon. W. W. HALL, (Minister of Tourism and Sports)
Mr. C. A. NEBLETT, B.A.
Mr. C. L. TROTMAN, M.A.
Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Mr. P. J. M. MILLER
Mr. R. P. BYER, LL.B., L.E.C.
Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.

Prayers were led by Fr. Noel Burke.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES Mr. SPEAKER:

Minutes of Tuesday, October 6,1987.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes be taken as read.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, let those Minutes stand confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by the Cabinet to lay:

The Post Office (Overseas Parcel Post) (Amendment) Regulations, 1987.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

A Resolution to amend the Explanatory Note to Head 71 -Cabinet Office, Subhead 2 - Barbados Defence Force, Object No. 23 - Structures.

A Resolution to grant the sum of $7 000 000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1987-88, Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1987-88, No. 12, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Resolution to grant the sum of $225 900 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1987-88,

Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1987-88, No. 14, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Bill to amend the Land Valuation Act.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Thomas re feasibility of subscription TV.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, to ask the Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications:

Will the Minister state:

(1) How much money has been spent by the present Government in researching and planning or examining the feasibility of Subscription TV. up to the end of September 1987?

(2) Whether the Government proposes to continue planning for introduction of Subscription TV, and if so, will the Minister state the date on which this form of broadcast will become available to the general public?

(3) Whether subscription television has been avail able to the public or any members of the public and, if so,

(a) to which members of the public it has been available

(b) the period of time during which they received subscription television broad casts, and

(c) the terms upon which they received such broadcasts?

Mr. SPEAKER: Question by the same honourable Member re extension of District "D" St. Thomas bus to Airy Cot.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, this one is for the Minister of Transport only.

Will the Minister take steps to ensure that the District"D" St. Thomas bus goes to Airy Cot via Canefield?

Mr. SPEAKER: Question by the same honourable Member re large heaps of gravel along Shop Hill road.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The same Honourable Minister, Sir, for Transport, Works and Telecommunications.

Is the Minister aware that there have been two large heaps of gravel beside the main Shop Hill road for over two months?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister state:

(a) the purpose for which the said gravel was heaped;

(b) the reason for its non-use on any road in the Shop Hill district?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable Member, question re street lighting in certain districts in St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The same Honourable Minister, Transport, Works and Telecommunications: Will the Minister take steps to have street lights installed in the following districts in St. Thomas namely:

(1) Grand View to Christie Village (4),

(2) Bucks/Mango Pond (4),

(3) Hopewell (3),

(4) Canefield (2),

(5) Hangman's Hill/Blyth Hill (4),

(6) Lewis Village (3), and

(7) Dukes (4).

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Thomas re circulation of the Task Force Report.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Minister of Labour and Community Development:
Is the Minister aware that the Report of the Task Force on unemployment was laid in this Honourable House in March 1987?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister state why the said report has not been circulated to honourable Members for study?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable Member, question re Unemployment Benefit Scheme.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The same Honourable Minister, Sir, Minister of Labour and Community Development

Will the Minister please state:

(a) The balance standing in the account of the Unemployment Benefit Scheme or Fund as at May 30, 1986 and September 30, 1987 respec tively.

(b) The quantum of money paid out of the said Scheme or Fund in each month from June 30, 1986 to September 30, 1987?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable Member, re the state of Bloomsbury Road, St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications:

1. Is the Minister aware that it is now almost six months since the main Bloomsbury Road, St. Thomas collapsed and became impassable?

2. Is the Minister aware that the present state of the said road causes great inconvenience to the travelling public?

3. If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister explain why no remedial work has been carried out on the road since it collapsed?

4. Will the Minister state what steps will be taken to repair the said road and when?

Mr. SPEAKER: Question by the same honourable Member re Unsatisfactory bus service to certain districts in St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The same Honourable Minister.

(1) Is the Minister aware that residents of St. Thomas in the Porey Spring, Welchman Hall, Hopewell, Bridgefield, Proute and Walkes Spring districts are experiencing very unsatis factory bus service?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister state what steps are being taken to relieve the problem?

(3) In any event, will the Minister give favourable consideration to returning to service buses terminating at Sturges, St. Thomas and Hillaby or White Hill, St Andrew in addition to the present services and also increase the number of buses presently plying the Sugar Hill, St. Joseph route?

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member's last question, re repairs to old age pensioners' homes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Minister of Labour and Community Development:

Will the Minister please state: -

(a) the number of old age pensioners' homes repaired since April 1, 1987 and the amount of money expended thereon;

(b) whether there is a fixed maximum amount of expenditure for the homes of such pensioners and, if so, what is the amount?

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Land Valuation Act be read a first time.

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

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

Hon. P.M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Governor-General (Conditions of Service) Act be read a first time.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Judges Remuneration and Pensions Act be now read a first time.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, in moving the first reading of a Bill to amend the Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Act, I would like to give notice that when we come to consider this Bill, an amendment will be moved to-it to insert a third clause to the Bill.

I now move that the Bill to amend the Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Act be now read a first time.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I will also give notice that a similar amendment will be moved to the Bill the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (Remuneration and Allowances) Act.

I now move, Sir, that a Bill to amend the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (Remuneration and Allowances) Act be read a first time.

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, before we embark on Government Business, I move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

INCREASE OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S ANNUAL SALARY

Order No. 6 was called -To move the passing of a Resolution to increase the annual salary payable to the Governor-General with effect from 1st April, 1986.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the Government carried out revisions to the salary structures of public officers in accordance with agreements reached with the respective trade unions. Certain categories of workers received a 9 per cent increase on their annual salary and senior public officers received an increase of about 1.4 per cent.

Sir, we are now almost at the end of this revision exercise. The only salaries left to be revised are those of the Governor-General, judges and parliamentarians, including the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.

The Resolution now before us is for the revision of the salary of the Governor-General as set out in the Resolution. The revisions took effect from April 1, 1986, and there will be further revisions from April 1, 1987. The rate of increase that is being proposed here for the Governor-General, as, indeed, will be shown for judges and parliamentarians, will be identical to the increases granted to the senior public officers, that is, 1.4 per cent, or thereabout, as from April 1,1986 for the Governor-General as well as for the others, and an across-the-board 2 per cent with effect from April 1, 1987.

The salaries now being proposed for the Governor-General from April 1,1986 will be $95 832, and from April 1, 1987, $97 752.

I move, Sir, that this Resolution do now pass. Hon.

B. M. TAITT: I beg to second the Resolution.

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

GOVERNOR-GENERAL (CONDITIONS OF SERVICE) (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Order No. 2 was called - To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Governor-General (Conditions of Service) Act.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move the second reading of this Bill.

Some time during the past year, the Cabinet took the decision to amend the pensionable conditions of sendee of the Governor-General in identical terms to which we earlier amended the judges pensionable service. One recalls that earlier this year, salaries of the High Court judges were revised so that the judges would receive on retirement the highest annual salary paid to them during service. At that time, we were really following what also obtained for the Chief of Staff of the Barbados Defence Force. 12.35 p.m.

We felt, although we had not done it at the time, that the Governor-General should be in no different position and no worse position than High Court Judges of this country. After all, Sir, it is not unusual - as a matter of fact, it often happens, and he is required to do so by the Constitution from time to time - for the Chief Justice to act as Governor-General of this country. I believe that this is the kind of measure that would recommend itself to honourable Members, and I do not anticipate any opposition to the measure.

We also have a problem, which we intend to correct in the same Bill, with leave passages for the Governor-General. Section 14 of the Governor-General (Conditions of Service) Act provides that the Leave Passages Order 1966 should apply to the office of the Governor-General as if that office were an office created by Order under Section 2 of the Civil Establishment Act.

Sir, in 1979, that Order, the Leave Passages Order of 1966, was amended, and the Leave Passages (Amendment) Order, 1979, took its place. That limited the eligibility of all public officers as regards leave passages, so those persons joining the Service after January 1, 1980, are not now eligible for leave passages.

The question then arose, what is the position now of the Governor-General? The Governor-General assumed office after that date, Mr. Speaker, and the Governor-General has queried whether he is entitled to leave passages. An opinion has been given by the Attorney General's office that because of the amendments of 1979, the Governor-General is no longer so eligible. The purpose of this Bill is to restore to the Governor-General his eligibility for leave passages, and the Bill sets out how it is to be done - with the approval of the Prime Minister.

We are looking at the possibility of the Governor-General being entitled to two leave passages outside the Caribbean and two leave passages within the Caribbean during his tenure of office, but he will be able to take his leave passages as he wishes and, of course, in agreement with the Prime Minister. Again, Sir, this is a measure which we hope honourable members will agree to.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, it is not usually traditional to debate matters relating to the Governor-General, although in the House of Commons in England, Royalty sometimes does not escape the scathing tongue of a few Members of Parliament. His Excellency stands in the place of Her Majesty, and I am sure that if this was the House of Commons those who are strong objectors to the principle of the monarchy would use the occasion to debate the monarchy *vis-a-vis* Republicans. I want, however, to comment only on one aspect of this Bill, and that relates to leave passages for the Governor-General.

Certainly, if the legislation of 1979 had the effect which the Attorney-General has advised it has, it was never intended to have that effect, and I believe that the factual position is that since 1979 the Governors-General have proceeded on their leave passages on the assumption that they were so entitled. I expect that they would have gone on leave and have been granted their passages paid for by the public purse, and that, really, one is now regularising the position here.

I am a Hole hit concerned, however, by the statement from the Acting Prime Minister that it is envisaged that during his tenure of office, the Governor-General will have four passages paid, two outside the Caribbean and two inside the Caribbean. For one thing, I expect that that is a statement of principle not applicable to any particular holder of the office. I also assume that the tenure of office of Governors-General, whether it is by contract or otherwise, will vary from time to time. I would be happier with, having regard to the nature of the office which the Queen's representative holds, a situation where the' conditions are laid down in some form of legislation and His Excellency does not find himself dependent on the Prime Minister to specify conditions, unless it is made clear in the legislation that the conditions are specified by Order.

I say that, Sir, because within the constitutional history of the Commonwealth,, Governors-General have had to disagree with Prime Ministers, One could advert to the case in Australia of Gough Wrutlam, where Sir David Kerr, exercising the residual powers granted to him, disagreed and asked for an Order of dissolution of Parliament, bringing about a new election. I can cite the existing case, the regrettable circumstances that have occurred, in Fiji, where the Crown's representative is in disagreement with some matters that have taken place there.

One cannot in the constitutional life of a country foresee every eventuality which may occur, but there is no doubt that constitutional theorists will tell you that Governors-General do have residual powers, although a wise and experienced Governor-General would hesitate to exercise those powers, except in very unique and unusual . circumstances.

Under our Constitution, of course the Governor-General, in most instances, has to act on the advice of Cabinet, and there are very few circumstances in which there is reserved to him the right to act in his discretion. But he does have some remaining prerogative powers, the exercise of which may from time to time bring him into disagreement, or controversy, or to a different opinion from that being held by the Prime Minister who represents to him the views of the Cabinet of the day. Therefore, I would have been happier with a draft of the new Section 14 to reflect a legislative position that is specified, even if the Order is subject to negative Resolution of Parliament from time to time. It is that aspect of the matter that I would really like to see looked at 12.45 p.m.

The other point that concerns me is that I believe that when the Queen's representative is travelling on official business, he should really be accompanied by some person, his ADC at least, at a protocol level. I see the Acting Prime Minister nodding his head, but I am not sure that has occurred, I have not seen it occur. But I have seen past Governors-General and this present Governor-General travelling and having some difficulty in jurisdictions where we do not always have representation. Although courtesies are extended by some Governments, particularly by the Government of the United Kingdom, it is not often always that other Governments will take the trouble to extend some courtesy to him, and I wish, Sir, to see that we rectify any omission that we may have committed in these circumstances.

I said, Sir, that this is not the occasion, certainly on a Resolution such as this, to discuss any other measure. One has to be very careful in dealing with some of our institutions to make sure we preserve them by restricting criticism, carping or otherwise. That is why in speaking on this Resolution I have spoken on it only in those areas that I think necessary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to assure this Honourable House that the sentiments expressed by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition are well taken, and to let him know, in fact, that it is precisely those considerations which led to this rather broad drafting of the clause.

The question arose as to how many passages would constitute a reasonable number. There was a view, and there still is that view, that insofar as the Head of State is concerned, how many ought really not to be specified but rather, should be given as wide an accommodation as possible.

The only reason why the Prime Minister appears in the dark is for the purpose of the propriety of Parliament, having someone accountable to Parliament for leave passage. It was not envisaged that a wise Governor-General would not be served by a wise Prime Minister, and while one cannot legislate for all eventualities, one has to assume that anyone who holds the office of Prime Minister in Barbados will have, first, the support and, second, the goodwill of the community, and would be wise enough not to be so vindictive as to use this clause to thwart a Governor-General's position.

The point is taken, and it is a view which is shared on this side, that Governors-General do have remaining prerogative powers, although there could be discussions *ad inftnitum* as to what precisely they are.

The intention here, in fact, was to give a more generous application of the leave passages than existed before, or than would exist if we had, in fact, specified the two and two, the two outside of the Caribbean and two within the Caribbean. The idea of two outside of the Caribbean and two within the Caribbean was, in fact, the idea which came with the original recommendation for improvement of leave passages. But, Mr. Speaker, it is precisely because of the fact, as I said, that that would be a restriction that we, made this generous interpretation. I suspect that whichever form of words was used in the legislation, the issue would still arise, because somebody has to determine when and who will pay for the passages.

I do not think the matter of accompaniment when the Governor-General is travelling on official business is an issue, I think that is a matter on which both sides could easily agree. But it is a matter which the Governor-General himself, or herself, would have to determine. One tries to avoid dictating to the Governor-General as to how he should proceed in this discretion. I suspect that it is correct and easy to say that it is anticipated that that is a matter in which the Governor-General would take care of. But this Government sees no difficulty whatsoever in the Governor-General travelling in a manner commensurate with, and befitting, representation of this country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Speaker, I have a very short comment to make in relation to the position taken by the leader of the Opposition. In my view, the arguments he has raised in relation to clause 14 have more theoretical than practical considerations, because once we accept that we are operating in the area of Cabinet Government, as we know it and once we recognise the principles and sovereignty of Parliament, the concerns * which the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) expressed about the pettiness of a Government in being niggardly with a Governor-General in relation to this aspect of his terms of employment are not grave.

The point I am making is that if you-are operating against a background of pettiness in a Prime Minister or a Government even if we accepted the position suggested by ^4 the Leader of the Opposition and have the terms enshrined in an Order, or even in an Act of Parliament, and you are giving the Governor-General the most generous terms, if you want to be petty you can come back into Parliament and pass legislation taking away all you have given him. If the Minister has made ministerial Orders in relation to the terms and conditions of employment in this regard and the Minister has power to change the Orders, if he wants to be petty he can change them.

I am saying that the concerns are really theoretical rather than real. The Bill is premised on the assumption that we are dealing in a responsible area of administration, that Governments would not be petty. If for some ridiculous reason we find Government operating from petty and in vindictive ways, the public out there ought rightly to express their views on that type of behaviour and deal with the situation.

I think that there need not be undue concern about the matter, and I think the way in which the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) has put it, that the clause was drafted in this way to allow the widest possible latitude, bearing in mind that the Prime Minister is the person with whom the Governor-General would have the closest relationship in his contact with Parliament, is the best way of dealing with it. 12.55 p.m.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, rather than it being reported in a certain way and probably give you the wrong impression, let me state that in introducing this Bill, of course, I was following the files. I happened to be absent from the Cabinet at the time when this matter was dealt with, and the way in which it was put by the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), I am assured by my colleagues, is what Cabinet decided as regards leave passages for the Governor-General. In fact, it was not indeed limited to four passages at all, but it was left wide purposely so that it can be dealt with in agreement between the Governor-General and the Prime Minister.

The original thinking was two inside the Caribbean and two outside, but that is no longer the case. I had just picked that up from the files, but I am assured by those who were present at that Cabinet meeting when I was out of the country that the Bill as drafted really and truly sets up the new thinking and supersedes what had originally been proposed to Cabinet. I thought I should make this point rather than it be reported in a different way.

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

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the

House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 2-3 were called and passed.

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

On separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREWES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TATTT, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

JUDGES REMUNERATION AND PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Order No. 3 was called - To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Judges Remuneration and Pensions Act.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to bring the judges remuneration annual salary that is, in line with the rest of public officers. It is intended that the Chief Justice should be paid $76668 annual salary with effect from April 1, 1986 and the puisne judges should be paid $66444 from April 1,1986, which respective figures represent roughly a 1.4 per cent increase, and also that the Chief Justice's salary and that of the puisne judges be increased by 2 per cent with effect from April 1,1987, as regards the Chief Justice to $78204 annually, and the Puisne Judges to $67776 annually.

It is felt that it will be a much tidier arrangement if these retro-payments are given some authority within the Act itself and, therefore, the Judges Remuneration Act is being amended.

I move that the Bill be read a second time. Hon. E. E.

GREAVES: I beg to second that, Sir.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREfi/ES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1-3 were called and passed.

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

On separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREA/ES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Bill was read a third time and passed. 1.05 p.m.

MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES (REMUNERATION AND ALLOW-ANCESXAMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St Michael North): Mr. Speaker, this Bill has a twofold purpose: one, to put within the Act a retroactive provision; and two, to amend the salaries payable to the Prime Minister, the person performing as Deputy Prime Minister, other Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, as set out in the Schedule to the Bill.

I have already given notice that there will be an amendment, by inserting Clause 3 of the Bill. That has been circulated, as I am advised, to all honourable Members.

Sir, again the proposal as contained in the Bill as regards to salaries is to increase the salaries of the respective Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, to whom I referred, including the Prime Minister, who is *primus inter pores,* by the same 1.4 per cent from April 1, 1986 and then by an across-the-board 2 per cent from April 1,1987.

Earlier today, 1 was at pains to point out that those percentage increases are identical percentage increases agreed with the respective trade unions as regards senior civil servants. I do not know, Sir, if it is necessary each time we have a revision of Ministers' salaries to make the point about relativity to this and the other. I must make the point, however, that in June last year - or July, I think it was -the salaries of the Prime Minister and the Ministers and the Parliamentary Secretaries were reduced by 5 per cent. I will also have to make the point thai the increase now being proposed will not take the salary of the respective officials to whom I referred back up to where it was in March, April or May 1986.

Not so long ago, Sir, I had to remind my ministerial colleagues that in respect of my own salary, and therefore theirs as well, I was about No. 5 down the line in my Ministry. Those before included the various Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments, including, Sir, the Manager of the Barbados Port Authority and the Manager of the Barbados Transport Board. I am not sure that this even rectifies that position. Be that as it may, I think we are in duty bound - to my mind, we are morally bound - not to exceed the percentage increases granted to other public officers.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words I move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, I was interested to hear how the Government was going to introduce this measure. It is a bit fortunate in a way that the Deputy Prime Minister, who is acting Prime Minister, is introducing the measure, because to some extent he has managed to reduce the politics of the matter by his usual matter-of-fact way of speaking on such matters.

The matter of Salaries of Members of Parliament and Ministers of Government has been one that has excited the political parties, depending on where they are sitting in this House. It is something that has seen members of the political parties, in and out of the House, taking diverse attitudes, depending on the time in which the measure has come before the House.

If I may take the position, for instance, of the present Prime Minister, his position has always been that Ministers of Government and Parliamentarians should always be properly remunerated, reflecting the jobs which they do and the role they hold in public affairs. He has not always been supported by his colleagues. As happened as late as May 1984, his position differed considerably from other members in the shadow Cabinet then, particularly the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes),. who is not here today.

The other view which he has taken - and he has taken this view as late as. 1984,1 think it was December 1984 -is that there is a need for a tribunal to review the salaries of Members of Parliament and Ministers of Government, and the principle that he has argued here is that since teachers and other civil servants have their own trade unions and there is no trade union of Parliamentarians - in fact, sometimes it is doubtful if parliamentarians see themselves as having any common interest at all ~ it is necessary that there should be some bargaining unit and some representation made between the public's position and that of the parliamentarians.

The Prime Minister once removed, the late Right Honourable Enrol Barrow, took the view that he never used to vote on his salary at all, and that or*Iy twice has Sie been in the House to participate in any debate on salaries. But on the last occasion which he spoke on the issue of salaries, in July 19861 think it was, it was my understanding that the position of the Government, which he represented, and he was the only person who spoke, was that no increases would take place without a consultative committee of Parliament passing on those increases. That is in the debate of July 15, 1986, and particularly the debate which started at page 24.

Asides,
1.15p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I am stating a factual position. I am saying that it was my understanding that the Government's position on this matter, as far as I could discern from the speech of the Right Honourable Errol Barrow, is that whenever conditions, emoluments, remu-^ neration and allowances of Members of Parliament should be changed, normally speaking, "it is our practice that we should set up a joint consultative committee between members of the Government and members of the Opposition.' That is at the bottom of page 24, and it goes to page 25 of the debate, and that is my understanding of the Government's position.

I say this because the Acting Prime Minister now seems to accept the principle of relativity, a principle which was, by some members of the present Cabinet, savagely assailed when that principle was enunciated in here by a former Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Tom Adams, as the principle which the Labour Party Government considered should be followed.

I want to underline this, because I think we are getting to the stage where, obviously, if we have evolved into a principle on this matter, it should be made absolutely clear >. to the public that it would seem now that both of the political parties within recent times have now accepted the principle of relativity. I wish the Acting Prime Minister in bis reply certainly to clarify for the benefit of the Opposition - maybe his colleagues might have more knowledge than I have -whether the Government now does not consider it necessary to have any consultative committee or any review tribunal, or any other independent body, if you like, dealing with salaries.

If those were the totality of views of members of the Government on approaching salary matters, I would not even take this debate any further. But I said there is a good deal of feeling in the Government with different views being held. In the Senate, and I am not going to go too far on this - I am sure that other members will speak on this - the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) characterised any increase as "one of the more dastardly acts" that could ever happen, and he used various statistics at the time to really tear into the Government's position. I am going to say no more on that honourable Member, because I am sure he is here today and, most likely, will speak, and I am sure that, from time to time, people will reply.

I assume that the honourable Member is now satisfied that his position as enunciated in the Senate in 1984 is no longer tenable. He can now speak from the perspective of sitting within a Cabinet and having given more sober thought and reflection to the stand which he took. There is nothing so good for a politician that holding office from time to time will not cure, so even now he is being given the opportunity of seeing that nobody was, to quote his words, "raiding the Treasury" in those days, particularly having regard to the statement made by his colleague from the same parish, the Deputy Prime Minister, not the same

representative, that in respect of his salary, he is No. 5 in the pecking order within his own Ministry, a point which was made in previous debates as well as then justifying various increases.

Then there is the view of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I am sorry that that honourable Member is not in his place today; he is out of the country and I do not really like making statements critical of Members behind their backs. But the honourable Member has been in the Cabinet as Minister of Finance, and he would have been in a position, therefore, to have observed the conditions of all of the members of the Cabinet *vis-a-vis* their civil servants and other advisers, to look at the state of the economy to know whether or not it was possible to pay, and he would also be in a position today to say whether or not he agrees with the change.

I have to say one thing, I really do not want to score points in his absence, because I like to give people an opportunity to reply, but I have to make the point; maybe, on some future occasion he will reply, if he reads Hansard. I noticed that when he became a member of the Cabinet of Barbados, it did not prevent him from proceeding with his profession well beyond the time that one is decently allowed to wind down his practice.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. James South (Hon. N. K. Simmons) says "like me". I have to deal with that before he and the Douglas Leopold Phillipses misrepresent the position. In the first place, the honourable Member has to know that lawyers are a little different to doctors -the honourable Member laughs - or shopkeepers in this respect.

The first thing is that you go and speak to the Chief Justice, because one thing which would not be allowed to any Member is to turn up in court when he goes in as a Minister of Government.

The second thing is you have to get from him a respectable period of time to offload your clients' business and your clients' accounts, which is what happened, as it has happened in the case of the present Attorney General and the past Attorney General. Probably the honourable Member does not know, but you need to get that time.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I can say for the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Hon. W. O. Franklin) that he does, not practice his profession. I deal with his firm on a daily basis. Whatever arrangements he may have with his partners is a different matter, but I am saying that, to the best of my knowledge, he has not handled a matter on which his firm was advising me, and for which he had direct responsibility, since he became a member of the Cabinet

But I am not here merely to deal with people individually in this sense, because my speech is not *ad persona* on this matter. The speech I am making is on the basis that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central's position, as I have said previously in this House, and I continue to say it, was not based on a matter of principle in relation to salary increases for parliamentarians. It has been pure, straight, unadulterated partisan politics. Indeed, that is part of the tragedy of these matters. 1.25 p.m.

I have always taken the view that Ministers of Government should be reasonably remunerated, taking into account the economy and the overall position of the country. I am not going to belabour the point, but for the benefit of honourable Members who want to see the view I took, I refer them to the debate of Tuesday, July 15, 1986, and to the debate of December 11,1984. They can go through and read the debates when I have spoken on salaries.

I do not believe that people have been consistent on these matters. Therefore, I wish the Government to be quite clear, because whether this issue becomes a partisan issue in the future will be determined by the Government's position. Is it clear that the Government is now accepting the principle of relativity? Has the Government abandoned the position that ii wishes an independent body to review the salaries of Members of Parliament etcetera? Does it want some form of tribunal to review the position?

There is a statement that I really cannot allow the Acting Prime Minister to get away with. He is nominally correct, if you look at ball park figures without analysing them, that the nominal amounts which Ministers will now draw with the increases would appear on paper to be less than what Ministers would have drawn under the Labour Party Government in April 1986, I say "nominally", because although there was a 5 per cent reduction in Ministers' salaries in July, one had to take into account a changing tax regime.....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Let honourable Members listen. Honourable Members are getting excited already.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am hearing only the honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Honourable Members will know, and this is the point I am making, that if the measures proposed by the then Minister of Finance, Mr. Bernard St. John, in April, 1986 had remained intact and the allowances had remained intact, the tax effect of these matters would have meant that they would have taken home less than the Ministers at present will take home. That is the point. It cannot be gainsaid. In truth and in fact, you have to look at the real position.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: What kind of point is that?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: What kind of point it is that you make if you said that nominally you look better off unless you look at the realities? If you ask me what kind of point I am making, I am asking what is the kind of point you are making if you only give one part of the equation without taking into account the full amount. You either ignore the position as at April 1986 and make no point on it, or you have to look at the position at April 1986 with all the other implications, the taxes and otherwise, and the position now, changed with the 5 per cent but taking into account the changed position. That is a valid point. The honourable Member has how conceded that the point is correct. If the honourable Member had the 5 per cent that he took away added to the position, he would be better off than the Ministers would have been in April 1986.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will repeat again that the Standing Orders have not been suspended where Members will have an opportunity to speak. I would prefer honourable Members to make asides very quietly and not disturb the speaking Member. Again, I ask the honourable Member for Christ Church West to continue his speech.

Hon. H deB. FORDE: I think the point is now taken by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt). To say, as the Acting Prime Minister has said, that you get a situation where they are not nominally getting the same amount that Ministers were getting in April 1986, is to ignore the fact that given the changed tax and other situations that have occurred, they are better off than Ministers would have been in April 1986.

Sir, I wish to know from the Acting Prime Minister whether he is now satisfied that the conditions existing today warrant any increase as opposed to the decrease which occurred in July 1986.1 am taking the stand you all took. If you find the stand strange, it is that I am taking your case. At that time the Right Honourable E. W. Barrow, Member for St. John, explained his decision in these terms, and I am reading again from Hansard, Tuesday, July 15, 1986, 1981-1986 Session, at page 25:

> [Sf]l made a decision, based on my experience as a Barbadian, as I have said before, that one should not try to march to the sound of a drum different from that which is heard by the rank and file marching in the columns behind you; that is, that no socialist Prime Minister, no one who believes in democratic socialism, should try to live in a life style which is far out of step with that which is suffered by the majority of people in this country."

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Members seem to have difficulty with my quoting from as high an authority as the Right Honourable Errol Barrow. 1 have no difficulty at all in quoting from him on this point. What I am asking the Government is, is the Government satisfied that it is not trying to march to the sound of a drum different from that , which is heard by the rank and file marching in the columns behind them? Maybe the columns are no longer behind them, but I have to ask that question on this point. I ask, what really has occurred since last year July, when the Government was prepared to hold strain, that within a year the Government is saying that it does not have to hold strain? That is all I want to ask the honourable Members. If the honourable Members want to tell us that it is no longer necessary to hold strain, let us hear. Do not couch your position behind the bland statement made by the Acting Prime Minister.

I heard *sotto voce* from an honourable Member on the front bench that things have got better. I do not believe that even the Government believes that. I honestly do not believe that the Government believes that the people who are now taking home less, not more, can say that things have got better. There is a whole host of them. If the honourable Members do not know, go into the supermarket and shop and hear it. 1.35 p.m.

I hear from the honourable Member for St James South that things are better because they have got rid of the BLP. I want to remind the honourable Member that if he would listen now, he would hear a different sound from what he might have been hearing on May 28, 1986. He will hear a completely different sound.

The honourable Members must recognise that the Government's positions as seen within the year, the stand which they took then and the stand which they take now, have to be seen for what really they are. They stance then was not based on any consideration of economic considerations, no matter how much they are going to protest. The point is, as I said in July 1986, was that they were making some political hay, grandstanding! The Government was grandstanding at the time by pretending that they were making a nominal decrease in Ministers* salary, selling it to the country as though it were some major achievement, when in truth and in fact the Government recognised that with the tax proposals which they brought, Ministers were no worse off than if the measures of the Honourable Minister St. John had stayed in place and the salaries had stayed. Members would have known that This great political grandstanding only took just over a year to be reversed, and there are several other aspects of Government policy that we have seen the same reversal on. We must ask the Government, why not show some consistency on these matters?

Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have heard you better, boy.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is necessary in political life for the Government at least to make sure that on the

principles they are enunciating, they are consistent and clear. This is another instance of Government moving from pillar to post, changing its tune and its position to suit itself.

The correct way for the honourable Member to come down and introduce this measure is to acknowledge that you have always really, in truth and in fact, believed the principle of relativity, and to acknowledge that you were only grandstanding and securing some political points last time, in July. I want honourable Members to understand that the public is able to analyse and see through all of these things.

I am not for one moment going to say that it is right for the Minister who heads his Ministry to be number five, as he says -1 am assuming that the honourable Member is right in his pecking order. I would leave that for the honourable Member for South Central to say. I do not believe it is correct at all.

I do not believe that in Barbados there is the wide disparity in relativities between salaries at the top, certainly in the Public Service, and salaries at the bottom that one sees in some other countries, including communist countries, including Cuba and the Soviet Union, which is going to shock a lot of people. I am not saying that the relativity that exists at the moment is ideal or necessarily correct, or could not be improved. But the criticism I have heard in the past coming from the other side, and particularly from the then Shadow Minister of Finance, is one that one has to rebut, because if you look at the statistics put out by the United Nations, you will find that in terms of relativity, Barbados, - and this has been so for years, not only now under this Government -has had a better record than most of the socialist and other countries.

I have always contended, Sir, and if you read the speeches you will see the position we have taken on this, is that we need to remove the issue from where it becomes a partisan issue. But we need candour as well, and, frankly, 1 had hoped that this debate would have provided, not the Government now, but the Democratic Labour Party, with the opportunity to show greater candour on this issue of the salaries of parliamentarians. I have been in the House long enough to have witnessed some of this taking place.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: July last year page 25.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, let me again be quite definite on the issue. I believe that parliamentarians ought to be paid. We have long since past the days of 1946 and 1947, for those who like the history of these matters, where the aristocracy objected to the payment of parliamentarians because the aristocracy saw then that people of our colour would be coming into the House. No parliamentarians were paid in those days. Sometimes you saw in the columns of the newspapers people making the point that those were the grand old days when persons served without remuneration, but they forget that in those so-called grand old days, the ways of patronage were such that those who appeared to serve without remuneration were in fact doing better off because of the ways they arranged contracts in business and so on than if they had served with remuneration and had full accountability. 1.45 p.m.

I really do not want the Government to misunderstand the position of the Opposition at all. We have come a long way from those days, and I believe we ought now, as responsible parliamentarians, to let the public know that both political parties accept the concept of fair and reasonable remuneration for people who serve in the public life of the country.

I believe that some of the existed provisions could be improved, not merely for the benefit of Members serving, but also to reflect the position between parliamentarians and civil servants, that the relativity provisions should not merely end with salaries *per se,* but looked at in the context of pensions and the various risks and hazards which are involved.

Civil servants feel that the qualification period for pensions by Ministers and parliamentarians is too short as compared with their own qualification period before they reach their maximum pension. The position is that, in a way, they have greater security of tenure than Members of Parliament. I am going to give the arguments that justify some difference. In addition to that security of tenure which they have, in another way, it is true that parliamentarians contribute to their pensions, whereas, the civil servants do not contribute to ours. Each parliamentarian has 5 per cent, I believe it is, deducted, and we are in a contributory pension position.

Having said that, I believe that the \vays in which parliamentarians are discriminated against according to their length of service in the House is also something that should be reconsidered. I have spoken on numerous occasions about long-serving Members of this House who have not had the benefit of adequate pensions. I have mentioned the position of a former honourable Mernlxjr for St. Philip South, Mr. Reynold Weekes, who is one of them. I was horrified to recognise the small pension that is given to the present President of the Senate for his service in this House. And I can go through other Members who have served in the House, many of them longer than myself, some of whom have gone away, some still living, without us even putting right their position. I feel that is a serious mistake and a serious error.

I believe that there is a case for the Government to look at pensions and to let us have as wide a public debate and consideration on it as is possible, because you have to take into account the public interest as well.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member, the Acting Prime Minister, said that we should have asked our people to do it when we were in Government If the honourable Member will look back, he will see this is not the first occasion on which I have spoken on this matter in the House.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: And they ignored you?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is not a matter of ignoring someone. As the honourable Member knows, some of the most acrimonious debates have taken place in this House on the issue of Ministers' salaries. If it is near an election, it is even more acrimonious than it can be. The honourable member knows that The honourable Member knows that sometimes people lose sanity over this issue. The honourable Member knows that within our own parties, from time to time there are different views held on the issue. And the honourable Member knows that there is nothing that excites some members of the public more than to hear honourable Members tearing into each other, as the honourable Member is now enjoying his past speech in the Senate, on the issue of the salaries and remuneration. So one of the problems one has is to get objectivity where the public is not accusing people of setting their own salary willy-nilly, and where there is a proper system of looking at the matter, using all of the correct and objective criteria that should be used. The honourable Member knows that is what I am asking for.

The whole issue of the pensions position of parliamen tarians should be reconsidered and looked at to devise a system that will also take into account trie length of service of parliamentarians. Let me give you an example, Sir. If we had a situation in the House where a parliamentarian comes into the House and serves for five years during which period of time he is Prime Minister for a day - it gets as ludicrous as this - he is entitled to a pension .....

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAItT: That was Tom Adams! He did that. And you got over there and agreed to it and you are now quarrelling!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ....higher than the pension which another honourable Member, who might have served in the House for 30 years and held Cabinet Office for most of them, would have been entitled to.

Asides

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member says it is the same with the Chief Justice and it is probably the same with the Governor General, and probably it is. It is difficult to get into this debate without going at individual Members, and that is why I am trying to get the principle of these matters out. I have used that as an example to prove the case for looking at the wider issue of taking into account the length of service as one of the criteria on which to remunerate people when it comes to giving them adequate pensions.

The fact that we as parliamentarians have not been *4 able to arrange this issue in such a way that both sides of the House and the public can feel happy about it, I think is a cause for some sort of criticism of Parliament. There are several Parliaments in the Commonwealth today where these matters are not debated with the same partisan approach than has been taken in the Parliament of Barbados. Those of us who subscribe to and read "The Parliamentarian" will become conscious of this. In a way, it raises the whole question in my mind of the status and the manner of treating and looking at the rights and privileges of Members. 1.55 p.m.

I have said before, Sir, that if you want to see a Member of this House within the Chambers of the House, there is no way that he has any privacy to consult with you. I know that before the Barbados Labour Party demitted office, we started the process of refurbishing Parliament and it environs with a view to upgrading the facilities available ^ to Members of Parliament to enable them to service their constituents and others much better. That is part of the conditions and terms of service of Ministers and Members of Parliament as much as salary is, and it is not a privilege for the Member *per se* as a Member, it is there because it is a term and condition which would help improve his usefulness to the public.

Any time that I am in another Commonwealth country, I take the opportunity to go and observe its Parliament and to see what is provided for parliamentarians there.In Ontario, the controversies that we have heard, the grandstanding, that we have seen are virtually absent. Each Member has reasonable facilities provided for him to service his office. I believe that even with the refurbished position now, the only persons at present - I do not know what is going to be in the future - who have any proper facilities > are your Honour the Speaker, Sir, which, Mr. Speaker, you are most entitled to - I hope they have very well provided for you -and, I think, the Prime Minister. I do not believe that any other Minister of Government, if he has to be within the precincts of the House and has to do his work whilst waiting for a call to vote, has adequate facilities provided for him.

Since becoming the Leader of the Opposition, I have had a great opportunity to look at the provisions in that office. When I was a member of the Public Accounts Committee, I also commented to the former Prime Minister, who was then Leader of the Opposition, on the fact that the facilities over there were not adequate. Indeed, what I have observed in Opposition is that the whole thing has come up on an *ad hoc* basis; a little bit was given to us when we were in Opposition, we added a bit more to you when > you were in Opposition, *vice versa* and so on.

I think we have to clarify in our minds that the positions which we hold are not given to us for ourselves, for personal aggrandisement in that sense. They are there because they represent something for the country, and, therefore, when they are adequately -1 am not talking about extravagantly - provided for, you are providing not to please Mr. A. or Mrs. B. or Mrs. C, but really to ensure that they can carry out their functions in a proper manner and in keeping with the office, given the context of the country.

I once remarked, Sir, that no Member of Parliament has franking privileges, but certainly I find it strange that the position has continued that the office, for.instance, of the Leader of the Opposition has to pay for his own stamps if he is posting a letter to the Prime Minister on Government business. I happen to hold the office now and people may say that I am making a statement for myself, but I am not doing that. This is only symptomatic, in my view, of the manner in which the political parties have approached this issue, and the gravaman of my statement here today is that we must try to separate matters that call for a higher level of a national approach from those really partisan, cut - throat matters.

I am not saying that any of us is guiltless. I am not saying that at all. But if this has provided the watershed for the Democratic Labour Party to make some admissions, I ask that they be big enough to make them now, so that in the future we are not confused by issues such as this. Therefore, I wish, when the Acting Prime Minister replies to this debate, to hear quite clearly what is the position of the Democratic Labour Party on the matters thai I have raised in this debate, and I want to hear whether the Government is now satisfied that the principle of relativity should continue to exist.

2.05 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that the sitting be suspended until 3 o'clock today.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 3 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

2.06 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr. DEPUTY

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When we took the suspension, the honourable Member for Christ Church West was speaking. He may continue.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not going to delay the House much longer on this matter. I think that I have made the major points that ought to have been made in this debate. I wish to end on the point that I think it is very necessary to stress that this change in the Government shows quite clearly that the strictures that I made in July 1986 have been fully justified. The decision then was a political decision, and that is really all it was.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make some comments for the record with reference to what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has said. I was aware of the fact that when this Bill was brought before the House, the Opposition would seek to make some political mileage out of it, and that is why his speech took so long, so before I put this thing in a true historical perspective, there are some points I have to make.

There was some attack made on the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) about his practising his profession while he was a Minister. As a member of the profession, I am duty bound, since he is not here, to make a comment on that.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition said that when members of the legal profession like himself took over the post of Attorney General, they sought the approval of the Chief Justice, because one could understand that in that professional field you cannot just drop clients and move on. I want to remind him that if a lawyer finds it difficult to drop a client, it is much more difficult for a person who practises the medical profession to just walk out on his patients, some whom have psychological ties to him, and for some, the only physician who has ever taken care of them is that particular physician. So I think that that is a non-point, and as professional people, we have to be very, very careful, when we analyse the situation, about making comments of that kind.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: What I said quite carefully is that there must be a reasonable period of time, and that applies as much to the doctor as it does to the lawyer. That is the only point I was making.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS. I take the point that there must be a reasonable period of time. But there are some Attorneys General whose reasonable period of time may last for five years, so we have to be very, very careful about that.

There was reference made to the fact that in the 1986 Budget put forward by the then Minister of Finance, the Ministers take-home pay would have been less. But if we were to go on what happened under the administration of the last party, we cannot take at face value what happened in the Budget Debate just before the election, because in 1981 the Barbados Labour Party brought a Budget, but immediately after winning back the Government, they brought in a Mini-Budget, so one can assume, from a logical point of view, that we would most likely have had' a Mini-Budget if the people of Barbados had made the error of returning them. It is simple logic. That is the only point I want to make on that.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition was making a point about grandstanding and hand standing. I want to put that into a political perspective, because I want to remind this Honourable Chamber that politics in Barbados did not start in 1986.

Leading up to the 1976 election, the members of the Great Combination, and I think the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was identified as one of those members, went around this country saying to people that Ministers in Government were making too much money. That was one of the things that they brainwashed the people of this country with. After they won the election in 1976, they set up a commission called the Nicholls Commission which was supposed to assess the salaries of Ministers and make recommendations as to how Ministers' salaries should have been increased. I think it is a matter of history that the Nicholls Report was thrown through the window and that the then political party did what they wanted to do. So to come in here now and say that we need a policy as to how parliamentarians should increase their salanes is really trying to put the point that we in this Chamber have forgotten the history of what has taken place in this country. I am talking about recent history, within the last ten or 15 years. We have to be very, very careful about that

When we get to the actual increase in salaries, when we talk about an upgrading of parliamentarians' salaries by 1.4 per cent, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition really should be very, very careful how he speaks. He was a member of the Cabinet when the very Barbados Labour Party increased Ministers salaries by 25 per cent in 1982. We are talking about a little nominal increase of 1.4 per cent. How really can you get up and argue a case for a party, and he was a sitting Member of Parliament at the time, that brought in a whopping 25 per cent increase in parliamentarians salaries? And I remember well when Ministers of that Government said that they had to be paid because they were no maids and they wanted their money. To come in here now with this kind of pious attitude is really begging the question.

They put forward the point that politicians were more important than judges, more important than the Chief Justice. So when we on this side can stand up and say that there are Government servants working in Ministries who are drawing more money in salaries than the Ministers, I think it is a point that Barbadians can understand. It is a sacrifice that Ministers have made, and that they are making.

You might want to say that because of the Income Tax concessions and other measures that you can work it out in one way or the other. But that is not the point, Barbadians are intelligent people and they can understand what is going on in this country. I think that at times members of the Opposition are really looking for the most minute points with which they can try to score some political points. That happens, of course, when we are not sure about where our stand really is, and, therefore, I think that what we see here is no stance about the position the Democratic Labour Party has taken over the period of years.

We are committed to the fact that, as part of the total population of this country we will make a sacrifice, and that is what we are doing. We will not come in here and say we demand money, as Members on that side used to say, because we recognise that we provide a service to people and, as such, we have to make sacrifices, especially in hard times.

I wanted to make these few points in rebuttal to some of the points made by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, because I think that when we take a political stand, we have to be able to put forward that stand on a logical basis. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition always talks about not bringing politics into the debate and how we must get together as a unit and make it non-political, but then he would be the first one to make it as political as possible. We have to be very, very careful how we read the undertones about cutting out the politics while at the same time making it as political as possible.

When it comes to the increase in salaries for parliamentarians the Barbados Labour Party has no ground to stand on whatever. They have said in no uncertain terms that they will take as much of the money as possible that the taxpayers can give. They have made that clear stand. They have no moral stand as far as this is concerned, and I find it difficult for the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to come in here and try to argue from a moralistic point of view when they have taken a stand purely that they are going to get as much as they can get. 3.15p.m.

I understand the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) when he says that politicians get calls at 12 o'clock at night and therefore we should get paid for it. That has always been the stand taken by the Barbados Labour Party, and if you are going to make statements, stand by them - you cannot be on one side and the other. I found it very difficult to understand whose side the Leader of the Opposition was on, whether he was for it or against, and by the time he finished, I was not quite sure whether he was supporting it or opposing it

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thought that when the members of the Democratic Labour Party restrained the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) at their annual conference, virtually chaining him from contesting against the present Prime Minister for the presidency of the party, he would have realised that restraint and moderation were

two qualities that were better advanced than empty vapourings and enthusiastic outpourings *from* the back bench. Alas, I have been disappointed!

This debate was obliged to excite tempers. It is not acrimonious, and I hope it does not become acrimonious. It has excited tempers because every two years when parliamentarians' salaries come up for debate, in the past politicians have taken stances that suited public consumption, well knowing in their hearts and minds that there were certain inescapable and logical facts that argue for reasonable remuneration for parliamentarians.

I do not have to go over the history. This business began as a struggle and was won in 1946 when black politicians had some substance of power in 1946. Prior to that, black politicians, the few who could get in here, had to discharge their public responsibilities on a voluntary basis. But we have not yet matured as a people to the point where we are proud to tell the country that we are public servants, too, and just as civil servants in the civil administration get their remuneration, having regard to the complexities of contemporary life, we are entitled to some reasonable remuneration. We would not tell them the truth, and in the past we have postured that any increase in salary is a rip-off of the Treasury and unfair to the public purse and the people.

I want to state, first of all,, what is the position of the Barbados Labour Party, and what it has been since I have been deeply involved from 1970. Our position has been one of consistency. The honourable Member who just spoke did not understand, or did not appear to understand, what is meant by the word "relativity", otherwise he would not have made the statement mat when we gave parliamentarians a 25 per cent increase it was something ludicrous, outrageous and extraordinary. What he has not told this House, because he does not seem to understand the word "relativity", is that when the public servants got 25 per cent or 20 per cent or 18 per cent, parliamentarians got a percentage increase that related to, or was relative to, whatever the public workers got He does not understand. I wrote it down. What the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was saying today was that the Government lias impliedly accepted the principle of relativity in 1987 though previously appearing not to accept it.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) does not accept relativity. I want to know, therefore, what the Honourable Acting Prime Minister meant when he said that senior public officers at the top received increases of 1.4 per cent, those at the bottom 9 per cent over two years, and the revisions took effect from 1.4.86 and 1.4.87, then these words: "the rates of increase are identical with those granted to senior public officers." If you are saying that you are giving parliamentarians 1.4 per cent and 2 per cent across-the-board in 1987 and that the public workers got the same thing, are you not telling us that the rates of increase are tied to theirs? We are saying that it appears to us that on this occasion, for these purposes, the present Government seems to be accepting the principle of relativity. How many times do we have to say it before you accept it as a policy?

The Labour Party's position has always been that we accepted the principle of relativity.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is not true!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I prefaced my remarks by saying 'within my experience from 1970'. Other Members will have a chance to reply and tell me when it was different.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Members must please let me hear what the honourable Member is saying.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Having said that we accept the principle of relativity, every time the public officers get an increase parliamentarians can expect to get an increase, and the policy, as we understand it in the Barbados Labour Party, has been that we accept the rate given to the public officers, having regard to our relative position as parliamentarians relating to civil servants in the same kind of bracket What we have this year is the Government coming in and stating that they are giving 1.4 per cent and 2 per cent for the two years because these were the percentages agreed with the trade unions. The BWU forced the NUPW to settle by making it clear to Government, months in advance, what they were prepared to settle for. 3.25 p.m.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir: I think the honourable Member for St. Thomas is experienced enough, certainly intelligent enough, to know that the statement he just made is contemptuous of a leading institution in this country. The Barbados Workers Union never forced any organisation to any position of industrial relations. I think it is a statement that reflects badly on him, although it is meant to reflect badly on the Barbados Workers Union and the National Union of Public Workers. I believe he should be asked to withdraw that statement

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, if the interpretation is that the statement is contemptuous of the union, I regret it. I would never do anything that is contemptuous of the union.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member going to withdraw?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do what, Sir? Withdraw? That you take a position as a union comparatively early in negotiations and the other union in the negotiations alongside you is dilly-dallying.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If he is going to take it so, I am not going to take it, and I am not withdrawing. The

BWU made their position of settlement with the Government long before the NUPW. That is not an error of fact

r. R. L. MORRIS: I will deal with you. They do not represent us).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We have a situation where the NUPW and the Workers Union settled on behalf of the public workers of this country for rates amounting to 9 per cent over two years at the bottom and 1.4 and 2 per cent across-the-board at the top.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are dealing with salaries *fat* Members of Parliament

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, I am dealing with salaries for Members. Those are the rates that we are being asked to accept and vote for today.

You have a situation where the unions settled on the basis that they took into account the tax benefits introduced by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) in July last year.

(Aside. Hon. B. M. TAITT: By the Government.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is he going to make this speech for me?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like the honourable Member to confine his remarks to the item which we are currently dealing with.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He must keep quiet when an honourable Member is speaking.

The Honourable Minister of Finance, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, with the approbation of his party, last year introduced a fiscal rearrangement that promised more disposable income in hand. On the basis of that thesis, the unions assumed the workers of this country would have more money in their hands, and settled taking that into account

Certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas at this stage were ordered by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER to be expunged from the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I really am beginning to resist the one who was the most bad behaved Senator telling me that I must behave better down here.

It is true that the Minister of the Public Service expressed the wish to the unions that in settling they bear in mind the concessions that were then being offered by the Minister of Finance. Let them deny that and let me bring the newspapers and the debates in here. And in settling for the 9 at the bottom and the 1.4 and the 2 at the top, the unions took into account the fact that there were assumed, and certainly alleged, tax benefits which would have resulted in more disposable income in the hands of the workers. We are being asked to fit ourselves within that scenario.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Parliamentarians. If we talk on this one, we do not have to talk on the other. If you wish me to make two speeches, you will get two, different styles, different angles.

The situation has now been reached that the wheel has come full circle. Do not be denying it, the truth about the salary* increases and about these rates that we are being offered here today is that having regard to all that has happened in the most recent Budget, the increases in levies and so on, really the take-home pay of workers is, in some cases, substantially less than it was before the Democratic Labour Party got into power. Those at the bottom are worse off with the increases in levies.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member referring to Ministers?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMON?: Ministers at the bottom?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are dealing with a particular item and I would prefer if you do not go into excursions.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister of Health is at the bottom. He moved from Minister of Tourism and Information, to Minister without information, to pure Health.

Sir, we are not quarrelling about the rate of increase. What we are quarrelling about is that this is a Government which has consistently postured to the public.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER to be expunged from the record. 3.35 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What I am suggesting, Sir, is that in July last year the Government came to this country and the House of Assembly and said that the Ministers were prepared to take 5 per cent cut in salaries, well knowing that the previous month the Minister of Finance had dropped the top rate of tax from 60 per cent to 50 per cent, and at the same time had increased Personal Allowances and had allowed you to claim all kinds of things - mortgage interest to the fullest extent, repairs unlimited!

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Why is he interrupting me all of the time?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am sure the honourable Member does not wish to mislead the House. He will recall that even as the then Prime Minister spoke to the House, he was at pains to point out that no attempt would be made to interfere with those Barbados Labour Party Ministers who had been in office, and therefore the 5 per cent only applied to Democratic Labour Party Ministers. All the Barbados

Labour Party Ministers got all of the things he is now discussing.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, why is he misleading the House? There were no Barbados Labour Party Ministers in office after May 28. What benefits could they have got?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, so I could inform the honourable Member! It was with effect from April 1, and if he looks at the same document which his colleague read, he will see that pains were taken to give to the Barbados Labour Party what is its due. We were the ones who were suffering and demeaning ourselves by a 5 per cent cut If the Barbados Labour Party was in power now, they would have the 5 per cent plus whatever it is we are getting now.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, they postured that they were accepting, in real terms, a diminution in salary. My submission is that having regard to the financial gymnastics practiced by the then Minister of Finance, in real terms, Ministers of Government under the Democratic Labour Party after July 15 were taking home more money than Ministers under the Barbados Labour Party up to May 28, and I am going to give them the figures. I challenge any Minister on the front bench. I will bring the document that comes from that lady in Cabinet Office every month that sets out your salary and your deductions. Mine was three thousand, nine hundred and eighty-three dollars and some cents every months as Attorney General - I will bring it in here and lay it in the House - of which $1000 was allowances. If I had driven a 'MP' car, my take-home pay would have been $2 983. I drove my own car because it suited me to get the money.

(Aside: You never drove an 'MP' car?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Never, never, never!

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let us bet some money.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The test is what is carried home at the end of the day, and my submission is that Members on that side on the front bench will be taking home, with those financial arrangements, more than we took home. In real terms, they were not doing anything that was really fantastic. Having taken the 5 per cent off the salaries, they come this year now with these increases, backdated not to July, because the 5 per cent went on, I believe, from August last.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: You will get the increase, too)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That will not even buy a drink, man.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is the point I have been trying to make to them, that we are not quarrelling about the rate of increase, because it is not producing any money. It is not a rape of the Treasury, as the honourable Member for St Lucy would have said when he was in the Senate. What I am submitting is that it is deception practised on the public of Barbados by making them believe that you were willing to accept and sacrifice something, when, in fact .....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already ruled about that word "deception".

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will withdraw "deception". They have fooled the people into believing that they were suffering a sacrifice and a loss when in truth and in fact, having regard to what was happening in terms of the settlement, having regard to the financial arrangement put in place by the then Minister of Finance and well knowing that they could always backdate these things, they have not lost anything.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has two more minutes.

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

Our criticism therefore goes to the posturing of the Government. We have to expose them. You have to understand, Sir, the Honourable Prime Minister, now in Canada, in 1984 said that he wanted an administrative tribunal to look after these salaries. That has not come. The late Mr. Barrow, on July 15, promised a consultative.....

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Members are objecting. Look at the top of page 25:

> "It is our practice that we would set up a joint consultative committee between members of the Government and members of the Opposition.".

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you mean where it says "normally speaking?" He began:

> "Normally speaking, when it was proposed that the conditions, emoluments, remuneration and allowances of members of Parliament should be changed, it is our practice that we would set up a consultative committee between members of the Government and members of the Opposition."

That the joint consultative committee promised by Barrow died with Barrow. It has not come. The Members Remuneration Tribunal promised by the present Prime Minister in 1984 has not come, and he had a chance before these came before the House to put some machinery in

place. He has not done it So these are empty mouthings from the last two Prime Ministers of the Democratic Labour Party, only there as a means of befuddling and further posturing that you will have some independent body to work out these things.

We are asking that we all get back to the basic principle that we need to be remunerated. If you are going to bring in an independent body - fine. The Opposition will join with you on that

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He knows that we dismissed Nicholls because he had no idea as to what was involved.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has exhausted his time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Pardon?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has exhausted his time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Are you telling me to sit down, Sir? I will have to speak on the next Bill then. 3.45 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must at the outset say that I am profoundly disappointed that colleagues on the other side who have spoken so far and who are trained - I know that they are trained in the art of presentation of facts - could be so intellectually dishonest .....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was studied! He would not look at us and he thought carefully! He has to withdraw it!

Hon. B.M. TAITT: 'Intellectually,' Sir?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, let him withdraw it!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am objecting to the use of the words "intellectually dishonest" in relation to the Members on this side, Sir. The honourable Member must know that those words are offensive.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will withdraw that Sir. I will withdraw that if it causes any pain. I withdraw it, because I can see that the stark indication would be painful to them. But, Sir, I am going to demonstrate.

It is a well known understanding in the profession which they practise when they are not in this House, that when one is quoting a document one has an obligation to put that document and the quotation in context. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the United States a man who would have wished to become President of the United States has had to withdraw under an avalanche of information that he was incapable of putting a quotation in the proper context.

The uninitiated who heard them saying "page 25 of Hansard" would believe that they were quoting a document and a philosophy as expounded by the late Prime Minister, ^ the right honourable gentleman for St. John. The fact is that on page 24, what the then right honourable gentleman said was this:

> "If I may proceed with the business of the House, Sir, the last Order was made to take effect from April 1, 1985."

I am reading from page 24, and I am reading from the same Hansard they quoted. This is the important part, Sir:

> "Normally speaking, when it was proposed that the conditions, emoluments and remuneration and allowances of Members of Parliament should be changed, it is our practice that we would set up a joint consultative committee between members of the Government and members of the Opposition. I would like to say that this, in my 35 years, is the second occasion, or the third occasion only, despite the fact that I formally ** discharged the functions of Barbados' first Minister of Finance for a period of 15 years, in which I have taken any part in these discussions."

And he went on, Sir.

Those of us who knew him and were part of that discussion knew what he was saying. He was giving a historical evolutionary position on how the Democratic Labour Party, while he was Minister of Finance, used to handle salary revisions. He was saying that before the coming of the then Barbados Labour Party Government, they used to set up this consultative agreement as a committee of the House which would comprise members of both the Government and the Opposition, as Members of the House, and that those were the people who constituted and therefore brought back to the House the arrangement for salaries. That was a continuation of debate that had AM occurred before for persons who knew, persons who were aware of how the debate was conducted in this House, and you see, Sir, the reason why I am disappointed is because the two honourable Members who spoke, but in particular the Leader of the Opposition, would have been aware of the context in which the right honourable gentleman, the former Member for St. John would have made those remarks.

What they did today was give the impression that the Democratic Labour Party had enunciated and declared some new policy, a policy akin to the one outlined in their manifesto, when they said that no salaries would ever be decided in the House of Assembly before they went to a commission. And the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), who is now purporting to have the capacity to be the Leader of this country throughout this Barbados, and who is going around giving everybody the ^ impression that he has found a new salvation, that he is changed, that he is now ready, he has been washed in the

blood of the lamb - I am sorry he is not in his chair, because I wish him to hear what I am saying - and he has a number of minions, in all aspects of public propaganda and information, trying to give the impression that he is ready - I am disappointed that he conies in here and gives that impression, when he knows that it has been the position of the Democratic Labour Party, from time immemorial, that salaries of parliamentarians are to be decided by parliamentarians, and that is the principle that the late right honourable gentleman was establishing.

That late right honourable gentleman was reiterating, for the benefit of the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), his particular position, and to have quoted that document is a dark cloud in parliamentary debates in the history of this Parliament, because those who did not know and cannot understand would have believed that somehow a new articulation was put forward by that honourable gentleman. If he could be in this Parliament today, if he could somehow come back from wherever he is and speak, he would have cried shame, as he did time and time again, on the honourable Member for Christ Church West I say the honourable Member for Christ Church West should hang his head in shame, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because he attempted indirectly or directly to allow persons to have a wrong impression, and that must not be done by honourable people. It must not be done. Let us argue the merits and demerits.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), fought valiantly to take a position. I understand that, Sir. He fights valiantly to take a position because he constantly has to fight between the moral position that he holds and the position of the Barbados Labour Party as articulated by all of those absent people over there. He has constantly to walk that straight line between what he believes and what he feels and all of them, Sir. That is his problem, and I understand that, so when he is taking a position, I can battle with him occasionally. But the other honourable gentleman, who is now not in his place, can lay no such claim to sympathy. He knows better. He is a Minister that left the Government because they were not paying him sufficient money. 3.55 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: This is the second time I sat here and heard the honourable Member virtually calling him a hypocrite, that I was fighting with a moral position and another position. That is what he was implying, but he was clever enough not to use the words. Now he is accusing the Honourable Leader of the Opposition of being a person who is guided by improper motives. He is imputing improper motives.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is very simple. We are supposed to be all honourable Members, not to be operating, even intellectually, from dishonourable motives.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am very glad that you have treated the intervention by my colleague in that way, because I can speak with authority. I know that the honourable Member bet me.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When I told the honourable Member that he would not even stay in the Cabinet, he said he would only stay in the Cabinet two years. He has not yet paid the bet, but that is immaterial, Sir. It is a case of champagne, in case anybody wants to suggest that I am lying. I am sorry he is not in here, because I like to say this when he is here, but when he comes back tell him that I said that he has not yet paid me the bet. But betting is illegal.

The honourable Member left the Cabinet for two reasons. One is not germane to this debate here, it has to do with how Tom Adams treated him. The other one has to do with his financial position, and he said so, and it is not immorality.

Any man who has left a Cabinet for those reasons should not now be heard to be discussing salaries in the context in which he attempted to discuss them today. The honourable Member for Christ Church West ought to know better, because he is discussing this in the context of 1987 when all the people in Barbados are intelligent. The people of Barbados cannot be taken by any mealy-mouth protestation about a 1.5 per cent increase. The facts are very straightforward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is a technical adjustment, this is no salary increase. This is a technical adjustment, and let me put it to you in clear, stark, undisputed terms, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: You can tell the Great Jehovah that I said it was a technical adjustment. Everybody in Barbados who is involved with the Government, from the messenger at the Ladymeade Polyclinic to the IDC, to the almshouses, now called District Hospitals, to the civil servants, have all received the same identical increase. Earlier we went up to the Governor-General, and what we are doing is giving everybody the pittance that it was possible to give in the context of the increases arising from the generous tax proposals.

What is fascinating is that the honourable Member today admits that the tax proposals brought money into the people's hands. For the first time, the Barbados Labour

Party is willing to admit that the tax proposals brought money into the people's hands!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation: It has always been the position of the Barbados Labour Party since June last year that the tax proposals of the former Minister of Finance have, in fact, given a lot of money to the people at the top and the big companies and capitalists in Barbados! Yes, Sir, we agree with that!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Today when he was arguing, he talked about people and described them in a peculiar way, because he quoted from the right honourable gentleman and talked about marching. They, on the other side, talked about marching, and they spoke about the people at the bottom in a particular way when they referred to the statement by the late Right Honourable Member for St. John. Now, in all the fullness of a wheel turning full circle, we heard the Barbados Labour Party, through its spokesmen in Parliament, agreeing that the proposals and the implementation of those proposals brought money into the hands of the people. So we can move on to the next plane, and even if the barons in Bridgetown earned and got some additional profits, which they might not have been entitled to, according to the Barbados Labour Party, the other people, at least, got some of the sweets, because in this country what we have today, and this answers a question you raised, is that everybody in Barbados is benefitting from an enlightened and changed policy apart from what was being done by the Barbados Labour Party in 1984-85, when the people in this country were virtually sucking salt.

Only this morning, a lady said to me that she has not, and she is a shopkeeper, seen so many $20 bills for a very long time. She said that the people are getting money, they have money in their pockets, and that they are better off than they have been for a very long time. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would not even essay to say whether that is true or false. I can only tell you a shopkeeper told me so.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: The honourable Member, Sir, is goading me to discuss his intemperate and discriminatory statement, made on a political platform, about 2 000 having been dismissed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Objection! It is unconstitutional to single out any section of the people for discriminatory conduct. The Honourable Minister must know that. It was not intemperance either. I wish him to be assured that if there is no change in the unemployment situation and if victimisation persists, we will be marching. I want him to know that as a solemn pledge and commitment.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a speech.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I think that an honourable Member should be able from time to time to make those kinds of statements. If I were in his position, I would not do it, but if he does it, I have no quarrel with him. If he thinks that he is going to get 2 000 people to march on victimisation, it could only mean that he does not know that the Government has changed, because the victimisation stopped on May 28, as the honourable Member knows so well.

But that is not the issue. The issue is that the people of Barbados must not be misled into believing that we are having a massive debate today on salary increases. We are not having any debate on salary increases. What we are having is a technical adjustment, as I said.

Every year, we have situations where we have to come in here for an increase because we have to pay National Insurance or something. Do you really believe, Sir, that any honourable Member on this side is going to need a wheelbarrow to carry home the money which he is going to get as a result of passing this? The honourable Members know that we are talking about an adjustment because there would be an anomaly that would create a problem for the country if we did not extend it all the way up. It must be made clear that the whole question of salaries adjustment will have to be addressed before the five-year term is up, and I think that it is patently dishonourable for anybody to suggest that if the judges of the Supreme Court and the Governor-General and everybody else have this adjustment, the adjustment should not extend to Members of Parliament and Ministers. Nobody is going to take that seriously. 4.05 p.m.

I want to deal with an issue which they are jumping on, this matter of relativity. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party has never subscribed, and does not now subscribe, to any concept of relativity. Relativity suggests a fixed, straitjacketing of the arrangements for parliamentarians and others, such that whenever something happens to the one, something must happen to the other. That is my understanding, and that is what I am rejecting, We have always rejected it, and for a number of reasons.

Negotiations occur between trade unions in this country and various and sundry other organisations and employers, and the trade unions are entitled to make any arrangements they wish to make, in the final analysis, to get a settlement to a specific agreement. The trade unions of this country have agreements with their various employers in which, after taking into account the total circumstances at any given time, they agree on behalf of their workers to accept the particular arrangement for two years or three years, or some specific period. Parliament does not fall into that category, and in particular Ministers of Government, and when consideration for emoluments, certainly in the Democratic Labour Party, comes to the fore, we must pay attention to the circumstances of the day. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is entirely possible, as has happened under the Democratic Labour Party, for the workers to get an agreement and the workers to get increases while the

Democratic Labour Party Ministers do not get any. Let it not be forgotten that Democratic Labour Party Ministers in the past went through an entire period without an increase in salary when the workers had got one, because in the judgment of the Government of the day it was not warranted in all the circumstances, either for purposes of setting an example or for purposes of demonstration that they should not get an increase. It must be remembered that on the floor of this House the Prime Minister of the day, who was also Minister of Finance, announced that the Ministers would not get an increase when the workers had got one.

The reason why we have not agreed to any relativity is because there should not be any automaticity in the movement of salaries between workers and the Members of Parliament Ministers can hold strain sometimes, and that is why any argument about 5 per cent is patently dishonest. The argument about the 5 per cent cut is an illogical presentation as put forward by the two honourable Members. Five per cent is 5 per cent and there is nothing anybody can do to change that It is very simple, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we had had no cut, if we had done nothing, if we had reduced no salaries, we would be better off now without this increase. That is why one cannot sit in this Chamber and allow the Leader of the Opposition of all people to give the population the impression that, somehow, because something happened with taxes, we were better off. That is patently dishonest.

Mr. D. A, C. SIMMONS: A point of order: How many times has he said "dishonest"? The honourable Member was referring to the honourable Member for Christ Church West and insisting that he is "dishonest" and that he is ' 'patently dishonest"

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I withdraw any implication that the honourable Member is dishonest I said the argument is dishonest. He cannot fault that

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You said "illogical."

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the argument is dishonest, you cannot make it honest,

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is more than.....

Hon. B. M. TAUT; Mr. Deputy Speaker, I withdraw the word "dishonest". It is illogical in the extreme, and it will mislead even the first person who read and write, and because the honourable Member for Christ Church West is deemed to have been trained at the level he has been trained, I am disappointed, fundamentally and supremely disappointed, that a man of his stature would use an argument of such weak, illogical and intemperate a nature.

How in the name of anything that is good - the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) is going to speak, I hope - can anybody raise the question about what I am saying when he knows that 5 per cent added to anything is going to be constant, no matter what? How can anybody come here and suggest that your take-home pay is relevant to the fact that the Ministers on this side had the courage of their convictions, whether they like it or not, to accept the 5 per cent cut, and as a result are worse off today than they would have been with or without this technical adjustment? I challenge either one of the three of them to deny that the Ministers would be better off.

I am embarrassed that the three of them have forced me to be in a position to be arguing over 1.4 per cent I thought that it would be a matter of recognition that it is what I describe as a technical adjustment I thought that they would have accepted that in the same .way the Governor-General and the others are having a movement, we would have been able to move on. I thought that they would not have done what they accused us of doing, to grandstand. I did not believe that I would see a debate over this matter. But if it suits therh to grandstand over it, that is their privilege as members of the Opposition, and long may they remain in that position, long may they be in Opposition to grandstand on 1.4 per cent. They insult the intelligence, and, therefore, the integrity of the community, if they believe they can make a case to the population on so flimsy an argument. They insult the population if they believe they can come to Parliament and suggest that the Ministers have dipped their hands into some massive fund and taken to themselves great rewards.

This is not the same argument which we were able to put up when the Government of the day gave themselves 25 per cent increases and 35 per cent increases etcetera. What we said then was that they should have done what we ciid in 1974, that they should have allowed the workers to get the 25 per cent and that they did not have to adjust themselves. But it was because persons like the honourable Member for Christ Church West.....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Did you not get it?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I was not a Minister, and I wish to take this opportunity to say that it has been said by somebody that when we said we were not going to take the money, some of us did not do anything. I say on the floor of this House that the Clerk of Parliament is in receipt of a letter from me, from the Member for St. Michael West, asking the Clerk to send the portion that we discussed that we would not take to respective charities. There is a letter in this Parliament to the Clerk of Parliament. I do not wish to get into any details about it You can check with the Clerk of Parliament and let him give you a copy of the letter. I hope that that copy of the letter will remain a document for the Barbados Labour Party persons who now write, youngsters like Ronald Toppin, who has spent so much time making himself into a man that he does not understand that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to stop at this point so that I do not exceed your patience, but I wish to say, as I began, that I am profoundly disappointed that in trying to make it a political argument, the Leader of the Opposition, in particular, and the honourable Member for St. Thomas, who apparently feels some duty to support his leader, can continue in a discussion that lacks both logic and sense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that this is the last time we are going to have this kind of argument in Parliament over sums like 1.4 per cent. 4.15p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Five seconds.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: In any event, the final arbiter of what is right and wrong is always those who are not here, the people. They make the decision, and the people cannot be fooled by any concept that somehow the Democratic Labour Party has not fulfilled its mandate or has done something it should not have done.

The Democratic Labour Party, in this respect, is keeping very closely to what it said it would do and it has maintained the morality which it fought for on the floor of this House, and which it will continue to fight for.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES (St. Lucy): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I propose to be relatively short in this contribution, because I cannot understand what the argument is all about.

When the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) spoke, I believe they sought to draw me into a debate with reference to the scathing attack which I launched on the Barbados Labour Party during the last two salaries negotiations affecting Ministers and parliamentarians, that is, that there were not negotiations for Ministers and parliamentarians, but the increases they got were after the negotiations for the public servants were concluded. I therefore want to set the record straight as far as that is concerned.

Before I do so, Sir, I have to say that I think that the Leader of the Opposition ought to know better, and should have presented an argument which we would have been able to follow. It was extremely difficult to follow the position taken by the Leader of the Opposition on this matter, and it was equally difficult to follow the position taken by the honourable Member for St. Thomas.

What really intrigued me, Sir* was the suggestion which the Leader of the Opposition made that this country was not in a position to pay these increases. He made that point at the very outset In truth and in fact, what are we talking about? I believe that if one were to do a calculation on the gross amount which would be coming into Ministers' hands, going back to April 1, 1986, it would not exceed $1000. But it does not go back that far for Ministers on this side, because the honourable Member for St. Thomas will also be benefitting from this 1.4 per cent increase which goes back to April 1, 1986. He was a Minister in the Barbados Labour Party Administration then, so he is going to get an increase, too. But that is a small point, as small as the increases about which we are now asking for approval, 1.4 per cent

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member just started talking and I want to put him on the right road. I am getting confused. He is talking about the smallest of the increases, but the Honourable Minister was talking about a technical adjustment. I do not know where we are, Sir.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: The honourable Member is obviously confusing himself. I am talking about a small increase of 1.4 per cent

The Leader of the Opposition also indicated that the Democratic Labour Party has been asking people in this country to hold strain, and he wondered whether this decision to increase the salaries of Members of Parliament by 1.4 per cent, we have thrown that position through the window. I am sure that in making that comment he must have been remembering the position taken by the Barbados Labour Party in 1982.1 am sure you would recall that they adopted a position indicating that people should hold strain, and after they were able to get the unions to agree to a very modest increase in salaries for civil servants and other members of the Public Service, they went and granted increases far in excess of what was negotiated by the unions. That is not the case here. At the moment, what we are talking about is the same percentage increase, 1.4 per cent, which other people in the top bracket of the Public Service are getting. I really do not know what all the fuss is about.

Let me for the purposes of the record in this particular House refer to my intervention in the debate in the Senate in 1984. I took the opportunity then to do a historical analysis of salary increases for parliamentarians going back to 1976. It can be found in the debate of the Senate beginning at about page 590.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What date?

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Wednesday, December 12, 1984.

This is what I think we have to understand very clearly. Again on that occasion, the Barbados Labour Party Administration, as they did in 1982, as they did in 1980 and as they did in 1978, granted themselves increases, in most instances, in excess of what were granted to civil servants, and they adopted a very interesting technique, because they came with this argument about an across-the-board increase.

We in the Democratic Labour Party argued on that occasion that it was not right to give, let us say, a 15 per cent increase to workers at the bottom of the salary scale and give workers at the top of the salary scale the same 15

per cent increase. That is the effect of an across-the-board increase, and that is what the Barbados Labour Party has been doing over the years. As a matter of fact, in 1984 not only did they give the 15 per cent and 5 per cent which we granted at the bottom to themselves at the top but they also, it should be remembered, increased their entertainment allowance and travelling allowance. The entertainment allowance was increased by 53 per cent and the travelling allowance by 31 per cent. So on their basic salary they took the 15 per cent increase and the 5 per cent increase, and on the travelling allowance and the entertainment allowance they granted themselves handsome increases.

What we are saying, therefore, on this across-the-board increase, where the same increase given at the bottom is given at the top, is that this did not happen in this case. What was sought to be done in here was to give a higher percentage increase at the bottom and in the middle than was given at the top. It is a very simple matter. It was a completely different approach to negotiations.

I do not want to steal the thunder of the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) by replying to the comment of the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) about the BWU and NUPW. I am sure that that is going to be dealt with, because I have never heard the kind of argument advanced by any honourable Member about the whole conduct of negotiations as indicated here by the honourable Member for St. Thomas. 4.25 p.m.

What we did in July 1986 was no grandstanding on the part of the Government It is a fact that if the 5 per cent which we agreed to forego had remained on, we would have been in a better position than if we had not taken the 1.4 per cent That is the simple point the Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) was making. That is a simple matter of calculation.

It is difficult for us on this side to understand what the sound and fury is all about If we were discussing you know any fundamental changes in terms of rates of salaries, conditions of employment and allowances, then one could understand that that might occasion a big debate. But this is, as I said, Sir, a very simple matter, and I certainly want to indicate that it does not stand on the same all fours as what used to be done by the Barbados Labour Party in the past, and that is a matter of history and record.

Thank you.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the very smallness of the increase, taken within the context of the articulated political philosophy of the Democratic Labour Party, in context of the statements of the former Prime Minister of this country and the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party as regards the reasons why he enjoined the 5 per cent decrease of the Members of the Democratic Labour Party, are the themes to this debate. If we were dealing with some ordinary situation in which a Government had brought to a House of Parliament a request for the House to approve a 1.4 per cent increase in salaries for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, then I am sure that such a particular request by Government would not excite partisan debate or otherwise. But let us recall, Sir, that this 1.4 per cent .....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I will not be discouraged by the "schupsing" of the honourable Member for St. Joseph (Mrs. M. Barker-Welch). It is a very unpleasant attitude on her part which would want us not to speak, as if we are not Members corning to the House to speak, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, let us net forget that these things have to be seen in a sequence, and a point was made by the former Prime Minister to the effect that the cut in salaries of the Democratic Labour Party Ministers last year was not even a manifesto pledge. The records of Hansard show it It was an action indulged in by the Democratic Labour Party to establish that Democratic Labour Party's politicians are a special breed apart, that there are people who are prepared to accept cuts in salaries where such an obligation is not enjoined upon them, where such an obligation is not required of them, arid even in circumstances where they have not been made, by way of a manifesto, a pledge to indulge in cuts in salaries. That was the political philosophy last year, as set out, informing the desirability of the 5 per c^nt cut in Ministers salaries, that you had to set the Democratic Labour Party apart as setting an example, and even if the civil servants wanted a 1.4 per cent increase and were prepared to snatch at it, these were men apart who would set their sights and the country's sights loftily above that.

What do we have today? That the Democratic Labour Party has lost the mirror image of itself. That is what this debate is telling us, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The question of what the BLP has done in the past lias been answered by the electorate of Barbados. What you are doing now is what we are deciding here today.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, for the record: The honourable Member said that it was not a manifesto promise. On page 28, it says: "We further pledge to conduct the people's business with humility and a sense of decency".

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The pledge of humility and the 5 per cent cut had to do with the manifestation of the Government that we took over from.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What year?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Nineteen hundred and eighty-six, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I stand on the point that I made. I said that the Prime Minister of the country said that the party had agreed to a 5 per cent cut, and I quote Hansard, page 25, Sir:

> "I do not think that it was even promised in our manifesto, but one of the very first things that we decided as a Cabinet..."

(Hon. P. M. GREAVES: What is the point?)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am contradicting the point that the Member for St. Michael West was trying to raise. There is nothing in the manifesto which says that you are going to cut salaries.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point that I am therefore making, Sir, is that this particular technical adjustment, if you want to call it a technical adjustment, or an increase, in many ways reflect a fundamental change in policy. The size of the increase is not the point. You cannot come one year and say that you are going to cut our salaries, despite not having pledged to do so, to set an example, and then come in the next year and to ask the House for an increase. But it has now become characteristic of the Democratic Labour Party, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is absolutely clear that the same people who were prepared to set the example in cutting salaries when it was not required of them are now snatching at a 1.4 per cent increase.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Address the Chair.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point I am making, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the Democratic Labour Party wants to have its cake and eat it at the same time, and that its attitude in this particular matter is the same attitude that it has betrayed in a number of other matters. When you cut taxes, you want to claim credit for cuts in taxes, and when you increase taxes, you also want to get credit for increases in taxes. You promised to abolish levies and get the credit for promises to abolish levies, and when you increase levies, you want to get credit for increasing levies as well.

Asides. Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I heard you all in

silence.

That is why I say to the House today that it is not the size of the increase that is important in this particular matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We all know that a 1.4 per cent increase is not a substantial increase. Indeed, the most vulgar thing that I heard spoken of today was spoken by the honourable Member for St Michael West, that it is not money that you will have to carry a wheelbarrow for. That is not the issue. The question really is, what signal is the Democratic Labour Party sending to the public as regards its policy consistency? Is the public to take you seriously when in one year you are saying that you are going to cut salaries to set an example to the rest of Barbados, but come shortly afterwards and grab at a 1.4 per cent increase? These, to my mind are the only serious issues that this particular increase raises. You cannot have it both ways. 4.35 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Nobody asked it of you. You did it as a matter of deliberate policy, agreed to by Cabinet, to set an example, and you got credit for that. You cannot have it both ways.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, having gone past that...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not let them distract you.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as regards the broader issues which this debate raised, I have never before spoken on the matter of a parliamentary wage increase, and I find it a little bit distressing that every time you have to discuss parliamentary increases, you are going to have to have a fierce partisan fight on a matter which, in my view...

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: There has to be a partisan divide now because of the manner in which you behaved last year.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I listened to the honourable Members on the other side in silence.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Address the Chair.

Members, let us have some order, please. Mr. O.

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

I am really of the view that it is not to the credit of Parliament for us always to have the matter as to how much we pay ourselves in the arena of public controversy. I want to support the notion that has been put, that there has to be a different and a better way for us to agree on what constitutes fair and reasonable rates of pay for Members of Parliament, apart from this charade that we go through every time we have as a House of Assembly to agree as to what we must pay ourselves.

The notion of a joint consultative committee, in my view seems to me to be part of that way forward. I think that it would be a good and happy thing if the House could establish some format or structure by which we could have this joint consultative committee put in place at the earliest opportunity, because let us not forget that whereas these particular increases that we are being asked to agree to today

are to be from April 1, 1986, if we were to follow the convention, by April 1, 1988, we are going to have to be back into the situation of what is the level of wage increases that we are going to grant Members of this House. I think the time is upon us now that if we are serious about taking the rancour out of this particular matter, let the House stop talking about a joint consultative committee and agree at the end of this debate that such committee will be established so that parliamentarians can become subject to the norms which are part of a civilised society, that we, too, can have fair and reasonable increases without there being a sense of guilt that what is a normal entitlement to the rest of the society for us is not a grant.

I, Mr. Deputy Speaker, must reiterate the point that I started, that ordinarily a 1.4 per cent increase in ministerial salary is not something that should exercise this Assembly, but we must put it within the context of a development philosophy stated just a year ago, that it must be the responsibility of Ministers and the Cabinet to show the way, and ask ourselves, what is the Democratic Labour Party doing? I say, Sir, that it is now finding itself very much in the position of the Alice in Wonderland character that if you do not know where you are going, then any road will do.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) ought to have some disappointment at the line normally taken by the other two-thirds of the Opposition. Sometimes he has to get up and bring a different kind of debate to that side of the House. Sometimes he does it successfully, even if he is a bit misguided in some of the conclusions he reaches.

When the Leader of the Opposition feels that he has to speak for a very long time, and in filling that space of time he has to make extravagant claims, claims that really have very little substance, and which sometimes are supported by the Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), arousing a Member on our side, the Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), to use his best wit and analysis to destroy them, that is good entertainment, because whenever they go down that line, we get to counter attack and put them in their place, but sometimes it takes away from the substance of what we are discussing, and I agree, to some extent, with the honourable Member for St. Peter.

He is saying that one of the fundamental issues is when we took the high moral ground to sacrifice in taking a cut on salaries in 1986, took the high moral ground on precipices that the BLP could never ascend, and put us at a position then and now to look down on them on matters of public policy, and he wants to know if in coming back for a 1.4 per cent increase in 1986 and 2 per cent increase in 1987 we have surrendered that ground.

Let us use an analogy. If in sympathy with the people of Ethiopia I decided that I would cut my diet, cut the food I ate for a year and a half, and then I started to increase my diet a little bit one year and a half afterwards, would that forego the fact of the sacrifice that I made in that period of time in terms of my body? I use that as a very broad analogy. If we decided that we would cut our salaries by 5 per cent and we did not take that, what we would have been carrying home for our families and our children for a year and some time, would that represent a real sacrifice in this country? Can you gainsay that?

Even more import is the example that we were setting to the country. The Leader of the Opposition said it was political grandstanding and had no economic reality, which is nonsense. I am saying that by setting that example of sacrifice we were sending signals to this country that at a particular time in the country's development, if the politicians can make that sacrifice, then civil servants can make it, then the workers at the factories can make it. It meant that there was a particular atmosphere existing in the country which was significantly different from what obtained before, when the Barbados Labour Party was taking massive increases for themselves and telling everybody else to hold strain. You have to put it in that context.

You also have to understand the significance of how decisions are made in terms of collective bargaining. Civil servants recognise certain things when their trade unions come up against a Government for negotiating purposes. When we were negotiating against the Barbados Labour Party, with Tom Adams leading the negotiations, there was no good faith bargaining. I maintain that. He set the agenda of how much he would conclude at, because he knew what he wanted his salary to be. That is where the theory of relativity was. He wanted 15 per cent for himself and his Ministers, and he made up his mind that it was 15 per cent across-the-board. It was not a matter of graduating down from 1.4 per cent to 9 per cent.

Therefore, there are two different theories of relativity you are talking about. One is a theory of relativity that sets an across-the-board settlement, that up at the top is getting 10 per cent and, therefore, a Prime Minister must get it along with maids. It is a different theory where 1.4 per cent is agreed at the top, 9 per cent is at the bottom for the maids and so on, but the Ministers are only getting the 1.4 per cent. They would not deign to give themselves the 9 per cent, so do not talk about relativity in the same sense. 4.45 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That is elitism, complete elitism! That was the philosophy that they enunciated. They made it clear that they believed in elitism. At one time they said that the bottom was pressing too near to the top. Do not let them fool you. The honourable Member for St. Peter knows

these things. He*is constrained sometimes to get up and talk because of the side he is on, but he does not speak with a sense of conviction, because he cannot speak in support of those kinds of philosophies.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Barbados Labour Party has always been an elitist party. They believe in separation of people. Do you know what I always tell myself? If I could serve the working class people of this country as successfully as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the honourable Member for St. Thomas have served, serve now, and will continue to serve the capitalist interest in this country, I should die a happy man. I have no problem with that at all. And if the people of this country ever make the mistake of following the blandishments of the Press, which they control, and put them in control of this country again, I am sorry for the working class people in Barbados for all time. It is a very serious thing.

I read persons like the honourable Member for St. Thomas over a year ago talking about how he would lead - this came out of some discussion I think they had in Queen's Park or something like that - a civil march, a demonstration. It has been repeated again. He talked about this march business. He is accustomed to marching in Crop Over bands. Let him stick to that. Marching with the people of this country is a very serious thing. If you really feel that you have any socialist convictions to march in support of the people because they are experiencing any oppression in this country, I will march with you, but it would have to be against a Barbados Labour Party regime.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Older, order, please.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It would have to be against a Barbados Labour Party regime, because it is the only regime that excites that kind of action on anybody's behalf in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Do not try to appeal to the lowest elements for propaganda purposes. This is a simple debate. There is nothing in this at all, and that is why there are so many contradictions in what you are saying, because you are really not arguing from conviction. You are not quarrelling with the rate of increase because you know it is a moderate increase. What are you quarrelling about?

Nobody is saying that all of a sudden a parliamentarian should not work for money. It is nonsense. You have to work for income like anybody else, doctors, lawyers, anybody else, but if you freeze the increase for all time, what you are actually doing is regrading, downwards, the salaries in relation to civil servants and others. That was not the intention, as far as I understand it The intention was to take a sacrifice at a particular time to show the country the moral position from which you are operating. The intention was not to regrade downwards the politicians' salaries in relation to anybody else, and, therefore, what you are doing really is putting back a base so that for future negotiations you are moving from base to base. It is a simple matter.

Remember the 5 per cent increase now. You are not going back on the same base you were at before. You are going on a reduced base, so the 5 per cent sacrifice we took is significant. You have to understand that, and that it is taken off for all times now, so if you put on a 1.4 per cent, you are on a reduced base. Let us understand what is happening. I do not like to see at this stage of our development the Barbados Labour Party using these kinds of tactics over a simple matter. We have reached a much higher stage than that

I am not even touching my friend from St. Thomas who talked about the Barbados Workers Union, because I know he is not serious about these things; he is only keeping some noise. I believe the person who advised him on the BLP defeat, somebody who wrote a report for them, told them a number of things. One of the things that they told him was that they controlled *The Nation* and *The Advocate* but did not use them effectively, so they are doing it now. The second thing they told them was that not having any inputs in unions weakened them, so they are trying to attack the unions. They are so easy to read. But we really are not bothered, and the reason why we are not bothered is that we know that the people have a level of intelligence that surpasses anything that they understand. You cannot take the people of this country for a ride. They went past that a long time ago, so do not let us deal with him.

I want to make the point that the honourable Member for St. Michael West made, that it is very important that we repeat what happened here in terms of the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable Member for St. Thomas taking up a copy of Hansard and trying to mislead us, misleading the House and the public of Barbados, by using Errol Barrow's words, the words of the Late Prime Minister of this country, in a totally dishonest way. Instead of reading verbatim so that people would understand the context, they used it in a way to suggest that the man was saying that there would be no salary increase unless there was this joint consultative committee.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Leader of the Opposition actually said so, and he did not say it so that anybody would know that he was saying "in normal circumstances," which is the sort of thing that happened before. That is totally dishonest, an attempt to mislead us in here, because he did not feel that someone would ask for the records and check it Anybody who would do that is untrustworthy.

The Leader of the Opposition is reported in *The Nation* as saying that he would possibly make a good Prime Minister because he has money, or something like that, so he would not have to cheat.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: He made comments to that effect He has money so he would make a good Prime Minister. He would not have to cheat. That is a good qualification he has. That is not a direct quotation but words to that effect He did not go so far to say that it was the only qualification he had, but that is the indication.

It seems to me that that, again, leads to a fundamental inability to understand the reality of human existence. When you have a lot of money, it does not mean that you do not cheat Let him understand that. It might mean that he might cheat more. Let him look at insider trading on the Stock Exchange and let him see if there are poor people who do the cheating.

He is not portraying good character when he gets in here and uses Hansard to misquote a person who is no longer with us when the records there say exactly what the person meant That, I thought was the low point of today's debate. This is a debate that had no right to be brought down to the level of petty platform politics, and that is the standard that was set in here when the Leader of the Opposition spoke. He brought it down to the kinds of meetings they held at Bridge Road and in Speightstown, because they mistake the level of public discussion in this country. I thought we had set a standard in the debates in 1986 on the platform that would have removed that, bui they go back to the same foolishness, 1940 politics, and he has come in here to repeat the same thing, 1940 politics.

It is time that all of us in here raise the level of debate to a high standard. We have the capacity to do it I think Enrol Barrow said he was endeared with the composition. He had hopes, seeing us all gathered on both sides, that the level of debate would rise. But every time I come in hare now, I see the other side starting out with a pattern that would only make the debaters on our side come and put them in their place, but not using up the brains in a way that I am sure the honourable Member for St. Michael West would like to have to use his brain in debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am really disappointed at how two-thirds of the Opposition treated this debate. Even the one-third who tried to lift it a little bit made it a two and a half out of three - turn that into a percentage, whatever it is - because he did not leave it to two-thirds, he also had to put in half of his bad habits. 4.55 p.m

I believe that this is a very simple matter. I have no doubt that our side will reject the whole idea about relativity, because I do not think that the fact that you are now settling at that level on one occasion is any indication to say that we are moving into that theory of relativity, and, as I said before, the relativity as existed before was an across-the-board one, that a Minister got the same 10 per cent as a maid. It is a different situation. I, for one, do not believe in that theory of relativity, that whatever the civil servants get at the top politicians should get.

My organisation, the Barbados Workers Union, has spoken against it from a philosophical point of view, and we certainly would not support that as a philosophical position from this Administration. We recognise that this is something that is being done at this particular time under certain circumstances, and I think we also understand it

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON (St. John): Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of persons who spoke prior to me in this debate lamented the partisanship witn which a matter like this tends to be dealt with when it comes up before this Honourable House. Absence of partisanship in any kind of debate does not mean that there must be agreement In other words, it is possible for people to take different kinds of positions on an issue like this, reject relativity, reject any other kinds of theories that have been put forward, and perhaps put forward another reasonable alternate based on the circumstances that exist at a particular time.

When the Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke, he confused me a lei, because earlier in the sitting, on the matter relating to, I think, the conditions of service of the Governor-General, he started by saying that matters like these are matters that, in a sense, are non-partisan and people do not normally debate them. He was trying to suggest on this matter, from what I heard during the discussion on this matter, that this also should be & matter that should be dealt with like that He was suggesting that a Resolution or a Bill should come to this Chamber for the increase of parliamentary salaries and that -~e shoa'd all sit down dumb and accept thai, because *ii* I;; a i-ou-p&rtisan matter, that nobody should say anything a^c! ʃ\& #o should accept the principle, whether it is relativity or some other kind of principle, as the basis on which we proceed in respect of these kinds of matters.

That suggests to me that it is a challenge to our democracy. He is suggesting that there must be some kind of agreement. There is no requirement for agreement on either the size of increase nor is there a requirement for agreement on the mechanism by which that increase is brought about.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) raised the matter of some approach that was used by the Barbados Labour Party to fix the salaries of parliamentarians from as early as when they were negotiating with the unions, but to fix them at the high level at which they wanted them. In the converse kind of situation, where in three out of perhaps five times the

Government opts to legislate salaries, how could it be possible for an Opposition that disagrees with the legislation of those salaries to come into this Chamber and agree to accept an increase in salary based on the theory of relativity that the Barbados Labour Party is suggesting as the principle on which they operate? Do you mean you start by saying we disagree with how you approach the negotiations, you legislated the salaries, that is unsatisfactory, and yet you would expect the Parliament to be unanimous on the kind of salary increases that are a result of that kind of approach?

I disagree entirely that this is a matter on which there should be agreement, and for that matter, I disagree even that it is a matter on which there should be complete non-partisan discussion. People will always bring these kinds of party views, or views that are informed by their being in Opposition, or in Government, to bear on matters like this. I do not see the need for this approach where we have to come in here and say this is a matter like the Governor-General's salary where we should all sit down and agree on either the mechanism for, or the size of the increase. A person may disagree, in my view, and if that were not so, I believe that members of the public would be right, if there was some kind of general agreement in here, in saying that it may also be conspiratorial. So there would always be disagreement, and I think it is healthy. I cannot accept that the so-called principle of relativity is the best position to take.

I am also concerned about some of the other points that were raised which may have been glossed over, particularly about facilities for Ministers and so on here in Parliament. What concerns me even more was the matter of the facilities provided for the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition, the present honourable Member for Christ Church West, left Barbados and went all up, I believe, to Canada, and broadcast it publicly, for consumption throughout the world, that the Leader of the Opposition here in Barbados was suffering under serious conditions in his office, he did not have franking facilities, and tried to give the impression that some kind of dictatorship was being run here in Barbados, that there was no consultation between him and the Prime Minister on any issue, as though we had put him in some cubbyhole somewhere in these buildings from which to operate.

I had the opportunity to work from that Opposition office and the conditions there are deplorable, and they were deplorable not from May 28, 1986, but a long time before that, it was impossible for the air conditioner, the refrigerator and the electric kettle to work at the same time. That is the first thing. The second thing is that there was inadequate staff, the size of the office was too small. You had three proper functionaries in the office, the Leader of the Opposition, his executive assistant or whatever it is called, personal aide, depending on the holder of the post, and a secretary, and all of them were required to share what are substandard facilities.

I think that is one of the things we should address. Apart from parliamentary salaries, whether that of Ministers or Members of Parliament or the Prime Minister or Senators, ^ we should also look at the conditions under which people operate in terms of their daily work as Members of Parliament and the difficulties that they experience through lack of facilities. Perhaps it would be a reasonable compensation, at least I find it would be, if proper facilities were provided, constituency offices and assistance with respect to things like a telephone at the constituency office and other kinds of physical facilities. That would be a lot more helpful than even a 1.4 per cent or whatever small increase has been debated and bandied around in here for the sake of making an unreasonable point, in my view, about the relevance of a mechanism, a so-called relativity.

I think these things are more important, because we should be looking at ways and means by which people living in a constituency find it easier to approach their representative, and ways and means for the representative to be able to organise himself in a constituency so that he can give effective representation. I think it would also be a way of ensuring that Members of Parliament have certain fixed kinds of facilities in a constituency which they would be required to use to service that constituency. I also think it is more important for these kinds of facilities to be discussed and debated and dealt with as quickly as possible in here rather than us wasting time, in my view, in simply adopting or trying to debate some kind of common position on parliamentary salaries, when that common position is not one with which subsequent parliamentarians or individuals coming into Parliament may agree.

Thank you.

5.05 p.m.

Hon. C. V. WALKER (St. George North): Mr. Speaker, I plan to be rather brief. Since we started the debate the Leader of the Opposition has skilfully avoided utilising any x figures, and not only those in the document before us. If we were to look at page 17 of the Estimates for this year, and, I believe, for last year, you will see that it was pointed out that there were plans in the Approved Estimates for 1986 - 1987 which had figures in them that are much higher than any figures that we are now thinking of, or any figures that we, in fact, worked with following May, 1986.1 think we have to get our record straight.

You will see a figure for 1986 - 1987 of $71470.32 for a Minister. We were not operating at any time with that figure, neither did we operate since May 1986 on that figure. Indeed, the 5 per cent reduction which took us down in the $62 000 area was not anywhere near the $71000.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member with the large booming voice has once again misled the House, Sir. I have page 17.1 see something * about the Ombudsman. Find it for me.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Under Cabinet Office.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You go ahead. I will check it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He said he thought it was page 17. He was not quite sure.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I know why the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) is smiling. It is under Cabinet Office 1986 - 1987. You would know why that figure was there, and why it was not used.

The end result, which we never got around to talking about, in dollars is something like $179 a month. If we were even debating the Bill which we should be following, you will find that the increase of the same Leader of the Opposition comes to some $164, about $15 less than that of Ministers. He is conveniently not discussing that.

I wanted to put the record straight on this. Those figures must be looked at.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am about to wind up the debate on this particular matter. I am assuming, Sir, that no other Members would want to contribute to the debate.

Sir, I am still at a loss as to where to begin, so I will begin from where I began. I became a Minister in 1965, and in 1966 I experienced the first ministerial salaries revision. It was at that time that we had our last Salaries Commissioner brought in from outside, a man called Mr. Pusinelli, and he made certain recommendations for the public officers, civil servants as they were *then* called, and after they were dealt with, he himself said they did not have a mandate to make suggestions for parliamentarians, but he made a suggestion on it

Three years after, there was another salaries revision. but this time, Sir, it was based on negotiations between the Government and the unions. The same thing occurred in 1972. On each of those occasions, there were parliamentary increases at the same time that there were increases for i»ie civil servants.

There was also, Sir, in 1975 or 1976, *i* cannot remember the precise year, an increase in salaries for civil servants. That was the time of the turbulence brought on by the oil crisis. At that time the Ministers did not accept any increases whatsoever.

There is no inconsistency as far as the Democratic Labour Party is concerned. When things are not good, we either do not accept or we reduce, as happened last year. In other respects, we follow the times when there are increases granted to the Civil Service. There is absolutely no inconsistency in the fact that the salaries of Ministers were reduced by 5 per cent last year and we have come back on this occasion, when everybody has got an increase, to seek an increase that is commensurate with what everybody else has got.

What Members on the other side are telling us is that we reduced our salaries by 5 per cent last year and in addition to that, we should forego the 2 per cent across-the-board granted from April 1,1987. That is 8.4 per cent. They are not suggesting that we reduce it by 5 per cent. Their whole argument here today, implicit in what they have been saying, is that we should, in fact, reduce our salaries by 8.4 per cent

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Do not say no. You know it is so.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is misleading the House. You cannot reduce what you do not have.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael North may continue.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Thank you, Sir. That is no point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Of course it was a point of order.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Do you know what is a point of order? That is a point of disorder. A point of order is when there is a breach of the Rules of the House. I am not misleading the House. How can that be a point of order? You are the one misleading the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Address the Chair.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am saying it is a reduction *In* real terms. I said it would be a reduction in real terms of 8,4 per cent He knows that He has not exhibited complete honesty in this particular mailer, and that is where the point of order really is.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not let him make you miss ihe point you are making.

Laughter.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The fact is that even with this 1,4 per cent increase and 2 per cent increase granted in the consecutive years, we would still be 5 per cent down. That is the position. In other words, if we had not reduced the ministerial salaries by 5 per cent last year, we would still be entitled at this time to increase it by 1.4 per cent plus an additional 2 per cent That is the true position. 5.15p.m.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Exactly! The percentage would be different in fact it would be higher. I am keeping it in the terms about which we have been speaking and that simplifies it because we have to be able to calculate it arithmetically to get the precise figure.

I do not understand, Sir, if because the Ministers reduced their salaries by 5 per cent last year, they are of the

opinion that it should remain so, that we should never ever again increase for Ministers during this term. We never gave that undertaking, and we are not giving mat undertaking either. I am making this clear. We did not give the undertaking that that 5 per cent reduction would have fixed the salaries of Ministers for the rest of this legislative term. Nowhere in any of the debates that took place will you see that We did not give it then and we are not giving it now. It is as simple as that

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The point is that you all do not seem to understand what you read. The Leader of the Opposition purported to have read the speech by the then Prime Minister last year speaking about some consultative machinery. If one were to read the whole of that paragraph, one cannot reasonably come to any conclusion that the then Prime Minister was saying that we have agreed to set up any consultative independent body. We did not say it in our manifesto, we have not agreed on it in Cabinet, and the Prime Minister did not say so.

I can take the point made by the honourable Member for St Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) earlier today, that perhaps it may be a good thing for us to have a joint body, comprising Members of both sides of the House, to look at this particular matter. The honourable Member for St John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) said that we would still have some matters to disagree on. As a matter of fact, Sir, I recall that in 1972 or 1973, when the then Leader of the Opposition agreed on certain matters relating to salaries for parliamentarians, the then Member for St. Peter, the same constituency the honourable Member represents, openly disagreed with the Prime Minister - openly, Sir - and said that he was not leading him. Those were his words to his own leader at that particular time. So the honourable Member for St John is quite right, but, perhaps, that may be a way forward.

But we have to be very careful, because we are hearing it from the other side, and it is strange coming from them. As far as I recall, the whole history of debates on salaries over time has been the Government complaining about the attitude of the Opposition. But today, Sir, the Opposition is complaining about their own attitude. They are lamenting the fact that there is this kind of partisan rancour in these debates. But they introduced it, and you cannot introduce it and lament it at the same time. This is the position that we find ourselves in.

Pensions were mentioned by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. He said that the pensions position should be reconsidered, I from my seat, *sotto voce I* asked him why they did not do it when they had the Government, and I am serious about that The last time we spent on that, he was the Attorney General. He is the last man who worked on pensions legislation for parliamentarians. They set up a commission and they reviewed,and revised the pensions that were in existence. The former Attorney General, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, drafted the amendments.

I am quite happy to live under the legislation that they drafted. So if he wants to reconsider this, let him reconsider it whenever he gets into a position, and he never will get in the position, that will enable him to do it anytime in the future. 5.25 p.m.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Hon. M. A. KING, Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, Hon. W. W. HALL, Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH, Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. E. BOURNE, Mr. C. A. NEBLETT, Mr. R. L. MORRIS, Dr. E. A. SIMMONS, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE and Mr. R. P. BYER - 16.

Abstentions: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS and Mr. O. S. ARTHUR-2.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called, amendment of Schedule to Chapter 8.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Clause 3 was read a second time.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREfi/ES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Clause 3 stood part and was added to the Bill.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (Remuneration and Allowances) (Amendment) Act, 1987.

SENATE AND HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY REMUNERATION AND ALLOWANCES OF MEMBERS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1987

Order No. 4 was called - To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Act, 1987.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want to repeat all the arguments

I used earlier. I merely want to say that this Bill provides for the retroactive provisions as contained in it

I will move at the appropriate time that Clause 3 be added to this Bill. Clause 3 sets out the Schedule of the new salaries or allowances or remuneration for members of the Senate and the honourable Members of the House.

I move, Sir, that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): From time to time, Sir, we have heard honourable Members allude to the work of the Nicholls Commission. The Barbados Labour Party, in its manifesto of 1976, indicated in broad terms that it did not wish to deal with salary increases or salary adjustments for Members of Parliament except after recommendations of a commission,

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not have it in front of me, Sir.

As I remember, there were to be two phases. You would set up a commission, you would wait for their recommendations and then you would do the adjustments. The first thing done was that the Nicholls Commission was set up. Among those giving evidence to the Nicholls Commission was Mr. Cameron Tudor, as he then was - he is now Sir James - and he made a number of recommendations arising out of his experience over the years as a parliamentarian, and he called for handsome payments, remuneration and emoluments, and privileges for Members of Parliament

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We did noi fall for it, because we had nothing to do with it I think the party may have sent in a memorandum to the Nicholls Con [mission.

I think that when the Nicholls members on both sides realised that the N^chctlr G^T;mis-sion did not understand anything about the day ;o day functioning of a MP.

(Aside: Hon. E, E, GREAVES; They were making sport at parliamentarians).

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I agree with the Honourable Minister of Trade. They were making sport at parliamentarians and reducing us to be clockers-in, daily paid employees who would have to fill up forms and so on. It was a bad document. You would have to register and sign up a lot of books and papers. They never understood that the greatest part of your responsibility as an M.P. is not what happens in here on a Tuesday, but what happens on the other six days of the week, both at your place of work and at your home, the demands that are made on you to work in your constituency are in all forms and fashion. Every dance that is held you are expected to be there, every funeral you are expected to be close to the bereaved. Some, may invite you, some may not invite you, but there are weddings. It is every cricket game, every football game. It was put to me that whenever the bell hits in the constituency, the MP is expected to be there. 5.35 p.m.

When you go to a dance, you must have at least $80 in your pocket. I am speaking, I believe, for many Members of Parliament. I do not expect the honourable Members on the other side to agree with me at all. They will know that what I am saying is true. You go to a dance a Saturday night and the bar is clear until the MP goes to the bar, and then the fellows come around, and you are expected, and you do not quarrel about it -1 am only highlighting the realities of the thing - to buy a few drinks, have a few drinks and so on, and you do it, and toss in some rice and stew and pork chops on the side, too.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If you are not drinking yourself, Sir, you have to buy a drink for the fellows.

Each one of us knows the situation of distress when appeals are made to us to assist with the payment of the light bill, or the water bill, and if somebody goes and picks up a man for not paying Jiild money, you have to contribute. You also have to contribute to the funerals, a little $200 and $300 there.

Nicholls never understood anything about that. Nicholls thought that your only role was to come here on Tuesdays, talk and go home.

(Aside: But who is Nicholls?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Neville Nicholls is the Vice President of the Caribbean Development Bank. I am not blaming him, but his Committee.

I heard the Honourable Leader of the Opposition allude to pensions, and he made the point that from time to lime public workers complained about the salaries and pensions, perquisites that MPs get. I do not know of any public officers whose phones will ring at 12 o'clock. Three o'clock, you just come back from a dance in the morning, you are tired and you are hitting the hay, but by 5 o'clock somebody has called with a problem. You have to attend to it, and not one of us would be rude to that person, because you know that if he did not have a problem, he was not going to call. So you entertain the problem, but it impinges.

Politics impinges in a serious way in our respective, private lives, and our social lives. It can be very disruptive. In my own situation, my son does not have the kind of personality to deal with the rigours of politics which you experience at school. I have had to send him away -my daughter can take it. It can adversely affect our children.

We get abuse daily, cuss, all for $2 126 a month. That is what an ordinary MP gets, the basic salary, from April 1, 1986, $25 512 a year, for performing, we feel, a service to our country aimed only at the upliftment and development and progress of our people, but'especially the masses.

I did not even remember the Constituency Office that you have to pay somebody rent for, $400 or $500 a month. It is all of these.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We get a little help with the secretarial staff that Government pays. But apart from that, you have to buy your own paper, your own typewriter and everything -for $2 126 a month.

We incur abuse and our names are mired and people become cynical about politicians. It is a sad thing, but now that we have a black Parliament, there is more cynicism out there about us black politicians, among black people that we represent, than ever before. When they had the whites in here, oh, they treated them with the greatest respect We are nothing! Let us face it!

We are begmdged pensions which seek to compensate for the period of time in office and disabilities that some of us suffer. It is a matter of great regret that/we have not yet found a formula to assist us in helping former parliamentarians exist a little better in this society. We cannot feel good, I am not going to call any names, when we see persons who have served in Parliament for some ten or 15 years scrounging around because the level of pension that they are getting now is the pension that they were getting 20 years ago. They cannot survive on it properly! I support the honourable Members plea, since it is believed that relationships in this Parliament are amicable, and, perhaps, we can talk on both sides in a serious way about some of the realities of the situation, for H joint body to look at some of the ways in which we can take some of the political heat out of these debate that would come out every two y^ir?, STIC* prr's.rr^ly l.ocV ?/ *hc '•<ⁱn,-l:ᵛ"; where some forme* parliamentarians can be ^slated,

I remember that three former parliamentarians, all members of the Democratic Labour Party < who approached Tom Adams when he was Prime Minister ..o get something done. Some small token gesture was made, perhaps at the time when the Honourable Leader, as Attorney General, made an amendment to the pensions provision for honourable Members. But that was only tinkering. A current member of this Parliament has seen the pensions legislation altered to make sure that he would not suffer, but I think that, as a matter of principle, we have to look at a policy over the next couple of years that will be a general policy and will not bear on individual cases, unless there is one that has got away and needs special attention. 5.45 p.m.

I do not resent criticism at all, Sir. I am accustomed to the cut and thrust of debate, and I expect to be harassed from time to time by Members on the other side and to do some harassing myself, perhaps even more often to them than they do it to me. But if a careful check is made of my professional career, I think the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris), who accused me of practising and promoting the cause of the capitalists in my profession, would find that that charge is totally unfounded. I am in the position, and I am very proud about it, Sir, where I do not have any retained clients in Barbados, not one, black or white. I work for whoever comes first, and if they cannot afford the dollar and they are poor, I tell them to come, not to mind, and let me do the case for them first The public of Barbados knows that. He knows that I am one of the few who will do legal aid, as I did in the last Sessions. I did a murder case. I am sorry I have to talk these things.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order: Those words were really directed at the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I just had a case with a worker at a particular place and the man just said, "Look, let the fellow go to court. I have got Henry on a retainer and he has not worked for a long time." That is the situation I was talking about, not the honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have made a note for the Honourable Leader of the Opposition when he comes. He is very well able to take care of himself. I am not in a position to speak about another person's practice. I do not think it would be ethical. In respect of my own, the honourable Member need have no fear.

If it is that he was a little angered that I have from time to time to show up the ambivalence of the organisation that was created by the Barbados Labour Party on October 4, 1941, and to show how that organisation, the Barbados Workers Union, has moved, seemingly, from the founding principles that informed its establishment...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are still on salaries.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They have to negotiate salaries, Sir.

If it has moved away from there to where it is now and we have some positions on principle that are not easily reconciled, it is only that I am seeking to probe and goad my friends into being faithful to the original principles. It is not meant to be an attack on the union, because, philosophically, my friend will appreciate, if one has any principle and wants to be consistent, that we on this side cannot be opposed to the very organisation which we gave birth to out of the movement. I am making the position clear. From time to time, we reserve the right, if we see that organisation or the other, the NUPW, acting in a way we do not consider to be in the best interest of the mass of workers, to say so. If the honourable Member has a case to show us that we are wrong, put it forward.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you want some specific cases? Do not let us go into that

Sir, I want to take the opportunity again to make it clear beyond peradventure that we feel that the time has come when we should not be having every two years the kind of hostility, in some cases, the kind of histrionics, in other cases, the kind of grandstanding, on parliamentary salaries. We remain firm in our minds, and this is why we had to abstain just now, we are not convinced that the Government itself, with these particular measures today, is not accepting the principle of relativity. Everything said by the Acting Prime Minister seems to us to confirm it and we have not been convinced by anything said on the other side. To that extent, we cannot support the Government, because we think that, to a large extent, what was done last year July was so much window dressing and posturing.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How do you mean I cannot say it again? Sir, this is a new Bill.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister has not yet spoken on this matter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, so that we do not get ourselves bogged down: The honourable Member knows that the rules of debate do not allow us to refer to a previous debate in the same session.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I did not refer to a previous debate. I was careful not to refer to a previous debate. Some of what i said may have sounded like something you had heard earlier, but I did not refer to it

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am concerned about the sincerity, as I said, of the other side. In 1984, when the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) was in the Senate, he characterised salary increases, in a similar debate on page 592, as "a disgusting thing." He said:

> "This could only be characterized as people who are determined to feather their own nests at any cost This is nothing short of people feathering their own nests at the expense of the taxpayers, whom you are calling upon to tighten their belts, to make sacrifices in order for this country to get back on an even keel ....."

All of that we heard. At that time he was not sure that three years down the road he would have been asking us to vote for some additional dollars for himself. Do you see how the circle goes, Sir?

I also have to quote the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Hon. Dr. R. C. Haynes) from the day before, December 11,1984, at page 1691. He was most pathetic. This is what he said then:

> "You are going to find that the Prime Minister will be able to use the inducements of this money in order to get who he wants to join that Cabinet, and this is going to be a major attraction. Remember what I said. The elected members of the Cabinet will find that they have no say, as has happened again and again. I speak with knowledge."

He was not in the Cabinet then, but he was foreshadowing all that has happened to him, because two of his colleagues in the Other Place have, had more say than him, and elected members of the Cabinet. He had no say! 5.55 p.m.

Sir, the Opposition will again abstain, as a matter of consistency and principle, because we are not convinced that the Government again has not postured, that they have not found it necessary once again to reverse themselves. They have done it so often that we are in fact convinced of one thing, that they have no consistent policy. As was said recently by a member of their party who addressed a group of our party, the mediocrity in the Government is something for all Barbadians to be concerned about, and it explains the lack of consistency in the attitude of the present Government.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you would have noticed that I would be winding up, Sir. Does any other honourable Member wish to speak?

(Aside: Are you acting as Prime Minister?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No. I am acting in the position that you aspire to, whatever it is.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think that there is much that is required to bring this Bill to a conclusion. The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has outlined the difficulties of representation in Barbados in a way that, contrary to what he said, honourable Members on this side would agree with him. The facts which he outlined are facts, that Members who are elected to represent constituencies, and who represent those constituencies, do so at a substantial cost, both in personal and in financial terms. I do not think that there is going to be any argument on that, and I do not think there has ever been any demur on that from this side of the House.

The issues which we have always debated in this House on salaries have been issues of principle. They have always ended towards the methodology used by a particular Government. In our case, when we were in Opposition, we opposed the methodology imposed by the Prime Minister of the day. We stated categorically on more than one occasion, in the Other Place and in this Chamber, that the methodology exercised by the then Prime Minister and

Parliament. That seems to have been acceptable to them. They vote for the one that is going out They never vote their own salaries, ostensibly, because they are voting for their next Congress. The truth is that a substantial number of them come back in, and know they will be coming back in, so it is really a fallacy.

The point I am making, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that this is always going to be an area of concern and some controversy. The amount of controversy bears some relationship to the nearness of the election. When an election is on, members of the Opposition tend to scrutinise much more carefully the way in which public money is spent on parliamentarians, and members of the Government seek to defend a reasonable position as perceived by them. The deviation from that reasonable norm has tended to occur during the period of 1976 - 1986.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: One does not wish to dwell on that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think there is any other point made by the honourable Member that needs any clarification. 1 think we can consider that this year's discussion has led us to the point where we have heard the views expressed by those who have not expressed their views before on the other side, and hopefully, by the next time we come to discuss a substantive increase in parliamentary or other .....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Substantial!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, a substantive increase, this is a technical adjustment, a real increase in the salaries, by then we would have established whatever joint arrangement is considered necessary, Sir.

The question that the Bill be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, Hon. H. deB. FORDE and Messrs D, A. C. SIMMONS and O. S. ARTHUR dissenting.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called, amendment to Schedule of Cap. 13A.

On the motion ofHon B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREA/ES, Clause 3 was read a second time.

On the motions of Hon. B. M. TAJfTT, seconded by Hon. E. E. GRE/S/ES, Clause 3 stood part and was added to the Bill.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREWES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that brings us to the end of Government Business.

I beg, before moving the adjournment, to take note of the fact that last week when this Honourable Chamber resumed in these more spacious and well-appointed chambers, we had some difficulty with the chairs. Seven or eight, of them broke down because, contrary to what has been said, the cane which was used was of an inferior quality, cane which is not grown in Barbados, and which, apparently, had been lying around for sometime by the prisoners.

Subsequent to that, and in time for today's sitting, Her Majesty's Prison collected the chairs, and, as honourable Members would have observed, both in the sitting and the seeing, restored them with a new and different seating in a manner which appears to be satisfactory to all honourable Members. They are easy to look at and not difficult to sit on.

I think you would wish, having complained last week, to place on record our appreciation to the authorities at Her Majesty's Prison for the expedition with which they corrected the difficulties brought on only in part by themselves. I am sure that the Attorney General, in his capacity as the head of that department, would wish to know that we are with him in these matters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I now beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, October 27,1987 at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I second that, Sir.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, October 27,1987 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

6.17p.m.

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