THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 - 91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, March 14,1988

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10:15 a.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. Weekes, J.P., (Speaker)
His Honour J. J. Payne, (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. E. Sandiford, B.A., M.A. (Econ.) J.P., (Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)
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 International Transport, Telecommunications and Immigration and Leader of the House)
Hon. E. E. Greaves, B. A., Ed.M., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Dr. R. C. Haynes, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P., (Edin.)
Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman, B.A., M.A., (Minister of Transport and Works)
Hon. M. A. King, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney-General and Minister of Legal Affairs)
Hon. W. O. Franklin, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., 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)
Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Q.C., LL.M.
Mr. O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.)
Hon. C. V. Walker, (Minister of Education and Culture)
Mr. L. L. Brathwaite, J.P.
Mr. E. Bourne
Dr. E. A. Simmons, M.D.
Hon. W. W. Hall, (Minister of Tourism and Sports) Mr. C. A. Neblett, B.A., (Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office)
Mr. C. L. Trotman, M.A.
Mr. R. L. Morris, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Mr. P. J. M. Miller
Mr. R. P. Byer, LL.B., L.E.C.
Mr. D. J. H. Thompson, LL.B.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, March 8,1988.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes of the proceedings of this Honourable Chamber of Tuesday, March 8,1988 be taken as read and confirmed.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I am in receipt of the following:

Accounts and Statements for the month of January, 1988, as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

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

Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 3) Order, 1988.

Statement showing Net Customs and Excise Receipts for the months ended November 30, 1987 and December 31,1987.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES Hon. P. M.

GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of:

A Bill to amend the Barbados Telephone Company Act

During this sitting - I do not mean today, Sir -1 will seek permission to do this Bill in all its stages.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

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

A Bill to amend the Barbados Telephone Company ACL

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 the business of the Government for today, I want to move the suspension of the Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20,42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of the sitting.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988

Order No. 1 was called -To move the second reading of a Bill to grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of Barbados for the year ending 31st March, 1989.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, the annual cycle of parliamentary business brings us once again to the consideration of the appropriations necessary for the service of this island. By practice and convention, we meet some time before the end of the current financial year to make such appropriation. The process is set out in the Constitution, mat fundamental document which lays down the framework within which our democratic system should proceed.

In accordance with Chapter 9 of the Constitution, it is indicated at Clause 107 that there should be in and for Barbados a Consolidated Fund into which, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force in Barbados, shall be paid all revenues of Barbados.

In Clause 108(1), the Minister of Finance is enjoined before the end of each financial year to cause to be prepared annual estimates of revenue and expenditure for public services during the succeeding financial year, which shall be laid before the House of Assembly.

In Section (2) it is stated that the estimates of expenditure shall show separately the sums required to meet statutory and other expenditure proposed to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. 10.25 a.m.

The provision in our fundamental law continues at Clause 109 to state that in respect of each financial year, the Minister responsible for Finance, at the earliest convenient moment before the commencement of the financial year shall introduce in the House of Assembly an Appropriation Bill containing, under appropriate heads for the several services required, the estimated aggregate sums which are proposed to be expended (otherwise than by way of statutory expenditure) during that financial year.

It is in accordance with those provisions, Sir, that we are assembled here this morning, in this cycle of Parliamentary business, to appropriate sums of money for the goods and services which have been determined are required for the services of this island.

By law, convention and practice, the budgetary process in Barbados falls into two parts. First of all, there is the process of considering the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure in conjunction with the Appropriation Bill, and that is the exercise which we shall be engaged on during this sitting. There is a second part to come, and that relates to the making of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. It is all really part of the same process. But for purposes of facilitating the examination of the amounts appropriated, and then for a consideration of the budgetary measures which may be necessary to correct any imbalances, or correct any other thing which may be in need of correction in the public finances or the general economy of the country, the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals come at a later date.

I think, Sir, that, traditionally, the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure normally provide an opportunity for Members of Parliament, representative of their several

constituencies to examine, both from a national point of view, the provisions for the good government of the country. Also, opportunity may be taken to examine how the provisions may affect the constituents in the several constituencies of this country.

You, Mr. Speaker, by convention and law are unable to raise any matters relating to any constituency. But I am sure that you will be well taken care of, and that concerns will be taken note of.

Sir, when we look at the fiscal summary of the measures that are before us, we will note that this Government is proposing that Current Revenue should be at the level of $753 377 969, that Current Expenditure is estimated at $801 971 345, and that there is a Current Account deficit of $48 593 376.

Capital Expenditure for the year 1988-89 is estimated at $179 231 314, and when that Capital Expenditure is added to the Current Account deficit, the fiscal deficit is estimated at $227 824 690.

We also have to take into account, Sir, the annexed Post Office Estimates for 1988-89, which shows a revenue of $11 000 982, expenditure of $11 884 820, leaving an annexed deficit of some $883 838.

I have indicated, Sir, that statutory expenditure is not voted on in accordance with the law of this country. The law does not provide for statutory expenditure to be voted on in the Appropriation Bill, inasmuch as Parliament will already have made statutory provision for such funds. In the Appropriation Bill, therefore, the Government is requesting appropriation of some $568 015 105 from the Consolidated Fund to finance the non-statutory expenditure. Some $389 682 405 will be applied to the Current and Annexed Expenditure, while the remaining $178 352 700 will be appropriated for Capital Expenditure.

That, therefore, Mr. Speaker, represents the content and the main thrust of the Appropriation Bill, and I beg to move that the Appropriation Bill 1988 be now read a second time.

In moving the second reading of this Appropriation Bill, I wish, Sir, to look at the revenue and expenditure sides of the equation, and I wish to say something about the deficit There will be some other comments and observations which I may have to make.

Turning to the revenue side, the estimate of Current Revenue for 1988-89 is at the level of $753.4 million. That is 7.9 per cent higher than the 1987-88 Approved Estimates, which you will recall, Sir, stood at the figure of $698.1 million. But in terms of our Revised Estimates for this current year, we are expecting that that outturn figure will be somewhere in the region of $719.1 million, and therefore the Current Revenue for the coming financial year will be approximately 4.9 per cent greater than the Revised Estimates for 1987-88, the current financial year, based on the best information that we have at this time. 10.35 a.m.

The revenue includes taxes on income and profits, and these are expected to contribute some $153 million or 20.3 per cent of the 1988-89 current revenue. This compares with some $168 million or 24.1 per cent that was projected in the Approved Estimates for 1987-88. The outturn figure for the current year is, however, expected to be about $131.5 million. So what we expect from taxes on incomes and profits will be about 18.3 per cent of the revised 1987-88 figure.

I think we should note, Sir, at the very outset, that the projections for revenue have not turned out exactly as had been anticipated. Revenues have increased. But what we have to take note of, is that we have to look at the increased in relation not to itself, but to the total public finances. In other words, you have also to look at the expenditure side. So an increase in revenue by itself, while desirable, has to be taken into account with your expenditures. I will have a little more to say about that when we look at the fiscal deficit and at some other point during the annual cycle of parliamentary business.

I think at this stage it may be appropriate to note that there has been a relative decline in the receipt of income taxes, and note the implications of this in terms of the amount of money that is available to the Government to produce its goods and services for the entire country. In relation to the public provision and the impact on the quality of life and the nature of the society that we are trying to construct, this will have to be examined very carefully. I will have some more to say on this particular point a little later in my speech when I look at social and economic justice and the shaping of the kind of just society that we wish to deal with in this country.

The other component of the revenue which I wish to examine, Sir, relates to indirect taxes, that is taxes on goods and services, taxes on international trade and stamp duties. These represent some 61.9 per cent of the 1988-89 Revenue Estimates as compared with 59.8 per cent in the 1987-88 Estimates.

Revised indirect tax receipts for 1987-88 are estimated at 69.6 per cent of the total revenue. In terms of what I have indicated, indirect taxes are playing a bigger role in the total revenue relative to Income Tax, the direct tax. This is the obverse side of the coin, because direct taxes are described as being regressive and Income Tax in terms of being

progressive. But the concepts and implications of this we will have to examine also. At least, I certainly will examine a little later in this address.

Non-tax revenues also make a contribution to the revenue, Sir. For 1988-89, they are expected to bring in some $42.4 million, and that represents a marginal increase of some 3.6 per cent over the approved 1987-88 figure. The revised receipts for this item in 1987-88 have been projected at $50.6 million. But in this sum we are including $4 million in dividends from Barbados External Telecommunications which were paid during 1985-86 and 1986-87, but which were only brought to account during the current financial year.

The estimate for Special Receipts in 1988-89 is projected at $55.9 million, as against the approved 1987-88 figure of $31.9 million. But it must be noted that that figure did not include provisions for the increases in the Health and Training levies, and it did not contain the provisions for the Employment Levy, introduced during the Budgetary Proposals of the 1987-88 fiscal year. When compared, therefore, with the revised estimates of $54.9 million for the current financial year, the 1988-89 estimates show a marginal increase of just about 1.8 per cent.

Those, Sir, are the main items under the revenue side as far as the recurrent revenues are concerned.

I turn now to Current Expenditure. The Government's Current Expenditure estimates of $801.9 million for the coming fiscal year represents an 11.9 per cent increase over the Approved 1987-88 Estimates of $706.6 million. That is what we have provided in the Estimates, $700.6 million. 10.45 a.m.

In the 1988-89 Estimates is reflected a decrease of 1.5 per cent of the Revised Estimates for 1987-88. From the best information available at this time, we believe that those Revised Estimates will be in the region of $814.1 million.

But one must take into account that the salaries revision of 1987-88 included provision for arrears of wages and salaries which went back to the year 1986-87, and so the revised 1987-88 figure is inflated by the level of these arrears.

A substantial part of that salaries revision related to the year 1986-87, but they were paid during the year 1987-88, and that would have been probably, if my memory serves me correctly, some $26 million for 1986-87 and some $7.5 million for the year 1987-88.

The major portion, Sir, of Government's Current Expenditure continues to be in the area of staff costs, including personal emoluments, National Insurance contributions, and the levies, as well as the servicing of the Government's debt

As far as the expenditures are concerned, this House approved during the course of this year a number of supplementaries, approved without division, as far as I can recall .....

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Oh yes, sorry. There was a division, I believe, on one supplementary in the House - on the Opposition benches. That is the division that I remember, because the Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) went one way, the rest went the other way, and the Leader went that way.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I promised the people of this country that I will speak quite frankly and honestly on the picture as I see it, and that I will implement such measures as are necessary to ensure that we remain on the path of fiscal prudence. We will do everything that is necessary to ensure that this country continues the stability, growth and development which the people expect, and which may be within our resources to achieve.

We have sought to examine requests for supplementaries very carefully. All of my Ministers are sitting here on this front bench, and each one of them, I believe without exception,....

(Asides: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Nearly all.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We deal with financial measures particularly in this House and I am talking about the ones here in the House of Assembly, and I believe each one of them has come to this House with supplementaries relating to their Ministries. We do not come and ask for supplementaries simply because we believe they can be asked for. They are examined very carefully, and in the Ministries considerable pruning is done before they reach the Ministry of Finance. When they come before me as Minister of Finance, I also examine them carefully to ensure that it is necessary to have those supplementaries.

During the year 1987-88, this House approved supplementaries totalling some $79 357 442 on Current Account. On Capital, supplementaries in the sum of $39 427 035 was approved.

I have already said that we have paid very careful attention, and this House has paid close attention to these matters. No supplementary can be made without the

approval of this House. Certainly it cannot be done legally. Therefore, those are supplementaries which we have to add to the amount voted in the House when we consider the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure around this time last year.

The purposes for which those Resolutions were approved are matters of public record, and we do not wish to go into them. They are available from the records of this Honourable Chamber, and we do not wish to reflect in any way on the provision of those sums. But to refresh our memories on the major purposes for some of these supplementaries which were brought, we will recall, Sir, that there was one for $7 million, which was approved in November last year, for the Severance Payment Scheme.

There is really no way that you could avoid coming to this House to make up any deficiencies in the Severance Payment Scheme. The Severance Payment Act requires that any deficiency in the fund may be made good by provisions approved by this Honourable Chamber. However the financing may be done, wherever the money may be borrowed from, we still have to come here in accordance with the provisions of the Act, under which the Severance Payment Scheme operates, to be in accordance with the legal provisions. 10.55 a.m.

I say this, Sir, merely to underline the fact that every step that we take is in accordance with the law as well as appropriate or proper financial procedures. I wish to underline, Sir, that the requests for supplementaries are in relation to goods or services that are deemed to be necessary or desirable for the good government of this country in accordance with our promises or our undertakings. So there was a Resolution for some $7 million for the Severance Payments Scheme.

There was another Resolution, No. 65, for some $22 673 530, and that was also approved in November. That was an omnibus Resolution, and it was to meet increases in salaries and wages to Public officers and employees, which became effective from April 1, 1986. I have already made reference to that, but when we look at the size of the supplementaries, we have to relate them to a particular good or service which may already be in place, or to some new service which we may deem to be desirable for the good government of this country.

Another substantial Resolution, Sir, was Resolution No. 72, for a sum of $10 724 744. That was approved on December 8,1987.1 see my friend, the honourable Member for St. Peter, smiling. This was for the National Conservation Commission to carry on its work of beautification.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Anything to deal with pork, as I understand it, would be the Ministry of Agriculture. It has nothing to do with the National Conservation Commission. They do not deal with pork, to the best of my knowledge.

There was Resolution No. 9 for a sum of $13 609 412, which was approved not so long ago, Sir, on February 2, 1988. This was under Head 42 - Ministry of Transport and Works - to enable the Transport Board to meet its financial obligations to the end of the current financial year and to offset a portion of its operating deficit.

There were some other supplementaries for smaller sums, but these were the more sizeable requests that were approved by this Honourable Chamber.

On the Capital side, there was one for $3.6 million. That was approved way back on June 23, following the incorporation of Barbados External Telecommunications. The Government of Barbados had entered into a loan agreement with Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Limited in that sum to purchase shares in the capital of Barbados External Telecommunications. I believe there were some nine million shares at one dollar each.

Another Capital Resolution, No. 64, was for $5.8 million. Again that was the Ministry of Transport and Works, and it related to the access road to the Cement Plant, the Northern Access Road, an ongoing project which it was necessary or desirable to continue.

Resolution No. 77 was for $10.8 million. That was approved in December 1987 for the National Housing Corporation for a variety of purposes, including the purchase of the St. Joseph Hospital.

Resolution No. 25 for $5.8 million was approved just a little while ago, on March 8, 1988. That related to the purchase of equity by Government in commercial ventures. It was to meet a cash payment to the Barbados Development Bank, being part of the accumulated indebtedness of Caribbean Airways to that institution at the end of December 1987.

So on the Current and on the Capital side, in addition to the sums approved by this Honourable House, certain supplementaries became desirable over the year, and these would have increased the expenditure side of the equation.

J made a reference, Sir, to Central Government, to the staff costs. Sometimes it is not realised fully by the public - all honourable Members in here appreciate it, Sir - that most of the money that we pass in here goes on staff costs,

wages, salaries and the related payments that have to be made in respect of National Insurance contributions and other such expenses. And when we talk about cuts in expenditure, we have to think in terms of the impact that cuts may have on people, the human face, I believe, to which some honourable Members may have referred.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, that is your term, that is why I am repeating it. I know it will find approbation from you.

Any Government has to be humane. There are certain medicines that have to be administered from time to time, but when that has to be administered, it has to be in the best interest of the patient.

Staff costs are projected at $358.6 million, or 44.7 per cent of the 1988-89 Current Expenditure Estimates. So of all the money that we are proposing, and asking this House to adopt and approve, some 44.7 per cent of it will be going on staff related costs. 11.05a.m.

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If we add to these the wages and salaries component of the Government-funding statutory corporations and agencies, the boards, the staff cost will come to almost 54 per cent Between 50 per cent and 54 per cent of all Government expenditures go towards staff costs, wages, salaries and related expenses.

There is another aspect of this, the servicing of debt, which is a commitment that has to be met. That, I believe, will come to about 20.6 per cent of the expenditures.

We will see, therefore, that virtually 75 per cent of all Government expenditures are fixed, unless a decision were taken to cut back on the human element and the humane approach of the Government towards the conduct of Government business. But as I have said, we are humane. We are interested in the people of this country, and in solving our problems without the cost in human terms that would have to be paid simply by some rash, or ruthless, or inhumane action.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: No interruptions.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is quite easy to say cut and cut expenditures. But if we cut expenditures, we have to be sure that we cut in those areas where the scissors or occum razor can be used with a certain measure of benefit If, of course, a programme proves that it is beyond its useful life, there may be a case for that programme to be cut But we will have to find alternative forms of employment for the human element that will be involved in the discontinuation of that programme.

Debt servicing payments for 1988-89 have been estimated at approximately $165 million or, as I indicated, some 20.6 per cent of Current Expenditure. For the components of interest and amortisation, which relate to foreign loans, $56.6 million is for interest and $37.5 million for amortisation. In 1987-88, foreign loan interest and amortisation was projected at $41.2 million and $40.2 million respectively.

Sir, we should note that a major component of the projected increase and increased payments will be in relation to the $89.7 million draw down in June of 1987 of the Barclay's Bank loan. I mention this to indicate that movements in the value of the currencies of countries with which we, do business have a direct impact on our public finances, not to mention the operations of the private sector. If the Barclays Bank loan is denominated in the pound sterling, the British dollar has appreciated in relation to the Barbados dollar and, therefore, we. will have to pay out some more money as a result of the fall in the value of our dollar, .because the Barbados dollar is pegged to the U.S. dollar and the U.S. dollar has gone down in relation to the pound. That would be expected.

Sir, while we are on loans, because the servicing of the debt is a commitment that we have to meet and the implications of it are that we have to spend money in meeting interest payment and amortisation of the loan, that money that we spend there is not available for spending in other discretionary areas. It is a commitment that has to be met up-front. Just as the commitment for wages and salaries have to be met up front, we have to meet our other commitments. If we do not, we will put our credit-worthiness in peril, and that is a road which we shall not travel.

When we talk about borrowings, I think that it is best that this Honourable House and the country understand the present position. We have a substantial amount of loans outstanding, and they have to be serviced. I have been able to examine the record, and what I have discovered, Sir, is that at 1976, when the Democratic Labour Party remitted office, some $19 million in loans was outstanding. Since that date, some $687.9 million in loans have been generated by the Government of Barbados. I thought I would mention those figures to underline the fact that each Government has to exercise caution and care with the money that it borrows and in the regime for the repayment of loans. The outstanding balances are what we are talking about.

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Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of elucidation, I understood the honourable Member to say that in 1976 the debt outstanding was $19 million. Am I correct in understanding that figure? Is that what the honourable Member meant to say? The records do not show that

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The public debt in 1976 was some $258 million. But what I am saying is that at that particular time we were paying seme $19 million, and thire is a schedule for the servicing of the debt which shows the amount of $19 million at that time, and since then it has climbed to $687 million.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I went into your constituency, St. Thomas and gave the figure as $258 million in 1976.1 have found out since then that it came up to over $1 billion as the amount outstanding. I said I will speak from the record, and what the record shows. And every perplexity of the honourable Member for St Peter, we will seek to clarify for him.

I will be addressing this particular matter a little later in the annual cycle of parliamentary business, because we will have to look at the impact of the debt also. I wish only to say at this stage that we are not in an unmanageable position. I am satisfied that the debt has been accumulated at a very rapid rate certainly since 1976, but that it has been accumulated in terms of the needs of Barbados in accordance with the priorities set by the Government at that time. We, as a Government, would not have opted for those priorities, or to borrow for some of the purposes that were indicated. But it was debt incurred at that particular time and it is a national responsibility.

This country experienced a very severe recession during the period 1973-75. We did not have to go to the International Monetary Fund for any kind of assistance tq deal with that particular problem, to the extent that by late 1975 the revenue started to come back into a reasonable state of balance, and the cost of living had moderated, I believe, to around 5 per cent by 1976 certainly. But that recession of 1973-75 was the most severe, up to this particular time, that this country, and indeed the world, has seen since the 1930s.

There was another recession in the early 1980s, let us say, 1979 starting to build up into 1980,1981 and 1982, not as severe as the 1973-75 crisis. But in 1980, 1981 and 1982 the Government of the day went to the International Monetary Fund under something called a Stand-by Agreement. Therp are two components to it, and you are telling me about a third one - and the Compensatory Financing Facility, and borrowed under the latter cine in relation to funds resulting from a fall in export earnings on the merchandising account and tourism, I understand. You were not acting as Minister of Finance on that occasion.

This country believes that that is something that just happened at that time and that it is all in the past. What is in the past is the agreement that we entered into. But each taxpayer in this country is still paying for that IMF agreement. We are still paying back the money to the International Monetary Fund under that Stand-by Agreement and for the Compensatory Facility.

There is talk about a decline in our exports and tourism earnings. The decline in exports started a long time ago. I would not like to say it seems to be endemic now in the structure of our economy, but certainly it is a problem in there that needs adjustment. We are considering it, and we are seeking ways and means of pushing up the level of our exports, particularly as far as the manufacturing aspects of that area are concerned.

I have been looking for the figure that we are paying back to the International Monetary Fund. In 1977, the Government went to the Compensatory Financing Facility.... 11.25a.m.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: For the first time.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: 1977?) Hon.

L. E. SANDIFORD: Seventy-seven.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Nobody knew about that)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: No, no. I think that was known.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Six point five million dollars was the amount in SDRs borrowings.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is what you would say. When you tell me the specific problem that you are trying to correct, I will reply to that.

We borrowed $6.5 million in SDRs, which was about Bds.$15.1 million in 1977. We are still paying for that in 1988. I think there is still a small sum, I believe some

1988. I think there is still a small sum, I believe some $15 609, still outstanding under that particular matter.

In 1982, the equivalent of Bds.$26.6 million was borrowed under the IMF Compensatory Financing Facility on October 6, 1982. The terms under which it was borrowed was a short grace period, a moratorium, of some three years. So you did not have to pay back anything for three years, until October 1985, and the repayments are quarterly.

I am going slowly on this, Sir, because I believe that, up to this particular time, even this information has not been given to the House, or to the country for that matter. A debate was squeezed out of the Government on this particular matter, because it was all done *sub rosa.* I think the country should know this.

This was repayable quarterly from January 14, 1986 and ending October 2, 1987. That was completely repaid. This is the second Compensatory Financing Facility, and I think that is the one to which you were referring. That was completely repaid on October 2,1987.

Under the IMF Stand-by agreements, the amount borrowed was the equivalent of $70.3 million. That was drawn on October 15, 1982, and the drawings were in quarterly amounts between October 1982 and May 1984. The loan was for a period of eight and a half years, with a moratorium of three years, so the repayment started on January 20,1986. We will not be rid of that, Sir, until 1991.

They were correcting their problems. But we still have some $35.6 million outstanding under that agreement that was secretly entered into between the Government of Barbados and the International Monetary Fund. And we have to pay it back out of public funds.

At another time, perhaps we will look again and review the kinds of circumstances which led to that situation. There is some interesting reading, a letter sent to some high official of the International Monetary Fund over the signatures of one Blackman, not Don.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: And no Harold. They are not in here, so I can say that

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: And I do not think Forde. There is no Forde in here either, so he knew nothing about these matters either.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not blaming him either.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I know of the current one.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is a matter that we will look at, because ever since returning to office in 1986, we have carried out a very close examination both of the internal and external financial situations of the country. If we find ourselves at this stage having to make sure that we maintain fiscal prudence, and have to be very careful in how we go about to implement our programmes, it is because we have been having to exercise a very steady hand, a very understanding approach, to the management of the public finances of this country. And I have been warning this country of the need to exercise extreme care and caution in the management of the public finances, because the situation was less rosy than we were expecting or than we were led to believe.

It did not take me three years to discover that. One of the very first criticisms which was levelled against me by a section of the Press, I do not remember which one it was, was that they wanted to know how I knew that the state of the finances at May 1986 was not as rosy as we were led to believe. It was a public statement which I made, and our experience in office since then has confirmed the validity of the statement that I made at that time. I made it at Britton's Hill in St. Michael.

They wanted to know how I knew. It may be - I am not saying that it is - that the same way that you get information, information is also available to others. We read the documents and interpret, and if you know what you are looking for, there is a considerable amount of information that you can get from existing documents. But you cannot refer to page 11 nor page 12 of any document and say that the information is there. 11.35am.

The Annual Report of the Central Bank is published from time to time, and you can by a creative reconstruction or interpretation, make comments. But if you get up and say page 11 or page 12, or whatever it was, and make those statements, those are not available from any published documents.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Or Japanese black man, I do not know.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: All right. I would not tell you who that sounds like. I do not know about anybody looking for anything. We do not have to look for anything.

As I said, information has been obtained from various sources. People will obtain information from various sources from time to time. Part of it is public information, of will become public information.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not concerned about that Sooner or later somebody may be caught in breach of some of the laws of the country. Statistically, it is bound to happen. So I do not ask anybody to look for anything, to find out why anything has happened. Sooner or later it is bound to happen. So we will just leave that I am not concerned about that

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I will not say very much about the Capital Expenditure. The amount which we are proposing to appropriate is $179 231 314, which is just 1 per cent increase over the Approved 1987-88 Estimates.

Among the major projects for which these funds will be expended is development under the Ministry of Finance for the purchase of equity by Government in financial ventures and some further development at the airport. There is $4.6 million for Airport Development and $16.5 million for the Ministry of Finance. But I am not going into any details on this.

We have to upgrade and renovate some of the police stations. There is work to be done on the construction and renovation of primary and secondary schools, and construction of a Conference and Examination Centr«. There is upgrading and refurbishment of hospitals, the polych'nic development project, and the extension of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which is ongoing work. There is provision for the National Housing Corporation and its housing projects, including the Low Income Housing Project, some funds of a capital nature for coastal conservation, and some $33.6 million on the roads and drainage. We are to construct a gymnasium, and this House dealt with an aspect of this particular matter recently. There are renovations to the Dover Convention Centre and other matters under the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, and then there will be a programme of construction and restoration of factory buildings and development of industrial sites.

When we take that Capital Expenditure and we put it to the Current Account deficit, we get the overall fiscal deficit, to which I made reference early in my speech.

Let me say a few words about deficits. I start by going to the record and indicating that this is not the first year in which there will be a deficit on the Current Account When this matter first came up, there were all kinds of alarms raised, as though under the Democratic Labour Party deficits were being originated.

I have always said that there should be no mystery or mystiques surrounding the public finances. You have a certain amount of revenue coming from various sources. You spend money in respect of certain items, goods and services, and if you are spending more than you are getting, you have a deficit. If you are spending less than you get as revenue or income, you have a surplus. There is no mystery about it, and, generally speaking, countries seek to get a surplus on Current Account, which meets your ongoing day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month expenses, as it were, and you also hope to make something which may go towards your Capital Expenditure.

Any Government has to borrow for capital expenditures. Individuals have to borrow for capital expenditures. There are very few persons in this society who may seek to build a house who can build that house out of their savings. I exclude the Leader of the Opposition from this particular matter, he may be able to do that, but individuals seek to borrow money through mortgages in order to build houses.

It is sometimes said, and people are warned, that you should not compare the individual household with the public finances. But I find that it is the best way in which you can explain in a meaningful way to people who do not follow finances from day to day about the nature of the public finances. So I ignore that conventional wisdom and I refer to the household. 11.45a.m.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Like you used to do it with match sticks.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Match sticks? You can call it what you like. What I know is that we will not be practising any voodoo economics in here as Bush once called it. We are not into that

If we have a deficit, we have to see how we are going to deal with that particular deficit, and as far as the deficit is concerned, I have said individuals in a household contract debt of a capital nature when they buy a car, or a consumer durable like a refrigerator or stove. You either enter into hire purchase or open an account or something like that, and you make a down payment and you owe the rest. That is debt, and it shows a deficit in your household accounts.

Companies do it. If they are carrying out a development, they borrow money on the strength of their assets and they use those funds to carry out capital developments. It may be extensions to their buildings, laying some particular resource that will help them down the road to earn more money, purchasing utility poles or laying mains. So borrowing is known to companies, it is known to individuals and it therefore should not be surprising that Governments have to borrow money for capital projects.

We go further and say that it is only right that if you are developing a capital project which may benefit not only the present generation, but future generations, that debt is an appropriate means, because not only the present generation, but future generations will have to pay for it, if the future generations are to derive some benefit for it.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Debt incurred by one Government and paid for by another Government, yes, if the projects for which you incur the debt are really developmental projects.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We were set in so far that we could not just close them down. We looked at them very carefully. So we want to get this thing about debt and deficit out of the way and understand that debt can be a creative instrument in the growth and development of any country.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Pardon me? I am sorry, Sir, I was not asking you to pardon me, I must have been hearing something or other*which you did not hear.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already asked Members to observe Standing Orders, and I hope they will do that for the balance of the debate.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Having got that point about the debt out of the way, Sir, let us now look at the deficits on Current Account From time to time deficits on Current Account occur, and I believe that there is one line of economists in economic history which indeed argue that at some times it is wrong-headed policy to seek to balance the budget Deficit financing has a distinguished history among a certain line of economists. I am not going to pursue that particular topic at this time. I wish to look at the record of the times in our history since 1966 when we have developed deficits on Current Account, because there are still a lot of people out there who believe that this is the first time we are having a deficit on Current Account and I need to give some information in this regard.

In fiscal 1968-69, after two years -1 am starting from the financial year 1966-67, in which the Current Account showed a surplus - there was a deficit of $3.3 million. There were surpluses in 1969-70, 4970-71, 1971-72, and 1972-73. Then in two years, 1973-74 and 1974-75, there were deficits of $15.2 million and $17.2 million respectively.

I have pointed out already that those were the two years in which this country, like other countries of the world, suffered the worst. The world was undergoing the worst recession that it had experienced since the 1930s and it is expected that those recessionary tendencies and trends would have fed into our economy and would have had a very deleterious effect on the public finances of the country.

But in 1975-76 -. and remember the Democratic Labour Party demitted office in 1976 - there was a surplus. In 1976-77, deficit; 1977-78, a deficit. In the three years 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81, there were surpluses on Current Account But then we come to 1981-82, a deficit; 1982-83, a deficit. In 1983-84 there was a surplus. Then 1984 -. 1985, a deficit; 1985-1986, a deficit; 1986-1987, a deficit, 1987-1988, a deficit. So of all of the years in the 1980s, from 1981 right down to the end of the term of office of the Barbados Labour Party and into the years of the Democratic Labour Party, there have been deficits. 11.55a.m.

One thing is sure. We cannot continue indefinitely building up deficits, and this is where I add a rider, without doing damage, or some damage, to our credit-worthiness.

I am not among those who say that you cannot develop deficits, because I have already said that when you add your Current Account surplus or deficit to your Capital Expenditure, then you end up in a deficit But you then have to find ways and means, by a variety of ways, of finding the sums to deal with that deficit

Having set that matter of deficits in its perspective, an overall deficit of some $227.8 million is the one which we have to deal with at this particular time, and this deficit we would seek to finance by a variety of means. The honourable Member for St. Thomas calls them "options".

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You said we were rolling the wicket when you had your discussion with the honourable Member for St Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) on the floor of the House on page 11 or page 12.

A precise way in which we will deal with this deficit is a matter for the second stage, of the budgetary process. That will be coming later in the annual cycle of parliamentary business. Of course, we will be seeking some funding for some of the capital projects from the international financial institutions and from other sources. But I am not going into that particular detail now.

One thing is sure, Sir, as far as that deficit is concerned. We are members of the Caribbean Development Bank. We are members of the Inter-American Development Bank. We have good relations with some foreign countries, and the Leader of the Opposition, I think, the last time we were looking at the loan to finance the gymnasium, made reference to a loan from the People's Republic of China. So we will seek to get funding for the implementation for our Capital Works programme.

We also have to seek to narrow the gap of the deficit we have. This will be done, as I indicated, in the annual cycle of parliamentary business. We are concerned here with the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, and I certainly, do not intend to go into any more detail on this.

The fact, howevef, is that revenue has been increasing. But expenditure has been increasing at a faster rate than revenue has been increasing, so the increases in revenue that have been registered are not sufficient to deal with the problems of the deficit. What we have been getting so far from the revenue is not sufficient to deal with the maintenance of the production by Government of the goods and services required for the adequate running of this country at the level indicated.

It is in that context that I nave said, and I can repeat it here, that there, obviously, has to be some stimulation of the revenues. We have to deal with that

I indicated already that there is a very small increase on the capital projections for the coming financial year, and I want to make it clear that we will continue to keep our expenditures under very close control to make sure that money is not wasted in any particular area. We will be seeking to institute measures, which I will be discussing with my Ministers, to make sure that each Government Department not only sticks within the budgetary allocation, but that any request for additional funds by way of supplementaries will be very closely scrutinized. I intend to strengthen my office to make sure that there is very close scrutiny of expenditures.

Already I have had a meeting with the accounting officers in the various departments, and from time to time, I have been discussing these matters with my Ministers, and each one of them is, and will continue to be responsible for the close scrutiny of expenditures within their departments in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act, and in accordance, with the Financial Rules made thereunder. We will be looking at this very closely.

We have to balance it On the one side, there is a revenue which will have to be stimulated. On the other side, there are the expenditures, which will have to be controlled. These are the two sides to the equation, what you spend and what you get in, and we will have, in an even-handed manner, to seek to keep the finances of this country in balance, or to put them into balance, as far as the Current Account is concerned. 12.05 p.m.

I think, Sir, that I have dealt with most of the issues that related to the Appropriation Bill, as well as, on a broad basis, the components of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. But there are a few issues which I have to make reference to round out the picture.

There has been some talk in this country of a wage freeze and wage restraint, and my office has been inundated. Let me put it this way, because I do not want to use those loaded terms - there have been calls to my office for some comment on this wage restraint and wage freeze. Members of my staff have been asked to go on some programme and, generally, to discuss this matter.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will deal with it now, and then as well.

I want to make it clear, Sir, that nowhere has myself or any of my Ministers said that there would be a wage freeze in this country. It is a total concoction. It was the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) who came into this House, cocked with something or another, which I will deal with at another time when he comes with it, and talked about wage restraint and wage freeze, and then want the Government to come and respond to something.

One of the other rumours that has been generated is that the Government is interested or has a policy for wage freeze. It was like the talk about devaluation. I want to make it absolutely clear that wage freeze is no part of the policy of this Government.

We have, and we intend to effect, a policy in respect of wages and salaries, and that policy has to be clear and fcir. It is broad; it if not just wages and salaries, but incomes.

We will try to keep inflation down to a manageable level so that if there are increases in real growth in this

country, the workers must benefit in that growth. That is what we are interested in. If there is growth in the economy, the workers must benefit from that particular growth. A wage freeze is contrary to that basic philosophy and of growth.

In any event, I do not know that any policy of wage freeze has been successful anywhere in the world. I know Britain tried it, I believe, in the Sixties, and tried it again some time in the Seventies. At the end of it, it did not work. I know that the United States tried it for a period of time, and again it did not work. Then, in 1981-82, a wage freeze was imposed by the Barbados Labour Party Government. They are the ones who imposed a wage freeze, because as far as the conditions of the International Monetary Fund Stand-by Arrangement are concerned, that is what they had to do, to keep those wages under control.

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order. If honourable Members want to speak, they should rise on a point of order, elucidation or explanation. I will not allow honourable Members to interrupt the honourable Member, who has the right to speak, according to the Standing Orders of this House. The Prime Minister is the Member speaking, and I would ask other Members to allow him to complete his speech.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I have the records, you have records, so we will put them on the table, and I will be quoting from time to time. That is the only time in this country that I know there was some talk about wage freeze from a ministerial level.

The Government of Barbados is a member of a number of international bodies, and from time to time, whether it is the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, or whether it is the one that the honourable Member for St. Thomas knows about, the International Monetary Fund, I believe, virtually without exception, there are two areas that they talk about They have been doing it down through the years during the 1970s and into the 1980s. One is something they call exchange rate adjustment, and the other one relates to freeze or restraint in wages.

Wage freeze is no part of the policy of this Government, and to be fair to the Opposition, I do not think, except during that period 1981-82 when they were faced with very severe problems in the economy, that they subscribed to a policy of wage freeze. Each particular agency has its own pet theories that it will advance. But that is not part of the policy of this Government, because, as I have indicated, we are interested in justice in the economy. It is that social justice which determines the paths along which we will go.

There are goals and objectives which we will seek to maintain and strengthen in this country, above all, the goals of social and economic justice. We also believe that the Estimates that we present, as well as the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, must have a certain thrust, must have a certain objective in terms of not only the short term, but in terms of the medium and long-term development of the country. In that particular regard, wage freeze is not part of our policy. We will have a policy in which we will seek to promote growth in our economy, and we will seek to ensure that all who contribute to that real growth in our economy, including the workers, will benefit from such growth. We seek to ensure that there are good industrial relations prevailing in the country, and we will certainly hope that the conditions for ensuring such a state of industrial relations will continue to prevail. 12.15p.m.

I have said, Mr. Speaker, that I would speak with frankness, with sincerity. As a Government, we are concerned, we are concerned about developments of our economy and developments in our social structure. Where there are problems existing in the economy and where there are social and economic problems, we will seek to understand the causes and nature of those problems and correct them, or modify the problems if they are- not capable of elimination.

Above all, Sir, we believe that the appropriation which we make for the several Ministries and agencies under those Ministries should continue to send the message that growth and development are the twin objectives of the thrust of our policies in this country. In that particular regard, you will search and find, therefore, that the alarmist talk about old age pensioners and members of the Royal Barbados Police Force having now to pay bus fares directly, and that school children would have to pay bus fares on the buses....

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: ....I said the old age pensioners, the old people....all of that is part of the rumour factory that is busily cranking out rumours, looking around for issues.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They were there, yes. And then put a headline that bore no relation at all to what was said!

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not blaming anyone. You did it? I-did not call any name.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You all are Simmons. That is the Simmons together. The same name, sounding the same way, so you all will deal with that one.

But I really wonder. It is difficult, apparently, to separate fact from fact, and it is difficult to separate fact, or some point that is made in all seriousness, from one that is made in a humorous vein.

A humorous statement that was made in a humorous vein in Dominica, *that* is reported as though it is a serious statement that I made, that Barbados is an LDC or more of an LDC than Dominica How can you take a statement which was made and received in a humorous vein as being serious? The meaning of any statement does not reside only in the words used, but in the context. You have to sum up. Meaning is a totality. I think we have to do better than that.

But I believe that the problem is that ever since the change of Government and the change of leadership, opposition sources have been looking around for major issues on which they can attack this Government. And they have not been able to find any major issues!

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: But I have not pointed anything. I said "opposition sources." You have to understand something about politics. "Opposition sources" does not mean only Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

(Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It can mean disloyal Government members!)

Laughter.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not heard the asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There are not any Opposition forces or resources of opposition on this side of the House. You may understand that. But that is not what we understand over here, so those kinds of interjections cannot carry any weight

The point I am making here is, I believe they have been searching around for issues but cannot find any major issues. So you have to look for all kinds of little matters to raise. Now they believe they have found one in terms of wage restraint.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Who is addressing the Chair? I have given the Honourable Prime Minister the opportunity to address the Chair. May I remind honourable Members of the Standing Orders of the House. Some Members have been in here long enough to be able to understand these.

Asides are not considered a part of a debate. I allow that by discretion. But having done so, I do not expect people to make that part of a debate or reply to debate.

In future, I will ask all replies to asides to be removed from the debate if Members do not carefully understand the Rules of this House and apply them.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will ask them to be removed.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will do that.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would, if Members do not apply themselves to the Standing Orders.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, in this House, we are at your disposal, and you will continue to rule with an even hand.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the Member's feeling, but I, too, would like to hear honourable Members in silence when they speak, according to the Rules of the House.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, we are at your disposal.

Sir, the objective is social justice. We will continue, in all ways possible, to keep an even hand as far as the public finances are concerned. We will speak from the record as we see it, and we will point out quite clearly what the problems are. If there are problems of unemployment - and we have not hidden that particular fact, that that is one of the problems endemic in our economy - we will seek, over

tir^e, to find a solution for reducing the level of unemployment in this country. 12.25 p.m.

But neither that nor a meaningful Capital Works Programme, nor significant improvements in the infrastructure of our country, nor enhanced training opportunities at the levels that we would desire, none of the objectives that we have set ourselves in the just society to achieve, can be achieved unless we have a strong economy. We have to work, therefore, for the strengthening of the economy. In this particular regard, all of us in this country have to make a contribudon. It is understood that, from time to time, as members of different political organisations, we may seek to score a little point now and then, but there comes a time when we must put those differences aside and, in the national interest, work for the good of our country and its progress and development

With these words, Sir, I beg to move that the Appropriation Bill 1988 be now read a second time.

Applause.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister served notice on the House of his intention to bring a radically new approach to bear in the presentation of economic issues in this House and before the country. I recall, Sir, that he said on that occasion that matters pertaining to the running and the management of our economy are things that are not dissimilar to those which face a housewife on a day-to-day basis. He added, Sir, that, in consequence, he would have endeavoured to reduce the presentation of economic ideas and developments in this august Chamber to dimensions which can easily and immediately be recognised and grasped by the ordinary housewife.

I fear, Mr. Speaker, that in that endeavour he has not disappointed the House, that indeed, Sir, he has succeeded wonderfully well, if, only in so far as he has managed to strip the problems of a very considerable magnitude of their most serious dimensions. He has been overly simplistic in his explanation of economic cause and effect in this country. Also, Mr. Speaker, he has not chosen in this presentation this morning to delve into any serious economic issues, except in so far as they prove amenable to the techniques of analysis which are within the grasp of the ordinary housewife, whom he has set as his financial role model.

I feel also, Mr. Speaker, that he has not given the>. House a housewife's tale. He has given the House an old wife's : tale that, perhaps, best fits within the Chaucerb.» tradition, but which has no immediate, nor obvious, relevance to the circumstances of the Barbadian economy. And in the course of my presentation, Sir, I will be outlining those precise areas in which the explanation and the outline of our economic problems have been sadly deficient.

This has been no more, Sir, than a discussion of the meaning and significance of fiscal deficits. Indeed, Sir, I tremble for my country when I heard the presentation put today by the Minister of Finance as regards what a deficit means. But these are things to come.

It becomes the duty of the Opposition, therefore, Mr. Speaker, to begin to highlight the salient features and the significance of the Estimates of Expenditure and Revenue which the House is being called upon to approve, both as regards the expenditure and revenue for fiscal year 1987-88, which is now about to end, and fiscal year 1988-89, which is soon about to begin. In that respect, Sir, I wish to highlight a number of significant features before I go into an extensive review of the developments which have been unfolded in Barbados.

First, from the evidence before us, it is safe to say that Government finances is in a state of complete mess, - of complete anarchy. Prior to this fiscal year, which is now about to end, no Government of Barbados has ever in the course of a financial year spent more than $685 million on Current Account.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I will have to remind Members on the other side, whose voices I can hear by way of asides, that their party came into office pledging to the country a process of cuts in expenditure. They have short and very easy memories, Mr. Speaker. But I will have to remind them of that fact

What, Sir, are the facts today? The bare truth, Mr. Speaker, the brutal facts, are that this Administration has managed, somehow, to go not only through the $700 million ceiling, but it has surpassed the $800 million mark, and has kept going. We have now had in the course of a financial year an increase in Current Expenditure by a whopping $130 million. The House, Mr. Speaker, has to reflect upon this: that a Government which came into office with the pledge of making an economic policy work on the basis of a cut in expenditure can bring an Economic and Financial Statement to the House which shows that its Current Expenditure alone has increased by a whopping $130 million in the course of one year.

Secondly, Sir, the House must understand that this incredible growth in Government's Current Expenditure was as unplanned as it was unchecked. I repeat, Sir: this incredible, whopping growth in Government's expenditure was as unplanned as it was unchecked!

At the start of the fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, having regards to the financial resources likely to be available to Government, the House approved Current Expenditure of $716 million. Government has proceeded, by its own estimates, to undertake spending of $814 million, a massive $98 million more than had been planned for, and a development which is without precedent in this country's economic history, and which now, and in the years to come, will impose severe problems in the running of this country. We need to hear more clearly from the Minister of Finance, than he has as yet told us, what set of factors can explain this sort of financial bedlam. The Opposition will today go into the factors which lie at the base of it 12.35 p.m.

The Prime Minister spoke very glibly about current deficits, and he said that current deficits are no big thing, they have happened in the past. What he did not tell the House is that the Current Deficit which is going to be incurred in the course of this financial year is not only the largest in this country's history, but the Current Deficit that is to be incurred ia this financial year, and this financial year alone, is lajger than the combined current deficits which have been realised over the course of the last ten years. That is the* point. It is glib and shallow to say that a current deficit has been realised in the past. The important point is that this deficit bears no relationship to anything that can be regarded as being reasonable in the context of the Barbadian economy. We are running up a current deficit in one year that is as great as all of the current deficits that have been realised in ten years. And we are not speaking of a financial mess?

The overall deficit, Sir, of $271.5 million, if I may use the terms that have been applied by one of my learned and illustrious colleagues, is nothing short of alarming. The way in which it has been financed - and this is what the Prime Minister did not deal with - has been the principal source of pressure on this country's foreign reserves. In that capacity, it is the main generator of economic instability and disturbance in this economy at this time. The Opposition will show that today.

However, and more to the point, Mr. Speaker, taking the projected deficit for the financial year to end on March 31, in conjunction with the deficit to be incurred in the year to come, Barbados will have inflicted on it an accumulated public sector deficit of over half a billion dollars in the course of two short financial years. If I may spell out what this means, it means that this half a billion dollars will be the amount that the country, in the course of two short financial years, will have to borrow .....

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: In two years, if you do not like the word "short".

In two mere years, half billion dollars is the amount that this Government will have to borrow just to meet public sector purposes, to say nothing of the additional amount that it will have to borrow, given the existing state of the balance of payments, which have been put under stress by the nature of Government finances in its own right It is tantamount to an economic nightmare.

What makes it all the more distressing is the timing of these types of deficits, because we are facing the prospects of increased foreign borrowing at precisely that time when our export earning are diminishing, and when any increased foreign borrowing must, of necessity, put this country in an unsustainable external position. The timing could not be worse.

If we carefully analyse the numbers and the trends set out in these Estimates of Expenditure with a view to determining what they say about the direction of Government's economic policy - because the Prime Minister has not spoken about this, he has not told us what is the general policy - we will come to certain conclusions. It becomes very clear, first of all, that the original policy enunciated by the Democratic Labour Party before and on assuming office has now been gutted, dismembered, and is now relegated to the status of an economic cadaver. It is left now to the curiosity of economic historians.

But, at least, we knew what the boundaries and the content of that policy were. Even if we disagree with them, we knew what the boundaries and the content of that policy - the supply side approach - were.

What is now apparent, Sir, is that nothing of substance has been put in its place, except a set of economic expedients which have neither rhyme nor reason, and which, perhaps, can only be described as an economic and financial policy in which any number can play. On such a trouble sea, Mr. Speaker, are we now afloat in this country.

As regards the size and the composition of proposed expenditure for the coming year, the following observations and comments are pertinent. First of all, Sir, we are again struck by the strange and the curious ordering of Government's economic financial priorities. We are presented with a set of Estimates which purport to cut Government's expenditure. But if we were to analyse them for economic and social significance, what emerges is that

the principal area of increase in expenditure is Defence, which is an area that the Democratic Labour Party had avowed to reduce. There is an increase as well for the Ministry of the Public Service and its bureaucracy, although it has lost departments. But in areas such as export promotion, tourism development and agricultural development, the Government is pursuing a process of false economy by effecting cuts in critical areas of the economy where increased activity is required.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, the whole point of Appendix G which is now eloquently missing from these Estimates, was to highlight the manner in which Government had ordered its priorities in such a way as to reduce expenditure on critical areas of economic development while maintaining expenditures on areas which, by its own reference of analysis, cannot be regarded as being vital. I am saying now, even in the absence of Appendix G, that we on this side can tell the Government, without any fear of contradiction, that in the course of this financial year, when Barbados should be spending more money on export development and promotion, the Government will be pursuing a false economy by cutting expenditure on export promotion. We have to fight it, Sir. In real terms, we are cutting expenditure on tourism development, agricultural development and on the development programmes of the Industrial Development Corporation.

The manner in which these Estimates have been presented also suggests that Government is not giving itself any elbow room to respond to any of the very legitimate and real concerns expressed by the private sector for scope and latitude within which to renew growth in the Barbados economy. The overall picture is one in which Government has, apparently, pared expenditure down to the bone. Even in so doing, it is going to find itself in a position where its Current Revenue is not going to be enough to meet it Current Expenditure: So all of those who are asking Government for a waiver and a stimulus for investment in the private sector are going to be sorely disappointed. 12.45p.m.

These Estimates do not provide Government with any room whatsoever for manoeuvre. As a consequence, Mr. Speaker, in the course of my presentation today - and I will take a new guard after lunch and come back -1 will have to establish at least four .things.

The first is that the economic problems in Barbados are homegrown economic problems. I am disappointed that the Prime Minister did not seek to put these numbers set out in the Estimates within the context of the evolution of the economy. We heard not a word about what has happened to the economy or what is likely to happen to the economy over the period in which these numbers are supposed to have an effect. I am going to be arguing the case in this House that the economic problems in Barbados of today are home-grown economic problems.

I shall be arguing today as well, Mr. Speaker, that in attempting to clean up what he anticipates, and regards, to be a financial mess, the Minister of Finance is creating an even greater financial mess for himself and this country.

I also want to argue the case, as I have mentioned before, that the Democratic Labour Party has completely disembowelled its initial economic policy and has not articulated, in my judgement, nor the judgement of the Opposition, a clear economic strategy which addresses how the myriads of economic problems that face this society at this time - strong and robust growth, increased employment, stability in the balance of payments and things of this character - can be addressed. We feel that they have disembowelled one policy but they have not said exactly what their new intentions are. Their Manifesto is of no use to us, because that Manifesto sets out only a one year economic policy. It says nothing absolutely as to what is to happen at the level of policy beyond that first year.

My fourth point relates to certain broad hints that the Prime Minister has given as regards the prospects of revenue stimulation. I make the point in this House that if the financial and economic affairs of this country were being properly managed, there would be no need for an increase in taxes this year, as the Prime Minister is threatening by implication. We would now be in a position to free the people of Barbados from the prospect of having to endure another set of taxes, coming after the large dose of tax increases of 1987.

It I am to take the Prime Minister at his word, and if it is indeed, his financial policy to stimulate revenue to remove the Current Account deficit and to finance his Capital programme from loans, then, by implication, he is talking about a tax package this year that could be in the vicinity of $50 million, following upon a tax package of $59 million in 1987-1988. If the financial and economic affairs of this country had been properly run, the prospects, and likelihood, of a tax increase of this magnitude would have been obviated, and I shall be dealing with that theme, Sir.

As regards a wage freeze and whether the Government at any time spoke about the prospects of a wage freeze, a lot of aspersions were made to try to side-track this issue by pointing a finger at the Barbados Labour Party of 1981-1982. As I recall, Mr. Speaker, in 1981-1982, a situation pertained that pertains now, wherein you had two-year wage settlements there was a two-year wage settlement beginning in 1980, and the facts as to what that two-year wage settlement provided for are part of this country's economic history.

I want to know if there was a renewed bout of discussions between Governments and the unions in 1981 after the 1980 wage settlements had been agreed to, because there is no record of that

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The wage settlements are all on a two-year basis, so it has to be agreed that the 1980 agreement covered two years. This nonsense about the Barbados Labour Party imposed a wage freeze in 1981 is totally ridiculous.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: That is a fact. Two year wage settlements are nothing new in Barbados, so I do not understand what this nonsense is about that the Barbados Labour Party imposed a wage freeze in 1981. If the Government has something to hide, or feels defensive about wage restraint and wage freezes, let it put its own case. It is bad form and principle to try to distort economic history, and the Minister of Finance and Planning should have known better than that.

I will concede the point that the Barbados Labour Party argued a case for wage restraint. But the House and the country must understand that there is a difference between wage restraint and a wage freeze.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is not a dry point, Mr. Speaker. The notion of a wage freeze is outlined in a document which we may intentionally have to take the pleasure of making a document of the House. A wage freeze is when you keep wages in one year at the same level as the wages of the previous year. You can, however, have wage restraint, where wages are allowed to rise in accordance with certain criteria

In Barbados, Mr. Speaker, as was indicated in the presentation of the Minister of Finance last year, between 1980 and 1986, wages in Barbados rose faster than the rate of increase in prices. All it means, therefore, Sir, is that the people of the country were finding that their real incomes were increasing. You can have a wage restraint policy which merely says that wages, rather than being allowed to rise faster than prices, should be allowed.to rise in line with productivity, or should be kept in line with price increases. 12.55 p.m.

But let us not, Mr. Speaker, try to confuse the issue in this House at all by equating the notion of a wage increase with a wage freeze. I say categorically on the floor of this House that the Barbados Labour Party has never stated, never intended, and at no stage in the Administration of this country's economic affairs ever imposed a wage freeze on the people of this country.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) says it could not. Where was his aside when the Prime Minister was telling this House that the Barbados Labour Party Government imposed a wage freeze in 1981? The honourable Member knows that it had no wish to do that, nor at any stage did it ever indicate an intention to pursue a programme of wage freeze.

I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that I have at all to apologise for the Barbados Labour Party's position as regards wages. The records are there. And I am sure that during the course of these debates, if not now, but in the cycle to come, we are going to have a very stirring discussion on the relative positions of the parties as regards wages and incomes, and as regards those other called areas of the economy where a case has to be drawn and issues have to be raised

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the announcements which were made in relation to procedures for the week, I will at this stage move that this sitting be now suspended until 2 p.m. this afternoon.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed

When the sitting was suspended, the honourable Member for St. Peter was addressing the Chair.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (RESUMED)

APPROPRIATION ACT 1988 (CONT'D)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Barbados is not frozen in a moment of economic history. If I am to make a contribution to the debate, Sir, it is to stir the debate from a very sterile examination of the numbers as only numbers - although we have to discuss them as such - and try to set the numbers which we are discussing within the context of the broad sweep of economic development in this country

and the drift of economic policy. I wish to do this because one cannot help but be convinced that what we do here in' this Chamber over the course of the next few weeks can have a very decisive impact on whether, at this very critical time in the country's economic history, this country goes forward or lapses into a status of a very lesser developed country, a status that some persons, apparently, want to . invite on us. So before going into a full elaboration of the numbers as numbers, I think I ought to pick up the story of our economic development from the late Sixties and bring it forward.

It is a matter of historical fact that, since the Sixties, a very concerted and deliberate effort has been made to broaden the productive base of the Barbadian economy and to use the rewards of our productive effort in this country to enable the Barbadian people to enjoy a quality of life that will allow them to remove from their vistas the more serious and abject aspects of deprivation which has been this country's fate for too long in its history. Throughout the Sixties and into the early Seventies, the thrust of economic policy in Barbados has really been to develop new sectors of the economic activity, based principally on the attraction of foreign capital, the. context being the fact that we enjoyed a competitive position by reason of the relative lowness of our wages to those of more developed , countries, the fact of our tradition of stability and the fact that we manage, incrementally, to improve the infrastructure which could support higher levels of economic output. 2.05 p.m.

It is very important, Sir, that we also understand that in the initial stages of this country's economic transformation, the role played by Government was necessarily a circumscribed one, for many reasons. Barbados did not become an independent country before 1966, and the operation and the character of our financial system and our relationships to international organisations did not hold forward the possibility, nor the prospects, of the Government being able to play directly a substantial role in the country's economic transformation.

It is not commonly known, Sir, but it ought to be said, that when this country was operating under the old Currency Board system, for example, the nature of our monetary and financial relationships were such that it was not possible for the Government to use the monetary authorities as a source of credit for the conduct of any serious development efforts on the people's behalf. Indeed, Sir, it was only with the formation of the Central Bank in 1973 that the possibilities for the extension of domestic credit by the monetary authorities became an instrument in the developmental way forward by the Barbadian society.

The truth of the matter, Sir, is that under the Currency Board system, as Members should know, the money supply of the country had to be backed by foreign assets. And you could only have expanded the money supply to the extent that the foreign assets position of the country expanded, as quite distinct from the present situation that now prevails, and has prevailed since 1973, that the money supply can be backed not only by foreign assets but by domestic assets, including assets extended by the monetary authority and the banking system to Government.

It is also true as well, Mr. Speaker, that in those early years, Barbados could not contemplate the undertaking of a large capital programme because we were not members of international institutions such as the World Bank and the IADB. It would have been hazardous, Sir, and, in fact, foolworthy, for any Government of the day to have sought to undertake capital development purely by recourse to commercial financing. Indeed, Sir, it is generally accepted, I think on both sides of the House and the wider society in general, that the best way in which one should finance a capital development programme, particularly a programme which is defined by public sector type criteria where the direct returns are low, is by having access to long-term capital at relatively low rates of interest

So it must not come as a surprise to us that there were low rates of growth in debt prior to 1973. It should also not come as a surprise to us that there was a difficulty even then in executing a large number of capital programmes, because the historical facts would also show, Sir, that one had to endure a gestation period after joining those international institutions to have access to large volumes of financing from that source.

I must also stress the point, Sir, that in those initial years, certain developments were made as regards the social sectors which have implications for us today. In many respects, they are part of what some of this debate is about. Because as we all know, Barbados institutionalised a set of social services in such a manner that the cost of the social services was not borne directly by the private individual, but came to be borne by the state. It is a policy. These were things like free education, and the expansion of the health system.

We have to understand, therefore, Sir, that over a long period of time the management and financing of that social sector has been a critical element in informing the economic policies pursued by a Government And to the extent that they were regarded as critical, there was a related commitment on the part of Government to raise the revenue each year to meet the social services which it agreed it had to provide.

There were difficulties experienced even in those early years." We already have been told by the Prime Minister that Barbados, like other small countries, showed itself very vulnerable to the effects of international recession around 1973 and 1974. But what emerged from that particular experience, Mr. Speaker, is that this country always does well when we maintain a satisfactory rate of growth of exports, and when we do not take excessive risks with our public finances. In particular, we always do well in this country when we do not allow the claims of Government on resources to commit Barbados to economic distress.

I have written a paper in which I have established that a large part of the economic problems of 1976, which led to the IMF programme of 1977, could be directly related to the decisions taken in 1976 to run up a very large deficit, and to finance that deficit by access to Central Bank resources. If you look at the numbers of the 1976 Estimates, in that year a Current Account deficit of about $18 million was planned, and it was planned in 1976, at 1976 dollars, to have a capital programme of in excess of $100 million. A hundred million dollars in 1976 terms. Sir, is well over $200 million in 1988. It was the resulting pressure of that particular approach to fiscal management which caused balance of payments problems in 1977, creating the need for the country to seek compensatory financing from the IMF in 1977.

In the post-1976 period, Mr. Speaker, what Barbados has witnessed has been an acceleration of its efforts to evolve as an export-led economy in which the private sector leads the way in that process, but in which, Mr. Speaker, the Government maintains its commitment to the preservation of the social services of this country, at a level and at the quality that befits our status as a progressive, developing society. And if I were to recite, Mr. Speaker, some of the more instructive aspects of the Barbados Labour Party's Administration of this country, they would, to my mind, have to relate to the tremendous expansion of both tourism and manufacturing, and the laying of the basis, within manufacturing and tourism for the earlier edge given to foreign private capital to be reduced by the provision made for the emergence of a small class of Barbadian entrepreneurs in both manufacturing and tourism. The numbers, Mr. Speaker, are there to show us. I have already said before the House that between 1976 and 1986, one of the most satisfactory and pleasing aspects of this country's development was the way in which the Barbados Development Bank's resources were used to finance the emergence of the small hotel establishment in this country.

But another very instructive lesson that had to be learnt from that experience, Mr. Speaker, was the lesson that we have at every level to maintain stability in the Barbados economy, and that we should not resort to policies which could put the balance of payments of this country at risk. I have kept hammering this point over and over again, Mr. Speaker, because it is my conviction that the economic problems of developing countries start when they allow balance of payments problems to get out of hand.

The truth, Mr. Speaker, is that, if addressed early, a balance of payments problem can be reversed. But if you allow a balance of payments problem to go unattended, eventually you merely create such a scarcity of foreign exchange as to rule out the possibility of the productive sectors of the society having access to foreign exchange on demand to meet their legitimate requirements. You generate pressures leading directly towards the creation of a black market for foreign exchange, and we all know from the sorry experience of other Caribbean societies where that particular experiment has led to.

When one reviews the performance of the Barbados Labour Party over those years, Sir, you can see that certainly between 1977 and 1980, the most careful management was exercised to ensure that a balance of payments problem did not arise in this country. There were problems which emerged in 1981 and 1982 as a result, again, of an international recession. The policies pursued by the Barbados Labour Party in the face of that particular adverse development have been criticised by the Democratic Labour Party, but it is still my judgment that they were the correct policies to be pursued in the context of the time.

In circumstances, Mr. Speaker, where you are dealing with a small economy and you face a situation where your export earnings are falling, you are left with no real option, in my view, but to curb your domestic spending, stabilise the economy amd maintain your productive sectors, such that when conditions for economic growth become possible again you can start the process of growth which we all recognise to be desirable. That was the policy that informed us in 1981 and 1982, that we faced a situation where the economy could only be made to grow if we took extraordinary and hazardous chances with the country. We decided to stabilise it, to hold a line on expenditure.

Critical in that process, Mr. Speaker, was the role that we assigned to the control of Government's expenditure and the overall fiscal deficit. I have already admitted in many different places, that, to my mind, the deficit of 1981 was too large and was a large part of the cause of the problems faced in that year. But if you were to analyse, Mr. Speaker, what happened subsequent to that, you can see very clearly that the Barbados Labour Party brought the fiscal deficit of the country down from $198 million to levels like $125 million and $130 million and $140 million,

levels at which the si/e of the deficit itself was not a factor creating disturbance in the economy.

I also must point out, Mr. Speaker, that the Barbados Labour Party in that period recognised that we had to have some sensible balance in the composition of our revenues, and I go back to the initial point that I made, Sir. When a society institutionalises the delivery of high levels of social services as part of its overall development policy, it needs to be sure of stability where its revenues are concerned. And from that position, it becomes necessary for the country never to put itself in a position where it depends excessively on one or a few selective sources of revenues.

It is very dangerous indeed, Mr. Speaker, for Barbados, as we are doing now, to depend very heavily upon indirect forms of taxation. All you will succeed in doing by adopting that approach is to reduce the room for manoeuvre by the Minister of Finance. If he were called upon to protect the balance of payments by curbing imports, to the extent that the economic system comes to depend very heavily on indirect taxes, he would find that he will have to pay a very incredible reverse price if he moves to restrict imports. So the relative balance that we brought to the composition of our tax revenues was an important factor in maintaining the stability of the Barbadian economy.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party also believed that some element of tax reform had to be undertaken. But our concept of tax reform, Sir, was a very simple concept; that we had to use tax adjustments as a means of redistributing income in the country for the better, to make periodic adjustments in the levels of allowances and things of that character to compensate for the fact that prices and incomes have changed. We also, Mr. Speaker, used tax reform to strategically stimulate areas of the economy which we thought were in need of strategic stimulation.

For example, Mr. Speaker, the approach by the Barbados Labour Party to the Corporation Tax and the reform of the Corporation Tax is something that ought to be spelled out in this House. We did not believe in an across-the-board cut in the Corporation Tax, because when you pursue this path, you reward enterprises indiscriminately, disregarding the fact that different kinds of enterprises make different kinds of contributions to the national economy. Our first effort, in reforming Corporation Tax therefore, was to give the construction firms in the country a lower rate of Corporation Tax than that enjoyed by other enterprises, because we regarded housing construction as a very important area of development in the country.

Equally, Mr. Speaker, we recognized the need for the development of exports, and the Barbados Labour Party left office with enterprises earning profits on exports paying an effective rate of Corporation Tax that was far lower than the general rate applied to enterprises which were earning a profit merely from the importation and sale of finished commodities. Enterprises earning profits from exports, under the Barbados Labour Party were allowed a rebate on 80 per cent of the profits realised. They put the first $80 of each $100 profit in their pockets, and then they paid the Corporation Tax of 45 per cent on what remained.

We also recognised, Mr. Speaker, that Barbados had to broaden its base as a major earner or foreign exchange through services. Thus, we put in place a Corporation Tax regime whereby people earning profits from the sale of services abroad could keep the first 50 per cent of profits realised, and they were taxed at the rate of 45 percent on the balance. Their effective rate, Sir, was 22 per cent. So under the Barbados Labour Party, the Corporation Tax on export sectors was 9 per cent, and on sectors earning foreign exchange from the export of services it was 22 per cent.

We also believed, Mr. Speaker, that there were some areas of the economy, such as Speightstown, Oistins, Six Roads and the Glebe, which had to be developed. We put in place a commercial building allowance whereby if people made investments in the development of those important sub-towns, they were in a position to claim an allowance as an expense for having so doing.

These were important aspects of our Corporation Tax adjustments, designed, Mr. Speaker, not to give a willy-nilly, across-the-board adjustment because the Corporation Tax was there to be adjusted, but to ensure that there was some direct return to the economy from the fact that a public concession had been granted. In these days when the relevance of tax reform is very much part of the issue of our times, it becomes important for us to restate the point that tax adjustment must be 'made to bring about strategic developments that are of worth to the country as a whole. 2.25 p.m.

I could even begin to talk about the way in which we stimulated savings in this society by expanding the allowances available for credit unions. The phenomenal growth in credit unions in Barbados is in part related to a wish for a greater self-reliance on the part of progressive people in society, spurred also by the fact that there was a financial reward for persons who took advantage of that self-reliance effort.

We also made it possible for the investor who was investing funds in companies up to $10 000 in new shares to enjoy tax relief for so doing. That was another important device by which the Barbados Labour Party constructively and progressively tried to use tax reform to bring about important changes in this society.

We left office, Mr. Speaker, with an economy that had gone through a recession, but was on the rebound. The September Report of the Central Bank clearly establishes that in the first half of 1986, growth was realised in every major sector of the economy. We left office, Mr. Speaker, with an interest rate regime which we had brought down from 15 per cent in 1983, the prime rate, to 9.5 per cent in 1986, a rate that struck the correct balance in reconciling the needs of those who wished to save and those to whom interest rates are an operating cost It is instructive, in my view, that after much criticism of our interest rate policy by the Democratic Labour Party, in the first 22 months of their term in office they did not seek, nor find it necessary, to change the interest rates that prevailed.

The rate of inflation was low. And among all Caribbean economies, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados economy was the only economy between 1982 and 1986 which managed to see an increase in its holding of foreign reserves. There was a point when our reserves fell to as low as $82 million - I think it was in September of 1982 - but in every year thereafter we succeeded in lifting up this country's reserves to shelter Barbados from the vagaries of economic fluctuations which are the bane of all small economies.

I am saying that the conditions which have presented themselves over the course of the last two years are conditions which were so advantageous that this economy should not now be limping along, but should be enjoying robust growth as is the case of countries like Grenada, Antigua and other countries in the Caribbean. We cannot point over the course of the last two years to any international recession. The constellation of factors has been stacked in the favour of growth of countries like Barbados; strong international growth, low rates of international inflation, low rates of interest abroad. You also had last year a situation in which, it can be argued, exchange rates even worked to Barbados' advantage by making it possible for an area of our tourist market which had experienced difficulties in the early 1980s to resume considerable growth. The sugar industry even benefited over the course of the last year from the fact that the United States dollar had weakened against all other currencies, and tourism benefited. You had low rates of international inflation, and domestically the BLP had already in place a constructive system of incentives designed to stimulate exports, and there was an institutional frame designed for that In addition, you had excess liquidity in the domestic banking system.

Provided there was the will, Barbados could have resumed a growth path, Mr. Speaker, based upon the stimulation of exports, that would have served this country in great stead. But this country was distracted from its real economic preoccupation. We flirted at one stage under the DLP with a particular economic expedient which says that a small country made up of 70 000 consuming households could turn its attention away from taking its proper place as an exporter to the rest of the world and look to its domestic market as the main source of economic growth and development. It is at this point, Mr. Speaker, that I must turn to the economic policies pursued by the Democratic Labour Party, because they must be seen as a continuum.

The Democratic Labour Party came to office espousing a particular economic ideology, which I must now say was the most expensive intellectual import ever brought into Barbados. Sometime around the late 1970s, Sir, an American, Professor Laffer, developed what he regarded as a new approach to economic management. It is known as the supply side approach to economics. Like the former Prime Minister, Mr. Barrow, I must say that I do not subscribe to the supply side economics. But we have to talk about it today, because this is, in part, what today is about, the policy is a continuum.

The fundamental premise of the supply side approach, Mr. Speaker, is simply this, that at a zero rate of taxes, no taxes will be collected, obviously, and that at a tax rate of 100 per cent, no taxes will be collected either, because nobody will want to work in circumstances where taxes are at 100 per cent So it was conceived that at low rates of taxes, revenue will increase, but at some point a level of over taxation will be reached, and that any further increases in taxes will give rise to decreased revenues. The Laffer Curve is what they call it, Sir, shaped like a semicircle, with revenue increasing for a period as the lax rate increases, and after a certain point revenue decreasing. The argument then is advanced that a situation can exist in a country where over taxation exists.

Flowing from that, the supply side approach to economic management argued the case that where a situation of over taxation exists, the economy can be restimulated by a cut in direct taxes and a cut in corporation taxes. The argument, Sir, is that the cut in direct taxes will give rise to increase domestic personal income, and that as people's incomes increase, they will do two things - they will buy more and they will also save more.

As regards the cut in the Corporation Tax, Mr. Speaker, the argument advanced by that supply side was simply that as the Corporation Tax is cut, the retained earnings of the corporate sector will increase and it would lead automatically to greater increases in reinvestment by the corporate sector. So across-the-board cuts in both personal and corporate taxes were fundamental to the workings of the supply side approach to economic development. 2.35 p.m.

The supply side approach also argued that to cushion the effects in the short-term of the lax cut on revenues, very substantial cuts in Government expenditure would have also to be put in place, and, if necessary, Government would have to privatise a number of its productive enterprises which are operating at a loss.

This, Mr. Speaker, was the economic policy that was applied in the United States of America, except that in the United States of America, when the tax cuts were put into effect, the Government, however, subsequently did not decrease its expenditure. There was a massive increase, as is known, on things like the military. There were no cuts in Defence, and this has now led to a situation where the resulting increase in the American overall fiscal deficit is one of the major problems facing not only the American economy, but the world.

It is clear from that particular experience that one of the most important sources of disturbances was the partial application of a supply side approach to economic matters.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: In Britain, you had the tax cuts, but you also had a wholesale disposal of public property, even down to the disposal of the Sanitation Authorities, which, I am sure, would appeal to the Honourable Minister of Health and the Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt).

That policy formed the core of the Democratic Labour Party's economic policies as enunciated prior to the election, and as followed in the first year.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Democratic Labour Party, as I understand it, is an organic whole. There is such a thing as collective responsibility in Cabinet, and I shall not have the Minister of Health trying now to surreptitiously say that he was not in agreement.....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I regret interrupting the honourable Member, but, surely, Sir, the Minister of Health has not spoken in this debate. It cannot be fair for the honourable Member to be putting in the record that he cannot have the Minister of Health doing anything. It is not fair. He knows that.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, keep quiet then!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You cannot tell me to keep quiet. You think you come in a Rolls Royce and I come in a box cart?

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I shall not allow members of the Democratic Labour Party to walk away from the fact that Cabinet exercises a collective responsibility. If a policy is enunciated by a Minister of Finance on behalf of a party, at least that policy would have had to be agreed to by Cabinet. It was brought to this house, and the approval of the House was sought by way of a Resolution commending it to the House. So let us establish very clearly that the element of the supply side approach in economic management was given the seal of approval by the DLP.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member, should contain himself. I will say no more at this stage. I hope the honourable Member has taken my warning.

I am listening to the honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Despite the fulminations of the honourable Member for St. Michael West.....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When he says "the honourable Member for St. Michael West," that is me.

On a point of order, Sin I have not spoken, and it is improper for the honourable Member to be referring to the honourable member for St. Michael West as if he has spoken.

He was the adviser to Brcc S t. John!

Mr. SPEAKER: I have heard the point. I think I will have to make a ruling on this particular issue. I have said before that "asides" arc a matter of discretion, and in the process I will probably have to deal with it by not allowing asides, and the replies to them, to be written in Hansard.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West has taken exception to the fact that you might be implying that he has made a speech already, and that you are replying to something that he has said in his speech. Since I do not accept asides, I think the honourable member should try to keep very closely to the Rules of the House.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for St. Michael West is a very fine baritone, and he

likes to hear himself boasting and talking, and you must forgive him if he has difficulty keeping his mouth shut in this debate.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: On a point of order: The honourable Member cannot say that the Member for St. Michael West must keep his mouth shut when he has not spoken. He is insulting the Chair. The Leader of the Opposition is even worse, because he is speaking when the chair is speaking. I draw to Your Honour's attention for what it is worth.

The honourable Member cannot get up and talk about who is a baritone. The only honourable Member in this House who have spoken so far is the Honourable Prime Minister who is a bass, and the honourable Member, who is a falsetto.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member, please proceed.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to get involved in a debate ....

Mr. SPEAKER: The debate before the House is on the Appropriation Bill, I would hope that you would now stick to the Bill before us.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to establish, Mr. Speaker, that the economic policy that was brought before this House as elaborated by the former Minister of Finance, was an economic policy to which no member of the Democratic Labour Party presently serving in the House took objection on the floor of this House, and that when Resolutions were put in support of the economic policy, there were no dissenting voices. In saying that, Mr. Speaker, I want to make a general point of censure, and also make the specific point, that to the extent that there were no dissenting voices, we can find no public record that the honourable Member for St. Michael West and the Minister of Health has ever before taken exception to the practice of supply side economics in this country.

I proceed. What we are, therefore, Mr. Speaker, now doing in this debate is, after two years, we are taking stock of the experience in relation to the working of a supply side economics approach in Barbados. We are, also asserting that the actions being pursued by the Government through its Estimates for the next financial year and the financial outturn for the last financial year say very carefully to the country that the supply side approach to economic management is being laid to rest by the Democratic Labour Party. 2.45 p.m.

To begin with, Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party spokesman on Finance acknowledged that the policy only had a possibility of working to the extent that the tax cuts of 1986 were accompanied by measures to reduce Government expenditure by at least $53 million. When I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, stress the point that we are this year witnessing Government's expenditure increased by $130 million on Current Account - not decreased, increased by $130 million on Current Account - we can begin to see how far at variance the Democratic Labour Party is now from the policy objectives which it set itself in July, 1986, and with the whole spirit of the economic philosophy and programme that it put before this country for the General Election of 1986. The policy, Mr. Speaker, has collapsed, and it behoves us in this House to begin to ask very serious questions as to why, within the course of two years, that which was supposed to herald a breakthrough in economic management has now to be put on the shelf.

The fundamental difference between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party as regards the potential workings of our relative economic strategies is that our position was based on very carefully considered arguments. We held to the belief, Mr. Speaker, that nothing should be done in Barbados to stimulate domestic spending until such time as we were sure that there would have been a flow of foreign exchange earnings to the country to cushion the demand for imports that resulted from that domestic spending. We in the Barbados Labour Party, recognised that it would have been attractive to cut taxes and seek a short term and very temporary boost in the domestic economy by having the cut in taxes filter through the mercantile community and some peripheral parts of the manufacturing community. But it could not have been conceived of as a permanent solution to our economic problems, because it could only have been supported over the long and medium terms by a permanent increase in our export earnings. And we were in a process at that time in 1986 trying to turn the Barbados economy away from its dependence on the CARICOM market towards a more productive dependence on extra-regional markets. We understood that it takes a while to change the export orientation of an entire economy, that, therefore, we did not have the latitude at that time to flirt with an economic policy, the central feature of which was that you could have a burst of economic growth based on high levels of demand for imports.

A lot has been said about whether or not the DLP's policy has led to an increase in the demand for imports. The numbers are interesting, Sir. I have already said that when the Barbados economy got into trouble in the early Eighties, the Barbados Labour Party took a deliberate decision to try to stabilise it by reducing our demand for imports, not by banning imports, but by the use of credit controls. The evidence, Sir, is revealing.

One has to look at consumer goods if you are talking about the impact of personal income on imports. In 1981, Barbados imported $372 million of consumer goods. We recognised that given the kinds of export difficulties we were facing then, we had to bring down the volume of imports of consumer goods in this country in the interest of the welfare of Barbados from a long-term point of view. The evidence will show you, Sir, that by 1984, we had stabilised imports of consumer goods at $350 million, and that in 1985 it increased marginally to $353 million.

Now you ask yourself the question however, Sir, what has happened to the demand for consumer imports subsequently to the imposition of tax cuts? Consumer imports rose from $353 million in 1985 to $371 in 1986, and for the first nine months of 1987, they stood at $324 million. If you were to annualise that, take it for a 12 month period, it is quite likely that in the course of the last calendar year. Barbados' consumer imports would have risen to about $420 million.

Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is that it was always dicing with danger for Barbados to set in train anything that would increase the demand for imports of consumer goods at a time when we were facing difficulties with export earnings, and I am also saying that contrary to what we are being told about the fall off of overall imports, when we look at the situation scientifically, there can be no question that our balance of payments have been hurt directly by the resulting increase in imports that have come from increased personal income.

We also disagreed very fundamentally, Mr. Speaker, with the DLP's estimation of the size of the deficit that would ensue from the practice of a supply side approach to economic management. When the issue was first put, my main concern was to establish that a large cut in taxes on the scale that was contemplated would in the course of a full financial year - and that is the operative word - give rise to an overall deficit that was not only bigger than anything contemplated by the Barbados Labour Party, but a deficit of sufficient magnitude as to begin to put pressure on the balance of payments through the need for Central Bank financing of that deficit

I started by saying, Sir that $261 million would be the kind of deficit that you would be looking at in the course of a full financial year and last year I adjusted that to $270 million. The reason why I was arguing that case, Mr. Speaker, is that there was simply no way in Barbados that we could increase the threshold below which Income Tax is not paid by 50 per cent, there was no way that you could also increase all personal allowances by 50 per cent and also introduce unlimited allowances in Barbados, particularly allowances that would be utilised like unlimited mortgage allowances, without expecting a very substantial fall out in the yield from income taxes. 2.55 p.m.

It was my judgement, Mr. Speaker, that we also had in measuring the cost of the tax cuts to be scientific in how we did it. In 1985, the income taxes of Barbados yielded $134 million. However, on the assumption of a 3 percent growth of the economy for 1986, we projected that income taxes in Barbados would have yielded $159 million. The evidence, Mr. Speaker, is there, based on the outturn for the first three months of the financial year, that $159 million in income taxes could have been realised in 1986 in the absence of massive tax cuts. We realised $41 million in the first three months of the financial year. If you were to analyse that, I think that you would see that $160 million was attainable.

The cost of the tax cuts, however, Mr. Speaker, must be the cost realised in 1986 by changing a taxation regime in 1986. It therefore would have to be the difference between what would have been realised in that year on the best possible projection of the situation and what was eventually realised.

I told the Government last year, Mr. Speaker, that when they looked at the Income Tax yield for last year, $80 million was realised. But $41 million were realised in the first three months when the taxation system was under the Barbados Labour Party, and only $39 million were realised when the taxation system was under the Dems. I was abused, Mr. Speaker. They said that I did not understand anything about numbers.

The Income Tax base of Barbados in 1986 was a tax base that would have yielded $159 million in income taxes in that year. It is now projected for this full financial year to yield $56 million. So let Us understand what has been done. After a full financial year, the yield from Income Tax has fallen in net terms by over $100 million. That was always the case put by the Barbados Labour Party, and by the honourable Member for St. Peter.

I said that the lost to the revenue of the Income Tax cuts, if allowed to take effect for a full financial year, would be, at a conservative guess, no less than $90 million. Our Income Tax base has been reduced from $159 million to $56 million, a net change of over $100 million. Indeed, Sir, we now have a situation in Barbados where Income Tax yields less revenue than the Corporation Tax, although the Corporation Tax is substantially paid by no more than 18 big companies. So 18 big companies in Barbados today are contributing more to the revenue than all the persons on PAYE. That is the extent on the adjustment, Mr. Speaker, that was brought by the tax cut of 1986. I stand on the point

You would also recall, Mr. Speaker, that last year when we came to Estimates Debate, I made the point that Government was doing two things of a very suspect financial character. I said that Government was deliberately overstating its revenues, and also that Government was understating its expenditure so that the real deficit that was going to face the country could be camouflaged.

In relation to Income Tax, I argued then that if the Income Tax system only yielded $39 million in the course of nine months, there was simply going to be no way, absolutely no way, Mr. Speaker, that it would have yielded $100 million in 12 months as anticipated by the Democratic Labour Party. I said, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that in arriving at what was going to be the likely fiscal deficit that faced the Barbadian economy, we had to include an amount of no less than $20 million to take account of the fact that Government was artificially overstating the amount of income taxes that could accrue, given the scope of the tax adjustments that had been put in place.

The evidence there now, Mr. Speaker, is very clear for all to see. A large part of the overall fiscal deficit that has arisen this year has to do with the fact that Government revenues have not performed to expectations. The numbers, Mr. Speaker, now tell their own story. Last year, the Government projected that before taxes, it would have realised $698 million in revenue. It then came to the House in April, Mr. Speaker, and raised taxes by an additional $59 million to $60 million. So if Government's tax revenue had stood up to expectation, the entire amount at the disposal of Government should have been in the vicinity this year of $760 million, as distinct, Mr. Speaker, from the $719 million projected to be realised during the course of the full financial year.

The evidence clearly shows that there has been a lot of over-estimation of Government's revenue. It is either that, Sir, or the growth of the Barbados economy has not been as strong as the Government would want us to believe has been the case. As you know, Sir, revenue increases come primarily from two sources, increases in tax rate or the natural growth of the economy. It is up to the Minister of finance to tell us, Mr. Speaker, what now explains the fact that the Government set out over the course of the financial year to realise $760 million in revenue and has ended up realising only $719 million.

As regards Expenditure, there are at least four areas in which inappropriate financial management can be held accountable for the explosion in expenditure that has taken place over the financial year, which is to end very shortly, four additional reasons to those advanced by the Minister of Finance.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, it was ridiculous cash flow management for the Government to try to carry the full cost of a two-year wage increase on a one year Budget. It was poor financial management. It could have been, and it should have been, avoided.

The agreement with the Barbados Workers Union was reached as far back as September, 1986. Despite angry words from the President of the National Union of Public Workers, to all intents and purposes, the issue was closed once an agreement had been reached between the Government of the country and the principal union in this society.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: He had to go through a charade, Sir. Having taken an angry stand, taken the civil servants on long marches in May 1986, he had to create the impression that he was involved in a struggle. But it is significant, Mr. Speaker, that despite his very angry statement subsequent to September 1986, the wage increase to which he eventually agreed was in substance no different from that which was agreed to by the Barbados Workers Union in the same September, 1986. 3.05 p.m.

He told the country that he could not have afforded to accept the BWU package, because there was the expectation that Government could have come and increased taxes, and he, therefore, would have found himself in a position where he would have been contributing to the erosion of the purchasing power of his constituents. He was also making the very pointed comments that the nature of the tax cuts had benefitted people at the bottom far less than they had benefitted people at the top. So a whole charade was gone through.

The essential point, Mr. Speaker, is that by January 1987 the Government and all of the unions had reached agreement on every aspect of the wage package. It would have been better financial management, from a cash-flow point of view, if a part of that wage agreement could have been properly shown in the year to which it related, with the rest carried forward and shown in 1987.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The matter came to the House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, on at least three different occasions, and we deferred discussion of it in this House.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Barrow had a toothache!

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We deferred discussion for whatever reason.

If the Government was interested in proper cashflow management, it would have made sure that it never found itself in a position where in the course of one financial year it had to pay arrears of wages, and also had, Mr. Speaker, to find the revenue to meet the full two-year settlement in the course of 12 months.

Secondly Mr. Speaker, the Government, I think, is now finding itself in a position where the myth that you can get more for less is being exploded.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Crazy Eddie!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: My colleague speaks of Crazy Eddie. In the United States of America, there is an appliance dealer whose sales pitch is that nobody under-sells Crazy Eddie, because you can get more for less at Crazy Eddie.

We were in this House bombarded with continuous statements by members of the Democratic Labour Party that there was massive waste and extravagance in the Public Service when it was managed by the Barbados Labour Party. And they led the House to believe that they had a magical way by which they could have abolished waste, reduced extravagance, and get the same and even a greater level of delivery of services for less money. That argument, as is now being said *sotto voce,* was put very vociferously - to use the Prime Minister of Dominica's words - vociferously rather than humorously - on the floor of this House.

What we have found, Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last financial years is that we have had a welter of supplementaries coming to the House, arising purely because artificial cuts had been made in projected Government expenditure, on the strength of the myth, Sir, that you could get more for less. As early as July the House was being called upon to supplement things like utilities. If you were to go through the entire range of the $110 million in supplementary expenditures that have been brought to the House, Mr. Speaker, you will find that one of the principal reasons supplementaries have had to be brought is precisely because Government had, eventually, to admit that the allocations provided for particular items of expenditure are proving inadequate for the purposes and it started to happen as early as July of last year. It was all because the Government started by artificially suppressing its expenditure, guided by the myth that there was some bloated bureaucracy out there to be cut and that they had the magic to get more for less.

I have worked in the Barbadian bureaucracy more recently than any Member of this House, and I have to say that it is run along very frugal lines. There are no splendidly adorned offices, in general, in the Barbadian bureaucracy. The bureaucracy is so frugal that there is the greatest economy exercised even in the use of paper. When I returned from Jamaica, I was struck with the fact that I had come out of a system, Mr. Speaker, where one will write memoranda on separate sheets of paper, whereas in Barbados, if the bureaucracy receives a letter from a member of the public or the private sector, the back of the letter is used to write minutes. Indeed, fundamental decisions of great importance in this society are taken even sometimes by Ministers writing minutes on the back of letters sent to the Ministry by the general public or the private sector.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Prime Minister says that he has one there.

The bureaucracy is very, very frugal in the way in which it uses resources. If there was that element of experience residing in the Democratic Labour Party, it would have known in advance, Mr. Speaker, that the so-called search for these pockets of bloated bureaucracy, extravagance and waste in the bureaucracy are things that you are going to have the greatest difficulty finding in the Barbadian bureaucracy.

I am not, Mr. Speaker, suggesting by any means that all state enterprises and Government departments are run as if they were models of financial virtue. But the general trend is that we in Barbados over-estimate the extent to which you can get public savings from a cut in supplies and materials. And if there Was one point that the Prime Minister had to make this evening that is instructive in this matter, it is his discovery, communicated to all the emotions of the original discovery, that, in fact, a large part of the expenditure in the Barbadian Public Service can be regarded as fixed expenditure, to the extent that it is expenditure on wages and related payroll cost, and expenditure on debt. The point that flows from that, by extrapolation, is that an economic strategy that was predicated on the assumption that you could go into a system with such fixed costs and find large areas in which to cut in order to cushion the effects of tax adjustments, was an economic policy that was doomed to fail.

We have always said that if you looked carefully at the composition of Government's expenditure and took account of the fact that under our Administration the largest part of expenditure was deployed in keeping people employed, as well as in running the social welfare services that we have institutionalised, then one could only have

instituted an expenditure-cut approach to management if at the same time there was a very serious deterioration in the delivery of social services in this country. I remember in April 1986 challenging the other side to tell us in advance which areas were going to be cut, so as to give support to the broad economic policy that the DLP was intending to pursue. It is a question which even today, Mr. Speaker, cannot be satisfactorily answered by the DLP.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, there has been an increase in Government Expenditure because commitments that should have been honoured in 1986-87 were not honoured in that year. I remember that when the supplementary for Tourism came to the House, a large part of the $2.8 million vote related to the meeting of commitments incurred in 1986-87. If you were to go through the supplementary expenditure, you will find that the same thing pertains in the Ministry of Transport and Works. It was a point that we in the Opposition made much of in last year's Estimates Debate. We charged then that the Government was not paying its bills, that it was carrying a lot of Accounts Payable into the new financial year and that sooner or later the piper would have to be paid. The piper has had to be paid in this financial year. 3.15 p.m.

I would be falling in my responsibility as shadow Minister of Finance if I were not to ask of the Minister now, what is the level of Accounts Payable that he is going to be carrying into the next financial year, what are the amounts to which he is already committed?

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: He says he cannot answer it I am putting the question to him nonetheless, Sir.

Hon. L. E. SANDBFORD: I made the point during my speech that we have a servicing of debt to meet and that there were expenditures relating to the Civil Service which came to about 75 per cent of the cost on Current Account, and that the remainder, therefore, of about 25 per cent represents the kinds of discretionary areas in which you can cut expenditures. That 25 per cent goes on paper, utilities, whatever.

To ask any Minister of Finance now to say what bills will be carried forward into the next financial year, is a question which a Minister of Finance cannot answer. I do not know if on March 29 a bill will come in.

What I can tell the honourable Member is that we have no policy in place stating that we should not pay bills in this particular financial year but that they should be carried over. The only way that that will be done is if there are no funds voted by Parliament for the purpose and it would be too late to vote the necessary supplementaries.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, things have changed. When I was in the Ministry of Finance, every morning the Minister of Finance got a computer printout from the Central Bank that told him at a flash what was the external position of Government He could have at a minute's notice, if he wishes, the reserves, where they are held and whatever else. He could also at a flash get from the Accountant General a statement of expenditure and the revenue at that time. He could also get a statement from the Accountant General on Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Show me one that they have got from the Accountant General.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance is saying that he cannot pick up the telephone and get at a moment's notice, a statement from the Accountant General....

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am asking the honourable Member to show me one of those he received. That is all I am asking him.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He is not in the Ministry of Finance.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If the Minister wants me to draw one out of the brief case, I am not in a position to do that But that is not the point

. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that a Minister of Finance is in a position to know at any point in time what are his Accounts Payable. We used to do it as a matter of course. It is something that was done particularly in the months between July and September, when the Ministry of Finance is being run on a shoe-string. July and September are the hardest revenue months of the year, and when one is coming towards the end of the financial year, it is a normal practice within the Ministry of Finance to know what is the level of Accounts Payable that face the Accountant General.

I am, therefore, Sir, not surprised that the Minister of Finance must sometimes assert that he is the Minister of Finance. However, this is normal, Sir, and we must not believe that what is standard in any business, to know at any point in time what are Accounts Payable, is not something that must not be standard to the Public Service. I cannot imagine it, Sir.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that last year we properly charged that Government was carrying forward

a lot of bills that it had not been paying, and that it caught up with them in this financial year.

Certain remarks made at this stage by Mr. O. S. ARTHUR and Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD were ordered to be expunged from the record by the SPEAKER.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We have a situation now, as the Minister knows, where, for example, in the Welfare Department there are difficulties with people receiving their cheques, and we have a situation as well, Mr. Speaker, where there is again evidence of a mount up in Government's Accounts Payable. Since the Minister, by his own confession, has not asked for the information, and has not had it provided for him, Sir, I think that he perhaps might need to check to see if what happened during the course of the last financial year might not happen again during the course of the financial year to come; that we have to come to the House with supplementaries to meet commitments in one financial year that have had to be carried over from the previous financial year.

The fourth area in which there had been bad financial management on the expenditure side was the decision taken by Government to introduce certain levels of expenditure to give rise to short-term generation of employment in the face of an unemployment situation which was higher than it had expected.

The tax cuts of 1986 were sold initially as a package of economic measures which could have had an immediate, direct, stimulating effect on the Barbadian economy. One of my learned colleagues appeared on television and pointed out that by September of 1987, one would have seen - he called it - a quantum leap in the level of employment generated as a result of the way in which the domestic spending power worked its way through the economy. It was suppose to stimulate manufacturing and give rise to an expansion and explosion in new jobs in areas of the economy that could have been stimulated by domestic spending. But it was clear that by September of last year there was going to be no immediate reaction by the economy to the fact of tax cuts of a previous year. Government then embarked, in my view, Mr. Speaker, on a process of public sector expansion to take the place of the growth in jobs that did not materialise in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, there is an important issue that has to be addressed. The issue is whether the Government has been too precipitate in increasing its expenditures for this purpose, not only through the crash programme, but in general terms, rather than allowing a situation to emerge where it runs a smaller deficit in the short term in the hope of having a higher rate of economic growth, both immediate and long term. That arises, Sir, because there is no question now as we look at these numbers that the size of the Government's deficit is now far too large. 3.25 p.m.

From as early as September last year, I have been speaking in this House about the accretion of Government's expenditure. And I have been warning the Government that the size of this Government's expenditure being built up month by month by a progressive series of supplementaries had to be carefully looked at in relation to the kind of deficit that would ensue, and the manner in which the Government would have financed that deficit. I was told then, Sir, that I was making the same economic speech, that I was like a stuck record. But all I was doing was giving a step by step commentary of the way in which decisions taken one by one were leading to a situation where an unmanageable deficit could arise.

I must turn fully to the deficit, if only because it was also addressed by the Honourable Minister of Finance. There is nothing that disappointed me more in his presentation than the way in which he very casually addressed the role of deficit in an economy.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, one cannot fault the argument that a country should try to avoid Current Account deficits. That is not the issue here. Also, Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that in some respects Government's relationship to deficits will be similar to that of the household sector; that Government will sometimes have to run deficits in order to effect strategic investment decision in the economy in much the same way that a private individual has, very often, to borrow because he does not have the funds to pay for investment that he wants to indulge in. But the management of fiscal deficits is more complex and goes far beyond that, because a deficit can be a double-edged weapon.

A reasonable deficit undertaken at a strategic time in the economy, and properly financed, can be a boom to employment in an economy and can also serve to expand the productive base of that economy, not on a short-term basis, but on a permanent basis. However, if circumstances were allowed to arise where a country found itself incurring large deficits, those deficits in and of themselves can become part of the country's economic problems. The question that we must ask ourselves is, how do we know when a deficit has become unmanageable and how do we know when a deficit begins to play the role of a disturbance factor in an economy?

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Is it unmanageable now?)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am going to tell you why. I am sure the honourable Member is asking because he does not know, and he genuinely wants to know, so I will tell him.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have warned Members not to listen to asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, he does not know, and he genuinely wants to know, so I will tell him, otherwise he would not have asked.

A deficit tends to be problematical and unmanageable when it reaches such a size that its financing creates economic problems in other parts of the economy, in particular, and in the context of small economies, in the balance of payments. Do you understand that?

The point which has been established over and over again in this House of Assembly, through the presentation of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) and by this side, is that a deficit poses a problem for the balance of payments when its financing has **to** be done by way of accommodation through the Central Bank to Government.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will be tempted to suspend the sitting or ask someone to leave the Chamber if we cannot have proper order in the Chamber. I have given the honourable Member for St. Peter the right to speak, and I expect to hear none other than the honourable Member for St. Peter. Similarly, I am asking the honourable Member not to enjoin "asides".

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, it is very instructive that on page 2 of the Memorandum of Estimates, the Government has identified the source of funds for the deficit for last year. The deficit for last year is set at $271.5 million, of which $195.6 million of financing has been identified. Of that $195 million, $39.7 million is only domestic credit, credit through debentures, through the Tax Reserve Certificates and other domestic financing. So in accordance with Government's statement, there is a shortfall in financing of $75 million which is not accounted for here.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Because the overall deficit is $271 million. But you all have only shown how you will finance $195 million of it, of which domestic financing is $39.7 million.

Mr. Speaker what are the facts? The facts are that the difference between what Government has shown in these Estimates as secured financing and the total amount of the deficit is some $74 million. That amount is really financing that it has received from the Central Bank.

Between May 1984 and November 1987, according to the Statistic of the Central Bank, net domestic credit to Government increased by $103 million, Government is claiming in this document that it only received $39 million in domestic credit. But there was an increase in net domestic credit to Government by $103 million between the period May 1987 and November 1987. The difference between the $39 million and the $103 million is the element of Central Bank printing of money that Government has used. The printing of money by Government to finance this fiscal deficit has been of an order of magnitude for which there is no precedent whatsoever in the financial history of this country.

The fact, Sir, is that as Government has sought to increase its credit more and more from the Central Bank, the Central Bank reserves have plummeted. To be precise, in that same period when Government was increasing its domestic credit, principally by having money printed by the Central Bank to the extent of $103 million, the reserves of this country were falling by $124.2 million. There is therefore a direct relationship, Mr. Speaker, between Government financing of the deficit this year and the deterioration of this country's foreign reserves. 3.35 p.m.

The reserves have deteriorated. They stood at a high of $412 million in May, but by November they had fallen by $124 million, and the principal reason for that, Mr. Speaker, is irresponsible financial practices by the Democratic Labour Party. The very thing that they condemned the Barbados Labour Party for doing in 1981 is the same precise and exact thing that they have done in 1987.

(Asides: So you admit to doing it!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Ask the Minister of Finance why he has not done what every other Minister of Finance has done in the history of this country, to show on page two of this document how the deficit for the year has been financed. Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter simply is that the Government is embarrassed to have to come and admit that it has utilised Central Bank financing this year to carry an oversize deficit that should not have been carried. And no amount of shouting from the honourable Member for St. Michael West will stop me from making the point that the greatest threat to the continued stability of the Barbados economy is to have this Government running up oversize fiscal deficits.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: I have not been shouting. I have not even spoken. How can the honourable Member accuse me of shouting by saying "no amount of shouting by the honourable Member for St. Michael West"

The honourable Member wants to discuss the printing of money. He has been talking about the printing of money for five years. He now admits that they printed money. That is their problem. Wny is he including me? I have not been ihouting any thin r,.

You have been talking fairly long, you know.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious now that the Government, including the honourable Member for St. Michael West, is very embarrassed by the revelations that during the course of its financial management this year it has been instrumental in putting pressure on this country's reserves.

There is an additional point, Mr. Speaker, that has to be stressed - the timing of it could not be worse. Barbados' export earnings from the sale of goods, Mr. Speaker, fell last year by almost 50 per cent. It follows that to maintain the ordinary standard of living of the Barbadian people, nothing should have been done in the course of the financial year to add to the existing pressure that they would have been on the pool of financial resources available to the Government and the country.

When our export earnings fall by as much as they have fallen, it becomes difficult to support our consumption standards as well as to support the high levels of investment in this society. It is therefore a disgrace that at a time when Barbados' export earnings have been falling and there would have been normal pressure on Barbados resources, the Government has added to that pressure by indulging in what can only be described as a complete exercise in financial recklessness.

I am also saying, Mr. Speaker, that when we analyse what is likely to be the situation next year, there is nothing to suggest that this very unfortunate trend will not be carried into the new financial year. The Government now predicts that it will have an overall deficit of $228 million for the next financial year. It has so far identified only $70 million in financing to cover this deficit of $228 million.

I know that no serious approaches have yet been made to the international financial markets to raise foreign commercial funds to help in the financing of this year's deficit. Indeed, when the Minister of Finance and his group went to London, they made a statement that Government was not anticipating coming back to the market at all in the course of the financial year to raise funds. This was not contradicted by any member of Government. The only exploration that has been indulged in has been a visit by the new Governor of the Central Bank to certain entities and parties in Japan, but no firm contact has been made with parties in the international banking system to finance a part of this country's overall fiscal deficit for the years to come.

The implication is, Mr. Speaker, that we will have to look again this year for a large part of Government fiscal deficit to be financed by the creation of domestic credit, and what we will find ourselves in, Mr. Speaker, is a bind. I earlier made the point that if a balance of payments problem is reversed at an early period, then no permanent damage need ensue to the economy in which that balance of payments problem arose in the first place. But if you allow the balance of payments problem to persist, the damage that can be done to the economy can become permanent and you will have structural difficulties in running the economy, maintaining levels of investment and maintaining levels of consumption. And if you have started a situation where the printing of money by the Central Bank has been used to finance the public deficit in one year at the expense of the reserves, and you carry that pattern into the subsequent financial year, you are setting up yourself to do permanent damage to this economy. The point is that when we take the deficit for last year in conjunction with the deficit on this year, look at the way in which the deficit for last year was financed and look at how the Government proposes to deal with the deficits to come, there can be no doubt that a tremendous strain will be put on this country's external position purely because Government is choosing the wrong way to finance its deficit at the wrong time. 3.45 p.m.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was very clear last year in his Estimates presentation to indicate that, notwithstanding the excess liquidity in the domestic banking system, the Government would not have been looking to an extension in domestic credit to help finance this situation. He made that point, Sir, because he understands that excessive increases in domestic credit are the central source of balance of payments problems in countries like ours. How then can the Minister of Finance come to the House, Sir and seek to laugh off a situation in which the Government has set out to use massive increases in domestic credit to finance the deficit. Between May and November there was an increase of domestic credit to Government by $103 million, and it is regarded as no big thing. It is also regarded as no big thing that in the process of his doing that, the reserves of this country fell by over $124 million, at a time when our export earnings were falling, and when there seems to be no end in sight to the drift.

The manner in which the Minister of Finance discussed the deficit very clearly indicates to me that Barbados has a very fundamental problem. That problem is that there are people who do not seem to understand that it is not only the size of the deficit that is important, but also the manner in which it is financed.

You would remember, Sir, that early in my presentation - and I am going to talk, because these things

need to be spoken of - I said that there was a time in Barbados when the money supply had to be backed by foreign exchange, and you could only have increased the money supply in Barbados to the extent that you had access to additional amounts of foreign exchange money. That was the situation under the old Currency Board. But as a result, you could not have really a payments problem, but the country would remain poor.

Under the existing system, Mr. Speaker, the total money supply in Barbados is made up of notes, coins, demand deposits and other things that can be used as money, savings deposits, time deposits and other short-term instruments. The total money supply is now backed by a domestic credit component as well as the net foreign assets of the country.

Pages 36 and 37 are the pages in this Economic Report that we should first of all look at if we are to understand what is happening in the economy. The money supply of the economy must be equal to the net domestic credit in the economy and the net foreign assets. So if you increase the net domestic credit in the economy at a faster rate than you increase the money supply, you are going in every circumstance, Mr. Speaker, to get an equal and corresponding change in the country's external reserves position. That is one of the few things in economics that are true. And if you were to take this document, Sir, on pages 36 and 37 of the Economic and Financial Statistics of the Central Bank, you will see, Sir, that, month-to-month, the monetary liability must be equal to the net domestic credit as well as the net foreign assets.

When I said that the Minister of Finance in trying to clean up a mess is creating an even greater mess, I am precisely referring to the fact that it has been a tremendous error of financial management to indulge in excessive domestic credit creation in Barbados in 1987, a tremendous financial error. And I am really worried when I hear the Minister speak *sotto voce* as if these things are foreign to him, because they must be first nature in the running of this economy.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I have not said that anything was foreign to me. The only thing I said was foreign to me was information on what bills - and the source of those bills - would be carried over into the next financial year. In the new financial year I will be able to tell him or come to the House and say it. That is the only thing I said about anything being foreign to me.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Point taken.

Mr. Speaker, we take too lightly in these very fragile economies the way in which the economy reacts to shock. One of the features of the functioning of a small economy is that things which would in another context be absorbable tend to have an exaggerated impact. The view has been put by many commentators on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party that it took a large number of years for the Barbados economy to bleed out of the system the kind of shock that was imposed on it in 1981 by excessive domestic credit creation in support of too large a fiscal deficit. The point is true.

You would also find, Sir, that things like a 30 per cent change in any major aggregate in our kind of economy has a very pronounced and exaggerated impact on the economy.

Most of all, Sir, it has been shown to be true that the smallest area of a small economy which is hardest to repair once it is allowed to deteriorate is the balance of payments. We can do what we want, Sir, with domestic income. We can increase domestic purchasing power by granting ourselves more domestic credit. We can do what we wish Sir, with the interest rates. But the only part of the economy that we cannot truly manipulate in a certain clear and pre-determined way is the amount of foreign exchange to which we have access. And once we lose control of that, Mr. Speaker, we commit these small economies to extended periods of economic distress.

The case of Guyana now clearly establishes the kind of economic distress that a small economy has to endure once it looses control of its foreign exchange. The case of Jamaica indicates how true that situation is. Trinidad is now living evidence that you can have extended periods, five years of recession, following on fundamental errors in the management of a country's external position. We are flirting with disaster, therefore, when a situation is blissfully allowed to arise in Barbados whereby our reserves are drained because of fiscal irresponsibility and the authorities do not do something immediately to change it.

You can ask yourself the question, Sir what is the relevance of that point in the context of the evolution of economic management in Barbados? The point, Sir, is that in 1981, once Barbados got itself involved in a balance of payments problem, steps were taken, with immediate effect, to reserves the cause of that problem. You would remember that as early as September in 1981 a Mini Budget was brought to the House to take back out of the economic system a part of that increment to spending power that was fuelling the balance of payments problem. It was the timeliness of the response that allowed the Barbados economy hot only to remain stable, but to build up reserves between 1982 and 1986.

Between May and September of 1986, the former Minister of Finance temporarily put himself in a position in which the net domestic credit to Government increased at

too fast a rate. But, again, Sir, in credit to him, he understood at the time the need for timely intervention in these matters to make sure that a reversible balance of payments problem did not become irreversible. 3.55 p.m.

I do not see the timeliness here. Rather, Government will be carrying forward into next year the same problems of financial management. It is only going to aggravate an already bad situation which could put Barbados in a position, Mr. Speaker, where an incredible pressure can be brought to bear on this country's reserves at a time when our earning ability has started to decrease.

I am arguing, Mr. Speaker, for discipline to be brought to bear in the management of this country's financial affairs. This discipline which must be brought to bear has to do with the fact that this Government has allowed its expenditure to get entirely out; of hand.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order: I hope the honourable Member for St. Peter is not reflecting on any votes of this House, because he voted for all of those supplementaries except one. He voted for all of those supplementaries except one, and he is talking about getting "out of hand."

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sit down!

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Take your seat until the honourable Member has made his point of order.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am making a point of order, Sir: I was very careful in my introduction to say that Iw as not reflecting on any vote of the House, and I merely gave a recital of the supplementaries that were passed. Those supplementaries have been added to the amount of monies voted by this Honourable Chamber and are part of the decisions taken by this Honourable Chamber. The honourable Member for St. Peter was part of that He agreed to, and voted, for, all of the supplementaries except one, when there was a division on the Opposition benches. He cannot speak now about anything being "out of hand" when he agreed with all of them except one.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the way in which the Minister of Finance speaks, one would presume that all of us in here, including members of the Opposition are sitting in the Ministry of Finance and that we are in a position to know the financial position as it exist at any and all points in time, as well as to know what are the commitments which face Government as they evolve. I made continuous statements in this House last year to the effect that Government should be seeking to control its expenditure and it should exercise great caution in the control of the expenditure, in the light of the fact that the fiscal deficit, from the information that was available to me at that time, was worsening.

Mr. Speaker, when Government sets out with a Revenue projection for the year and it becomes clear that the target cannot be realised, that Government must exercise caution in its spending. That is the only thing it can control. It cannot control how much revenue it really gets. It can, however, control how much it decides to spend in the face of the volume of resources that it has at its disposal.

Government has allowed its expenditure to get out of hand. During the course of August, September, December, when these supplementaries were coming to the House, the Government was not at the same time telling us that we will be looking in terms of a deficit of over $271 million. The situation was evolving slowly and we were not getting a full enough position of the situation that was likely to arise. But what Government should have controlled was its expenditure. This becomes imperative when there is a shortfall in revenue as compared to what was projected at the outset.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member give way?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Member for St. Peter seems to be confused, Sir. He is arguing from different premises on every occasion. He wants us not to carry forward any bills into the next year. But when we come for the supplementaries to meet the commitments to pay the bills, he then says that expenditure is out of control. How does he really want it? Then, on the other hand, he is arguing that if we go to the domestic market to borrow money, we are crowding out the private sector. I believe that is the point that he is making. But at the same time he is talking about borrowing abroad, but if we borrow abroad, we are putting pressure on all kinds of things. He is all over the place!

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not consider that a point of elucidation at all.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Not at all, Sir! In fact, Sir, I am sure that you are as confused by the honourable Member's intervention as anybody else. I am glad that you do not regard that as a point of elucidation, Sir. Nobody at all Mr. Speaker, regards that as a point of elucidation.

The point that is being made, Sir, is that in the course of managing a country's financial affairs, you start out with Estimates which show the amount in the course of the financial year to come that the Government is projecting to raise. But the Ministry of Finance and Planning keeps two sets of books. In one is shown what is approved here by the Parliament.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Of course, it does! This is one set of books that it keeps. But it also keeps another, on a quarter-to-quarter and, sometimes, on a month-to-month basis, in which it records its spending allocations, which are based upon the revenue positions which most immediately confront the Government at the time. If the Government, therefore, was in a position where it saw that its revenue projections could not have been realised, then what it should have done, rather than increase expenditure, is that it should have tried to bring expenditures down to some sensible level to reconcile with its reduced revenue base. That is the point.

So, Mr. Speaker, when I make the point that a runaway fiscal deficit exists and that Government fpending is the source of the problem, I am making it from two points of view. The first point is that the size of the deficit is too large. Secondly, the Ministry of Finance seems not to have been doing what the Ministry of Finance has done , from time immemorial - making sure that once that Revenue estimate gets out of line - this thing must become a living document of the House, Sir - expenditures must also be brought into line with the changed circumstances. For the Minister of Finance to want to pour cold water on that point is for him to completely misrepresent what has been happening in Barbados. He should have been telling the House when he was bringing up supplementaries what was the situation facing the country as regards to the revenue, based upon the most immediate information at his disposal.

It is a pity, Mr. Speaker, that the information that we have often in public life to use as the basis on which we make pronouncements, and on which, sometimes, we make policy or comment on policy decisions, is information that tends to be dated. From the point of view of the Opposition, we very often find ourselves in the position where we have to be speaking on a supplementary to increase expenditure on the basis of trends in revenue which are three months dated. It would be a good thing for any Government that wants to bring as many supplementaries as this Government has brought, to not present those supplementaries in the way in which they were presented last year, but to keep the House abreast, if the House is to be held responsible in a collective way, as he would wish it now to be held responsible, and for us to be able to take those decisions on the basis of the most recently available information. 4.05 p.m.

It was a shock to me» Mr. Speaker, to realise that at the end 6f the day Government was contemplating a deficit of as much as had been realised, because I thought that the Ministry of Finance and Planning would have done what it knows it must do. That the flaw is management...

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You have to keep two sets of books. Anyhow, the point I am making is that expenditure last year was too large.

When we turn to the next financial year, Mr. Speaker, the Government proposes to shave off a little bit of the expenditure as well as to maintain Capital expenditure at levels that show no real increase beyond what was spent last year. It does so again, of course, without making provision, as it cannot do now at this stage, for the wage increase. But it is clear that if there is going to be a wage increase, the level of expenditure to which Government will have to become committed during the course of the financial year is going to be more than the $802 million that is now being approved. We are going, therefore, to have to come to the House to supplement these Estimates by reason of that wage increase. So let us start from now to recognise that the deficit for the year might be larger than what the Minister of Finance is saying at this point in time.

These Estimates are interesting also, Mr. Speaker, from the point of view of expenditure for what they do not contain, and I want to talk now about the St. Joseph Hospital. Last year the Government brought to the House a supplementary to enable it to purchase the St. Joseph Hospital. That supplementary enabled the House to vote $6 million to buy the hospital on the expectation that the hospital would be put into operation sortie time in the immediate future. We have heard statements coming from the Government as to when the hospital will be put into effect It was supposed to have gone into effect by December 1986, then it was supposed to have gone into effect by March 1987, but we'are now being told that the hospital should come into operation by some time, June or July, of this financial year.

A number of issues arise, Mr. Speaker. If the Government intends to purchase the St. Joseph Hospital and operate it, and if that policy decision has already been taken by Government, then it has a responsibility to reflect those expenditures in these Estimates. It must either put up or it must shut up.

It sought in 1986 to get political mileage from the fact that it was intending to buy the St. Joseph Hospital, and that we should have bought the hospital for $15 million after pressure had been brought to us at the last moment. Has the hospital as yet been paid for?

The information at my disposal is that the hospital has not been paid for, and is not likely to be paid for during the course of the present financial year. As a result, monies voted for the hospital will lapse, and an additional amount will have to be provided next year if it is to be opened by June, for the hospital to be purchased, for the hospital to be remodelled and refurbished and to meet part of the operating expenses of the hospital. Nowhere in these Estimates can one find any evidence of Government's commitment to give effect to its policy statement on the St. Joseph Hospital. The time has come for the Government to put its rr-oney where its mouth is. It has got the political mileage already. Start putting your money where you mouth is!

I wish to go back to my point that we can sometimes take decisions of a financial character in this House not based on the best information possible. It is now within my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, that a private sector study and appraisal was done on the St. Joseph Hospital. It came to the same conclusion that the honourable Member for St Michael South Central spoke of when the hospital first became a political issue. He said then that it was not worth any more than two to three million dollars and he would not pay more than two to three million dollars for it A private sector study appraising the St. Joseph Hospital established that, by the best method of valuation, no more than $3 million should have been paid for the hospital. I want to know, therefore, Mr. Speaker, why we were put to the necessity in this House of having to come and vote $6 million to pay for a hospital that is only worth $3 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member may very well be now bordering on reflecting on a vote of this House.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have the information now.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member must remember that a vote has been taken on that already and I would advise you not to pursue that line of argument.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to reflect upon the rules of the House offensively.

The point is simply that we are sometimes agreeing to supplementaries, and supplementaries are being put to the House, without the House having access or the advantage of the best information possible. We sometimes do not have current information on income/expenditure trends. And in the case of that particular transaction, Sir,....

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the honourable Member had better withdraw the previous statement. A vote has been taken and the House decided on it One may acknowledge the reference, but certainly not a reflection on the vote.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I shall not reflect on the vote of the House, Sir, but I will make the point that if the hospital has not yet been purchased, and it is to be opened this year, these Estimates of Expenditure will have now to be supplemented by the purchase price, as well as by the amounts that Government intends to spend on its renovation and its refurbishment. They are not reflected in the Estimates, and if Government has set itself, as it has said, a July deadline for this particular transaction, there is no way we can avoid having the amounts reflected in this year's Estimates.

I go forward, Sir. I recently read a statement where the Minister of Transport and Works had indicated that some $35 million is to be spent on development of tenantry roads in the course of this financial year. Again, the Government is getting political mileage for making these broad statements about how much it intends to do in critical areas of the economy, but we are not seeing it match its statements with the commitment of resources. You will not in any part of these Estimates see any provision at all of $35 million to be spent on tenantry roads. 4.15p.m.

The provision in this year's Estimates for tenantry roads is $1 million, $100 000 more than was provided last year. Therefore I am telling the Government that it must either put up or it must shut up. You cannot go around trying to profess that you Have this over-developed concept of how to improve people's lives and create the impression that so much money will be spent on the St. Joseph Hospital or the tenantry roads, and not matcii it by commitments in the Estimates.

If those commitments are to be given effect, we know already that the Estimates that we are here contemplating will be of no effect They will have to be substantially amended to make provision for those things which Government has already stated it is committed to as a matter of policy. And - a further point - the kind of expenditures that the Government really knows it has to commit itself to this year is nothing like $802 million. It is more like in the vicinity of $840.

Yet another point follows. When you look at the distribution of Government expenditure, there are going to be very severe hardships imposed on the people of Barbados as a result of the way in which Governments has allocated its resources for its various purposes.

The Child Care Board, for example, is going to have to endure a decrease in Government's subvention in the next financial year by as mlch as $1 million, compared to what they received over the course of the last financial year. It was given $6.5 million in the Estimates and that was supplemented by half a million dollars, so its total subvention for the last financial year was $7 million. This year it has only been provided with $6 million. The Government must pray tell us how it can cut expenditure on child care, on the children of the country, by more than $1 million in the course of one year and do not seriously affect the quality of the health care services that you are providing.

The crash programme is getting a large slash. I am warning you of the dangers of getting into and starting things that you cannot finish. That is what you are doing. There is no advantage in a one-shot increase in employment

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Last year, the Government's total subvention to that crash programme area of operation was $16 million. This year it is going to be provided with $10 million. The Government is to tell those persons, whom it has led to believe that they have found a permanent base of economic solace in the crash programme, what is to happen to them when expenditure on the crash programme is reduced from $16 million to $10 million.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: They are saying that the economy must work it out They have started with the foolish notion that you can get more for less. But there is simply no way that you can reduce expenditure on the Child Care by $1 million, and expenditure on the crash programme by $6 million, without there having to be serious readjustments in the structure of the programmes. These are the things that the House must talk about in this debate.

Last year in this debate, we also made much of the point that the Government was going in the wrong direction where its support for the private productive sectors of this economy are concerned. We thought then that a word of warning would have been a word of warning to the wise. But what has happened? At a time when Barbados should be increasing its commitment to export promotion, for two successive years - not just one, but two, successive years - the amount of funding to be provided for Export Promotion is to be slashed.

A time must come when the Export Promotion Corporation will have to become the most important economic institution in Barbados. It is clear that if Barbados is to go forward, greater attention has to be paid to market development, market research, and to understanding the workings of international business environments than is the case at present. The whole complexion and focus and thrust of the Export Promotion Corporation must change.

It is a total nonsensical policy for the Government to come year after year and postpone the point at which that operation becomes a contributor to economic growth and development by cutting its subventions in the manner in which it is cutting them. I cannot understand what can be the rationale for it. It surely must appeal to somebody in the Ministry of Finance that to the extent that this country must live on exports, to the extent that we continue each year to refuse our support for that export drive, we are making things more difficult in Barbados.

The Export Promotion to date has not exercised any extraordinary claim on this country's economic resources. When we were earning $700 million, $700 000 in export earnings used to be generated from the sale^fcpmmodities, but about $2 million was devoted to export-promotion to secure that base. What is being done is going to worsen that situation, more so precisely because it is happening at a time when there needs to be a complete rethinking of our export strategy and our approach to dealing with the rest of the world. If the Opposition hammers the point, it is precisely because the experience of the Barbados Labour Party in Government establishes beyond a shadow of a doubt that Barbados will only be able to enjoy the standard of living that we want to enjoy in circumstances where we build up the export base of the economy.

What is the Government doing? Apart from the crazy statement that it will do more for less! Last year exports fell by SO per cent in the course of the financial year. Has that not yet satisfied the Government that you can directly relate that to the fact that the export drive has been going nowhere?

Mr. SPEAKER: Address the Chair.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We have a situation in Barbados which is serious, and I wish that the Minister of Finance would view it as a serious situation. The country's receipts from the sale of commodities have fallen more than 50 per cent in the course of a year, consequential, in part, on a decision taken by Government to relax the thrust of the export drive by reducing its expenditures on export promotion. 4.25 p.m.

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member must address the Chair and rtot hear the others. I do not know if you want to finish your speech, but you should address the

Chair. I am not hearing asides, and I will handle the asides when I thjnk it necessary to do so.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR? The point, Sir, is that the Government has no export development strategy, and it becomes possible in such a circumstance for this kind of situation to arise. There is nothing, in a sen|e, for this Government to spend money on where export promotion is concerned. All of the institutional arrangements that were put in place by the former. Minister of Finance to make sure that there was a co-ordinated approach to investment and export development have been dismantled. The Investment Council is a thing of the past. The Venture Capital Fund, Mr. Speaker, which was supposed to be a source of financing, has not been functioning and is a thing of the past That important institutional arrangement that would help identify investment opportunities has gone nowhere, and the only way in which you are going to increase exports in Barbados is if ypu are speaking in terms of increasing investment opportunities, because our broadest base of investment opportunities comes from the expansion of the export sector. So when you dismantle, whether by direct decision or by just sheer inertia, an initiative such as an Investment Council, you are affecting, simultaneously, investment possibilities and the creation of export possibilities.

It is also true that the Government has spent too long trying to prove a political point in relation to our export development which simply cannot be proven. The point that they have been trying to prove is that all of the problems with our exports stem from a relationship between Prime Minister Adams and Ambassador Pitt The evidence now clearly establishes that the problems in the Trinidad market are deep-seated, economic problems that have been going on for the last five years. As a result, the concentration that the Government has put on trying to resolve that problem that cannot be resqlved has prevented it from pressing ahead with more serious initiatives in the area of developing Barbados' extra-regional >exports to this country's advantage.

I ask the Minister of Finance: how much effort has been put by anybody in that administration in getting things like the Market Development Allowance, which you retained after it has been brought to this House by us, to become a normal part of the. business function of Barbados? Who is handling it? Who is handling the follow up now to the investment allowances that we provided in regard to investment in export areas such as professional services, accounting services and the like, an important area? Who really now is dealing with the service sector?

Expansion of export earnings as well, Mr. Speaker, will come from the broadening of the services of the country. There were clearly defined institutional arrangements until recently for the management of that service industry, but one gets the very clear and distinct impression that Barbados is continuing to miss opportunities where that areas is concerned. The development in Panama, for example, is one in which a more alert system, wjth clearly defined operational features, would have been on the ball.

To what extent, Mr. Speaker, have Barbados taken advantage of the breaks made possible by the provision of our double taxation treaty. For example, Sir, why are we not utilising the provisions in that treaty that makes possible the write off of convention expenses?

I am saying that I can understand why it becomes possible for that side to preside over the cut in the Barbados' subvention to export promotion. Ij is precisely because they do not have a policy, nor a programme. You do not have a broad concept as to where the Export Promotion Corporation fits within the general framework of growth investment and development in the Barbadian economy. There is no secure place for it

The same thing, Mr. Speaker, pertains as regards the development of the tourist industry. At the start of this year the prospects for Barbados' tourism were supposed to be very rosy, but we are now being told that the winter season is very far below expectations. A large part of it has to do with the fact that insufficient financial provision has been made by the Democratic Labour Party Government for the support of tourism.

I begin by charging that they have- completely misrepresented the way in which the market development allowance for tourist expenditure was construed. It was not construed as a substitute for Government expenditure. It was construed, Mr. Speaker, and intended by the Barbados Labour Party, as a supplement to that, and the refusal and the failure of Government to maintain satisfactory levels of expenditure on the promotion of Barbados' tourism in many respects explains why the winter season is as poor as. it presently is.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I made the point in a discussion that the Government had come too late and for too little.

As regards the summer programme, there is tremendous institutional lethargy .at, the level of the Board of Tourism. The summer programme that should have been in place by October last year is now only in draft form. We have to raise these things, Sir, because if Barbados is not going to be generating foreign exchange, the Government has to tell us how it is going to maintain and manage the standard of living that this country has established itself as

being able to sustain. The Prime Minister is pretending not to know that the summer programme for tourism is only in a draft form, but it is a fact.

Hon. W. W. HALL: The honourable Member for St. Peter is alluding to a market development plan, not a summer programme. By saying that a summer programme which should be in place since October last year is now in draft form he is not only misleading the House, Sir, he is becoming a pusillanimous humbug.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think you will have to withdraw that remark. 4.35 p.m.

Laughter.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I withdraw it, Sir, but it is nothing bad, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. SPEAKER: You still have not withdrawn it yet.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I withdraw it, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I can understand the vexation of the Minister of Tourism.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope you would not get into a vexatious feeling as well.

Laughter.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope you would not continue in that vein.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker! I am not here to please the Minister of Tourism. I am here to tell the truth and to state the facts. It is a very shameful thing that no funds at all were spent on advertising Barbados on American television in selected markets, as all other countries do, between April, 1986 and the present. One does not expect, Sir, blanket coverage, but....

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order, Sir: I told the House that no funds were spent since 1986. Tom, Dick, and Harry are talking about it in Barbados simply because I made a truthful statement.

I would like the Member to understand that there were no funds spent on American television when the Barbados Labour Party was in power either.

(Aside: At all!)

Hon. W. W. HALL: None... for five years.

(Aride:Atall,atall!)

Hon. W. W. HALL: From 1981 to 1986.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member said that no funds had been spent on advertising Barbados in the American market by way of television since April, 1986. If he is standing on it, I am taking him at his word, because he is a truthful person. But it is a shame, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Minister cannot take criticism.

A lot of Government's economic plans for the year were predicated on the tourism sector of this country performing above usual. That is not going to materialise. And at a time when the tourism sector is performing in a very indifferent manner, it is a very curious and very sad thing that the Government is bringing to the House a set of Estimates which will in effect reduce expenditure on tourism in real terms. Because when you add, Mr. Speaker, what was voted last year to the amount by which the Budget was supplemented, you come face to face with the fact that the allocation this year is less than the combined provision for 1987-88. So in two very critical areas of the domestic economy, which are vital to the continued buoyancy of the Barbados economic system, the Government is making ridiculous cuts in the interest of false economy.

As regards Agriculture, the Government is coming forward in that sector with nothing that is new. The agricultural sector endured a very disastrous year last year. There were funds voted by this House for programmes such as agricultural diversification and things of this character. Much of this, Mr. Speaker, was just fancy public relations by the Government, because there has been, in fact, no improvement in the fortunes of the agricultural sector, despite the generous statements that have been made from time to time in the Press by the Minister of Agriculture.

It is quite instructive that the growth in the Barbados' food import bill is now again beginning to assume an increasingly important role in the overall import bill of Barbados. The numbers are going to tell the tale. Between 1981 and 1985, we in the Barbados Labour Party managed to bring down the food import bill of this economy. It was

$179 million in 1981 and we brought it down, Sir, to $160 million in 1984. It was even reduced to $155 million in 1985. It rose in 1986 to $159 million. And for the first nine months of last year, the food import bill of Barbados has stood at $142 million. We could be looking at food imports this year of anywhere in the vicinity of $180 million.

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The Minister of Agriculture knows that Barbados is importing a large number of commodities that can easily be produced in Barbados. He also knows, Mr. Speaker, who is in control of the trade.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: There is a person who has a general expertise in the selling of garments, has an establishment in Swan Street, but who is the key p^son involved in the importation of vegetables in Barbados.'

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have not asked the Speaker's liberty to cite names, and I therefore will not breach the Rules of the HouserBut there is a certain individual who is controlling the vegetable trade in Barbados. Day by day, month by month, large shipments of cucumbers and melons and cabbages come in consigned to this particular individual.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is "mashing up" the local producers.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: That is undermining production in Barbados. And at the same time, Sir, the House is voting monies for a so-called agricultural diversification project which cannot get off the ground! But the National Fruit Orchard Project, which was started by the Barbados Labour Party, has gone nowhere. The Livestock Development Project that the Ministry was carrying out, after being started by the Barbados Labour Party, is now to be reduced in scale during the course of this financial year.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the whole allocation of Government's expenditure for the financial year in its totality, it is quite clear to us that the Government has ordered its priorities in such a way that the productive sectors of the Barbadian economic system will not have access to the kind of resources that will enable them to be able to rise to the challenge that now faces this economy. The challenge is grave. We have to add to rising unemployment the problem of a weakening balance of payments position. Nothing but the greatest degree of economic growth, particularly in the export sectors of the' economy, will suffice in the eradication of those two particular economic difficulties.

There were some issues raised by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance and Planning in his presentation which require some immediate reaction. He spoke inaccurately about the debt outstanding and confused the debt outstanding with the debt service. And his statement about the relationship between Barbados and the International Monetary Fund is a statement on which a clarification is necessary. 4.45 p.m.

First of all, I have very grave doubts as to whether it can be true that the 1977 Compensatory Financing Facility loan has not been repaid while that incurred as recently as 1982 has been. One of the features of the operation of the International Monetary Fund is that a Government should seek as far as possible to clear off the arrears that it has outstanding to have access to additional resources from the institution. It would seem to me surpassingly strange that the very rule that the fund expects in the relationships between Governments and banks is a rule that it would breach in relation to its own dealings with a member Government. Rather than that matter becoming part of the current propaganda, I think that the Minister of Finance should check to see if he is not .making a mistake and misleading the House. It does not seem to me natural nor right that you can say that we have paid off the Compensatory Financing loan incurred in 1982 but for some reason have left unpaid by a small amount the Compensatory Financing loan of 1977.

The use of compensatory financing from the International Monetary Fund is nothing new, nor is it anything as distressing as the Minister of Finance would want the House to believe. There are some parts of an IMF programme that carry conditions. There are others that do not. A Stand-by arrangement generally, carries conditions. However, a Compensatory Financing arrangement with the International Monetary Fund does not cany any conditionalities whatsoever. The problem, generally, in relating to 4ie International Monetary,Fund, is the fact that very often the conditions which are attached to the receipt of loans can have adverse consequences for the functioning of the economies which receive the loans. The important point is that compensatory financing does not carry conditions. It is therefore quite proper for a member country of the International Monetary Fund to go to the fund in circumstances where it has experienced a shortfall in its export earnings and get compensatory financing without there being any derogatory connotations attached to that particular transaction, or without, Sir, the kind of remarks that the Prime Minister delivered himself of against the Government which became involved in the particular arrangement. *

" When Barbados went into a programme with the International Monetary Fund in 1977 to secure

compensatory financing, it was merely to make up for shortfalls in export earnings arising out of the international economic market, conditions. That is the only basis on which compensatory financing can be had from the fund. The country must be in a position to show that the shortfall in its export earnings has been due to international market conditions. There were no conditions at all attaching to that particular transaction. So I do not know what is the big deal the Minister is trying to create now before the House in Hying to cast the aspersion that the Barbados Government of 1977 entered some secret arrangement with the International Monetary Fund. It would have issued the Government a line of credit or something of that character with no strings attached.

I also have to defend on the floor of this House our arrangement with the International Monetary Fund of 1982, because the Prime Minister made a big song and dance about that arrangement. That particular package with the International Monetary Fund was undertaken at a time when there were tremendous liquidity problems facing us as regards the composition of our reserves. At September 1982, Barbados had only $82 million in reserves, and a decision had to be taken to boost the reserves by access to some form of foreign financing. The critical point is that at that time, the interest rates on the money markets to which we could have gone were in the vicinity of 21 per cent, and we took a decision, and it was preferable, to get longer term financing at lower rates of interest from the International Monetary Fund in 1982 than to go on the international market and incur the tremendous expense of having to borrow at an interest rate approaching 21 per cent

Barbados went through that programme with the International Monetary Fund - and I would ask the honourable Members to read the new book by Dr. Worrell of the Central Bank - without having to deal with conditionalities that were in any respect different from those that we in-house at the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank .had ourselves independently put in place. When the IMF came to Barbados in 1982, by way of letter of intent, a programme of stabilisation had already been created for Barbados, independently drafted by the technicians of this country, to hold the fiscal deficit to a level such that its financing would not create a problem for the balance of payments. There were a whole series of credit control measures to stem the growth of domestic spending. It is therefore, Mr. Speaker, outrageous for the Minister of Finance and Planning to speak so derogatorily about the way in which that arrangement was handled.

Barbados was not subjected to any cut back in its social services. There was nd cut back in public staff. Indeed, the argument that has always been used by members of the Democratic Labour Party is that the public sector expanded too fast in that period. So I do not know what they are telling me now about cutbacks. There were no cutbacks in Education. There was no cutback at all in the allocation for Health. There was no real shrinkage in a sense, Sir, in the scope of the public sector, beyond certain-adjustments in the Capital expenditures.

The point, Sir, is that if you analyse the situation, you • will see that in 1981 the build-up in the fiscal deficit resulted from the Capital budget The major adjustment that was undertaken, and the House must remember this, was a major re-adjustment in the scale of Government's Capital programme. There was no consequential adjustments whatsoever in the delivery of public services in this country. If you were to check the records, rather than speaking so *sotto* voce in the House, you will see that the adjustment was made not in the quality nor the volume of services, but on the capital programme.

At the time when we had a programme with the International Monetary Fund, there was a dire prediction that there would have been a devaluation, and a consequential reduction in Government Services.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Five minutes?

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not mind him. You have until 7. IS p.m. man.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Nothing, Mr. Speaker, has materialised to give substance to that particular set of economic projections which were unfolded before the people of this country.

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I want, Mr. Speaker, to address the fourth broad area that I adverted to at the start of my presentation this morning. The Opposition is very concerned that the Government seems to be embarked, if one is to read very carefully the veiled statement of the Minister of Finance, on a programme in which it is going to visit on the people of this country another increase in taxes. The Prime Minister has spoken about his need for revenue stimulation to close the fiscal deficit on Current Account, and we would in consequence have to contemplate, if we follow him on his words, that a very sizeable tax package in the same order and magnitude as the tax package of last year will have to be imposed upon the people of this country. 4.55 p.m.

The tax package of last year was one which took back from the wage earners of this society a lot of revenue in the form of indirect means of taxation and levies. As a result, Mr. Speaker, the basic mal-distributions that would have already been built into- the initial tax cuts of 1986 would surely have been worsened by the way in which the

Government went about taking back revenue last year. The initial tax cuts could only have worsened the distribution of income in this country. Let there be no doubt about that, that persons at the top benefited more than persons at the bottom, and there is no question now that the shareholders in the corporate sector also benefited to an incredible degree.

The whole thrust of the 1986 tax changes was to take back some of the income from wage earners. I am saying that in the prevailing climate of the time, when the wage earners of this country have been already called upon to cough up almost $60 million in tax increases, it would be unconscionable for the Government this year to come and impose an additional tax increase on them on the scale that the Minister of Finance seems to have in mind. Let the growth of revenue in this country come from economic growth.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, again in accordance with the prior arrangements made, the time has come for there to give Your Honour some relief, and I move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.30 p.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 530 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 5.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. The

honourable Member for St. Peter.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (RESUMED)

APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988 (CONT'D)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I was at the stage, and I shall press ofy of making a general point that the implied intention of Government, as stated by the Minister of Finance in his statement that he would be looking this year through revenue stimulation to cover the Current Account deficit, which now stands at $48 million before allowance is made for Civil Service increases and other increases in Current Expenditure, is a position which the Opposition regards as an entirely misguided position by Government which will harm, rather than help, the economic position of Barbados.

It is our view that, for the immediate future, increased Government revenue should come from the growth of the economy rather than from increases in the tax rate. The implied intention by Government to pursue a reckless policy of tax increases, consequential upon those which it has already put in effect in the financial year 1987-88, has to be discussed very soberly against the background of what it will require to induce growth in this economy, and, by association, what Government has done and has not done to make this growth realisable.

The Minister of Finance has failed in his analysis and presentation to this House to outline either a development strategy or a growth strategy on behalf of his party, and by association on behalf of the people of this country. We knew before what the intent of the Democratic Labour Party's economic policies were. We knew, for example, that there was a hope that a combination of reinvestment of retained earnings, together with an increase in domestic spending, together with the putting in place of institutional changes that could fuse investment planning with export development, was the former policy of the Democratic Labour Party.

We on this side can entertain misgivings about the content, the philosophy and the spirit of that policy. But at least there was a policy. The same, however, cannot be said now, and it is very important that the Prime Minister made sure not to couch his discussion of the likely outturn of revenue with any statement regarding the likely performance of the economy, as one would normally expect in circumstances such as these.

Mr. Speaker, when one begins to speak in terms of revenue increasing from $716 million to $753 million without a change in the {ax rate, implied in that must be some concept of the growth of the economy, and also implied in that must be some set of measures at the level of specific development policy, at the level of fiscal policy and at the level of institutional arrangements, to bring about that rate of economic growth. That really has been the saddest part of the presentation by the Minister of Finance. We do not know what is guiding the Democratic Labour Party now that it has departed from the economic path that was set by the fiscal rearrangements of 1986.

What we do, however, know, Sir, is that there are already a number of important policy initiatives taken by the Democratic Labour Party which will- serve not to brighten, but to reduce the prospects for growth. To begin with, it is a mistake of major significance that the Democratic Labour Party has chosen this point in the country's economic development to increase interest rates. 5.35 p.m.

I make bold to say to this House that if it was possible for us to relive the experience between 1981 and, certainly, 1983, there would have been simply no way that we would have allowed interest rates in Barbados to increase. While serving at the Central Bank as a director, and the records will show it, I insisted that the policy of high interest rates was a policy that had no relevance to Barbados. I stress that point, that during the time that I was a Director of the Central Bank, we made sure that those interest rates had to come down.

Mr. Speaker, interest rates in Barbados effect this economy at a cost, and the argument that capital flows in and out of Barbados can be affected by adjustments in interest rates is an argument that has, and bears, no relationship whatsoever to our particular reality. People will not bring hard currency into an area such as Barbados, which has a non-convertible currency, out of a desire to speculate about interest rates. So the argument that has been advanced at various times, that it is necessary for us to raise interest rates so as to stem the outflow of capital or to provide a basis for the inflow of capital, is a spurious argument that is entirely without economic merit As I said, nobody brings hard currency into an area that has a non-convertible currency, because they are concerned about the relationship between interest rates and interest rate differential. They will be more concerned with political stability, and confidence that they repose in the country's development objectives and in Government's economic policies.

To go further, Mr. Speaker, the existing situation as regards international interest rates cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, suggest that Barbados has any remote justification for moving its interest rates upwards. If the argument is that one must maintain a slight difference, or some difference, between domestic interest rates and foreign interest rates so as not to provide a basis for capital to flow out of Barbados, then it should follow as a natural corollary that we would increase interest rates in Barbados if international interest rates are also increasing. But the truth is that international interest rates are not increasing. International interest rates, particularly those set in the United States market, have been falling. So by the very logic that the policy sets itself as a guiding principle, the policy can be shown to be sadly deformed. The increase in interest rates takes place at a time when they have not been changed by the Democratic Labour Party for almost 22 months.

In the course of the Budget Debate, I will read letters in this House of Assembly from the former Prime Minister, Tom Adams, to the Central Bank asking very serious questions as to why was the Central Bank not advising him to bring down interest rates in this country, because he was very conscious that in the Barbados economy, the interest rates play a role in economy, the interest rates play a role in economic activity as a cost. They are a cost to the public sector and, hence, can affect the level of Government expenditure. As well, Mr. Speaker, they are a cost to the private sector, which must show them as part of its overall operating cost, and to that extent they will affect the competitive position of the Barbados economy.

Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a consensus that Barbados must not pursue exchange rate adjustment as a means of addressing the problem of competitiveness of its exports. It, therefore, follows, Sir, that we have in areas other than exchange rates to ensure that nothing at all is done to put our exports, which are already in a parlous state, in an even more disadvantageous position. And I am advancing to the House that I cannot perceive the elements of a growth strategy by Government when the first thing that it has done this year, by way of the enunciation of any economic policy, is to increase interest rates in Barbados.

The immediate and direct impact of that will be that those producing enterprises which are already under stress will find themselves even under greater stress. The Government will find that its own cost of operations will increase if this year, in the absence of having secured any external financing, it has to go to the market in a big way to find means of financing a deficit of over $230 million.

The rationale of interest rates being used as a way of stimulating savings is also a policy that is entirely without merit. There has been a tendency on the part of the Barbadian people to save without reference to what the level of interest on saving deposits happen to be at any time. Indeed, Sir, the numbers are very enlightening. In 1985, the total savings in Barbados increased by over $30 million. Between January 1986 and May 1986, before the tax cuts, savings increased in Barbados by over $50 million, and for the entire year, 1986, savings increased in Barbados by, I think, in excess of $100 million, at a time when one could not say that a variation in interest rates was being used as a stimulus to increase savings.

I cannot, for the life of me, Mr. Speaker, understand how Government intends to induce growth in the Barbadian economy this year if is going 'to pursue a policy that puts our exports in an even more uncompetitive position, that increases the general cost of doing business in this country, and a policy that puts a penalty on every small businessman, every service producer, every shopkeeper and every small person in Barbados as a whole. The Government has to tell this House what its growth strategy is, and we cannot at all in this House be satisfied that any part of that growth strategy will have to do with an increase in interest rates. I want to urge, in the interest of the growth of the Barbados economy, that immediate steps be taken to

reverse that policy that had absolutely no merit nor foundation.
5.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to be talking in terms of a growth in the Barbados economy this year, the operation of institutions such as the Barbados Development Bank has to be looked at, and looked at with great care. The manufacturers of this country have a real case in arguing that access to financing from the Barbados Development Bank is emerging as a serious problem confronting their expansion prospects.

The numbers are illustrative. At May, 1986, loans by the Barbados Development Bank to small manufacturers stood at $1.588 million. By November of 1987, which is the period for which information is most immediately available, loans to small manufacturers had declined from $1.588 million to $1.527 million. So rather than there being additional help for the small manufacturers in Barbados through the facilities existing at the Barbados Development Bank, there has been a reversal, Mr. Speaker, in the total amount of financing secured through that particular mechanism.

There has also been a decline, Mr. Speaker, in credit extended by the Barbados Development Bank to large manufacturers. At the end of May, 1986, the Barbados Development Bank had loans outstanding to the large manufacturers of $31.67 million. By November of 1987, which I am saying is the period for which information is most recently available, loans outstanding amounted to only $26.7 million.

We are speaking in this country, Sir, of the need to have a resurgence in economic activity, the need to bring the small manufacturers and the large manufacturers back into the act. But the principal institution from which they should be expected to get concessional financing at reasonable rates of interest is in the process of cutting back its allocation of credit in this critical part of the domestic economy. When I say, Sir, that this Government does not have a growth policy, the evidence is conclusive in bearing out the point.

In relation to Tourism, Sir, there has been no change in the amount of, credit extended by the Barbados Development Bank to that important sector between May, 1986 and now, despite the fact that one would anticipate that, given some of the cash flow difficulties being experienced by the sector, an infusion of credit would have served to improve the prospects and the functionings of the tourist establishments, both large and small.

Before the Barbados Labour Party left office, it had instituted a programme of refinancing a lot of the existing debt on behalf of not only tourism, but also manufacturing. But the numbers that one is seeing would indicate that that institution is reneging on that particular responsibility. The data suggest that it is now being run in accordance with rules of commercial banking that have nothing whatsoever to do with the development imperatives of this society, and I think perhaps the time might have come for us to nationalise the Barbados Development Bank. •

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am begging you to nationalise

Mr. Speaker, I had spoken about the position as regards small manufacturing.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Bring it under national control, because the leadership seems to be spaced out somewhere in the Far East!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please!

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have spoken, Mr. Speaker, about the sad and sorry position as regards the lending policies of the Barbados Development Bank in relation to manufacturing and tourism. But there is a wide conglomerate of small service industries in Barbados, extending from shopkeepers, hairdressing establishments to boutiques and so on, which have become in recent years one of the very important additions to this country's economy, and one of the very important sources of employment generation in Barbados. It has also, Sir, emerged as a source of indigenous entrepreneurship, the small man going out, with help from the Development Bank, and setting up his own little establishment, employing a few people and contributing to the widening of the services in this society.

It behoves us, therefore, as a matter of national policy, to ensure that that particular trend to develop the small service business sector in general continues to be part and parcel of the overall development of Barbados as a nation, and I ask tne House to reflect on what has happened as rogards the lending by the Barbados Development Bank to that important class of indigenous entrepreneurs. The facts, Sir, are that in January, 1986, loans to that class of business had reached $13.5 million, and by November of 1987, loans to the true small man in Barbados had declined from $13.5 million to $11.37 million. I have to ask, Sir, where can Barbados be going if the small people of this society, if the manufacturers of this society and if the tourism operators of this society, do not have a safe and secure place within the portals of the Barbados economy.

It seems to me that if they were to talk in terms of any serious growth rooted in the conduct of the just society, of which the Minister of Finance so ably speaks, he first has to convince us that these credit patterns at the Barbados Development Bank are going to be reversed. They have, Mr. Speaker, to be reversed. I remain unconvinced, therefore, that the Government knows what it intends to do by way of actual mechanism to make sure that the level ojf growth that we want in Barbados is going to be realised. I make that point, Sir categorically. This situation is sad. And it stems from the fact that people bring concepts developed in one particular environment and seek to implant them without satisfactory modification in a radically different environment to the country's economic distress. 5.55 p.m.

The overall lending by the Barbados Development Bank to this society has decreased from $102.5 million in March, 1986 to $95.3 million at November, 1987. The manufacturers of Barbados therefore have a real case, the tourism operators of Barbados have a real case, the small businesses of Barbados have a real case when they enjoin on Government the need at this critical time to come to their rescue in the face of this onslaught from the executive leadership of the Barbados Development Bank.

Perhaps we could ignore the significance of this very sad and sorry state of affairs if the trends in the commercial banking system were of such as to assure us that what the BDB was not doing, the banking system was doing. But what is their credit position, Sir? There has been a decrease in credit to tourism in the commercial banking sector between may 1986 a'hd November 1987 from $97.2 million to $90 million. There has been a marginal increase in credit to manufacturing, from $116 million to $121 million. There has been a massive increase in credit to the distributive trades from $115 million at May 1986 to $165 million by November 1987. The manufacturing sector, which is to go out and earn our foreign exchange, finds its credit increasing from $116 million to $121 million, but the distributive trades enjoyed a massive and whopping increase from $115 million to $165 million. And we are surprised, Mr. Speaker, when the Opposition points out that when you analyse the whole configuration of Government's economic policy, what we are having in this country is a set of in-built factors designed to increase the propensity of this ^i (jountry to import precisely at that time when this country *ean least afford it because our export earnings are dropping.

Entertaining and catering, again an area in which the small man tends to congregate, Sir a decrease, marginal, from $16 million to $15 million. Loan, however, for personal credit have increased in that same period from $175 million to $230 million.

I make the point, that Barbados is becoming more of a merchant economy, and we are financing our way to our economic ruin when we add the distribution of credit in this society now to what has happened as regards the distribution of personal income.

The maturity structure of the bank loans have also worsened. I am talking now about the banking system, and we have to go into these things. Loans of over five years have fallen from $280 million in May 1986, to $263 million by November 1987. So there have been less loans with a shorter maturity structure.

The Government must ask itself if it would want to be put in a position where the maturity structure of its debt was made to shorten at a time when the interest rates are increasing and you are having even tighter access to credit That, Mr. Speaker, to my mind suggests that sufficient control is not being exercised in the Barbados economy over the distribution and terms of credit, both concessional and commercial, for us to confidently speak this year of having the kind of economic growth that would allow the Government to by-pass a recourse to tax increases as a way out of its financial difficulties.

I have already, Mr. Speaker, adverted to what I regard as a malaise in the operations of critical economic institutions in Barbados which should be in the forefront of the charge for increased growth and exports. It distresses me, it distresses me very profoundly, Sir, that important initiatives that could have been of potential benefit to the Barbados economy, such as the Investment Council have 'gone nowhere. It distresses me as well, Mr. Speaker, that things like the Micro Business Window for Small Businesses came almost as an after-thought by Government in terms of its implementation, after it had been made to appear to be one of the most substantial aspects of Government's way forward during the course of the last financial year. The money was only $250 000. But it took the Government almost a year to give effect to its commitment to boost the financial resources available to that part of the economy where we can anticipate that people will look to their own devices and will put in train efforts to bring about their own economic salvation. These things are worrisome.

It is also worrisome - the Minister of Tourism seems not to like when I criticise his Ministry - that it seems to me that the Barbados Tourist Board has lost its way. It is my great regret that tourism comes so late in the Estimates this year that we are not going to have a chance to discuss Tourism in its fullness.

(Aside: Hon. *L.* B. SANDIFORD: You are responsible for all that.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: No, I did not put them at the end of the document.

The fact, Mr. Speaker, is that you cannot relax in your efforts to keep the Barbados product viable, even when international circumstances create the impression that all is well. And it is a distressing thing for the Minister to have to confess that a marketing plan for tourism is now only in the draft stages.

(Aside: He is coming, repeat it.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is an important deficiency that the Minister has to confess ....

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to warn the honourable Member that repetition is not permitted in these debates.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I was repeating it for the benefit of my friend and colleague, the Minister of Tourism, who had just come into the Chamber. 6.05 p.m.

The same malaise that one observes in Tourism is evident in important areas like the IDC and the Agricultural Development Corporation. It therefore behoves the Government to let us engage in a full and frank debate on the kind of institutional constraints which are now presently preventing Barbados from advancing at the pace in which it should be advancing.

I have already spoken at length about the export promotion effort and the way in which this effort has been defused, and the failure of Government to link investment planning with export planning. There is nobody in the Government right now, Mr. Speaker, who is using the breaks that are made possible by changes in the taxation regimes of other countries, including Canada, to start to identify potential export opportunities for this country. That whole area has been defused, and as for the services, it is instructive that the Estimates of Revenue for the financial year to come project that receipts from the foreign sales corporations will diminish rather than go forward. And the question that obviously arises is whether that is a position that pertains only to the foreign sales corporation or whether it is something that can be generalized to the service sector as a whole.

My co-point, Sir, is that because of the nature of the Estimates that are presented to the House, and the House is being called upon to Approve, one would expect that if there is going to be growth in the Barbados economy, such growth as is going to be generated is growth in which you will require a higher private sector input than we had in the year past Because the Estimates themselves, Mr. Speaker, imply that there is going to be a process of fiscal contraction, that Government Expenditure is supposed to be reduced and that the size of the fiscal deficit is supposed to be narrowed. It follows that once those things are put in effect, if they can be put into effect, that you would not expect that Government will contribute as much to GDP in the year to come as it contributed to GDP in the year past. There will be less Government spending, less Government activity, hence, Sir, our attention has to turn, in a very specific way, to the role of the private sector.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, I must press the Government on the point that there was a policy in place as regards the relationship between the private sector and the growth of the Barbados economy. That relationship, from all intents and purposes, has now been disembodied and discarded by the Government But it was a relationship which said that the private sector should be in the vanguard of growth. What are we.this year to expect as regards to specific measures that Government is going to take to make sure that the required rate of growth is generated in the Barbados economy on the basis of private activity, as is now called for?

The Opposition has already put the very eloquent and strong case that the call for a reduction in the stamp duties on raw materials is a call to which Government must harken at this time. Stamp duties were imposed by the Barbados Labour Party in Barbados, in part, as a defensive mechanism. We imposed them at a time when other Caribbean countries were imposing stamp duties on our goods, and by that mechanism were enjoying a competitive advantage in our markets for their exports relative to the position that our exports enjoyed in their markets.

Mr. Speaker, there is a commitment on the part of Caribbean Governments to reduce the Stamp Duty on Barbados goods. The question has properly to be asked: is the Barbados Government going to reciprocate and create the conditions Sir, for there to be a resurgence in international trade within the Caribbean region? My suspicion is simply that the Government now finds itself in a position in which it has no elbow room to make any concession to anybody. This is because revenues as compared to its expenditures are so limited that even to make an investment in the domestic economy in terms of waiver of tax, which could in itself give rise to a growth in exports and a growth in total income that will be greater than the tax concession, cannot be contemplated.

I must plead with the Government that as it looks at these Estimates, as it surveys the unfolding of the economic events in Barbados, it must remember that these Estimates fit within the context of the development of the Barbadian society. It must be remembered that Government

structured, merely to save an Administration from financial embarrassment. They must be conceived of with reference to broaden developmental perimeters, including that rate of growth which can be brought about, the best distribution of income, the best and most appropriate way of generating job, and the safeguarding of this country's external position, which I truly feel to be one of the most important parts of our status as an independent country. Because if I have to issue a final blast on these Estimates, it will simply be to say that they have been designed purely, Mr. Speaker, to save the face of Government; that the intended tax increase is designed purely to rescue Government from the financial distress of it own manufacturing.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: He spoke about revenue stimulation.

In conclusion we now need to hear from Government a statement of broad economic policy, including a statement of fiscal policy, that bears some reality to the contemporary situation of the Barbadian society.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for your great patience, and I look forward to continuing this debate in the second session today.

Applause.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, in the half an hour or so available to me, I certainly cannot attempt to respond to the many thousand of points raised - the philippic that has just come to an end after, some six hours or so. However, I believe that certain references were made to the period when I held responsibility for the financial affairs of this country as Minister of Finance, and I believe that I should first address those particular areas, not only in the public interest, but also as part of the record to ensure that any distortions should not remain unattended to. 6.15 p.m.

I think a lot of time has been spent in the discussion of the fiscal deficit. It is important to recognise that one has to address the question of the fiscal deficit. I could not possibly stand here in this House, as I address the House on this Appropriation Bill, and bypass the fiscal deficit when for so many years I have spent so much time, either by charts or otherwise, impressing on the Government the need to keep that deficit under control.

There is no question that, as the Estimates indicate, we have the peculiar phenomenon before us of the highest revenue yield in Barbados at any time, and at the same time the highest deFcit. It is important to recognise that the deficit represents, in fact, the total claims against Government arising out of its activities in respect of any given accounting period, and that deficits may arise by a combination of a variety of factors, either due to revenue failures, expenditure expansion or some combination of the two. What clearly, we must all address ourselves to is the fact that as we convert a deficit of $271 million this year and a projected one of $227 million next year, we will in fact be adding substantially to the National Debt by about $498 million.

I do not propose at this stage, although I shall do so later on, to reply to the strictures of the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) in relation to how that deficit is financed, but I formed the firm impression that he made an accusation of the printing of money. I can assure this Honourable House that at no time when I was Minister of Finance was there any printing of money in this country. And at all times when I was Minister of Finance of Barbados the Government was a net lender to the Central Bank of Barbados, not the other, way around. My one argument with the Central Bank of Barbados was how much they would pay us for the money that we have deposited with them, not the other way around.

The second point which I think the honourable Member for St. Peter failed to address in respect of the deficit is that it is important to determine whether deficits are large in relative or absolute terms. I do not think at any time during his speech he adverted to the relationship between the current deficit and Gross Domestic Product, the major parameters which we tend to apply in terms of assessing the desirability or otherwise of a deficit, a point which he had always stressed, I must say, when he was on the back benches of the Government

Much has been said about the revenue position in Barbados. There can be no question that as a direct consequence of the tax concessions in 1986, the pattern of Government's revenue would have changed in the direction that it would come principally from indirect taxation and less from direct taxation for a number of years, and as incomes expand, then the gap would close between the two. It will be necessary for whosoever forms the Administration in five, six or seven years' time to look again at the question as to the specific distribution of sources of income which they deem to be desirable at that particular time in the economic development of the country.

We are not speaking of a static situation. So it is no mystery that taxes on personal incomes have declined. They have declined because of a specific act of policy. Taxes in terms of the yield from profits of corporations would have increased because of the increased profitability of corporations. This is not a permanent feature of Government's revenue structure. It is one which will

change from time to time, and it will be up to the particular Minister of Finance at any given time to determine the particular direction in which he wishes to move the composition of the revenue structure of Barbados.

Another point that should be made is that it is a general assumption, and I think generally erroneous, that indirect taxes need necessarily be totally regressive. When you look at the kind of indirect taxes that we have in Barbados, it is possible to design a regime of taxation, based on the consumption practices of different groups within the society, from which you can actually evolve a progressive indirect taxation base. From a philosophical point of view, if that is the worry, it can be done. A lot of work is involved, but it certainly can be done. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning, 12 years ago, when there was an increasing emphasis on indirect taxation, there has always been a progressive element built into the indirect taxation regime in Barbados. If you look very carefully at things like stamp duties and consumption taxes, and the areas of exemptions, you will see that there is provision, even at the present moment, for some element of progressivity within the indirect tax structure of Barbados.

I think that the time has come when we have to deal with Government's revenue position in relation to the tax concessions. Government's revenue in Barbados in 1985-86, the last full year of the previous tax regime, was $648 million only. Government's revenue in 1986-87, the year in which the tax concessions were introduced, was $669 million. Government's revenue in 1987-88, the second year after the tax concessions were introduced, is projected at $719 million, and for 1988-89 it is projected at $753 million. 6.25 p.m.

The salient points are, firstly, that there has been no fall in revenue in Barbados despite the concessions. Secondly, it underpins the point that taxation does not necessarily mean revenue. You can come in here and impose all kinds of taxes and at the end of the year find that you get much less revenue. You can reduce taxes and get more revenue, or you can increase taxes, get increased revenue, get the same revenue or get less revenue.

The point is that; particularly in this society, there is a limited pool of money from which revenue can be derived for the Government, and if you take it from one pocket at one end, you are not going to get it at the other end. If you look very carefully at the years in which significant taxation has been imposed, we have had situations in Barbados when you have imposed taxes twice in the year, but the revenue has not responded. Basically, in Barbados revenue responds more significantly to economic growth than to artificial taxation measures by a Minister of Finance.

I have stated that the revenue has grown in absolute terms from year to year before and after the tax concessions. The question arises now: has there been any change in the average annual increment or growth in the amount of tax yield in Barbados before and after the tax concessions? The answer is no.

If you look at the Estimates in front of you, you will see a sheet which shows Government revenue over the previous ten years. If you did an average of that between 1981 and 1985-1986, you would see that Government's average revenue growth was only $36 million. And if you apply the same criteria to the revenue growth in 1986-1987 and 1987-1988, the revenue growth has been exactly the same $36 million. The point that I want to stress is what I stressed earlier, that all that has happened in the tax system is that you have shifted the money from pocket to pocket, but Government is, in fact, getting exactly the same yield. I dare say that no matter what the tax policy was in Barbados today, the revenue would not have been significantly higher, given a million dollars here or there, because there is only so much that an economy will yield.

We are talking of an economy yielding an 11 per cent increase in revenue over the past two years, when, in fact, there has only been slightly under 6 per cent growth in revenue. The revenue yield has been twice what the growth in the economy has been. And as far as I am concerned, I think we should be thinking in terms down the road of looking at when we can, at the right time, relieve further tax burdens on the people of Barbados. I can see absolutely no case for any significant increase in taxation in Barbados. If there is a case, it is certainly not for revenue reasons, because, as I said, if you go back and look, if you had kept the 1986-87 April Budget in place, you would have got probably about $684 million last year, and you may get somewhere between $720 and $740 million this year. There is no more that you would have got.

Think of all the tax measures which were introduced between 1981 and 1986; you still ended up with an average increase of only $36 million. These are things that we must reflect on. I spend a lot of time doing analyses of tax yields in Barbados, and not only as a hobby. Of course, when I was Minister of Finance and Shadow Minister of Finance in this House, it was most important that you got some idea of what has happened in taxation down the years.

Under the present tax regime, I think $753 million is projected for the next year. It is probably a bit more or less. I think you are going to get no less than a $20 million increase under the heading "Taxes on Income and Profits", for the simple reason that I do not think that the tax refunds this year were much in excess of $40 million, and oniy $10 million more than the average, hence, we could not be projecting revenue at $719 million.

Next year, those refunds will drop by at least $20 million because of the new tax rates. Persons earning $15 000 would not have paid any taxes and, therefore, they cannot be claiming any refunds. So taxes under that Head alone would rise by about $20 million, and for the first time, you will see the full impact of the indirect taxes which were imposed in the last Budget. I want to stress this, because I made this error again and again when I was in Opposition.

Each time there were significant increases in indirect taxes, we made the charges that they were inflationary and that they would bring in far more revenue than the Minister of Finance indicated. When you got the final outturn, it is never in the year in which indirect taxes are imposed that you see the full impact of those taxes, for the simple reason that Barbados carries a very high level of inventory and it is not until that inventory is totally exhausted - and it takes about a twelve-month period - that you get the total impact of indirect taxes. For example, the Stamp Duty increases which were introduced in 1984 were not seen in Government Revenue until 1986-1987, because the inventory to which they would have applied had not been exhausted until that particular point in time. Whatever the state of economic growth in Barbados this year, there is one thing you can be sure about, that Government's revenue would climb by at least another $50 million quite spontaneously.

You are talking, Mr. Speaker, of increases in revenue somewhere in the region of $100 million on an annualised basis in a two-year period. What more taxes can you expect to get? Short of expropriation, I do not see how much more you are going to extract from the Barbados economy, and I wish to repeat that taxation does not necessarily mean increased revenue. It can mean a whole lot of other things, because one thing you can be sure about is that any form of taxation in the Barbados economy reduces the prospects of economic growth. That is a given, a fundamental, and if you look through the history of this economy over the past 20 years, you will always see that in those years when there have been significant taxation, you always get a reversal of growth effect. It is a historic fact, not that Barbados is peculiar. Most economies behave this way, but Barbados is peculiarly sensitive in that particular regard.

The actual projections for revenue in the Ministry of Finance when I was there were $,720 million. We anticipated that you would get an average yield of revenue of $60 million a month and that the revenue would come in somewhere around $720 million. What the honourable Member did not spot in the Estimates in that part of the increased revenues which were subsequently incorporated in the Budget were included in Non-tax Revenue. 6.35 p.m.

You should have spotted that. If you look through any Estimates, you should be able to pick up the areas where there is a likelihood that taxation would come from. So it was not $698 million plus $50 million, it was $669 million plus roughly $50 million that we were aiming at, $720 million. That was the revenue projection, certainly up to July, and it is still the projection.

I want to make it quite clear that the deficit that we have is due to expenditure. If you want to deal with the problem, you just have to deal with it. You have a budget, and one of the fundamental things you have to do is to determine what level of expenditure the country can safely afford. You have political demands for expenditure, you have social demands for expenditure -1 do not have time to go into these on a philosophical basis - but you also have economic demands, and you must fix expenditure at a level that is not harmful to the economy.

You must ask what is the level of expenditure that the economy of Barbados can afford, and then you operate from that basis. Can we afford expenditure-at the level of $990 million? Can we afford expenditure at the level of $980 million? My own view is, and I may be quite wrong, that that represents too large a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product, and it is a fairly fundamental index that eventually can generate problems in the economy, and I would urge that steps be taken to try to bring expenditure in line with the more fundamental indices of economic growth and inflation.

Current Expenditure grew by some 17.9 per cent in 1987-88, whilst the economy grew, as far as I know, by about 1.5 per cent. If you look at the Capital Expenditure, Sir, you will see that it was kept in reasonable line, about 7.2 per cent. This has been an area where there was clear evidence when we assumed office that there was a major explosion in expenditure and it involved a complete restructuring of the Capital programmes, postponement, deferment and even the abandonment of some Capital programmes, as set out very clearly in an answer to a Parliamentary question which I laid in this House in response to the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons). So the problem clearly is not one of the Capital side. Capital Expenditure was kept within reasonable limits. The problem has been in our Current Expenditure side.

I heard the honourable Member for St. Peter making a very serious accusation today that a major cause, or one cause, was deferred expenditure from the previous year. I think I know where the honourable Member got that information or suggestion from too.

Let us look and see what are the realities of what we are talking about. The average expenditure growth in

Barbados between 1981 and 1986 was only $38 million a year. If you are talking at any time of any kind of roll over or deferment in terms of payables, it could not possibly be in excess of $38 million. That is the first point. The second point is that in 1985-86 expenditure was $663 million and in 1986-87 it was $685 million, an increase of current expenditure, and in 1987-88 it was $814 million.

I have also heard it said that there was a suppression of Current Expenditure in the fourth quarter of last year. That is also a false accusation. If you look at the patterns of Government for the four quarters of last year on Current Expenditure, you will see that in the first quarter $151 million was spent, in the second quarter, $172 million; in quarter three, $176 million; and quarter four, according to the usual pattern in Government expenditure, $186 million, the highest expenditure, $35 million more than in the first quarter of last year.

But what is not often realised is that the Accountant General of Barbados has a responsibility to bring to book all expenditures and charges against revenue occurring in a given year, and he does not close the books until around the middle of May. Therefore, any expenditures, as distinct from commitments, made during that period would have been brought to book, and that is why you always find that when a Budget Statement is made early in April, and when you get the final outturn of the Accountant General, there is always a discrepancy between what the Minister projects as revenue and what the Accountant General says was the actual revenue. It is the same for the expenditure, and this can vary by as much as $15 million, $20 million, $30 million in the past, so that you are not talking about expenditures, you are talking about commitments.

The next point I wish to make is that at the end of the financial year, Government has payables and receivables. In 1986-87, we found payables and receivables, and in April of this year, you will have payables and receivables. The point I am trying to make is that that kind of flux is a constant in a mathematical sense in Government accounts, and therefore, does not significantly influence the deficit from year to year. It just cannot happen, unless there is a major breach of the Financial Rules, the Constitution of Barbados and under the laws under which we operate. I would like to get those points clear.

There is no point my accusing my predecessor in office of leaving payables behind, or leaving this and that behind, because I know he cannot leave it behind. He can only leave those things that did not come to the attention of the Accountant General, things like billings and so on and that cannot amount to more than about $10 million to $12 million in any given year, or a worse case scenario, it cannot amount to more than the average growth of expenditure over a projected period in the pre-existing five years. I want to stress this, because there is no point, if we are going to address this deficit, not to try to find out exactly what happened.

I have here in my hands - it is already a document of this House - the Accounts and Statement for the month of September of the Accountant General of Barbados. It shows that at September 30, a half year, the total expenditure of Government was $379 million, which would have included some $26 million in backpay in the first six months, and most certainly would have included any left over, like the $12 million that I talked about which would have come out in 'Jie wash in the first half of the financial year. Based on that, if you subtract $26 million from $379 million, you are left with $353 million, you multiply that by two, you are left with $700 million, add back the $26 million, you are left with $726 million, and our projection at that time was that expenditure should be in the region of about $730 million to $740 million. Based on the supplementary in relation to the Board of Tourism and $9 million in relation to the Parks and Beaches Commission, we felt that a worse case scenario would have been that your expenditure could have gone to $750 million, which would be consistent with the average growth in expenditure over the year, and taking into account the salaries and so on, the fact that we had twin payments in that year. So I think that based on the mathematical analysis, as distinct from what people might tell you, what they want you to hear, and come and tell the Opposition things that do not make sense and then you get up and repeat them, it is quite clear that we have to look and identify those areas of Government expenditure. 6.45 p.m.

The Democratic Labour Party's policy is rooted in restraining the growth in Government expenditure. In the first year, we said that we would reduce current expenditure by 2 per cent which we-did from $701 million to $685 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member has about one minute more.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is not cutting back on expenditure. It is keeping expenditure growth in line with the rates of inflation, and with the rates of output and productivity within the society. I believe that this can still be done, and I will urge on all my colleagues to try fteir best to see whether or not they can get the expenditure back in line with those major indices, and the deficit that is so much talked about will be self-closing in due course.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. H deB. FORDE (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing to be said of the

honourable Member who has just spoken, it is that, like Pontius Pilate, he has washed his hands of all of these things. His defence has been limited to the period up to September last year, and of course, it is a very significant date in his history as Minister of Finance.

But the Honourable Member must not simplify the problem in that manner, and just run away from it without accepting collective responsibility.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It was not avoiding collective responsibility, which would be a serious charge. The thrust of my argument was that the basic trends are there whereby the expenditure can be held within the growth ranges which I suggested.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member is still a member of the Democratic Labour Party Government He may not now be sitting on the front bench, but he played a very leading role. It was not only in the policy of the supply side economics, which was enunciated today in this House by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), he also played a very significant role in the implementation of that policy, certainly up to September 1987. And the effects of the policy are still being felt in the economy of Barbados today. The honourable Member must not blind himself to that fact.

The honourable Member has done a simplistic analysis of the revenue yield in Barbados and he has conveniently lumped to the revenue growth of 7.9 per cent, $45 million which was placed into the Consolidated Fund from the levies, the Transport Levy, the Health Levy and the Training Levy.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Let me give him the exact figures, Sir, because the honourable Member wants to know which ones came in. If you take those funds out of the revenue yield, the honourable Member will see that his figures are not accurate.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation, Sir: The Transport Levy is not part of the revenue of Barbados in respect of the Consolidated Fund.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is the Transport Levy.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In respect of the Training Levy, we are talking about $3 million. All the surplus of the Health Levy, since 1985, was part of the revenue of Barbados. So you are talking about $6 million.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: For the benefit of the honourable Member, Sir, we are talking about $7.8 million on the Training Levy, $28.3 million on the Health Levy and $7.9 million on the Employment Levy. So the honourable Member would realise that about $44 million to $45 million of that revenue of which he spoke is in levies, and that, therefore, if he looked at his figures for growth, he will find that the 7.9 per cent in growth, of which he spoke, did not materialise in revenue.

Sir, there is another statement of the honourable Member that is extremely interesting, although it came very late in the day. He said that really all that was being done was shifting money from pocket to pocket, and that that was the effect of the tax changes.

Sir, it is that shifting that concerns us on the Opposition side very seriously, because we have always argued that the supply side type of programme implemented by the Democratic Labour Party was a tremendous shift in monies from the pockets of those who were worst off in the society to those who were better off.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation, Sir: I was talking about the composition of revenue at the time. When I spoke in relation to pocket to pocket, I was talking of pockets in terms of revenue compositions, not in terms of ownership of money. If you do not understand it, you do not understand it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The composition of the revenue is made by taxation. The honourable Member said that he moved from a position of direct taxation on incomes to indirect taxation on goods, particularly imported into this country and to a limited extent, on services. That was the context in which he spoke and which I understood him to speak. Therefore, if you were shifting the burden of taxation, you had to look from where you were shifting that burden and to whom you were shifting the burden. And we have always contended on this side that if you shifted the burden in the way you purported to do, you were penalising those at the lower end of society.

Sir, the statistics bear us out on this. The honourable Member may boast as much as he likes that there has been an increase in corporate profits and as a result the yield from the Government's revenue from corporate taxation. But the honourable Member has to concede that there has also been an increase in the revenue which is available to the better off in this society. And one of the serious allegations against the honourable Member's tenure as Minister of Finance has-been that those who are worst off in the society profited less from his tax measures. And nothing

that has happened in the last 18 months can undermine that serious stricture against the Government. In fact, it has happened in the context of the Government, at the same time, running up the worst deficit that has ever occurred in this country's history.

Sir, the honourable Member simplifies his case by saying that if you take the half year to September 1987, in those circumstances he was on target. But he stops short at that stage, and does not explain to us why then the Government, of which he is part, has run up this tremendous deficit. Furthermore, he said that there is no case for any significant increase in taxes, certainly not for revenue reasons, and I would expect that his reading and analysis of the economic situation varies considerably from that of the Honourable Minister of Finance as to the direction in which future policy must go.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: What is your direction?)

Laughter.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Next year you are going to hear that.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not listening to asides. I am hearing the honourable Member.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I would have expected him to add some flesh to his argument. Tell us the reasons why he feels that his Government has created such a large deficit in the history of Barbados. He has conceded that Capital Expenditure has been controlled, and I want to spell out the implications of that. I am paraphrasing here, Sir, but he said that it has escalated beyond what he had forecast in his Budget, before the resignation, and beyond what he would have considered reasonable in the context of Barbados. Therefore, I have to say that the honourable Member, without giving the reason, is implyingly criticising the Government for the escalation which has occurred, and rightly criticises them for the escalation. But I make bold to say in this House that the honourable Member was as much part of that escalation as any other Member who sits in the Cabinet or on the front bench. One has to accept these responsibilities. 6.55 p.m.

When the Opposition forecast last year that the deficit would be between $268 million, I think we said, $274 million, and the honourable Member for St. Peter was characterised by the present Prime Minister as a prophet of doom, always making false forecasts. I believe, Sir, that the figures have borne him out, and this House has a duty to recognise the serious analysis which he brought to bear then, as indeed he has brought to bear this year, on the economic circumstances of Barbados.

Sir, the Opposition does not gloat over the situation in which the Government finds itself. If we were gloating about that, we would be gloating at the very serious situation confronting Barbados tonight

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is obvious, Sir, that the Government is really very excited. Even the normally cool Deputy Prime Minister is losing his cool tonight, attested to by the number of asides which he is forced to make.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is obvious that the full effect of one year of the measures implemented by the honourable Member has now taken their toll on this economy and there is a very serious situation confronting our country. We stand on our case, Sir, which is that the Government has mismanaged the economy since it came to power. And the charge which I make is mat it did that purely for electoral purposes.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Yes. The honourable Members well know from the debate which took place in here in April 1986 that the figures put forward by the then Minister of Finance, Mr. Bernard St. John, and the analysis by the then honourable Member for St. Peter, were accurate and were realistic. The honourable Members well knew that if they implemented their policies which they thought were sufficiently vote-catching, it would have been at the detriment of the economy of Barbados. When they came into power, if the economy was as bad, as I understand the Prime Minister to have hinted only obliquely in his address this morning, one would have expected at that time that the honourable Members would have delayed their measures, have come to the country and given the analysis of how bad that economy was, and then would have taken the corrective measures that were necessary. Either the economy was not that bad or the honourable Members must concede that the corrective measures which they said they took have not worked at all. They cannot reprobate and approbate in those circumstances.

We had the honourable Members coming into the House and boasting that within a couple of months they had implemented their fiscal measures of tax concessions, and forecasting that, despite the implementation of those measures, they would be certain that the economy would

advance in such a way that it will not be necessary in the future to bring additional taxation back. Within a short space of time, there was a reversal. The late Prime Minister was around. I remember him in last year's Budget speaking and saying that he was not a disciple of supply side economics. He had, of course, enough stature in this country that when he spoke, people would accept what he said without question sometimes. Obviously, he was a very concerned man. Having implemented the promise, it was necessary to go back on that promise - with the largest dose of taxation that was ever faced in this country - $59 million in taxation! And despite the $59 million in taxation, the Government finds itself tonight in a situation where the honourable Member for St. Michael South, the Prime Minister, must say that he has to stimulate revenues in the second phase of this process!

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Euphemistically, we are being told that we can expect a massive dose of taxation in order to close the gap between the revenues that Government has forecast it will collect next year and the expenditure to which Government has committed itself.

In a very sober manner, the Minister also said that he has not got much room for manoeuvre, because 75 per cent of his expenditure is virtually fixed and, therefore, he only really has 25 per cent to spend otherwise, and it is a very difficult thing to cut in that 25 per cent. I was listening to him quite carefully. So he has very little room as well for controlling expenditure.

But, as I understand it, that is to be his case. However, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, whether he spells it out or not, said that the Government's problem is not revenue growth, but revenue expenditure - run away expenditure! He has impliedly, regardless of whether they like it or not, criticised the Government for allowing the Government's fiscal deficit to build up by bad management of the finances of the country. That must be the case that he is putting in no uncertain terms.

Sir, I take the case seriously, because I take it against the background where the honourable Member is also saying that last year there was a cut back on Capital Expenditure in the last two years, a deferment of some of the capital programmes, abandonment of some, and a postponement of others. But it is by virtue of Capital Expenditure that this country's developmental process takes place. The developmental process may be assisted by expenditure on Current Account, to the extent that we need institutions and persons to be there to perform the tasks that are necessary, but it is to the Capital Budget that one must look if Barbados must grow. What really the Government's policy amounts to is, the Government has put a brake on growth and development, and in the process, it has put a brake on employment generating projects. 7.05 p.m.

We are not arguing here, Sir, about the size of projects as the Government made it appear at one time. We are arguing about the quantum of the resources of this country, whether they are generated by ourselves immediately, or generated by borrowings and then paid for out of other resources generated by ourselves. We are arguing about those resources which we are prepared in this House to commit to the development of Barbados, and in the process the creation of employment.

I regret to say that the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure are more than disappointing on the Capital side. The only new thing, outside of the gymnasium, that I can find on the Capital side is $4 million for factory space. There is nothing new at all. As a matter of fact, on the Capital side there has been a reduction, a considerable reduction, in major areas of economic activity.

The honourable Member for St. Peter has cited the cut on export promotion. We cannot allow the Government to get away from this, even if it must be repeated by the three of us on every occasion that we have to make that point in this House. It is totally unsatisfactory for a Government that is committed to export growth to generate foreign exchange and employment to find itself in two successive years, in both nominal and real terms, cutting back on one of the main institutional instruments for promoting growth in the sector.

Sir, the honourable Member made the point of what has happened to export promotion in the context of our trade. I want also to say this. If you look at the figures, our trade in CARICOM has come to a very sorry past indeed. I am saying that under two years of Democratic Labour Party Government the fall in CARICOM trade has been phenomenal. We are now in a position where the total amount of goods sold to Trinidad and Tobago in the two years of Democratic Labour Party Government hardly exceeds $27 million; it is $27.523 million. If the honourable Member wants the statistics, 'he can look in the Central Bank Report and he will find where we are getting the statistics from.

You now have a High Commissioner stationed in Trinidad. You have additional costs in Trinidad. You are supposed to have better relations with Trinidad and Tobago. You are supposed to have settled all the problems of CARICOM. Yet, you find yourself within two years doing worse than we have ever done at any time at all, even in nominal terms, on trade with Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is succeeding in misleading himself and, inadvertently, misleading this House. We have never done worse in the Trinidad market than when we exported $130 million in goods for three years and did not get one cent for it. The value of our exports was zero.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member is going to get up and talk a great deal of foolishness about never getting a cent from it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. Sir: I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition, experienced as ,he is in the ways of this House, knows that the use of the word "foolishness" in the way he just used it is unparliamentary. I draw it to his attention, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member should know that to say that we never got a cent for goods from Trinidad is false. He knows it, because he has had access, more so than many Members on the other side, to all of the figures in the Central Bank, and it was no point that he should make in this debate. He cannot shield the other Ministers who may be responsible for trade. Where are the 2 000 jobs that we were told were going to come from CARICOM trade? Why don't honourable Members recognise that Barbados' position in CARICOM has worsened under the Democratic Labour Party Government?

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Not true! You know that is not true, Henry man, don't start that!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member wants to say that it is not true. The figures are there, Sir. CARICOM trade in 1981 was 96.8 million. By 1984,....

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: 96 million what?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Dollars!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: In which direction?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member must go and read his statistics. By 1984, Sir, we had exported.....

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We had exported to Trinidad and Tobago....

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE:.....$100.9 million.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member said that the honourable Member should know that CARICOM trade was "96 million." Sir, that is a *non sequitur,* there is no such thing. It either has to be exports, imports or the total value. He cannot say the trade was 96 million and then behave in the unctuous way as if somebody is misleading him. He has to tell the House properly if he is quoting statistics, and he purports to do so, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: In 1981, we exported to CARICOM $96.8 million. The problem with the honourable Member is not only that he does not understand, he also, unfortunately, cannot express his misunderstanding.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Now, you know nobody believes you.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: By 1984, we had exported $100.5 million. By 1986, it was $56 million; 1987, up to October, it is $41 million.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: The trend is there.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: What trend is there, Sir? The trend is that the fall has continued. Under the honourable Members the fall is there. That is what I want to tell them, Sir. The honourable Members came to power on the boast that they were going to reverse any trend in falls in trade. What has happened to your strategy and policy?

Mr. SPEAKER: There are too many uncalled for interruptions and I would prefer to hear the honourable Member in silence. Do I have to repeat that rule each time? I think honourable Members should know better than to interrupt a member unnecessarily.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I promise the honourable Members that when they speak I will not interrupt them, because I am sure they have not got anything to say. Interruptions only occur when it is biting, Sir, and therefore, obviously the Government has a lot to hide, despite its 24. It cannot keep silent to listen to the Opposition, despite the 24 they are. They are totally disturbed. In fact, there are only two members of the Government who seem to restrain themselves on this occasion; maybe three, Sir, one, in an uncharacteristic mood, waiting to pounce tomorrow, no doubt. 7.15p.m.

The position is that whether it be on the CARICOM front or on the external front, whichever front it is in trade, the Government has performed extremely badly. One would have expected that the Government by now would have come to grips with that particular problem, taken in hand

our pattern of trade overseas and set in place steps for reversing this trend. I regret, Sir, to say when I read these Estimates for the first time, I really was deeply upset at what was the pattern of expenditure as forecast in these Estimates in relation to stimulating growth *vis-a-vis* other sectors of the Government's expenditure.

Sir, I note very carefully that the Government came to power on a promise that it was going to reduce expenditure on Defence. Once again, this is very instructive.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: This year, there is no reduction in the amount of money which Government is spending on Defence. The Barbados Labour Party was severely criticised for its expenditure on Defence and Security. This year, the Government on Current Account, not on Capital Account even, is spending $21 529 370 on Defence and Security. What I have to ask the Government is, is there again here another change in policy on the part of the Government? Is the Government still wedded to the concept that it was going to reduce the Barbados Defence Force? I remember the former Prime Minister saying in the debate in April 1986 that part of the savings will come from a cut in the Defence expenditure.

The Government also said that another area of its policy would be the privatisation of several of the state enterprises. We are yet to see this policy implemented. When we come to discuss the state enterprises, we will see a pattern where state enterprises that were earning a profit on their operation have now gone into decline.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I refer, in particular, to the Barbados Water Authority, if the honourable Member wants to know, and the Barbados Port Authority. For the first time for a long time, the Barbados Water Authority is now in a position that it is running up a deficit on its operations. Instead of bringing revenue into the Treasury, it is in the position that it cannot pay anything into the Treasury. Contrast that position with Barbados External Telecommunications.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: On a point of order: What the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said about the Water Authority is simply not true. The first time an accounting deficit was registered at the Water Authority was the year in which the Barbados Labour Party was, correctly, unceremoniously thrown out of office. I will have the opportunity to deal with it, but you must not say it in the first place, when there was an accounting deficit recorded under the Barbados Labour Party. Speak the truth.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member cannot speak points of order that are not points of order. If he wants to make a speech, he must make his speech at the proper time.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The honourable Member is grossly misleading this House. I can say that this is not the first time that the Port is losing money. At no time has the Port Authority reported any losses. There is no loss at the Port Authority.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Let the honourable Member bring the figures. If the honourable Member can get up and say that, let him bring the accounts in here. I am saying that there is a loss.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sin He is the honourable Member who said that they were making a loss.

Mr. SPEAKER: But you cannot have two points of order.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: But I am making the point on what he just said, Sir. He brought the allegation. He must bring the figures, Sir, not me. If he is going to say it, let him prove it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am saying that you have to contrast the worsening positions that are occurring in Government state enterprises, including the deficit position, with BET.

. Mr. SPEAKER: Wind up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The interruptions that are coming from the other side....

Mr. SPEAKER: I have given you extra time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: This year the Honourable Prime Minister made reference to a supplementary of $3.6 million for Barbados External Communications but the dividends which the Government is going to get in this year, which he has admitted, as part of the non-tax revenue is $4 million.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister obviously does not listen. The position is that they are getting $4 million in dividends from BET this year, so they are getting much more in revenue than what was spent on aid for the shares in that company. For the benefit of the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, who seems to be

having difficulty this afternoon, the $3.6 million came by way of supplementary for investment in new equity, and part of the equity was in BET. The honourable Member must know that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am asking the honourable Member to conclude his speech.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am concluding my speech, Sir.

What has happened with the Government is that they have mismanaged the country in two short years, to the extent that they do not even have the confidence of the former Minister of Finance.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Again, Sir, in accordance with previous arrangements, I am at this point moving the suspension of this sitting to 1Q.OO am. tomorrow, Tuesday, March 15,1988.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until Tuesday, March 15, 1988 at 10.00 a.m., was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 7.25 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr. SPEAKER:

This sitting is resumed. GOVERNMENT

BUSINESS (RESUMED) APPROPRIATION

ACT 1988 (CONT'D)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we listened to a long and sober discourse from the Shadow Minister of Finance, the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) - those were your words, I am quoting your words - and I could not help but be tempted into replying to some of the comments that he made with reference to the outline of the Estimates.

First of all, I want to remind the honourable Members on that side that the Democratic Labour Party is a party founded on a philosophy for the advancement of poor and especially black people in this country. It is all right to get up and pour forth about figures. Figures bear a relationship to people, and that is very, very important.

He commented that the Honourable Prime Minister made an address that housewives could understand, and he thought that that was something rather *bazaar*. I want to remind him that the very first time the Lord and Master entered the Temple at the age of 30, it was recorded in the Holy script that he spoke with authority and not as the Scribes. A lot of us like to get up and pontificate, but sometimes we ourselves do not understand. The essence of greatness is to speak so that the most simple person can understand what you say. So you were paying a compliment to the Prime Minister.

I think we have to understand the environment in which we are operating, because it is important that in Barbados we keep a healthy environment economically and otherwise. He talked again about the collapse again of the Barbados economy. I happened to be listening to the news on something only a day ago, and I heard -1 do not know who is the author of the news - that the investors running from Panama are looking at Barbados as a place of investment. It is very significant that if investors in the world are looking to Barbados as one of the areas in which to invest money, it must mean that the people who invest their money and do studies deeper than the ones which you are doing, and I am going to get to that later, must think that Barbados is a safe place to come to. That is an important indicator.

You made a couple statements yesterday that I think .....

Mr. SPEAKER: I think you better say the honourable Member.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: The honourable Member for St. Peter made a couple statements yesterday that I must allude to. One was that he had sure information that this Government has not approached foreign Governments to raise loans overseas. As slight as that statement may have been, that statement. .....

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of elucidation, Sir: I never said anything of the kind. I never said that the Government had not approached foreign Governments, and the Record of the House will show this. I said the Government had not made any approach to foreign international markets. It is a different thing altogether, Sir.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Thanks for that correction. You said that they had not approached foreign markets for funding from overseas. If a Minister of Finance or a Prime Minister is approaching foreign agencies for funding, he does not necessarily have to take along a member of the Opposition. Those talks are supposed to take pl*u;e with confidentiality and trust. The point I am making here is this

that, indirectly, that statement implies that somebody in a confidential area is leaking information.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The honourable Member is imputing very improper motives to me, that I am conniving with some persons in positions of confidence as regards the disclosure of confidential information.

The Prime Minister of the country indicated last year that he was not proposing, Sir, to go to the market to borrow. If I spoke, with certain knowledge, I was speaking with the certain knowledge of the Prime Minister of the country and the Minister of Finance.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the point I make remains. I am not sure what he intended to say, but I know what he said. He said that he had sure information that the Prime Minister has not approach foreign agencies for funding....

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Up to this point)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: .... up to this point. Therefore, he is saying that whoever the Prime Minister should have, or would have, taken along with him would have to be the ones who are feeding back the information. That is a serious charge. But that charge is not an isolated charge.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation, because I do not want there to be any misunderstanding about what I say. And I am elucidating because I notice in one of the newspapers today that I was quoted as saying that income taxes are regressive and indirect taxes are progressive.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is a report in the *Nation* newspaper today. There ate some screws loose somewhere. I mean, this is now about the fourth or fifth time that you are getting that kind of report, that kind of misunderstanding and misreporting. I am not sure that it is all by accident.

I never said anything like that, and I am saying it on the floor of the House, and I am elucidating what I said. I never said that indirect taxes are progressive and I never said that incomes taxes are regressive. The opposite tends to be the case.

When the entire country hears this, the conclusion that they may come to is that the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance does not even understand basic tax principles or has a screw loose. And this is a newspaper that calls itself the *Nationl*

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not speaking with any anger. The newspaper does not issue any apologies or anything for any errors made in respect of what is said on the floor of this House. There are shareholders in that newspaper who get up in here and apologise for any statement if they state something that offends the House or anything like that. But the very newspaper in which they have investments does not apologise to anybody. But I am not asking for apologies. I simply want them to correct the errors they make.

I have made it quite clear, Sir. I said it in my speeches in London that I was not on any borrowing mission during the year 1987. I made that quite clear when I was asked about the nature of the missions, and I was speaking in relation to the year in which that particular visit to London was made. I want that to be absolutely clear.

I confirm what the Member for St. Peter is saying, that I said at that time, in that particular year, that I was not on any borrowing mission, because I was speaking about the mission that I was on at that particular time. I hope that is what you have said. But you are saying something else, and that is what the Member for St. Michael South East is correcting you on.

Thank you, Sir.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I will continue in that vein. I am talking about credibility and confidentiality.

There was another statement made by the honourable Member for St. Peter yesterday which, if he had not made that statement, I would have let the first statement go. But on Thursday last week a constituent of mine, an old gentleman, came to the office and said that he had been notified by the Welfare Department that the cheques would not be paid last week. I picked up the phone and called the Welfare Department and was put through to the Accountant's section. When I asked the Accountant - a lady's voice - why old people would not be paid, she said to me, - "It is your people's fault." That was the answer I got from a civil servant. I told her that I did not understand what she was talking about, because we came in Parliament last week for a supplementary. She went on to say, "And they will not be paid until next week anyhow." I further investigated, and I found out that there were some vibes coming back from that department. This is the department which, during the last Administration, delivered Welfare cheques in the Pine like berries dropping off a tree, and I will get back to that later. I tried to get in touch with the Minister that is in charge of the Ministry, and I finally spoke to the Prime Minister and related to him what had happened. The cheques went out on Friday, and I find it

very interesting that the honourable Member for St. Peter could get up in here and say that Welfare cheques were not paid last week. They were paid, but the plan was nipped in the bud. 10.10a.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order! The general theme that this honourable Member is pursuing is one in which he is accusing me of colluding. He has said that one of his constituents told him that Welfare cheques had not been paid. I am a Member of Parliament and I have constituents to represent. In the same way that one of his constituents told him, one of my constituents told me, and it is wrong for the Member to impute improper motives to me merely because I have said before the House something which is generally in the public domain. I find, Sir, that his line of argument is improper and I am asking you to rule on the point.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I had the same problem).

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I am deliberately spending some time on the honourable Member for St. Peter because I realise that the Leader of the Opposition has really decided that he would not take part in this debate. I came to that conclusion.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the honourable Member has obviously not slept at all, or not slept home, because he has come into the House this morning as though he is disturbed. I took part in this debate, intend to take part in the debate,'and take objection to the foolishness and folly that the honourable Member is talking.

Mr. SPEAKER: I certainly can confirm that the honourable Member did take part.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I apologise, Sir.

The honourable Member for St. Peter was asked to give his marathon discussion. So he found it difficult to come with a well-preserved, quality presentation. In his presentation, he made the comment that he is the author of a paper explaining why the Barbados Labour Party had to go to the IMF in 1977.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will not let this Member mislead the House. I have never on any occasion written a paper about why the Barbados Labour Party went to the IMF in 1977 or 1978. The Member must withdraw those remarks, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: The honourable Member for St. Peter yesterday said that he produced a paper explaining why ...

(Asides: No!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Whenever it was, he produced a paper. Ninety-nine per cent of papers that are being produced are thrown into the waste-paper basket anyhow, and I think that is the category in which that paper has been relegated.

When you look at this august Chamber, we have in this Chamber some of the most intelligent representatives to be found any place in the British Commonwealth. This concept about writing a paper is something that you tell Sixth Form students and First Form university students. We are not impressed by anybody who writes papers. I make that point to say that the honourable Member for St. Peter, during 1977, when the BLP went to the IMF, obviously was in Jamaica, but probably going to the IMF, too, - probably, I am not sure.

The honourable Member for St. Peter in the Budget of 1986, our first Budget, made this statement:

> "Overall, Sir, in 1976 the then Government (which would have been the DLP) was contemplating a deficit of $106 million in the context of a $700 million economy, a deficit of 14.6 per cent of GDP. The results, Mr. Speaker, are now history. By 1977, the country was in the hands of the International Monetary Fund."

You tried to explain that the reason for the Barbados Labour Party going to the IMF was something that the Democratic Labour Party did. But your Gamaliel, the person who was your tutor, the late Tom Adams, was the one who went to the IMF, and he stated in more than one Budget why he went to the IMF. In 1977, in the Budget Debate, on page 19 of the Financial Statement, Tom Adams said:

> "Even so, Government, in January 1977, took the precautionary steps of borrowing under the Compensatory Financing Facility of the IMF because of the anticipated shortfall in receipts from the exports of sugar."

So you do not have to write any papers. The Gamaliel explained precisely why he went to the IMF. He has nothing at all to do with the Democratic Labour Party, and you know that if it was anything to do with the Democratic Labour Party, Tom Adams would have explained it in all the details.

This is what he said in the 1982 Budget

"This was a direct result of the fall-off in receipts of our main export sector."

This is on page 5 - Balance of Payments. That is why he went to the IMF. And now you can come in here and try to rewrite history.

I understand that there is supposed to be a book coming out shortly trying to rewrite the history of Barbados and I think the focal character in it will be your Gamaliel. I understand the Leader of the Opposition has bought all the copies that are supposed to come out. But that is not going to rewrite the history of Barbados. But we have to be careful, because the honourable Member for St. Peter comes in here and flies in a rage and starts to lambaste the Democratic Labour Party and its policies.

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I know you are very upset But you have more lashes coming! Hold on!

When you come in here and try to ridicule the policies of the Democratic Labour Party, you must understand that the hallmark of the analytical professional is that you must be consistent You cannot come in 1976 and criticise the policy, and then come back in 1986 and say that because the policy was a policy put forward by your own party, it was a sound policy. 10.20 a.m.

Yesterday, you got up in this august Chamber and talked about the sound policies of the Barbados Labour Party.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Peter were ordered to be expunged from the Record by the Speaker.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: You spoke about the great contributions and the sound economic policies of the Barbados Labour Party, but I want to quote the honourable Member for St Peter again, from the 1986 Budget on page 38S2.1 have to do it, because I think we have to understand what is happening.

The honourable Member accused his own party of making financial errors and then having to go to the IMF. He criticised the policy of his own Minister of Finance, and now comes in here, two years later, and tries to tell us that the economic policies of the Barbados Labour Party were sound, hard policies which we should all follow. We have to be very, very careful, Mr. Speaker, how we get involved in that sort of retrospective. We must not be schizophrenic about our approach to anything, least of all, economic development of this country.

I started by saying that the Democratic Labour Party was founded on a philosophy of trying to uplift the masses.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: I recall yesterday that when the honourable Member was speaking, the honourable Member appealed to Your Honour on numerous occasions saying that he had a right to be heard in silence. Today he is sitting down, and he seems to feel that the law was changed last night instantly.

Sir, I am only drawing to the honourable Member's attention, through you that the Rules are for the just and the unjust alike.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take your point, but I have not heard the honourable Member for St. Peter for the morning.

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, often in this Honourable Chamber, I hear honourable Members from the other side make asides about wage freezes, which hit the headlines of the next day's paper. I have said already that that tactic is to intimidate people, because they recognise that people in Barbados are sensitive to certain issues. But the honourable Members on that side should be afraid to talk about wage freeze.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member has accused us of intimidating the people of Barbados. With respect, Sir, any statement made by an honourable Member in here must be taken with some form of *bona fides* on the assumption we have made statements, and I am objecting to the use of the phrase that we are intimidating people in Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I will uphold the honourable Member's point of order in view of the fact that I cannot accept that any honourable member in this Chamber would intimidate anybody.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the term "wage freeze" has been used on that side and it has hit the headlines of their newspapers. Everybody in the world today is sensitised to the IMF. The only time the IMF has been in Barbados, we have had to draw down from the IMF, was during the Barbados Labour Party's time. That is when Barbados was at its most perilous economic point. Everybody knows, it is no secret, that once the IMF is involved in a country, it spells the ruin of any developing country. Therefore, we'have to be careful how we throw out those kinds of terms.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: The Prime Minister yesterday accused me, and he has been reported on the front page talking about....

Mr. SPEAKER: May I make a comment at this point? I think there are many fraudulent points of order coming from time to time, and I am going to require of honourable Members to indicate which Standing Order is in breach, because that is the purpose of the Orders. If you can give me that, then I am'in a better position to better rule on the point of order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I just want to indicate, Sir, that the honourable Member....

Mr. SPEAKER: I have asked, I am going to insist, that Members say which order is being breached.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You want the point of order, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Which rule, which order? Mr. D.

A. C. SIMMONS: That he is breaking? Mr.

SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You want the numerical number or the content of the rule, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: It does not matter whether you give me the content of the rule or the number, but I prefer the number, in view of the fact that the Standing Orders are designed by numbers.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I want to deal with the content of the Standing Order, Sir. The honourable Member has accused the Members on this side of alluding to wage freezes and talking about wage freezes in this House of Assembly, and I wish to say it is untrue, a lie and misleading. I have never used the words "wage freeze" in here. I spoke of wage restraint, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is unparliamentary.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If it is not true, Sir, it is a lie.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure the honourable Member can use better phraseology than that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you mean like "lie", Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: You can use more parliamentary language.

Mr. D. A. SIMMONS: It is entirely inaccurate, baseless, without foundation and at variance with what is conceived to be the truth. I never said "wage freeze" in this House. I said wage restraint.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TATTT: I have heard you.) Mr.

D. A. C. SIMMONS: You heard who? *(Aside:* It!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There are three "he's" over here. You could only be the "it"!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir I am dealing with misleading the House. The honourable Member just got up on a point of order and sought to mislead the House, because he gave the impression that the honourable Member had accused him of a substantive speech. I distinctly heard the honourable Member say he has heard them in asides.

Let the record say that he said "I have heard them mentioning wage freeze in asides and then they become headlines." That is what he said. The honourable Member is misleading the House and he should know better. In any event, I have heard all three of them at some time or other use the words "wage freeze".

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: The Honourable Minister is making the point and winking at me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Am 1 to rule on winking as well?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I do not like men winking at me. I want you to rule on that

Never in a substantive speech, and never by way of aside, has anyone on this side talked of wage freeze. We have accused the Government of having a plan for wage restraint and we are not withdrawing from the position. I am not resigning from that.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I understand the predicament of the honourable Members on the other side, because yesterday the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made some comment about the people on this side being quiet and being ready to pounce, so I can understand the interruption.

To get back to the main theme of what I am saying, the honourable Member for St. Peter yesterday accused the

Democratic Labour Party of not being supportive of small business. I want to remind him that the biggest growth in small business in Barbados occurred after the first regime of the Democratic Labour Party, which small businesses were killed during the years 1976 - 1986, and a major industry in Barbados became receivership and close downs. That was a major industry in the early 80s, and that was only reversed after the defeat of the Barbados Labour Party.

Hotels were closed week on and week off, and people working day on and day off, for the first time in ten years have been working a full week. I had the opportunity, along with the honourable Member for St. Michael North East, (Mr. L. L. Brathwaite), to have been in Miami passing back through from Suriname, meeting a hotelier who is very well-known to the honourable Member for St. Peter. He told us that things were so good at his west coast hotel that he had sent some of his workers to Miami on vacation as a reward. That was last year, after the hotel industry had been complaining for years that they were almost in a state of being closed down. 10.30 a.m.

I find it passing strange that the honourable Member can get up and just rattle off figures. They just think about figures and do not think about people, because people are the most important factor in any instrument that Government has to produce in this Honourable Chamber.

We have reversed the situation such that the bad economic times are now receding. I know people complain about unemployment levels, and we have to look at unemployment levels, but there is something even more fundamental we have to look at, and it is the fact that businesses have stopped closing down and going into receivership, and that people who were underemployed for several years are now fully employed. That is a very important factor, and I think that it is a factor we must not overlook.

The honourable Member for St. Peter keeps talking about the Democratic Labour Party putting money back into the hands of big business. I say categorically that there are few western Governments which earn foreign exchange of themselves, and in most of the developing countries the major problem we have is the earning of foreign exchange. Foreign exchange is earned by the businessman. The businesses in this country are most suited at this time to get involved in the economic thrust for th§ import of foreign currency. That is a historical and economic fact One does not need to read John Kenneth Galbraith to know that Therefore if the Government of this country, the Democratic Labour Party, is going to take a chance.....

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

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS:....at trying to uplift the young and poor people of this country, the people who will create the jobs are the people who are best able to export into the international market. They would be the people who have got the infrastructure ready, therefore it comes as no surprise to anybody with an elementary knowledge of economics that those companies were given a priority.

The last thing I want to address is the point which the honourable Member for St. Peter spoke about yesterday about discriminatory concessions of corporation taxes. That is purely a matter of philosophy. One can say that a particular Minister of Finance will sit down and pick out ten or 12 corporations which he thinks may be well placed to earn foreign exchange to bring into the country and give concessionary corporation incentives to those companies. But one may take the philosophical position of saying that we will not discriminate against any corporation, we will give all the corporations like opportunities and at a stated time review the situation and decide which companies are functioning in the best interest of the country, earning foreign exchange, and then take a stand.

I will be back later in the Estimates to counteract some of the statement made.

I thank you.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Speaker, if the matter relating to the export manufacturing was not a very serious matter, one would almost find it amusing to listen to the honourable Members on that side get up in here from time to time and speak about export manufacturing, and try to tell us now all of the things that we.should do to revive an export manufacturing sector that the Barbados Labour Party Administration had a lot to do with in terms of its demise.

Mr. Speaker, I have said on many occasions that I am not satisfied that the Barbados Labour Party Administration had any serious programmes for the development of export manufacturing. Every time I say this, I can hear them saying look at INTEL, despite the fact that INTEL had plans to come here before they came into office. But I speak mostly of a development of local export manufacturers.

We need these foreign investors to come in here and set up, and in a large part they provide short and medium term employment opportunities. Many of them have been fairly labour intensive, so one is not saying that we did not benefit at all from those companies coming into Barbados. But we must also recognise what was the local value added, how much it cost us in terms of foreign exchange expenditure to get the income that we got from these companies. These are some facts that we have to look at, before we get up and use export manufacturing as a

political football, as it were, because, quite frankly, Sir, all I have been hearing from that side on export manufacturing in recent times has been what I call a political football, they are trying to tell us what we now should do to bring export manufacturing back into the fray, as it were, in terms of economic development.

If we are going to be serious about dealing with export manufacture, we have to first examine the agencies we have in place, which have to play a very significant role in the real development of this export manufacturing sector. I cannot understand how the Members on that side could talk to us about export manufacturing when they left us saddled - Sir, I am going to step on some corns - with a Director of the Export Promotion Corporation who it would take virtually dynamite to get him to move. The Barbados Labour Party Administration, weeks before the 1986 election, renewed the contract of that director and left us with him for another five years.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to warn the honourable Member that he is now trespassing on a public officer's rights, and the Rules do not allow you to speak in that way r.bout a public officer unless you had intimated to me that you wanted to do so.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Sir, the point I am making is that the Export Promotion Corporation is a very serious organisation. It has a very vital role to play if we are going to be able to improve the export manufacturing sector. I have on more than one occasion spoken with the Minister about the role that this organisation is playing, and the role it has played in the past. I have made certain recommendations, having had the experience and still having the experience, of exporting goods manufactured in Barbados, having been involved with the Export Promotion Corporation. There are certain things that we are going to have to do if we are really serious about moving export manufacturing ahead.

It has been clearly identified by all kinds of experts that one of the ways in which we are going to have to go is the Caribbean at large, and in Barbados specifically, if we are going to be able to penetrate those extra-regional markets that we keep speaking of, is to look at the particular niches. And if we are going to be able to develop that, we are going to have to ensure that we have not only the correct personnel, but that the programme is marching in step with what is happening in that marketplace, that we are marching in step with what is going on in the real world out there in terms of marketing. We will have to not only use it for good political rhetoric, but we have to seriously develop proper market research.

I am not satisfied, Sir, despite what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has said about the work that has been done in these extra-regional markets, that we are yet at the stage where we have the right kind of people in place to do the correct kind of market research that is absolutely necessary if we are going to determine what we can sell into these marketplaces, when we can sell it, and how we can sell it 10.40 a.m.

It is incumbent on us not to be side-tracked by the constant speeches and rhetorical statements, but to buckle down to the job of placing marketing people in these market-places in these third countries, meaning countries extra-regional to the Caricom area. Once that research is done properly and the markets are identified, there is a need for development, and that development has to be done in that market-place.

I recall that as long ago as, I believe, 1983, a former Minister of Trade, Mr. St. John, and myself and others were having discussions in New York about exporting. One of the recommendations that came out was that we should have our own warehousing facility, and the possibility of using CARICARGO was brought out by Mr. St. John, and there was a plan then by the then Barbados Labour Party Administration to use CARICARGO warehouses in New York, Houston and Miami, and use the Barbados Consul General's Office in New York, in particular, to set up this marketing arm. It would have been a marketing arm, as explained by Mr. St. John, that would have goods in place in the market-place, and people would go out there and literally pound the pavements and get the Barbadian goods sold, as is done by other countries, and successfully. We continue to speak of countries in the Far East which are doing a fantastic job in terms of exports, and we do not seem to understand that they are doing the things that are necessary to bring about these exports. ,

As I said, that was somewhere in 1983. The Barbados Labour Party remained in office for another three years. Nothing came out of it. I believe the only thing that happened, to be completely honest, was that a man was placed in New York from the Export Promotion Corporation. But when I saw him in New York a year later, and asked him for information on the CARIMEX Exhibition to get a mailing of list of people who would be interested in buying goods from the Caribbean, he said to me, "I have been here a year, but I am really training". So three years went by and no serious work was done to put that system in place. I believe that came out of what I have always said, that the then Prime Minister really did not have any serious plan for export manufacturing as related to the indigenous manufacturers in Barbados.

I have indicated to the Honourable Minister of Trade that it is still very important that we have this kind of facility set up in those market-places. The closest place to

home that I can think of that has so far done it, and done it successfully; is Jamaica. So we do not have to reinvent the wheel, Sir, it has been done, and done successfully, and Jamaica has already offered to give us any assistance we need in setting up our own operation. I was present when that offer was made, and I am appealing to the Minister of Trade to take a serious look at this area.

Only on Saturday just gone I happened to be in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, at the reception for the inaugural flight of Caribbean Air Cargo. One thing that came'through clearly was that the Canadian market, as I have said on many occasions, is virtually virgin territory to our manufacturers. Another thing that came through very clear was that in Canada, and we say that we are serious about exporting to these countries and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition often try to impress me that the BLP has done a lot in terms of making the way clear for us to export to Canada - there still is no one place in Canada, from the EPC or from any Government agency, relating to exporting. So I do not know what the honourable Member means when he said that they did a lot for us in getting into Canada.

I believe that Canada, like the United States of America, is a market-place, where if we do the correct - I underline correct type of marketing research, followed by serious market development, we can make an impact. And it has nothing to do with how much money you are spending now. I gather that the members of the Opposition seem to believe that we have to spend a lot of money from the EPC to be able to get these gains in exports. I do not necessarily share that view. I believe that the money has to be spent well. I think part of our problem is that we have not spent the money well, and when I say "we", I am speaking of Barbados. We have not spent the money well in terms of getting export marketing done.

It is all well and good for us to continue to believe everybody who comes here, as some Barbadians will say, "from over and away", saying that they are consultants and experts, and we pay them a large sum of money and they give us thick reports, and continue to believe that that is the beginning and the end of export marketing. I suggest, Sir, that most times, these reports are not even worth the paper they are written on, and that the money could have been better spent in terms of getting the kinds of assistance. I do not mean hand-outs. I am not saying that the indigenous export manufacturers should be spoon-fed, because I have often said that there is a lot of other training that has to be done for the very manufacturers.

The very manufacturers may need assistance in marketing training, in production training, in finance management. These are facts, and the honourable Member for St. Peter knows that when he was Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, he took it on himself - I will give him credit for it - to get a group of manufacturers together to discuss the problems that they were having and how the various Government agencies together could assist them in alleviating these problems. I believe he recognised that if we are going to solve the unemployment problem in Barbados, there is no one area that you can say will solve all of the unemployment problems. Every single area where there is a possibility of somebody having a job and earning money lawfully is important. But the only problem that the honourable Member had at the time was, as I said, which was clear to me, that there was no serious policy regarding the indigenous manufacturers by that Administration. The honourable Member would tell us, if he feels to, that he had serious difficulty with the then Minister of Trade. I will not repeat, Sir, the comments that the Minister of Trade made in front of about 100 manufacturers. But all I can say, Sir, is that when he said it, we were extremely disappointed that that was the Minister of Trade that we had to deal with. 10.50 a.m.

(Aside? Which one?)

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I am speaking of the former Minister of Trade, the one at the end of the Barbados Labour Party's Administration prior to the 1986 Election, Senator Tull. It was then clear to us, as manufacturers, that we had a very serious problem, because we had a Trade Minister, the Minister who we are supposed to relate to, who could not understand or accept what the Member for St. Peter was trying to do. This is why when I say that it was clear to me that there was no serious policy by that Administration, I can bring chapter and verse. There are many incidents that would bear me out on this.

It is all well and good for the honourable Members on that side now, and they may be doing this genuinely, to try to give us suggestions as to how we can correct the problems in the manufacturing sector. But let them recognise that the previous BLP Administration gave the manufacturing sector horrors at every twist and turn. Do not let us forget the past, because unless we examine carefully what happened to the manufacturing sector, we cannot honestly say that we are trying to assist them and trying to put them back on their feet. We have to understand what the problems were.

Most times I hear Members, even members of the general public, deal with the manufacturing sector on the basis of personalities, whether they like a particular manufacturer or not And they talk about substandard quality. They do not talk about the manufacturers that are producing high-quality goods that can past the tests in Germany, the United 'Kingdom, the United States and Canada. I, Sir, produce goods that go to all those countries

and pass all the rigid tests of their food and drug administrations. They are food items.

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I thank you for that.

Laughter.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I remember the former Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Brathwaite, repeatedly complaining about the quality of Barbadian-made goods in the Press; But never once calling us up, or calling the Manufacturers Association as a body, and sitting down with us and saying, these are the problems I see. He could not identify the problems. But all he was doing was towing the line, because it was clear to all and sundry at the time that that Administration had intended to behave that way at all times.

I would be very disappointed if any Member on that side now would get up and try to defend that past Administration and that behaviour, because that would only provoke me to come and give them chapter and verse. We cannot take serious sectors like the manufacturing and tourism sectors, which play such vital roles in terms of foreign exchange earning or foreign exchange preservation and employment, and use them as political footballs. If you want to do that, do that after all the things have been put in place so that they can start moving ahead.

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: It sounds like the honourable Member is saying Tom did it. I do not know.

Laughter.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, prior to 1976, there was an industrial revolution. We did a good job, I agree with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. There are a lot of people out there who would say so. There are several factories. In one year there were some 40 odd companies that closed down as a result of the lack of policy by the Barbados Labour Party Administration.

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: It is Shopkeepers Retail Mini Mart. You do not know that. I thought you said you are always on the street.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of a policy caused that kind of closure. Businesses that went from joiner shops to furniture factories under the Democratic Labour Party's Administration prior to 1976, more than half of them closed down during the ten-year period, particularly the last five years of the Barbados Labour Party's Administration. If the Honourable Leader of the Opposition wants to deny that, let him deny it and let him bring the facts. A reputable accountant in an accounting firm in Bridgetown had a paper on the number of factories which closed, and a lot of it had to do with the lack of Government's policy, because there was no policy, unless the policy was that you were going to close them down, so I have to say the lack of a policy.

We hear talk about that we, the manufacturers were depending on Trinidad and were not trying to get anywhere else. This is not true, Sir. Long ago, I said the Trinidad Government would burst before the austerity measures were put in place in Trinidad, before there was any licensing. I got wind that licences were coming and I told the then Trade Minister, Mr. St. John, and he laughed and said to me, "They cannot try that, they cannot risk that". But they came!

And it is history now that the then Government added insult to injury by insulting people in high places in Trinidad. It is well-documented, the incident with the shirt-jack suit. The then Prime Minister made a serious error in thinking that because it said "Daks of London," it had to be made in London. He did not know about franchising, or pretended not to know. You have products that are franchised. You make a label. The company I work for makes labels for several people in the United States and Canada, and even here in Barbados.

But we got into that kind of petty nonsense, instead of keeping an eye on the ball. Then is when we should have been working on a serious extra-regional marketing thrust. I do not care what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition says, it was not happening'then. We went off to the United States on all kinds of missions. They were junkets. A whole group of people went out to Korea to see how they do things in factories, factories that have economies of scale that Barbados is nowhere near to. What was the use of that? Expensive trips!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars!)

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: The honourable Member seems to have a difficulty with Hamilton. The company I work for sent up two orders to Canada which went up on the inaugural flights. I was there to see that they were cleared properly, and I was also there to make sure that Barbados was properly represented. And I think I did a good job, Sir!

Applause.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I was even kind to your BLP friends. And it was no expense to the taxpayers. Far from being expense to the taxpayers, we are going to earn some foreign exchange as a result

Applause.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, when I started to speak and I was making a point regarding the Export Promotion Corporation, I had no intention, I still do not have any, of making any personal attack on anybody. I am concerned with the running of the corporation as it relates to the development of Barbados. It does not matter who the person is, B, D or otherwise. It has to do with whether the job is being done in a competent manner. So I do not want anyone to believe that it is any personal problem between myself and the director. I want to get that clear.

The vital role the Export Promotion Corporation has to play cannot be stressed too much. But if, Sir, as one of the functionaries in the export manufacturing sector, I say to you that I am not satisfied that the proper kind of research and development is being done, I find it hard not to have to point a finger at the leaders of the organisation. This is where my difficulty comes. 11.00a.m.

I have had words with the Chairman of the Board. The Chairman understands clearly what the problems are. As I said before, I spoke with the Minister. When I asked the EPC about Canada and why we were not making a greater effort, I was told that is a dead market. Those were the exact words. I do not know how the Honourable Leader of the Opposition can tell me that they were doing a lot of work in Canada, because I was told then that it was a dead market. It is not a dead market It is a difficult market, so only a greater challenge.

When the Commonwealth Small State Exposition came off, the EPC decided we would get involved. They had done some research in Canada before, but I would like to tell you the kind of research they did. They told me, for instance, to give them a list of the names of the people I deal with in Canada, and they went and talked to those people. I do not need them to do that, I know the people already. Bring me new people. Tell me how to sell goods and what packaging to use, what kind of products you need. Tell us, they do not need furniture but they need cheese-boards. The same furniture factory can make cheese-boards. It is better for them to sell a billion cheese-boards than to try and sell three streets of furniture - more employment and more foreign exchange earnings.

This is the kind of development and research that I speak of, Sir. I am not dealing at any petty level. I am not dealing with the political aspects of this whole exercise. I am dealing with what is there for Barbados in terms of the economy, and I am dealing with the fact that if you are going to talk about export manufacturing, we seriously look at the agencies. There are several other agencies that will have to come into this. I guess, Sir, that as the Estimates go on, I will have an opportunity to deal with that in more detail.

In closing, Sir, I want the honourable Members of the Opposition to understand that when we discuss export manufacturing and we talk about the EPC, let us get it in the right perspective. Do not let us try to get in here and deal with who did what and when. Because if I look at the record of the BLP Administration - I will be dishonest to say that they did nothing, but I will also be dishonest to say that they did a lot. I can find a lot that was not done that should have been done.

Rather than get in here, or even on the street, and talk about the quality being substandard,....

Mr. SPEAKER: Wind up.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER .....Let us have an organisation that will tell us what is wrong with it and how to make it right. Research and development will do that If production marketing is wrong, we have agencies that can train people. Let us get them in place. In other words, Sir, if we are serious about export manufacturing, let us start discussing what has to be done to make it work and stop spending so much time dealing with what has been done wrong so far.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St Thomas): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to spend my time looking back. I would have expected that the last honourable member who spoke would have told us something about the policies of the present Government rather than complain about sea coast hotels and about the fact that his Government has not implemented any of the promises for manufacturing. That is what he should come in here and talk about. But we are going to deal with that later on.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sunday before last man, the Sunday before I went to Canada.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Physical, Mr. Prime Minister. You are going to hear a lot of talk - foolish talk.

What we have to -do with this Appropriation Bill, Sir, is set it in a certain background, and I want to take as my

point of reference, statements that were made last year by the then Minister of Finance, who told us at approximately this time last year: "Contrary to what has been said, the fiscal deficit will be well within the limits of propriety whichever way you look at it" Page 733 in Hansard, if you doubt me.

It is strange that one of the advisers to that former Minister of Finance, and one of the founders of the policy that appears in the DLP Manifesto for 1986, one economist from me Cave Hill Campus, only last Friday referred to this deficit in the current year as alarming, some $270-odd million. But the one who sat at the feet of that lecturer told us a year ago, in the face of all the warnings of the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), that the deficit will be well within the limits of propriety.

What the present Minister of Finance has inherited is not of his making. What he has inherited is a hare-brained policy, which he subscribed to in 1986, whose effect was never contemplated by the Democratic Labour Party to have the kind of repercussions throughout this economy as it has had. The honourable Minister of Finance, I believe, is a realist The other one that preceded him, as I said in here recently, belongs to "cloud cou-cou land".

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not so sure I understand.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not give him the "cou-cou" punch, Sir? Do not talk about "cou-cou land", Sir?

The former Minister of Finance who preceded the one who immediately preceded the present Prime Minister - the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) - implemented a fiscal policy that took account of the natural greed of man for money. I do not make fun when I say that. The electorate in 1986 was virtually bribed, or bought, by a fiscal policy that demanded of them to believe that they would get $15 000 in their pocket, all kinds of jobs and so on. Now, Sir, the chickens have come home to roost All of them on that side believed that it was workable without an increase in taxation. The chickens have come home to roost, because as early as nine months after the implementation of those policies, they had to take back $60 million approximately from the taxpayers of this country, having made them believe before that the country could be run without the imposition of any new or additional taxes. 11.10a.m.

But now another dose of taxation is in store. I do not know the magnitude of it We will see in due season, as the Minister of the Public Service would say, the quantum of taxation that will be exacted this year. The Government must continue to delude itself that people are very happy with what they have done in the last 22 months.

We explained in July 1986 that the effect of the fiscal policies would have been to put more money into the hands of the capitalist class in this country at the expense of the average Barbadian, particularly the black Barbadian. We were pooh-poohed! They would not believe it!

Only this morning we heard foolishness in here. We heard the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) say these words, Sir: "The big businesses of this country are the foreign exchange earners, because there are few western governments which earn foreign exchange by themselves." He is the President of the Democratic Labour Party! "Big businesses are the people who are best able to export into external markets."

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The former President.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh, I am sorry, Sir. I do not mean the Prime Minister. I was still believing that the honourable Member for St. Michael South East was the President. Well, he is Vice President, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE; Somebody asked who was the Deputy Prime Minister the other night and they said Evelyn Greaves.)

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Somebody did not know who was the Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Apparently these simple facts escape people from time to time, Sir, like somebody on television did not know who was the Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party has adopted a stance in the last two years that whatever is said by the Opposition is not to be treated with any seriousness. Let us just examine the position of big business and see how the fiscal policies which are now being reversed, necessarily, by the present Prime Minister, have affected big business. Let us take Shipping and Trading. The Prime Minister is putting so much distance between himself and the Member for St. Michael South Central, you cannot even see the Member for St. Michael South Central in here. He is out of sight, gone and left him!

In 1986, Barbados Shipping and Trading gross sales - I am dealing with turnover - $315 167 000. Their 1986 gross profit, pre-tax, $16 725 000.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is all?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You ask if that is all? You are not even ashamed!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Very poor turnover.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The gross sales for 1987 went to $322 352 000. The gross profit for 1987, $23 million, up from $16 613 000. The net profit after tax: 1986, $8 993 000; 1987, $14 213 000. The after tax profit represents an increase of 58 per cent or thereabout.

What is significant is that the gross sales, the turnover, in one year only increased by $7 million, whereas the net profit in one year increased by $6 million.

And the same Barbados Shipping and Trading have published in their annual report that for the year 1987, so very induced were they by the tax measures of the former Minister of Finance, that do you know how many new jobs they created? Two! With all that kind of profit, two new jobs! And they write it in their annual report, and you feel smug about that, and smart!

That is how well the tax proposals have worked in terms of the generation of employment in big companies. We told you, you did not understand the psyche of some of the private sector corporations in this country. Now you have seen it. I do not know that Barbados Shipping and Trading is any big exporter. Exporting what?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I can call some more: West India Biscuit Company, Cave Shepherd, Plantations Limited, Banks Breweries, A. S. Bryden and Goddards. Those are the standard ones that you use for analytical purposes in Barbados. We used them in the Telephone Company enquiry.

. *Aside.*

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Barbados industrial index you call it? Thank you. I like the characterisation.

Which of them is a big exporter and earner of foreign exchange, as the honourable Member for St. Michael South East would get up here this morning and tell us? They are big importers and members of the distributive sector. He does not even understand the simplest thing and comes in here palavering.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Member for St. Michael South East, who I do not now see in his place.

The Honourable Prime Minister will have to pay attention to these kinds of trends. I am not telling you what to do, I am only saying look at them. You will have to prescribe your own medicine. But this cannot go on when those companies are making these kinds of profit, boasting of employing two people, while the ordinary maid in the Government Service now finds that under the head, "MS," on her pay slip, there is more deducted than under the head, "Tax". There is more coming out of her pocket by way of levies. All the levies are coming from and subsumed under one head now. I will bring some in here. It has NIS, but they take out National Insurance, Health 'Levy, Transport Levy, Training Levy, all of them, under that one head. 11.20a.m..

Let us take a person who would pay tax at the bottom. That person is losing more by way of deductions, including the levies, than he is from tax. So it is netting back to the same thing, that there is a vast amount by way of compulsory deductions that is coming from these people, whereas the bank managers down there are boasting about how well they are doing. It is not fair. We have got to redistribute wealth in this country, and there are mechanisms which are available which the Prime Minister can well deal with. I am not telling you what to do with it.

Those who are more involved in a day-to-day analysis of these matters tell us that it is not necessary to close the fiscal gap by raising any new taxes. I know that the Government had promised to hold down expenditure or restrict its growth. Probably they want to look at it from whichever angle, but Government has made no serious effort in the past financial year to hold down expenditure. The Honourable Prime Minister drew attention yesterday to the total fixed costs of Government, staff costs, debt and so on. It included a consideration of the statutory boards, not on the Central Government. What he must address - he has not paid any attention to it yet - is the system under which the statutory boards' personnel operate and increase the expenditure of Government. Every meeting of a statutory board is an opportunity for the board members to get a berry for the pocket. In our time, when there were periods of fiscal difficulty, statutory boards were asked to limit the number of meetings. That kind of restraint has not permeated this Government yet.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let them run free. You will hear in the law courts of this Island later on of meetings being held at the houses of the members of the statutory board.

(Asides: Rumours as usual.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will show you the Minutes. Wait until the case comes to court. Do you believe that I would come in here and make a statement that board meetings are held at private residences without having the information?

r. SPEAKER:

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure you are not referring to any Member of this House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not sure, Sir, but I will withdraw it.

Set up some systems to control the number of meetings, not find one statutory board having four or five different sub-committees a week just for people to get money. It happens. When we get down to the heads, do you want me to be specific?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not getting into the area of who works for the National Bank. I am not getting into the area of who goes to court on behalf of the National Bank. You know you were in court with me on behalf of the National Bank and I for another client. Do not talk foolishness, man. Do you want to lie for the sake of lying?

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for Bridgetown spoke about export promotion and it being used as a political football. All that I have been saying for the last two years is that if we accept a premise that the country must earn foreign exchange, not borrow continually, then we have to put a thrust in the export sector. The kind of statutory phenomenon that we have in place to give impetus to the export thrust by name of an organism is the Export Promotion Corporation. We cannot be saying that we want to promote export and at the same time not be giving that particular organisation the financial wherewithal to make it function in a developmental and creative way. We are asking the Government to address that problem, and address it quickly, because there has to come a time when we must stop borrowing at the level that we are currently borrowing at.

I understood the Prime Minister's point this morning. When he went away last year, which was 1987, he said he was not going to borrow any money for 1987. He has not excluded the distinct possibility that he will have to borrow on foreign markets in 1988. He has made no statement about that. But we cannot continually borrow. We have to do something to make sure that we earn foreign exchange. It was interesting to hear the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller). I want the honourable Member for the City to explain how he is so nationalistic, so committed, and he is one of the head ones who imports seasoning from Guyana into Barbados - that is true, do not shake your head, I know about it - and the poor people up in St. Thomas, who are growing thyme and other seasoning, cannot get it sold. Go at Welchman Hall No. 1 and No. 2 and look at the gardens. I am not saying that he cannot import, but do not pretend to be making a big thing. He is getting it cheaper from Guyana, I know that he is a businessman, so he is looking for the best deal, but if he is importing 200 pounds, he should only import 100 and give the poor locals a chance to share. Give my people in St. Thomas a little piece.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose that when the Honourable Prime Minister replies, he will tell us the implications of what he said yesterday. He wanted to have a go at me on my statement in here a few weeks ago. I am going to repeat it, Sir. I said then that I accused the Government of having a plan to hold public sector wages and salaries constant in nominal terms. 11.30a.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is exactly what I said.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is accusing me of coming in here and lying and the Minister of Labour or whatever it is.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Constant in nominal terms after the expiration of the present wage agreement in March, 1988. What it means is a matter for construction on that side. I never used the words "wage freeze".

What I also did say in that debate was that Government had certain options, and the Prime Minister alluded to them yesterday, one of which was wage restraint, one of which was the increased taxation and increases in tariffs, and the other of which, and the last resort, was devaluation. Those were my words. I remember them now.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I categorically say that at no time did I use the words "wage freeze".

There was a "Sunday Sun" article last Sunday that incapsulated and headlined what, perhaps, I was meaning, with a headline, I believe, "Wage Freeze", or something like that.

I wish the Prime Minister to tell this country in his reply the rate of growth he is predicting for the economy next year. We know that he is predicting a deficit of $228 million. I would like to know that, because yesterday the Prime Minister said, "We will seek to promote growth in our economy, and all who contribute to the real growth of the economy will benefit from that growth." In another part of his speech, he said: "If there is growth in the economy,

the workers must benefit from that growth." I want to ask, if there is no growth in the economy, can the workers expect to get nothing?

If what the workers are to get by the way of increases is dependent and directly linked to the growth rate of the economy, I think the country deserves a clear and unambiguous statement from the leadership, so that we know, and the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris), as a unionist, knows where we are coming from. Because the Prime Minister has said he has no plan for wage freeze, and I even believe he said yesterday wage restraint, too. I will check you carefully.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On this second reading, before we get down to the nitty-gritty Heads, the Opposition wishes the Minister of Finance to understand that we appreciate that he has had to break with past fiscal policy, but that he understands the necessity for this break was predicated on the failure of the former fiscal policy of that Government since 1986.

The Prime Minister has the interest of Barbados at heart. He must, as the maximum national in Barbados, be committed to Barbados as a country above party - I know that is how he feels - and if he feels that it is right to bring over his hand a little bit, bring over your hand, but be always aware that you, and your whole team over there, will have to explain to the people out there why was it necessary so soon after what they were promised in 1986. If the policies had succeeded, would it have been necessary to impose the taxation of $60 million last year? If you did not impose $60 million nine months after you had made the give-away, what would have happened with the prediction, which you all always talk about, of the honourable Member for St. Peter?

All he said was that the policies, if implemented over a full year, would be seen to contribute to a situation where Government's fiscal position could be undermined. He warned that the balance of payments could have been put in jeopardy by the policies if the policies were allowed to operate for a year, as they had been promised, and as they had been implemented in the law of July 1986. Do you know why they had to levy $60 million in taxes last year? To try and prove him wrong? Do not levy them then and see what would have happened with this country? If you could have got by without them, why did you not let the country run without taxes? Because the predictions that he made would have been proven to be accurate. Even now they are proving to be accurate. You have this calendar year to add on some more to the $60 million taken last year. It is still a most terrible problem there which you have to address.

We urge on Government to pay closer attention to the control of expenditure in the new fiscal year. I mentioned one area, the control of the expenditure of statutory boards. They can get away. It is easier to control expenditure in the Central Government - the system is a lot tighter. You have to impose control by way of directives out of the Ministry of Finance to every statutory board.

Mr. SPEAKER: Time is up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not call on you to sit. I just told you to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But I have sat already. We have a long time to go, Sir.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have reached a position where we would want to get in to the various Heads, but I think that as the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has spoken, much to our enlightenment and entertainment, I should make a few comments.

Sir, quite frankly, sometimes the honourable Member reminds me of the intellectual equivalent of Rambo.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Well, I know, the cement man that you were talking so much. I am tempted sometimes to call you "Sambo," but I do not know how that would be taken, so I refuse to do it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: The honourable Member, an historian of great repute, and one whom I respect deeply, Sir - I am under Order 28, Rule 5, at page 34 - is showing no originality and no creativity today. It is I who have christened the Honourable Minister of Health, "the Cement Man", and the Honourable Minister of Housing, "Rambo". Find a new one if you want to put an appellation on me. 11.40a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order on the particular rule.

Laughter.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, in particular, I did not call him "Rambo", I called him "Sambo". I want to be very clear on that.

Laughter.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, we nave helfcd addresses from the three members of the Opposition. A* usual, I think we heard some telling points from the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur). I do not think they are telling in the sense that they have done any damage to Government's policy, but I think he tries to make his point, even if he repeats it continuously. Every year he comes with the same kinds of points, but I think that he admitted in his speech that Economics is a discipline where you are very seldom right I think he said yesterday that it is only one thing that you could be right about in Economics. I think I understand what he was trying to say. But he tries.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Quite frankly, I found it very difficult to remember what he said, so I referred to the *Nation.* He did make some point about some statutory corporation that would not be making any money this year, and he talked about 2 000 jobs being created. He did not say anything of note. Quite frankly, you could not remember him. And nobody will remember, except for entertainment value, what the honourable Member for St. Thomas said today.

Laughter.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Nonetheless, I imagine he would have to say something about what the members of the Opposition said, and I want to start off with the point about wage restraint.

As a representative of labour, of the Barbados Workers Union, I sat and heard the honourable Member for St. Thomas some weeks ago throwing out the point about Government being advised by some organisation about keeping wages constant in nominal terms after the expiry of the 1986 salaries agreement with the public sector. Let me admit, I had no doubt that, perhaps, he was right

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation. The Honourable Member, Sir - Rule 28 (16), page 37 - has misquoted me. I never said anything about the Government being advised. I accused the Government of having a plan. Not being advised of having a plan!

(Aside: To do what?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To keep wages constant.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That is his usual irresponsibility then, because if you have the plan, bring it in here. You cannot just get up here and accuse the Government of a plan. Bring the plan. You are now going to be judged by everybody in here, and everybody outside, on whether or not you can bring that plan. I challenge you to bring the plan. You have corrected me. You said it was not a recommendation from an agency but it was a Government plan.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance is on record in this Chamber as saying yesterday that there is no plan for wage restraint, there has been no plan for wage restraint and he does not foresee any plans for wage restraint It is his word against yours. We will see what credence your words will have in here, up there and outside.

If you were saying that perhaps they might have been advised by an international agency in that direction, that would not have been a surprise to anybody. Because the only constant that we could be talking about is that constant advice which really has come constantly from the same sources. The difference is that when it came to your side, they had a willing ear; you all listened and made it part of your policy, a policy of wage restraint throughout the Seventies and early Eighties.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I do not know if that advice has been given on this occasion. But if it was given, it would have been in consonance with what happened before. It is a perennial strategy. It would not have been to the Government only. It is given to almost every Third World Government by the same agency.

If the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was taking a chance to tender to this Chamber that that advice was given to Government it would not have come as any surprise to anybody here. What would have been surprising is if the Democratic Labour Party's Administration, which is known in this country as an Administration that is sensitive to the needs of the working classes of this country, had taken that advice, 'and had incorporated it into their policy without seeking dialogue and discussion with the trade union movement in this country. That would have been unthinkable. The only person who would believe that would be Harold Hoyte, who could run it on the front page of the *Nation* newspaper.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the Record.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I was talking about wage restraint a policy that was not adumbrated by this Administration, but which found itself on the front page of a leading newspaper in this country, a newspaper of which the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for St. Thomas are shareholders.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am not a shareholder of the *Nation* newspaper corporation.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, to be more exact, he is a member of a company that is a shareholder in the *Nation* newspaper.

(Aside: Therefore, he is a shareholder.)

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But I do not even form the "therefore". He will challenge that, too.

Laughter.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But if the public of this country believes that there is a coincidence that the Government did not speak of wage restraint, but the Member for St. Thomas spoke of it in here, the *Nation* carried it on its front page in the *Sunday Sun,* and then got together, allegedly, a number of trade union leaders to say that they will not support wage restraint, but they do not know if the Barbados Workers Union will, - front page! - and one cannot understand the attempt to destabilise the labour movement and this country, then, perforce, one would have to be purblind. But the Barbados Workers Union as an institution is above that kind of niggling and petty pseudo-intellectualism that comes from that newspaper and people who support it. The institution is too big and it has a proper responsibility to this country, and it intends fully to carry out that responsibility in its actions. We do not waste our time with wasteful words and demonstrations of bravado. We do what we have to do. 11.50a.m.

In terms of this call for wage restraint, which is only a further extension of what the Opposition called for when they formed the Government of this country, I will make the point now. I have no difficulty whatsoever with this as a labour leader in this country, and I am not afraid to say it - I do not care how I am quoted or carried - there can be nothing wrong in discussing wage restraint in an intellectual framework. There is a lot of dishonesty in this country, position taking, that has nothing to do with the welfare of the country.

There is actual wage restraint in this country. The level of wages that have been negotiated have been moderated in consonance with the economic situation in the country. What we reject is the kind of wage restraint which the Barbados Labour Party tried to impose from on top without consultation, except for themselves as parliamentarians at the time. But that does minor gain.

When we talk about national matters of concern, we have to look at wages, incomes, prices, and related matters in any economy. Any country that does not understand its responsibility to sit down and discuss these matters is a country that would prefer go to the Press first and then look back from inside a well.

So I have no fears in saying that these are matters that could be on any national agenda, I have no fears in saying that the facts are that there has been wage restraint in this country. Anybody looking objectively at what has happened over time would know this. The honourable Member for St. Peter would know that there has been a certain level of wage restraint That is entirely consonant with economic factors and that is proper.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Perhaps one needs to look at the degree of moderation of all of the things you will have to look at. One has to look at the role, for instance, of moral suasion as against the attempts by Governments to use pressure, as has been used under the Barbados Labour Party. The workers of this country and the institutions that represent them will not be bludgeoned by any Administration. We reserve the right to analyse these matters and to co-operate, if necessary, with an Administration that seems to have the workers' interest at heart, because public policy must affect workers, and one has to look at the entirety of public policy in making certain decisions.

This brings us to the whole point of the deficit. The honourable Member for St. Peter tended to suggest that perhaps the Prime Minister in discussing the deficit dealt with the matter lightly. I disagree, quite frankly. If in the course of the Member's discourse, he felt that it was an area that should be highlighted because it has certain dangers to the economy, let us agree with that, but at the same time put certain things into perspective.

The deficit relates to certain matters, and one of the matters to which it relates is wages and salaries. Let us understand that one of the reasons why you are carrying a relatively big deficit is the fact that negotiations should have been completed with effect from April 1, 1986. But there were a number of circumstances, which we well remember, which caused an unusual delay in these negotiations, and pushed them to 1987, with the result that Government had to finance salaries in one fell swoop, as it were. In addition to this, there were certain regradings at level Z39 that caused even more cost to Government.

So when you are talking about the deficit, relate the deficit to the fact that the deficit would purchase certain goods and services. In this sense, it is purchasing certain services, and these services are the labour, mental and manual, of thousands of public workers in this country. Understand that the deficit has behind it the fact that the Government had certain negotiations with public sector unions, which is traditional in this country. These negotiations, which ended at a level of 9 per cent in the first year and 2 per cent in the second year at the bottom level,

where the mass of people are, graded up to 1.4 per cent, were extremely expensive negotiations. People tend to look always at the micro; we have to look at the micro effect of wages settlements on the economy - their costs.

Government always has to make a policy decision. The Barbados Labour Party had to make policy decisions. The Democratic Labour Party has to make policy decisions. Do you pay what can be considered by the workers a level of remuneration that will be motivating to them, or do you decide that you are going to limit the levels of increases and then be subjected to the attitudes of the persons who feel that they have not been dealt in the way that is consistent with the kind of productivity that they are able to put in? It is a very serious question. This Administration felt that it had to go ahead with these settlements, and therefore, it will know that it will have to develop strategies to deal with the level of the deficit

The second matter, of course, is that much of the deficit would also be created by the fact that things like training have been reinstituted under the Democratic Labour Party Administration. A lot of money is going into training. There is no doubt about that There is a lot of money that is being spent on developing the human resources component You will not necessarily get the returns immediately. Those returns will be picked up in later years in terms of efficiency in the same public sector. You cannot put out money today in training and expect immediately to pick up the results. If the deficit is being used to improve the quality of services in the country, and if other measures are going to be made to improve the levels of productivity, there is nothing wrong with that deficit.

As I understand it, the concern is that the deficit does not get out of hand. That is a real concern. It is an academic concern that has been raised by the Member for St. Peter. As an economist, he would understand the meaning of this, but he will also be generous enough to understand that the Prime Minister has the same concern, and would understand the same concern that he has. He is making the point because he is in Opposition, not that this side would not know the relevance of the point that he is making, or that this side would not be able to take the measures to offset the difficulties that he has predicted.

I believe it is very important in assessing what has happened over the last year to look at the area of employment. This is one of the bright sides of this Government's performance. I can tell the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that more than 2 000 jobs have been created. I can tell him that the number of persons employed in 1987 moved up to 98 300 persons as against the number employed in 1986, which was about 95 800. There were about 2500 jobs created. I tell him also that the creation of jobs - I would like to tell the Member for St Thomas, I hope he is listening - came out of the fiscal policy of the present Administration. I tell him that he only has to go to performance in the distributive and hotel sectors to see where jobs have been created. Jobs have also been created in transport and communication and manufacturing. 12.00 noon.

The honourable Member for St Thomas talks about one business place in town. You cannot be operating at the national level and be so blinkered that you are only looking at Cave Shepherd and two jobs. You have to look at this thing at a macro level, and he has to know that you cannot look at the balance sheet of Cave Shepherd or Shipping and Trading, and where the report says that two jobs have been created, and use that as a national barometer. Jobs have been created in the distributive sector, in the hotel sector and in the manufacturing sector. Twenty five hundred jobs have been created; no less!

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: No, no. You asked about the 200, and I told you there are 2 000 plus 500. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition asked about 2000 jobs and I gave him the statistics. You do not like facts when they are coming at you. You are like the honourable Member for St. Thomas, you like to operate at the level of rumour and innuendo. These are facts, incontrovertible!

Let us look at the benighted approach that is exhibited by the comments of the honourable Member for St. Thomas in terms of the fiscal policy, how it affects the private sector and the entire economy. Government cannot by itself be expected to create the new jobs that will put this country forward. Even the Opposition will accept that They will have to, because the advice has come from them not to use Government expenditure to create jobs.

How do you get the private sector, therefore, to go in for job creation? The fiscal policy introduced by this Administration had the effect - and nobody is going to apologise for that - of putting money in the hands of the private sector. Even as the honourable Member for St. Thomas got up and quoted the statistics, he was proving the point that our Budget had worked, that our fiscal policy had worked in terms of what we intended to do. He was making the point for us so beautifully. Yes, Cave Shepherd has more money; yes, Plantations Limited; yes, Shipping and Trading. But we understood at the same time that the intention was to relieve that yoke from the shoulders of the private sector and encourage it to play its role in economic development and job creation.

The members of the Opposition will tell us not to trust the private sector. That is what they are implying. When I

hear the Leader of the Opposition talking about not trusting the private sector, I get kind of bothered, because they believe in the private sector, they are the apostles of the private sector.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Henry Forde said he cannot trust the private sector.)

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That is what he is implying, but he has said so before. He is on record as saying so. Whether he means it is something else. No improper motive is being imputed.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sin The honourable Member, under Order 28, Rule 16, Sir, must not misrepresent any speech that I make in this House. I have never had in my experience to get up to explain myself away to anybody, because what I say, I say, and I stand by it, unlike some honourable Members in this House. I have always said in this House that the Government cannot believe that the private sector will do its jobs for it as it sees it

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: What do you mean by doing a job for Government? Government's job is not to get employment for everybody.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the honourable Member will give way again, on a point of explanation: I have always explained to the honourable Member that the philosophy of the party to which I belong, and the philosophy to which I subscribe, believes in a mixed economy. I have also always felt that the Government must take the primary role in creating conditions necessary for development and growth. If they do not understand, particularly the honourable Member who makes the most silly comments from the asides, the honourable Member for St. John (Mr.. D. J. H. Thompson), he will understand what is the philosophy that we are following.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his clarification. But it seems to me that it is really not very different from what I was saying. As I understand it, the Democratic Labour Party Administration takes the responsibility of setting the framework, the broad principles and policies for job creation in this country. It is establishing that it intends to create jobs as a Government, but it is also inviting another social partner, the private sector, to play its role. It also recognises that that social partner had been bludgeoned and defeated and almost destroyed by the Barbados Labour Party and therefore it had to relieve some of the burdens, once again give the people in the private sector a feeling that they could make some money.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member is making a broad charge that the Barbados Labour Party had bludgeoned and destroyed the private sector. I want merely to state the facts, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you elucidating on some statement you have made?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: When the Barbados Labour Party left office ....

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you elucidating on a particular part of the speech that you have made?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am rising to make the point...

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the point you want to elucidate in your speech?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Barbados Labour Party never neglected the private sector. It was owning $130 million in retained earnings in this country.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, as a representative of labour, and as a member of the Democratic Labour Party, I have no difficulty in the private sector making money. I understand that unless the private sector is profitable, workers will not get jobs, and will not be able to maintain their standard of living.

In the public sector, approximately $350 million a year will be spent on salaries and wages. That figure in the private sector is approximately $800 million. Let us understand that. So the private sector creates jobs for more people in this country than the Government ever can. Government might be the single largest employer, but the jobs that are created out there are private sector jobs. We understood that one had to give some kind of encouragement to the private sector if it is to create jobs in this country.

The honourable Member for St Thomas, while quoting figures for Cave Shepherd to show that they are making money,....

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: You did not give the figures for Cave Shepherd, but you said they were making money.

He should also indicate that Cave Shepherd is also expanding its activities, putting on more buildings and expanding. He should also indicate that B. S. & T. is expanding. He should indicate that almost all of the major complexes in this country have shown a renewed faith in this economy. So according to him, if the chickens are

coming home to roost, the chickens of a good fiscal policy are coming home to roost. We are seeing the outturn of the results of that fiscal policy. Within a period of one to two years we cart see a response in the economy.

Mr. Speaker, whatever is said in here or outside, the people know that you cannot drive through Barbados today without seeing obvious signs of prosperity in this country. You cannot drive through Barbados without seeing housing developments, commercial buildings going up, mini marts expanding and opening all around the country. Let us understand what is happening in economic terms in Barbados, that there is a new spirit, there are no businesses closing, and that is a result of the fiscal policies as part of the structural adjustment that we started in 1986.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas talked about supply side economics as a wrong policy for our situation. So did the honourable Member for St. Peter. There is supply side and there is supply side; the supply side that Tom Adams introduced, and which, under Minister St John, was expanded in a limited sphere in this regard, of course, with the advice of the honourable Member for St. Peter. This is supply side in slow motion. 12.10p.m.

Let us accept that perhaps an element of that strategy was introduced by this Administration in 1986. It was not a policy carved in steel. Any administrator has to be flexible in terms of using a mix of policy. Nobody told you at any time that any particular policy would be carried on *ad infinitum*. Which Administration would tell you that? We would never say, like the honourable Member for St. Thomas says, that we would run a Government without taxation. How you can reduce something as important as public finances to that type of a statement, I do not know.

There has never been a time in the country where tax levels have been reduced under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, tax levels in terms of income taxes, but compensatory mechanisms were introduced to make sure that the level of taxes increased because you just shifted to indirect taxation. The same thing is happening under this Administration. If a country is to progress, it has to pay its way, and whether you get the taxes from Income Tax or Consumption Tax, you have to get taxes to run a country, and use taxation to redistribute income. Do not get into old-time talk of the 19th century, when taxation systems were being introduced, when you criticised administrations for using indirect taxation because it came down heavily on the masses of the people. Let us understand that.

There must be a time in the history of any country when the differentials between the top and the bottom are not that wide that one can talk about belabouring the masses of people. It is when your taxation levels, whether Income Tax, direct or indirect, threaten people and they cannot survive. One talks about a mix, but if the transfer is from direct income taxes to indirect, but the people do not feel that pressure, the masses that we are talking about are not suffering because of it, there is nothing that can stop a country from deciding what is going to be the mix of tax policies, whether it is going to be Income and Property.

Mr. Speaker, when we are discussing the Estimates and the Budgets of a country like ours, you are tempted to educate the people out there about what is happening regardless of the situation. Do not let us for pure politics try to adopt an adversary approach to give the impression that the country is being destroyed, that there has been mass inefficiency, that nobody in the Democratic Labour Party, either at the policy level or the Civil Service level, knows what he is doing, that there is extreme wastage. This country is doing better - and I say this; not because the Barbados Labour Party is always talking about records, about who was the best in the west and so on - and we are doing better in this country than others are doing because of the sagacity and discipline of Barbadians on both sides of the fence.

Let us understand that the country is not at the point of any collapse. Let us understand that workers will be paid an increase that they deserve. All of us have to understand the need for productivity. It is not shouted from one side to the other, but productivity comes from both sides. Management must be able to direct that productivity and workers will respond, but you must not in Barbados, attempt to throttle any one particular sector in this country.

Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: On a point, of order: I want to respond to a point that was mentioned by the honourable Member for St. Thomas. This is under Order 28, Rule 6, Sir.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas tried to give the impression in his speech that I was importing seasoning from Guyana rather than buying locally-grown seasoning. That is very misleading.

The problem is that in Barbados there was a disease that affected the eschalot, which he calls seasoning, and Barbadian growers were hard-pressed to supply, and they got a better price from the fresh market and they have been selling it there. We were forced to import when we could not get local supplies.

I thought I would set that straight for the record, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON (St. John): Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I will be speaking on a matter that

relates in large measure to be financial policies pursued by the Democratic Labour Party since it came to office in May 1986. That puts me in a special position, because while it is the wont of the Opposition to suggest that only the Members of the Cabinet, in the concept of collective responsibility, supported the policies and therefore must take the blame if they fail, I would like to say, as one of those young members of the Democratic Labour Party, who was not in the House of Assembly, but who contributed, like many other members of the Democratic Labour Party, to the evolution of any economic policies, that I was then in full support of them. I seek in that sense, on behalf of several supporters of the Democratic Labour Party, whose voices may not be heard in here or in Cabinet or in other forums, to support the policies. That is a particular point, because anybody listening to the kind of reasoning that comes from the Opposition, would believe that it is only the members of the Cabinet who must be answerable. There is a level, in my view, of resentment for the electorate of this country, which is demonstrated by the statement made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), the people were bribed and bought by the Democratic Labour Party. If he has that level of contempt for the electorate, that is his business. He does not like to give that impression when he is outside of the House of Assembly, or when he is talking about how he gets cursed for the little bit of salary he gets in here. But I believe that the electorate of Barbados, which comes out to public meetings and watch the television when the Budget Debate exercises are going on,....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, under Standing Order No. 28(5); I want it to be clearly understood, and I want to repeat it, that it is not a question of contempt. I remain dedicated to what I said, Sir, that the Democratic Labour Party attempted to bribe the electorate of this country with a fiscal policy that was unworkable in the long term. I stand by that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The fact that the electorate accepted the bribe means that they must be corrupt, and therefore he has contempt for them, because if I attempt to bribe somebody and he accepts the bribe, he must be corrupt as well. Do not come with that foolishness. It is a simple analysis. I cannot believe that you would get in here and try to white-wash what you have said. You said it, and it is not the first time you have tried to take back what you have said in this Chamber and elsewhere, fooling people that you have some abounding concern for their interests and then making statements, which taken together, will demonstrate that you have a contempt for the electorate of this country. That is what I am saying in here, I have drawn the analogy, and if you do not accept it, it is sufficient for me.

If you do not value your time and your intellect, I can tell you that I value mine. And when I come into this Chamber, I anticipate that people will discuss serious issues, and discuss them in a serious manner. When we have, therefore, to reduce expenditure in the public sector to a matter of boards having regular meetings, something has to be wrong.

I have sat on a statutory board, and we have had many meetings for which no member of that board was paid, and meetings have taken place at people's homes precisely because it reduces cost. You would like to hear about the cost of serving tea and biscuits, because you are so concerned about costs at board meetings. Many Statutory Corporations cannot afford the cost of serving tea and drinks and biscuits, so you hold a meeting at somebody's home on a Saturday morning. Nothing is wrong with that. Once the decision is taken within the principles of administrative law, the meeting can be held anywhere. In fact, it can be held on the telephone. So do not come with that story about meetings being held. It is always a rumour that we are hearing. There is never any factual basis to any of the things that the honourable Member for St. Thomas brings before the public of Barbados, whether it is in this Chamber or elsewhere. 12.20 p.m.

He said that I appeared for the National Bank. Just as the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller) had to correct an impression, it must go on the record that I have never been retained by any statutory corporation or Government department in this country. I have never ever been paid a fee directly by any Government department.

One of the first things I learned when I came to practice in this country and retainers were being handed out, was that the gentlemen for whom I did my pupilage - May he rest in his grave now - the late Prime Minister, said to me, "Do not do Government work because as a young practitioner. If you do it, you are going to lose touch with the average people out there who would normally come to your office. You would be so engrossed in attending meetings and settling claims that you are going to lose touch with meeting average supporters of the Democratic Labour Party who may come for genuine legal advice."

I have never been retained by any statutory corporation.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. John and the honourable Member for Christ Church West were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. SPEAKER.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order: I am just seeking my own clarification, Mr. Speaker. I was not sure of Your Honour's ruling, and I am seeking clarification on a point of privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER: My ruling is that under the Rules, as I perceive them, it is an offensive remark, in the sense that it implicates honourable Members of this House, and all Members of this House are honourable Members. They are not members of any other system but an honourable system and that is my ruling.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker has explained, and I am now seeking guidance for the future.

Asides

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not challenging the ruling, David.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will give my rulings in accordance with what I consider good parliamentary language.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, Sir. I am seeking guidance for myself.

Mr. Speaker, the spoils system as described in the Political Science books is a system by which the Governments give to, or allows persons who are in favour of the Government to have legitimate, decent employment.

Mr. SPEAKER: But within the context, it makes a difference.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not understand, but I accept your ruling, Sir.

Mr. D. H. J. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I abide by your ruling in this matter.

In the private fora, similar remarks about the distribution of legal work by Government departments have been published in the Press, for which a very distinguished Queen's Counsel and myself had to be satisfied by way of a settlement, because of that kind of attempt to besmirch my character in the newspapers of this country. A particular person, obviously, a former Cabinet Minister, writing in one of his other capacities, where obviously, he receives more respectability than he did as a former Cabinet Minister, sought to besmirch my character. But I am satisfied as to that.

I am sorry, Sir, if I was in any way offensive by using the expression "the spoils system". All I am saying is that if there is a system whereby Members of Parliament do legal work on behalf of the Government, there is nothing wrong with that, but I, the honourable Member for St John, am not a part of it. There is nothing dishonourable about it I have my reservations about it, which are not based on honour or otherwise, and if the Honourable Leader of the Opposition wishes to bring any information in here on me and my family, I will stand up and defend it

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly, as Speaker of the House, I would not allow it.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I agree, Sir, so he cannot threaten me with that. I have entered politics at 25 and the people of St. John know how long I will stay in it Therefore, anything you bring, you bring at your peril, because I will bring back.

We have had a lot of points in here about wage restraint and wage freezes. The honourable Member for St. Thomas said that he did not say "wage freeze" but he said, as far as I can remember, that the Government will keep civil servants salaries constant in nominal terms after the expiration of the existing agreement That can only mean wage freeze, and even if you did not mean wage freeze, you know as well as I know, that there are some unsuspecting persons, not the least among whom are members of the Press, even well-educated members of the Press, or well-paid, for that matter, who would misinterpret what you said and represent it in the manner in which you probably would have wished it to be represented.

I am not going to forget the troika. There was a Governor of the Central Bank in this country who promoted wage restraint regularly, and that Governor said he was a "creature of the Minister of Finance". The then Minister of Finance in 1977 was the" late Tom Adams. If he was a creature of him, and he felt it was necessary to promote wage restraint, it meant that the superior of the creature believed in wage restraint. There was some talk about it being in 1981, by my recollection is that it was in 1977, just before the honourable Member for St Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) entered this Chamber that the Barbados Labour Party did three things -1 am not going to describe them with an adjective - one-armed bandits, daylight saving time and wage restraint But at the same time, they were increasing parliamentarian salaries and there was a big hue and cry in this country. So let us not get back to the wage restraint issue. Let us stay away from the IMF. Let us even stay away, if we can, in this debate, from the National Assistance Board.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition loves to defend the Labour Party, not only its so-called principles, whether grounded, as he said, in the principles of members of Socialist International, and even the CYC, which his

Youth Ann belongs to, and which he, obviously, does not understand anything about If he wishes to defend the Labour Party, I want to hear him without more defend the Commission of Enquiry into the National Assistance Board during these Estimates. If you want to challenge people, if you want to raise issues and say people are being offensive, read this report, and before anybody opens his mouth in here, get up and say why it is that mal-administration and what borders on corruption was practised at the National Assistance Board under the Barbados Labour Party. You get up and defend it! 12.30p.m.

You are going to tell me that you can silence me by making concealed threats about what you will reveal? Reveal something about this report! I did not receive a cent. Nobody came at me to fix my house, my mother's house or my grandmother's house. No members of the Democratic Labour Party received any assistance in St. John when the National Assistance Board operated under the Barbados Labour Party. But there was corruption! So you cannot taint the people of St. John, neither me nor my family. But there are some names in here which will be called in due course, and they will have to be called to account. I want you to reveal whether what this report indicates happened at the National Assistance Board is true. I am not afraid of those challenges. I have already set my mind on what the people of Barbados should be able to achieve in this country, and I will help them in or out of Parliament. If what you reveal means I must go out, I will go out with the same tenacity that I will exhibit in here on behalf of the people. So I do nof-worry about those kinds of approaches.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas, he is the person who said thatf the Democratic Labour Party's financial policies were aimed at the natural greed of the Barbadian people. Could that not be contempt? That is something that die Press should headline tomorrow, that the honourable Menfber for St. Thomas believes, that the people of this country are naturally greedy, and that therefore, the few benefits that the Democratic Labour Party conscientiously felt, should go to the people should be taken back from them, because they are too greedy.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I did not say it.

The honourable Member for St. Peter dealt with the Barbados Labour Party's economic policy. He is the only one qualified, not by his academic qualification, but by his intellectual virtues, perhaps to defend the Barbados Labour Party's economic policies. He knows most about them, having participated considerably in their execution and development under two Prime Ministers.

(Aside: Formulation.)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He participated in their formulation.

He was even described by a late Prime Minister as probably one of the future Ministers of Finance, the brightest and the best! So he has the basic qualifications which, obviously, distance him, as the former Prime Minister was wont to do, from the other mertibers of the Labour Party who were not even in his Cabinet.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He has the qualifications, therefore to speak on economic policy in that sense. And I admire that, because it brings to debates like this, a lot of truth about the Barbados Labour Party's economic policy. I warned him that he is going to lose the Shadow Ministry of Finance, it has gone on the Record, and I am going to continue to say that after I warned him, rather than his colleagues take stock, a particular Labour Party writer pummels him every week, to the extent that I could not believe my eyes, when two weeks ago, I read that he wanted to bring back Bree St. John to explain and defend the Labour Party's economic policy. That is a tremendous insult to you as the Honourable Shadow Minister of Finance. You have stood up in here and taken all the blows and the pressure....

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Like Richie.)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But that comes with the territory. You have taken it He does not have the territory, he. is out in Pinfold Street And a writer from the Labour Party says he must now come back at the last minute, after you have predicted, albeit wrongly on every occasion, after you have stood up and enunciated the Labour Party's policies and been contradicted by your colleague who sits next to you. The honourable Member for Christ Church West is not as well versed on these things as he pretends to be when he is writing all the time, because when he gets up and speaks, it reminds me of something I read in a recent column of the newspaper. I have never met somebody who can compress so many words into the smallest idea possible

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He writes away and gets up and makes a lot of vapid remarks about the Barbados Labour Party's economic policies! But you have the credentials, and you should know better.

You talk about -supply side economics, a former Lecturer at the University of the West Indies. Anybody who

has any fleeting acquaintance with Economics would know that the concept of supply side economics, or even privatisation.....

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Qualify it. I do not mind. You can qualify as much as you like. It is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end.

You talk about pursuing supply side economics as though there is some formulation that means it must exist forever. The former Minister of Finance, who was in here yesterday, indicated that, in due course, he was going to review the taxation policy when it had had its desired effect. So it is never to be seen as an end in itself, and you should know better. You cannot take a theory that is as imperfect as the supply side theory ....

(Aside: Imperfect?)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ....I am saying that it is imperfect.... and apply it as an end in itself. It is a means to an end. It is a way to get where you are going, and when you have got there and the people have begun to benefit, then you may be able more adequately to redistribute wealth.

The philosophy of democratic jocialism is, in many respects, a means to an end, too. All political economic theories are means to an end. It is only when you have achieved the end that you can either decide to throw your hands up in the air or evolve a new political, social and economic philosophy to carry you from that point to another point So let us not get on in here as though supply side economics is historically and futuristically the Democratic labour Party's policy, enshrined, cast not in steel but in gold, only to be destroyed if we erupt as a volcano. That is not so, so it is not a question of it being laid iQ rest.

We have had a lot irom the honourable Member for St. Peter over a period of time. It has not varied substantially. In the courts nowadays sometimes arguments go on, one side gets up and they repeat themselves *ad infinitum.* It has become a practice probably in the world of politics too. People believe that if they repeat themselves often enough, once, at least, the Press will get it right, and once the Press have got it right, they do not have to say it again.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But the honourable Member for St. Peter said so much yesterday that he will have to repeat it, probably for another 25 years, for the Press to be able to extract something new each time, and find a reasonable interpretation to put on it

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not cursing the Press. He said I cursed the civil servants too. It must be the manner in which I say things. That is what worries you!

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Peter should remember Rule 42.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: In last year's Estimates, he made the same point about a reduction of social services. The reason we have to have difficulty with what the honourable Member St: Peter said is that, so far, his predictions have been wrong. He predicted destruction and devastation. It has not come true. Last year he said the Government' beautification programme was going to be cut back, and that, in effect, members of the NCC would lose their jobs. Instead of being cut back, that programme was increased. He also said last year, as far as I remember, that the Government's Housing Welfare Programme was going to be cut What he did not understand was that it was not going to be cut, but we had stopped the stealing and the corruption. If you read this report, you will understand why it was not necessary to cut it. It naturally fell back into manageable proportions after all the thieving had ended.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: So we had to dismiss his prediction about the Housing Welfare Programme as invalid.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Of course he did not have that information then. He had not seen this report then. This year, I am certain that when we get to that particular part, after the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has spoken in defence of his former Ministers who administered this programme, the honourable Member for St. Peter will get up and explain to the House why it was possible for the Government to cut back, as he calls it, on the Housing Welfare Programme. 12.40 p.m.

He said that the Glebe Polyclinic would still be closed this year. I pass the Glebe heading to St. John, and as far as I know,....

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not quoting.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member is intending to mislead the House. Last year, if the House will recall, the Estimates came in draft form to the House with a provision for Capital, but not a provision to buy equipment for the Glebe Polyclinic, and no provision to staff it. A vote was moved in during the course of the debate, Mr. Speaker, to rectify the problem that I had identified. The honourable Member for St. George North (Hon. C. V. Walker) is shaking his head in agreement. If the Member is interested in telling the truth, he must tell the whole truth.

Mr. SPEAKER: All Members are supposed to be truthful.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Members for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. Arthur) and St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be struck from the Record.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I cannot quote from the debate of this Session.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I have read it

. He intimated that a beautiful, new polyclinic was built at the Glebe, and that by the end of the prior year, 1986, the building would be empty. He went on to say that next year, which could only mean 1987, and presumably on to 1988, we are going to have a building that includes some equipment but no people whatsoever. I did not say that

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He said no provision was made in recurrent expenditure, and therefore, you would have a building and no people.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But you predicted also. Mr. Speaker, all he had to do was ask a question: Do you intend to run the Glebe from this year? But no! As usual, without the facts at his disposal, without full information, without the slightest indication about what the future held, he made predictions. And everyone of these predictions has turned out not to be so.

Laughter.

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

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The honourable Member for St. Peter, in effect, launched an attack on the Minister of Finance and said that the failure of the Minister to provide for the staffing and operation of the Glebe Polyclinic meant that it would not be operational. Read on! That is all I can tell you.

Mr. SPEAKER: He cannot read on, because I have no page.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not mean read to the House, Sir. I mean read for his own edification.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise again on a point of order: The honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: If you do not state what you are rising on in terms of what you want to correct, then I have a difficulty in determining whether you are rising on anything. What is the correction you want to make?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The honourable Member is attributing to me, Sir, things which I did not say. I said in the course of that debate, if I remember correctly, that we would have a situation where, because of the composition of the Estimates, provision had been made to equip the polyclinic but no provision had been made to staff it. Because you had a Capital Vote, but no recurring vote to run the Glebe Polyclinic, and that as that stood at that time, you would have had a situation where you had a polyclinic equipped but no people in it. In the course of last year's Estimates, Mr. Speaker, a vote was moved in to correct the very point that I had raised, as a result of my having brought it to the attention of the House.

And Mr. Speaker, Sir, the foolishness he is saying about predictions....

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot say foolishness.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am maintaining my position, that the honourable Member said that because of the failure of the Minister of Finance to make adequate provision for the staffing of the Glebe Polyclinic, it would have been opened. He said that it would not be operational. What does that mean? That you would have a building equipped, but no people in it.

But it is operating. The honourable Member for St George North can tell you. I can tell you, because I pass there.

Let us go to St. Joseph's Hospital. Last year, he found it convenient to say that the SL Joseph's Hospital would not be bought This year he said it could be bought for less than the $6 million or whatever. He now has new information with which to make a new prediction. So he predicts all the way along. Last year, he predicted it would not be bought This year, after the Resolution came, he comes back to the House and says that it could be bought for less. That is not really a prediction. That is a positive statement.

Last year, he said that you can cut back on public sector expenditure by reducing inefficiency. He said there was a department in the Prime Minister's Office and one in the Public Service Ministry that was doing the same thing. But this year, he says that you cannot really do much to get the civil servants to cut back, because they write on the back of the letters.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order: The honourable Member is misleading the House again, Sir. Last year I said that it was ironic that the same Government which had set out on a philosophy and a programme to cut back inefficiencies in the Public Service had set up two separate departments of Government to deal with the same thing, and that if you wanted to cut out inefficiencies in the Public Service, you would have to abolish one.

The honourable Member, Sir, rather than waste his time dealing with gossip, should read the Estimates this year. You will now find in these Estimates that the State Enterprises Unit that was under the Ministry of the Public Service has been abolished, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are now going beyond the Standing Order.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, there should be a rule against honourable Members repeating themselves. The point is that he said last year that there was a means of cutting back on expenditure in the public sector by reducing inefficiency. This year he tells us - and he has not addressed what he told us this year - that there is not much you can do by way of that, because civil servants write on the back of letters and conserve a lot of paper. He finds it convenient to draw the analogy of people writing on the back of a letter to say that you cannot cut back on expenditure. 12.50 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, because these things get slipped in. The honourable Member said from his seat that the St. Joseph Hospital ....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I was not here. I heard the honourable Member say, Sir - I do not know, I cannot remember if he was on a point of order - that the St. Joseph Hospital has not been bought yet Six million dollars has been sent through the Central Bank to the people. If that means it has not been bought, you would be saying that the cheque bounced.

As regards the honourable Member on the other side, who probably has received....

Mr. SPEAKER: Even though I have permitted that intervention, I am going to read Rule 42 for the Members of this House. It appears that Members might feel that the Chair's hands might be tied, but I will have no hesitation.

Rule 42: "The Speaker or the Chairman shall order any Member whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately." I will have no hesitation, if I have to repeat that to any one Member another time, so I am asking Members to comply with the rules of the House.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, we now hear that the St Joseph Hospital has been bought. Yet another prediction that has fallen flat on its face, some would say "bottoms up", made by the honourable Member for St. Peter!

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member should now wind up.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Leave out the predictions. Every time he predicts, all available information, reasonable analysis, sensible opinion -1 do not even know how else higher I can put it - demonstrates to the pubb'c of Barbados and the persons who have the honour of working in this Government for the people of Barbados that he is wrong. But if he wishes to retard the progress of Barbados, that is his affair. We are committed to contributing to the further development of this country.

Thank you.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, we have had a very long debate on the second reading of this Appropriation Bill, and I am therefore proposing, in probably about five or ten minutes, to wind up this second reading debate. There are a number of points which have been raised and I would like to refer to them very briefly.

First of all, Sir, I wish to point out that there is no magic that can wish away the figures and numbers with which we are dealing in this country. There are requests which come from various Ministries, and the statutory and

other boards or agencies under those Ministries, which require funding for a financial year which starts on April 1 and ends on March 31 the following year. When these requests for expenditures are totalled, they come to a figure which the Ministry of Finance has to assess, and after that assessment, and with the approval of the Cabinet, the figure requested for expenditure is the one that comes to this House for approval.

There are also certain revenue measures in place which determine the amount of existing revenue that may be raised, from a variety of sources, to provide the total amount of revenue that will be available. And so we have a figure for the estimated expenditure and a figure for the estimated revenue. If in any year the expenditure exceeds the revenue, it is a matter that has to be considered, which is the deficit. Any individual, any household, any company, and indeed any country, considering expenditures or outlays in relation to income, or revenue, or inflows, has to look at that basic deficit or that basic balance.

There is no magic about it, and I believe that this Honourable House and the people of this country must understand that there are basic facts. More than half of the money we spend, as I indicated yesterday, Sir, is going on the payment of wages and salaries and related staff costs. You cannot wish that away. Then I indicated that we have certain commitments, we enter into sovereign debt as a nation, and the commitments, the amortisation and the interest on these, have to be met if we are to retain a credit worthiness and if we are to continue our integrity as a nation. There is no sensible discretion in respect of those payments. These come to about 75 per cent.

Then, if we have a Government office, you have to provide utilities for that office - telephone, electricity - you have to provide typewriters and paper of varying types, and those are additional costs that have to be met When we have totalled all of these and we look for the programmes relating to the public officers of this country, over 22 000 of them altogether - I am taking the statutory boards and others into account - we have to make the provision, unless, of course, we wish to cut back on staff and programmes. So we cannot keep our heads in the clouds and believe that this country can merely run on wishful thinking. The figures are there, and any sensible person must understand that these are the facts that we have to deal with.

I have never been afraid in my life of criticism. I tend to keep my cool. I cannot say that for the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. A leader must learn how to restrain and contain himself. I do not think that his behaviour today is a good example at all.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sorry. I will withdraw the part about not setting a good example, Sir. But I think the point has been made.

Amidst all of the levity and so on which we may have been introducing into this debate, there is a basic point which this House must inform itself of, and which must get through to the people of this country, that we have to do something with that deficit. Any deficit that is too high in relation to the Gross Domestic Product spells trouble for the country, and we have to reduce it in relation to that.

The Barbados Labour Party Government in 1977 found a problem in the public finances and went to an international body, the International Monetary Fund, to help them solve that problem. In 1982, again the Barbados Labour Party Government went to the International Monetary Fund for a Stand-by Arrangement and for payments under the Compensatory Financing Facility to help them to deal with the problems in the country. 1.00p.m.

This Democratic Labour Party Government does not intend to run to any international organisation such as the IMF. We wish to avoid that. We wish to retain the discretion in the hands of the sovereign people of Barbados to manage our own affairs and not go to the IMF to take exams and tests, as they took this country during the 1980s. They had to pass tests and examinations and that is what we are trying to avoid.

Two of them over there knew about it. The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) acted as Minister for a few days in 1977, too, if I am not mistaken. The honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) acted as Minister of Finance on a variety of occasions. They talk about who can act as Minister of Finance. You will not find in this Administration, so long as I am Prime Minister, that any person not sitting in this House will act as Minister of Finance, because the Minister of Finance should be accountable in this Chamber at all times. And so long as I am Minister of Finance, you will find the Minister of Finance or someone acting for him in this House.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Clyde Griffith also acted as Minister of Finance. I have told you already that I have the records. The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) never acted. You were not in good grace.

We faced the public of this country with this particular problem, and we have to deal with it. We have to adjust to that situation, but we wish to do this while retaining our

own independence, our sovereignty and the ability to choose between the different options that may be available. (The Member for St. Thomas likes the word "options".) That means that there will have to be certain measures.

Supplementaries have been introduced into this House and we examined those supplementaries very carefully. They related to each Ministry in the country. The Ministers here, and some in the Other Place, wanted supplementaries arising out of wages settlements. The salary scale Z.39 was removed and we had to come with supplementaries for this particular matter. The Minister of Health came on more than one occasion for supplementaries, all necessary, as further advances on sums which this House had already approved.

They were so satisfied with the requests that came here during the course of the year that they never voted against any of them. In fact, they were telling us to pass on, move them quickly, 'we do not want to hear the explanation, because we approve them.' The House is here today to hear the explanations. I do not operate public business on the basis that you come in here and try to get out as quickly as possible. We have to spend the requisite time - and we are elected public officials - and show the necessary seriousness in conducting public affairs.

I am not going to talk about how the gap is to be narrowed today. The honourable Member for St. Peter should know better. He is saying that I have not dealt with the deficit sufficiently. You are not calling the shots in this matter. I said there are two parts to this budgetary process, one is now that we are looking at the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, and the next one is the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. I will therefore deal with that particular matter at another time.

As far as this matter of wages freeze and wages restraint is concerned, all I say is that we are committed in this country to the processes of collective bargaining, and we will seek through that particular process to arrive at wages settlements that are in accordance with the capacity of this country to meet them, and that will not adversely affect our fiscal balance or indeed the balance of payments. I will limit myself to that particular statement at this time.

We believe thaj when the country is doing well, all those who contribute should share in that growth. We are interested in creating real growth in this country, and the task of all of us in this country is to seek to create that wealth. We are not going to do it simply by wishful thinking. It is the Democratic Labour Party Government now which is to put in place the policies to ensure the ends of economic growth, development and social justice to which I made reference. There will have to be adjustments as we go along. There is no case of any scuttling of any particular approach to the management of affairs of this country. As we go, as we have experienced from month to month, from year to year, there will have to be adjustments, because nothing is fixed in public finances like the laws of the Medes and Persians. If we are going down one road and we see that there are particular obstacles in that way, we have to make adjustments. This is what I am calling, and will be calling, on this Honourable Chamber to do. It is a fact, and I will be honest and frank about it That is the position. 1.10p.m.

There is no political capital to be made out of this. They believe they have some kind of Sicilian gambit working out over there. I do not know. If they know about the game of chess, they might try to work the Sicilian gambit There is no capital to be made out of that I can see through all of the approaches, the scenarios, that they may be working out.

I would simply like to assure this Honourable House that we will be looking very closely, as we did during the latter part of last year, at any requests for supplementaries. It is a fact that there were restraints on expenditures towards the end of fiscal year 1987 - 88. The reason we came with the supplementaries was that we did not wish this kind of build-up again this year, so we had to meet them. I am not concealing anything. I am saying what are the facts. We must understand that this country has to get accustomed to frank speaking about these matters.

Mr. Speaker, having made those particular observations and sought to set this record straight, I hope now that we can pass on and discuss the several Heads in the Estimates in a businesslike and efficient manner, so that we can get through as many of those Heads as possible.

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

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

Ayes: Hon. L. E. Sandiford; Hon. P. M. Greaves; Hon. B. M. Taitt; Hon. M. A. King; Hon. E. E. Greaves; Hon. W. O. Franklin; Hon. H. A. Blackman; Hon. N. K. Simmons; Hon. W. W. Hall; Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman; Hon. C. V. Walker; Mr. D. H. J. Thompson; Mr. E. Bourne; Mr. C. A. Neblett; Dr. E. A. Simmons; Mr. R. L. Morris; Mr. J. J. Payne; Mr. P. J. M. Miller; Mr. L. L. Brathwaite; Mr. R. P. Byer: - 20

Noes: Hon. H. deB. Forde; Mr. D. A. C. Simmons; Mr. O. S.Arthur: - 3.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.20 p.m. this day.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2.20 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 120 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, Sir, a number of amendments to the Schedule, that Is, this book of Estimates, have been circulated to honourable Members. These amendments will form part of the Schedule, as though this Schedule would have been amended by amendments.

During the course of the meeting, I think an additional page was added, page 27. There are now 27 pages of amendments. Rather than do each one in a laborious way, I thought' I would deal with them globally, Sir, and if that is what honourable Members agree with, I move, Sir, that this....

Asides.

HEAD 10- GOVERNOR-GENERAL - $303 818

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $303 818 for Head 10 stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 11 - JUDICIARY - $17 688

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $17 688 for Head 11 stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can someone second that Resolution.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do you reserve your right to speak as well?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, the judges have an important role to play in the administration of justice. We all agree that the physical conditions for the judges need to be modernised. One must be open and frank about it. Both parties, one in 15 years and the other in ten, really neglected the development for the modernisation of the Supreme Court. I was able in 1985 and 1986 to see the completion of the new court for the fifth judge, and we did appoint a fifth judge to take account of the increased workload that is coming before the courts.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Under this Head, I can deal with anything affecting the judges.

There had been discussions, certainly by the last Government, with a number of contracting firms with a view to raising finance to build a new Supreme Court complex. It started as a very ambitious project, but it was gradually scaled down, in my time, I think to about between $17 million and $22 million. We had it in mind to erect a new court structure on the site that is now the car park opposite the Central Police Station. The revised drawings cut out a number of the original offices that had been planned for, DPP, Attorney-General, and we looked towards a smaller, but utilitarian complex.

The difficulty was getting money on good terms from overseas markets. There was a facility that was offered to me through an English construction firm which had the support of Mrs. Thatcher. But, unfortunately, the money was seven-year money, and it would have had implications for bunching of debt, and we could not entertain it at the time it was offered.

I believe I saw in an *Official Gazette* within the last year, probably within the last six months, where Government had evinced an intention to acquire the Barbados Foundry and Home Centre site for the erection of

a new Supreme Court. I have subsequently heard that that acquisition has been abandoned. So, for the time being, a new court complex seems to have been held in abeyance until more favourable conditions are with us, particularly financial conditions.

I would be grateful if the Prime Minister could tell us whether the acquisition for the Home Centre Foundry complex has in fact been abandoned, and what considerations informed the decision to abandon that acquisition.

In the meantime, the Supreme Court building is in a severe state of dilapidation. Parts of it are falling down or falling in, however you want to look at it, and there are remedial works going on there. If Government has a difficulty with raising the finance for a completely new complex, I think that it would be wise not just to do cosmetic repairs on the existing Supreme Court building, but this is a matter of engineering expertise - if the existing structure can allow for a thorough upgrading and modernisation within the context of the existing structure, I think Government will meet most of the desires of the profession, and indeed of the judges, I am sure, by spending some money now to refurbish and upgrade the existing facilities to give them a useful life, certainly into the year 2000.

So I would like to know, first of all, the reasons for the abandonment, if indeed, it has been abandoned, and secondly, what is the extent of the works which Government is going to carry out at the existing Supreme Court building, which is now in a very bad state of disrepair and under repairs.

Hon. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, a decision has been taken to abandon the Home Centre Complex as the site for the Supreme Court. That does not mean that a decision has been taken to abandon the effort to construct a new Supreme Court. In fact, we are still trying to identify an adequate and suitable location for the construction of a new Supreme Court complex. There are one or two sites which are under consideration. We are going to make a serious effort to try and get a proper court complex established.

The honourable Member has made the point that the court buildings have been neglected over the years. That is quite true. The very dilapidated state of the present Supreme Court building is certainly nothing new. It has had a long history. In fact, I believe that, structurally, there may be some questions about its continued use as well. One of the judges pointed out to me the other day that some of the walls even seem to be bulging a bit, and one has to look at that as well to see if, structurally, it is a building which needs to be preserved at all. 2.30 p.m.

But I wish to assure the honourable Member that we are looking for alternative arrangements to provide an appropriate Supreme Court complex. The Home Centre site has a number of buildings on it, and there are lots of businesses in it, and the acquisition of that complex has proved extremely costly. If it is possible within the existing properties which Government owns to provide a Supreme Court complex, it seems that that might be a much better use of Government's finances and of properties.

I do not know if I have answered the honourable Member's questions, but that is the extent of the reply which I can give at this time.

Hon. H. dcB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, in the last year's Estimates, I raised in the Estimates Committee, and the then Prime Minister replied, the question of whether or not Barbados will be going into a Court of Appeal with the other territories in the Caribbean. At the time that he gave what was his personal view, that he thought there was a case, at least, for a final Court of Appeal of the Caribbean, and that he thought that the matter would be supported by his Cabinet colleagues. I do not know how far that matter may have been advanced within the governmental system, but I take the opportunity to enquire whether or not Government has given further consideration to the establishment of a final Court of Appeal for the Caribbean, including Barbados, outside of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

I believe that at some stage we in the Caribbean will have to look to our own institutions. Most of the territories which are affected by such a change have now been independent for almost, I believe, ten years; in the case of Barbados some 21 years and in the case of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana much longer. I think we now have the experience of managing almost every aspect of our own affairs, and I would have thought that in the legal field we have produced persons of an outstanding calibre, some of whom, like Sir William Douglas and the late Sir Hugh Whitting, have been members of Her Majesty's Privy Council in England.

One of the other areas that we could possibly develop would be to look for a Commonwealth Court which will serve the smaller countries of the Commonwealth, particularly those in the Caribbean. It is perhaps an idea which, if we are not satisfied that we ourselves want to limit our association with the court only to those existing members of CARICOM, we could perhaps canvas the idea of a court involving members outside of the CARICOM region as well. That is an idea for consideration.

In addition to the issue of the final Court of Appeal, Mr. Chairman, we also have to give consideration to our own domestic situation, where we continue to have a Court of Appeal which is composed of members who at the same time are members at first instance, and, therefore, you have the position where a member may find himself sitting on judgment given by his brother judges. And because there are so few judges from time to time, there are problems in even being able to get a Court of Appeal constituted to deal with a particular matter without one judge having sometimes to take leave. I believe this occurred the other day in a particular case when the Court of Appeal could not sit immediately.

I think one judge had to take special leave to bring on someone to act because he had been involved in a matter at another level.

I believe that we have on the Statute Book legislation passed in some time, either in 1980 or 1981, which would, to some extent, enable us to have a separate Court of Appeal. It would mean an increase in the number of judges, I believe, by two. But in my view, the workload before the courts has now reached the stage to justify an increase in the numbers of the judiciary.

On any Tuesday morning, before the court you can have at least 40 matters engaging the judge in chambers, and it is the experience of most of us that, from time to time, those matters have to be adjourned over and over again, particularly if they are argumentative. Whilst I recognise that the revision of the Supreme Court rules has enabled certain matters which usually came before a judge in chambers to be sent to the Registrar, only a limited number of those matters do go before the Registrar. In any event, I think, as the Honourable Minister for Legal Affairs would know, there is only a limited amount of things that a Registrar can do, and certainly the Registrar and the Assistant Registrars have also found that their work has been increased tremendously. So I believe that we must be seriously considering improving the personnel of the judiciary.

I know that the Bar Association continues to make representation about modernising the ancillary aids which are available to judges to enable them to carry out their particular functions. In many respects, the new technology, which is now becoming an everyday phenomenon in the offices of the legal profession, is still, lacking from the Lower Courts, and, in fact, the judges have not got access to these new technological advancements and changes. I wonder how much thought the Government has been giving to this particular matter.

My friend, the honourable Member for St. Thomas, has raised the question of the physical conditions at the Supreme Court, and has said what plans had been on the drawing board to try to deal with the problem. I completely agree with him. The problem has been one to find the financing to put up a new court structure. In fact, in the planning stages, whenever one reached the Ministry of Finance, you were always met with the position that the Lower Court did not have the same developmental implications as, for instance, housing or something like that 2.40 p.m.

Sir, I have been informed that the position at the courts has got so bad that at the moment there is a report available in the Ministry of Transport and Works -1 am not sure in the Technical Section - on the physical condition of that building, and I wonder if it is not doing more than bulging. I understand the report may say that even the roof is in danger of possibly falling in or something. I say this not in any alarmist way, but really by way of seeking information, because I think it is important that we deal with it

I know that a large section of the court has been cordoned off, that you cannot even pass in that particular section because of the physical condition of the area. I wonder whether the Minister can tell us whether there is any validity to the information which I have received. I have not checked the information, I cannot certainly vouch for its accuracy, but I have had the information, and I thought that I ought to raise it with the Minister and to find out what steps are being taken now, as we see there, at least for the immediate future trying to hold a position.

Sir, the Minister mentioned that various sites were being considered. Could the Minister tell us if the Government now considers the former Waterworks site too small for the future law courts? I know we had spent some money on that site, I think almost half million dollars was spent on engineering and consultant fees when we were formerly planning to establish a court on that particular site. If that site is too small, will consideration be given, for instance, to rebuilding the law courts on its existing site, the Supreme Court, but perhaps gutting the interior of the building, maintaining the facade for historical and architectural reasons and reconstructing a new court there, and in the meantime using some temporary facilities for that particular purpose.

It seems to me that we are going to have to put into the Physical Development Plan, and really stick to them, firm arrangements for improving facilities at the law courts. I think it was only last week, listening to two of the persons at the level of the Civil Service who inspire Government developmental planning, that one of them, a distinguished economist, made the point that the maintenance of law and order was as much a developmental goal and necessity - I

think both of them may have made the point - as anything else.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Both of them are very distinguished.

It is a point that has been made in this House certainly by my friend from St. Thomas, and it has been made by me, even from the back bench, when I had stated my disagreement with some of the views held by other persons in the Ministry of Finance, even at the level of a former Minister of Finance, as to the priorities of physical planning for the development of legal institutions as against physical planning for other aspects of Barbados' development. I think, however, Sir, we are reaching the stage where I believe that this matter must now move right up on' the front burner and away from the back burner.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church West clearly could not persuade his colleagues to remove the matter of justice as a developmental issue from the back burner. His colleagues clearly did not see justice as a developmental issue, that is how I understand it, because he could not persuade them to spend money to ensure that justice got all the perquisites and amenities which were necessary for its proper and effective administration. It certainly remained on the back burner for a long time. I believe that the honourable Member for Christ Church West did make some effort to get the new Supreme Court complex established, but his colleagues did not see that that was a matter which should receive any great degree of priority.

The honourable Member raised the question as to whether the site where the present car park is, is too small. We tend to think that that site is a little too small and cramped by itself.

I did indicate that we were examining other sites for the construction of the Supreme Court. The existing site where the court is is one of the sites which are being given very high consideration. Where the court is, and even further down in the back of the court where the cars are parked, where it is contiguous with Tudor Street, that whole area, is being considered as a possibility for the erection of the Supreme Court.

The honourable Member raised a number of questions - about the workload of the judges, the necessity for more judges, and about the need for not only a Caribbean Court of Appeal, but also for a local Court of Appeal. He advocated the provision of additional judges of the court. All this clearly has to be viewed in the context of availability of space for the use of the Supreme Court.

It has been considered that an additional magistrate may be necessary, certainly in the St. Michael area, to cope with the ever-increasing workload of the magistrates in that area. We have been trying to locate an appropriate site for the provision of an additional Magistrate's Court, but that has not proved too simple and straightforward as yet.

But clearly the provision of additional magistrates and judges, and the provision of a Court of Appeal, even a Caribbean Court of Appeal, if we are to lobby for its siting here, would depend essentially on the availability of the adequate structures and buildings for the siting and the housing of the appropriate court complexes. All of these matters are being given the attention of Government at the moment, and I can assure the honourable Member that we are not relegating the issues of the courts and justice to the back burner, but we have them on the front burner at this time.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas, I believe, in his earlier question, had raised a matter about finance being available to construct a new Supreme Court complex. I think he posed the question and answered it himself, because he said that the finance which was available was finance which was short-term money, and it was financing which would have been arranged by an English company, which, I believe, is not now operating in Barbados. Is that putting it neutral enough?

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: For probable cause, you said?

The position is, Mr. Chairman, that it is not that easy to get long-term financing for structures like Supreme Court complexes. Maybe the developmental agencies which lend funds to Government for buildings do not regard justice and court buildings as developmental areas. Certainly it is a matter which we have to take in hand and ensure that we deal with it. 2.50 p.m.

The honourable Member asked about our attitude to a Caribbean Court of Appeal and of a local Court of Appeal. The issue of a Caribbean Court of Appeal was raised and discussed at the last Heads of Governments Conference, which took place in St. Lucia last year. That conference mandated the Attorneys-General of the region to discuss the matter and put up proposals for the next meeting of the CARICOM Heads, after consultation with the Commonwealth Secretariat. There has been a meeting of Attorneys-General of the region in relation to this matter, and some further analyses are being done in consultation with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the CARICOM Secretariat, and proposals for the establishment of a Caribbean Court of Appeal will be put up for consideration

by the Heads of Government at the next CARICOM Heads meeting.

I am not too sure from this vantage point what is the commitment of all the CARICOM countries to accepting a Caribbean Court of Appeal as a final Court of Appeal for the region, but I know that there are some countries in the region which do not accept fully the need for a Caribbean Court of Appeal as a final Court of Appeal for the region. Certainly we in Barbados, as a Government, and I believe, as a profession, and as a people, accept that a Caribbean Court of Appeal is desirable, a direction in which we would like to see the matter moving. But we are not sure that it will receive the total support of all the countries of CARICOM.

As far as a local Court of Appeal is concerned, this is a matter which I believe the honourable Member for Christ Church West could not persuade his colleagues to remove off the back burner.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: You said you left before it was finished? The legislation was passed all the way back in 1980 and you said you were looking for physical accommodation for the local Court of Appeal? That is essentially the point which I am making now, and that is why I say you could not persuade your colleagues to take it off the back burner, because from year to year, maybe the will was there on the part of some members to get the Court of Appeal, but certainly the total political will to establish the facilities for the court was not there.

It is a matter which depends on the availability of adequate spaces for housing a Court of Appeal. I believe that once that problem is out of the way there would be no great difficulty in seeing the establishment of a local Court of Appeal in Barbados, because it is a direction which we on this side, for sure, will want to see the administration of justice move in.

The honourable Member also spoke about modernising the ancillary facilities for the judiciary. I take it he speaks of providing the modern electronic equipment which will facilitate judges dealing with cases, recording the evidence and matters of that kind. This, too, is a direction in which I would certainly like to see the administration of justice move in. When I did some investigations into this matter, I discovered that some years ago, again in your time, in the regime of the last Administration, some of the ancillary facilities of which you spoke, stenotype machines or something like that, were in fact obtained by the Government, people were trained....

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: You are saying there were palantype machines and that this is more than ten years ago? The machines were obtained and people were trained, but then the machines were put to lie down somewhere in some Government building and the people who were trained to use them were never brought on to use them. Only one person used them. That is the type of inefficiency which, from time to time, takes place in Government circles. The machines are brought, people are trained, the obvious desirability of establishing and formalising a system is there, but when you come to the crunch, all that money is wasted, gone down the drain, because no effort is made to ensure that the systems are put in place. But it is clearly a direction in which we need to move if the administration of justice is to be most speedily and effectively carried out.

I do not think there are any more questions which the honourable Member raised which I need to address, but if there are, Mr. Chairman, I will be more than willing to respond to him.

The question that the sum of $17 688 under Head 11 - Judiciary - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 12 - PARLIAMENT - $1 458 583

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that sum of $1 458 583 under Head 12 - Parliament - stand part of the Schedule.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, last year when this Head of Estimates was being considered, there was some informal discussion concerning the improvement in the conditions of constituency representatives, and I read in one of the newspapers a speech made by the Honourable Prime Minister as to the proposals which Government may have under this Head for improving the conditions of those persons who are appointed to assist in constituency duties for Members of Parliament. I wonder whether the Prime Minister is in a position to. tell the Committee what proposals are now contained this year in the Estimates for dealing with that situation, and also give us some idea of what stipend or other form of gratuity is being proposed for those persons. I believe that the Committee last year was surprised to know that no arrangements had been made for the payment of National Insurance or any other benefits by these persons, and it seems to me that we have to try as much as possible to regularise their position and at the same time give them some protection, as they obviously are in need of such. 3.00 p.m.

I have been having a look at the sort of facilities that are provided for Members of Parliament in other jurisdictions. As it should be expected, they vary in a very wide manner from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Within the Canadian system, they varied from sparse to an abundance, whether you are operating in Ontario, or Saskatchewan, or whether you are operating at the federal, provincial or municipal level.

What is quite clear is that most modern Parliaments and jurisdictions see the provision of certain amenities not merely as means to facilitate an individual member, or in any respect as a supplement to the members remuneration for the honour of representing the public at large. They see any provision as it should be properly seen, as a facility to enable the member to better perform his public duty, for which he has been elected. I have been in this House for some 17 years, and I am a little concerned with the fact that we still are lagging behind in making these facilities available.

Whilst I can understand part of the historical reason for it, I believe that we have progressed enough now to put those historical reasons very far behind us. Obviously, there was a time when the broad masses of this country were not represented at all within the domain of our Parliament, and despite the fact that we boast of having a parliamentary system of Government for 350 years, we must be the first to recognise that that parliamentary system was not as democratic as it ought to have been, and, in fact, the fight to reach the stage where we have reached today has been a rather long one, one in which many persons other than ourselves have participated in a very virile and positive way.

At that time, obviously, those persons who controlled Parliament had other means of maintaining themselves, I suppose, in Parliament, and they would not have had the necessity for any higher form of debate other than one to preserve the *status quo* or, indeed, any higher form of representation. But we have moved to the stage where the problems which are before the nation need the sort of close and careful analyses which we have come to expect, and are expected to provide, in this House. And I think that it is time that we give consideration, when the finances of the country allow it -1 think we can do it not necessarily at one go, but we have to make a start at some stage - to providing Members of Parliament with adequate research facilities.

I do not believe that members of the public recognise that sometimes you are called on to enter into a debate at short notice. You may be asked, Mr. Chairman, for instance, as has happened in this House from time to time, to debate the implications of the National Debt, as we have been debating in this House, or supply side economics, without necessarily having the background information, basic information, to permit you to contribute to that debate. In other Parliaments, however, those research facilities are available. In some Parliaments a block vote is given for the use of the Leader of the Government side, the Leader of the Opposition Party, the Leader of the Minority Party, so that there is available to them the facility of having proper research staff.

I would expect, of course, that when you are a Minister of Government, you do not have access to the assistance provided by public servants; not that they necessarily- give you the political perspective which you want to have on any particular measure, but they are there to assist with the necessary research as well as the necessary analyses. When you are a back-bencher, as I have been a backbencher in this House -1 think that I have been a back-bencher for longer than I was on the front bench - you are bereft of that form of research, and I think that all honourable Members will agree with me that you sometimes find yourselves either having to rely on volunteer assistance, if you can get it,....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I have not heard that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Neither did I.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE.... or you have to rely, Sir, sometimes on your friends on the other side to let you have the basic research material. As a matter of fact, there are not many occasions when basic material is made available to the whole House.

I would expect that in an area such as in the area of Foreign Affairs, in which there really is, more often than not, a bipartisan approach[1], it is possible for debates in the House to be inspired by some of the background papers in basic research which are available within the governmental structure. I recall an instance of once debating the Belizean issue, on which both parties were *ad idem*. We were continuing a policy that had been followed on Belize by the Democratic Labour Party when it was in Government. In those circumstances, a background paper was made available not only to persons on my side of the House at the time on the back bench, but, also, to the Opposition. There are areas in which this can be done, but, basically, there is a need within our parliamentary system for this type of facility being made available.

There is also the need, as I think the Prime Minister, in making a speech at one of his party's constituency branches, alluded to, for upgrading, as a whole, the facilities available to the individual Member to help him perform his duties, and not only here in Parliament....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ... I believe, Sir, it was at the St. George South branch but, also, outside of Parliament, because it is all part of the overall form of representation. As far as we are concerned, there can be bipartisan support on issues such as this. It is important that both political parties have, I think, come to recognise that we have not got to battle against people outside in order to have a democratic system. We have a duty, instead, to ensure that the system which we have now inherited can be improved in a sensible manner without detriment to the public's interest, financial or otherwise. It is in that respect that we are speaking under this Head, Sir. 3.10p.m.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) would wish me to revise the term "bipartisan" used earlier. Perhaps, they would make it "non-partisan."

Next year, we will be celebrating 350 years of parliamentary government in this country, and I use the word "government." I would like the Prime Minister perhaps at this time to give us some indication of how far the plans for that event have reached.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Or the Leader of the House, Sir, whichever. Both of them are in a position that they would be cognisant of what has been happening in this respect. I feel that the whole Committee of the House should be taken into the confidence of the Government at this stage on the particular plans.

Last year, I had suggested that perhaps we should have a small overall committee of both Houses of Parliament at some stage to look into this event. I believe it is Parliament's occasion, and Parliament involves both sides of the House, and it is not merely a matter for the House of Assembly, it is a matter as well for the Senate of Barbados. I believe that whatever proposals there are can be improved to reflect very favourably on this House's procedures, this House's history and this House's achievements.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to see us use the opportunity now of collecting some of our own parliamentary piecedents. Very often, as has happened in this House today, when we were in full session, - and as, no doubt, will happen while we remain in Committee - we make points of order and points of explanation. There are objections, but I have never found anywhere where we could look back over our 350 years and find the precedents that we follow. Most of us still from time to time refer to May's Parliamentary Practice. But I am sure there is a plethora of authority, not all of it, mark you, Mr. Chairman, with which honourable Members may agree - in fact, we may disagree very violently on some of the interpretations which from time to time have come from various persons in the Chair on various issues - but despite that, I believe that the precedents would be instructive and are a particularly vital part of the parliamentary life of this country. I would like to see them preserved.

In fact, I would like to see that one of the projects would be a history of the Parliament of Barbados. I think we have enough within our system, both at the Local Government and at the wider parliamentary level, to record what is instructive for the citizens of our country. It should be taught within our own institutions. I am aware that, from time to time, some of it is taught by those who have been in the teaching profession, who have done their own research, as time has permitted. But it is about time that we facilitate wider dissemination of this knowledge. I do not believe for one moment that it is going to be done by an industrious scholar from Cave Hill who might do it for a thesis or dissertation. I think that it is going to be done when we facilitate that research being done, particularly since there may not be a wider reading public available for the material immediately. And it is because of these considerations that I am urging the Government to let us know what proposals it may have for the occasion for the 350th anniversary.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, I wish briefly to make reference to two questions. Question one has to do with the matter as to who are. to be representatives of the people, and the second question is how is representation to be effected. The first question seems to have been given undue, malicious air by the members of the Barbados Labour Party, not necessarily in Parliament, but certainly including some in Parliament, to the effect that there are some types of persons who are by virtue of their employment debarred from the honour of serving the people of Barbados. I rsfer specifically to the Barbados Labour Party propounding the malicious set of stupidity that people who work for the trade union movement cannot be representatives of the people of Barbados. I think this has to be addressed.

I wish, at the very outset, to say that long before any of us became Members of Parliament, at least those that I know about, we started by being employees of something or of somebody. Some of us have been employees of big business, some of us have been employees of large corporations, some of us have been self-employed, but by and large, we have all been employed, and we have all had a commitment to our -employers. If we are doctors of medicine, we have been committed to that organisation that

we are members of, whether it is a medical body, a hospital or otherwise. If we are members of the legal profession, we have had briefs for those who employ us from time to time, or often employ us more frequently than from time to time. If some of us have been employed by the church, we have had responsibilities towards the church.

I make bold to say, Sir, that within the context of those parameters, we have all of us, from time to time, had to look at the *raison d'etre* of those organisations that have employed us, as we have at the same time looked at the aims and the functions of the political organisations with which we have been affiliated. And from time to time there may have been the apparency of conflicts. But I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, that when an attorney-at-law represents one set of people before the law courts and then he comes into this august Chamber to be representative of the people, that any one is so puerile as to suggest that that person does not have a certain integrity and a certain capacity to separate issues, or that that person is unable, to the best of his ability, to represent the country of Barbados and the constituency that has given him the honour to serve.

If persons happen, as has been the case in this Parliament, Sir, to be representatives of the mercantile community, nobody in Barbados has said, or is saying, that by virtue of the fact that that person may be a member of the Chamber of Commerce or the Manufacturers Association, or any other of the business interests which have been served over the years, especially between 1940 and 1960, that those persons, at one and the same time that they have been the spokesmen for business, whose aim is to employ people and to make the greatest possible profit, sometimes at the exploitation of the people, are not capable of representing their constituencies, sometimes constituencies of poor people. Because I venture to say, Sir, that in very few constituencies have we got any large areas of rich people, and we have been able to find this in several constituencies in Barbados over the years. Even in the constituency that was entrusted to me recently, it has been noted that representatives of the mercantile community were able to represent the people. 3.20 p.m.

The question, therefore, arises: Why out of malice should members of the Barbados Labour Party, or indeed, of anything else, suggest that there is a certain lack of integrity when the person starts by being a representative of the workers from scratch, where the person grows up as a working class person, where he associates all of his life with working class people, where his initial occupation is the representation of the workers? Why then in a Parliament that is a Parliament of working class people, for the betterment of working class people, should there be an apparent contradiction only in the minds of certain people who choose for their own personal interest to recognise that kind of difference?

I believe, Sir, that it is time that those who have their personal axes to grind recognise that anybody who chooses to be a representative will have conflicts confront him from time to time. But the person who has integrity,.the person who is able to separate the issues one from another, is able at one and the same time to wear a number of different hats and represent the interest of people in such a way as to bring satisfaction. When it comes to the trade union person, there is no such separation, because the hat is one and the same, in that the people who are being represented are, in fact, Mr. Chairman, the same people each time around. So that matter has to be examined, and the comments which sometimes appear from time to time must be given the short shift that is their due. Because until such time as Barbadians, and opposition forces, begin to understand that there is nobody in Barbados better equipped to represent the working class people than a trade union member, we do not understand what this is all about, and we are only fooling ourselves with a lot of words that people will go and print from time to time because it suits their own personal interest.

I am not suggesting that we are going to bring 24 the next time, although I would like to think that in the not too distant future, we will increase the number of trade union persons.

Asides.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Obviously, it will have to be at the expense of the three on the other side. We are not intending to increase the overall number, Sir, so that would give us three plus 24.

I think that one of the things for us to understand is that very quickly we are reaching the stage in Barbados where the perception is that to be a representative of the people we have to be people with large amounts of money. In fact, the very distinct impression was given in the run-up to the last General Election - it was given on the other side - that one BLP person who was contesting the candidacy in a constituency in St. Michael said that she had to come out of the race because it appeared to her that you had to have money to represent the people. It was very clear that even in St. Michael Central, the biggest criticism against my own representation offer in 1981 was that I could not represent the people because I was too poor, but those who had riches in St. Michael Central could represent the people. That is a very serious thing for poor people in a poor community. That might be all right for the United States of America, where one hears that within the three or so primaries some people have spent more than $3 million. But if we begin to get a situation where, without those matching funds, we

encourage people to believe that representation has to do with the amount of money that is spent, it is clear to me, if not to anybody else, that then representation is going to become not a matter of service, of what you can contribute to this country, but a matter of what you can get out of it. And God help us when we reach that stage, Mr. Chairman.

I do not believe we have reached that stage yet, and I do not like to think that we shall. But if we preach that you have to spend money to have the honour to represent the people of our country, and that you have to have plenty of money or that there is going to be pockets of interest which will give you large amounts of money to be able to buy your way into Parliament, I am saying that Parliament is going to lose the prestigious position that it now holds in Barbados, within the Commonwealth and the world. *"Verbum sat sapienti est."*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: May I remind the honourable Member that the debates of this House should be conducted in the English language.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Oh, that I thought, was English, Sir. I read it somewhere last night. I understand that it says that a word to the wise is sufficient.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Then that will be repetition. Still against the rules of the House.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I apologise. And I did not intend to repeat it, Sir.

The second question relates to how representation is to be effected. It seems to me that once we have taken the onerous task of representing the people, we should understand that that first of all, happens to be an honour, and that it has to do with plenty of hard work. There is not a lot of benefit up front to be derived in terms of remuneration or otherwise. But there is an awful lot of satisfaction, Mr. Chairman, to be gained from being aware that we have been able to assist others, that we have been able to make the lot of our brothers and sisters better, and that we have been able to contribute to the national debate in the interest of our very honourable country.

For that effort, I am glad that there is assistance, which was given some time ago, and I am also pleased, arising out of the suggestion made by myself earlier, that there is consideration for looking very seriously at this matter of the Parliamentary Assistant. I do not know yet what is the nature of that Assistant. I know only that, increasingly, there is the need for representatives to be able to deliver more than they have been doing before. There is a greater need, for instance, for letters to be written on behalf of our constituents, and if one were to write all of the letters that are required, I think that a very significant portion of the allowance that goes to the representative might be taken up just in stationery and correspondence. It seems to me that we have to consider franking services for representatives as being a very necessary and worthwhile consideration in assistance. 3.30p.m.

Though I understand that the Government has given thought to the matter, I should like to think that what comes up as an award as a salary will now become *a* salary as opposed to a part-time allowance. I want to believe that we have straightened out the difficulties associated with National Insurance contributions and that those persons will now be able to make contributions, and have contributions made on their behalf, so that they will not find themselves only in a job, but in the event, as will happen from time to time, that they no longer work at that job, they are out on a limb, as it were, provisions have got to be made so that they too, can benefit from unemployment benefits, and will be able to have severance payments provisions made for them. Since the legislators of the country have been the persons at fault, I believe that these provisions should be given retroactive effect so that these persons will not be disadvantaged owing to no fault of their own.

I take your note that I have not got any time left. If necessary, I shall address the matter more fully.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, it is a pity that the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) should be hurt in the way he has been hurt by an apparent perception about the relevance of the union in representing the interest of workers outside of Parliament. He said that there is malice in the Barbados Labour Party expressing itself against unionist parliamentarians. This is not a court of law, and I will not sink to the depths of emptiness which characterised the speeches of the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) in asking the honourable Member for St. Michael Central to provide evidence. I expect that, as a parliamentarian, he comes in here and makes a statement for which he ought to have some factual basis. But I wish to warn him that each one of us, from time to time, will find invective thrown at us from supporters of the opposite political party. When I went down the steps today for lunch, I got some, and yesterday the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) and myself got some invective, some cursing. But that is part of the game, we understand that. I am not going to say that anybody who abuses me in the yard is a Dem, inspired by malice; I take it in my stride.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Attorney-General is calling them "yard people". You can call them

yard people, DLP yardfowls, whatever you like. That is a matter for you.

What are you getting up for? On what?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, I will ask that question, not the honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Hon. M. A. KING: On a point of order: The honourable Member is misquoting, and misleading the House as to what he heard, presumably *sotto voce*, because he is suggesting that I have called some persons "yard people".

I have not spoken, to start with, and the second point is, if the honourable Member is referring to any remarks he heard somewhere, or even *sotto voce* in this Chamber, what he heard would have been a question which I directed to him as to whether he was calling the persons who were attacking trade unionists being in Parliament yard people.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You could tell from the reply, Sir, that he was not comfortable. Suffice it to say that he admitted in his point of order that it was he who used the words "yard people", but that he was asking me a question. The originator of the phrase is the Attorney-General.

Sir, the point I want to make is that we try as far as possible to have a keen and, at times, necessarily so, heated and spirited debate in here among ourselves. I said a couple of Friday nights ago, at some thing in St. Mark's for the honourable Member for St. John, that our supporters have to understand - and this is part of the educational process that Members of Parliament on both sides must assume - that it is unnecessary for them to resort to abuse or violence because of the strength of a particular party's case or philosophy. We have to do it, Sir. We try to do it by example. We would have heated discussions and arguments in here, we go outside and make a joke with the person who was just arguing with you, hug up, fire a drink. But when we get downstairs, the supporters want to hang us and skin us alive.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: From St. Thomas? You will not see anybody from St. Thomas behaving so anywhere about here. It is too far for the St. Thomas people to come to. They keep in their little area. If you say that about St. Thomas people, you cannot come back up there again, hear? Did you see we let in the Prime Minister a couple of weeks ago? The Honourable Attorney-General will have the record. It will show that the rate of crime is lowest in the parish of St. Thomas. Anyhow, we are not localising the debate, I want to talk at the level of general principles.

We have, as a matter of public education, to let the supporters understand that what we are really doing is putting two different sides to a particular problem. The Government has its view on the deficit and how it is going to control the deficit. The Opposition has its view, and we are going to put the views vigorously and strongly. But it does not mean that the supporters should resort to less than satisfactory behaviour.

The honourable Member for St. Michael Central made another point that I was abused for virtually today. He said there is not a lot of benefit to be derived in terms of remuneration from being an MP, and he is absolutely right. We refused to speak honestly and frankly to the country about this. I made a statement in here last year about backbenchers getting $21 026. The Honourable Minister of Health supported what I was saying, but I want you to stand on your feet and acknowledge that what I am saying is correct. Do not just nod and hide behind this table. 3.40p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: Since he mentioned the Minister of Health, I have to get up on my feet. You were the person who led the onslaught and led the people to say that when I said it was a technical adjustment, I was being dishonest. You were the arch-leader of that. Do not tell me to stand on my feet. I said in here that what we got was a technical adjustment and I did not hide behind anywhere. I said it here, I said it outside, and I say it now. I am too large to hide.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When we were dealing with wage increases, and you expressed one per cent or 1/2 per cent at the top as a technical adjustment, are you telling anybody that that is a reasonable increase? We got the same as the senior civil servants, and you will look at them and tell them to be happy. Is that a wage increase?

(Aside: They did not complain.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They didn't complain?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member get on with his speech?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the point I wish the Honourable Minister of Health and others to understand is that I am grateful that the honourable Member for St. Michael Central was man enough, and is not afraid to speak openly and frankly on these matters, to say that there is not much you can get in terms of money from being an MP. I am glad that the Minister of Health agrees, and is prepared to say, "Precisely"!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: He mentioned the Minister of Health, and I am the only Minister of Health in here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I agree with that, but I would still like to know what is the point.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When he says that and goes on to make the point to suggest that in my capacity as a Member of Parliament I behaved contrary to his expectations in regard to what he is saying, I wish to make the point that when I was a Member of Parliament for ten years in the Opposition, the Barbados Labour Party, continuously over and over again - I am going to speak, but he can confirm it - tried to stop me from earning a living in this country. Do not use me as an example, use somebody else!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Have you ruled on the point of order, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want honourable Members to abuse this point of order thing. I will soon start to have everything said struck from the record. Continue.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, all I was asking the Minister of Health to understand - he seems to have misread where I was coming from - is that on both sides we should have, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition likes to say, a bipartisan acknowledgement of the fact that the duties of an MP are onerous, that the duties of a Minister are even more onerous, and that the duties of a Prime Minister in responsibility are the most onerous of all, and in terms of remuneration for the dudes which we are all called on to do, we are not talking about any money that we can feel proud that we have a good job that is paying well. I wanted somebody from the other side to acknowledge the point, and the honourable Member for St. Michael Central has acknowledged the point.

Some do not know what to expect before they get into it; only after they are in it do they understand the ramifications. We make allowances for public criticism and so on, that is part of the job, but we cannot then assume that because there is a criticism from a member of the public, or two, that that represents a total feeling or characterisation of the particular MP. That is why I am suggesting that the honourable Member must not, because he may have had a bad experience or two, let us even .conceive, for the purposes of the argument, from one or two BLP supporters, believe that there is any concerted, malicious enterprise being organised to inveigh against the character and the *bona fides* of the honourable Member. I think that if he thinks about it a bit more, he would appreciate that being a trade union official with a seat in Parliament in its very nature will attract public comment and criticism from time to time. Neither one of us can be above criticism, and I am only asking you not to be too thin-skinned on the matter.

There are perceptions of conflicts, and I think the honourable Member has been around long enough to know that the question has been asked as a form of public debate, "Can a unionist"- I am putting the question, I am not agreeing with it -

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have a minute to wind up. Mr.

D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will have to come again.

"Can a unionist be a Member of the governing party and do justice to the legitimate grievances of the worker?" That question has been asked, not now, but from the days when the Honourable Sir Frank Walcott broke with the Barbados Labour Party and aligned himself with the Democratic Labour Party, and when there was a gradual shift of unionists into the Democratic Labour Party. It is a question that people ask. Who is to answer the question but the unionists themselves, by example and by precept? He put the question himself in this debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is the end of the honourable Member's time.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I put the question. Let us presume, Sir, that it was rhetorical and that I must answer it myself.

The question, if I am going to follow the honourable Member for St. Thomas, became a question to be answered ever since Sir Frank Walcott broke ranks with the Barbados Labour Party. I am grateful for the kindness of the honourable Member for St. Thomas. I am understanding, therefore, that the question never needed to arise until such time as that time when the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, Sir Frank Walcott, broke ranks with the Barbados Labour Party. So maybe the question was not whether a trade union person should be a member of the trade union and a Member of Parliament, because before that we had a splendid example which we might get to as we go along towards the Springer Memorial School, or we can have splendid example when we look back at Sir Grantley Adams, but it arose 'because Sir Frank Walcott was so rude and presumptuous as to break ranks with the Barbados Labour Party. 3.50p.m.

In short, Sir, by a logical process of elimination and conclusion drawn, we could argue that if a person is a member of the Barbados Labour Party, then there is no problem. Indeed, Sir, I have had to endure that. After all, I faced the polls. It is not a matter of being thin-skinned. I have gone to St. Lucy to represent people, and somebody

might say that there was a candidate who worked at Cable and Wireless who also contested. But we did not hear the problem, because the party was for the Labour Party.

When the trade union endorsed two persons in 1981, it endorsed two staff members in the persons of the current Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) and the current Member for St. Michael Central. If people are prepared to be honest about it, there was a very clear and unequivocable position on the part', not of the union generally, but of the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, asking the public to support two of his colleagues on staff, a non-partisan position.

We could, if we want to be honest, go beyond that. The Member for St. Philip South (Hon. H. A. Blackman) was a member of the union, and still is a member of the Barbados Workers' Union, and we were careful in' the Barbados Workers' Union not to endorse him. The Prime Minister of this day was a member of the Barbados Workers' Union at the time - I hope he is still paying his dues - and was never endorsed. The Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) was a member of the union and a consultant for the union, he was not endorsed. The Member for Christ Church West Central (Hon. M. A. King) was a member of a union, was an attorney for the union, and was not endorsed. Why this presumptuous nonsense, Sir? Because I say it was malice and, as the attorneys say, malice afore thought, expressed and implied. I do not know what that means, Sir, but I was told to say so.

It seems to me that a lot of people have forgotten that they were elections that were fought. We are not talking about being thin-skinned. We face that all the time. The honourable Member for St. Lucy, more recently the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) and I, all have had the experience of going to a cocktail party and having to make a decision to stop going to cocktail parties because when you say you are a member of the trade union, they walk away, they do not want to talk to you any more. We did not mind that. We were prepared to suffer that for and on behalf of the working class people of Barbados, so we do not mind going to the rum shop and drinking a coke with our friends in the rum shop. Let the cocktail parties be for the representatives of cocktail parties. We are representatives of the masses of people, and that is not being thin-skinned, Mr. Chairman. That is grabbing the bull by the horns and saying that we know that when Frank Walcott lost in what was St. Michael...

Asides.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Sir Frank Walcott, Sir, Frank Walcott at the time...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But you still have to address him properly.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Sir, I have the greatest respect for the person, but at the time he was Frank Walcott, now Sir Frank Walcott, President of the Senate. When he lost in 1976, that was because of a malicious campaign in St. Michael West, not about the man, but a campaign which tried to represent that he was not in his capacity of a representative of the workers doing them any good turn. There was an effort being made to say that as long as you were a representative of the workers at one and the same time as a member of a political party, and that political party was not the Barbados Labour Party, then he was committing a crime.

My colleague from St. Lucy and I know that when we had in 1981 to face the people, the major part of the problem that we were forced to put up with, not by any supporters that we want to relegate to any position but by the leadership of the Labour Party, was the position where they tried to make out that we had some kind of problem with our integrity. They can poke fun at and represent the mercantile big business community on a Monday and then come to Parliament on a Tuesday and represent poor people in various parts of Barbados. There is nothing wrong with that, but at the time when we were just Greaves and Trotman running, they said let us stay in the union because we were good union representatives, but if we move from being union representatives to be representatives of the wider community of working class people, there is something wrong with that.

Somebody says that you are being thin-skinned and dismiss it into a situation we are talking about supporters. I am not talking about supporters. When supporters speak, they speak only after other people speak, whether the people speak on the floor of this Chamber or in the Other Place, and in the Other Place there have been similar voicings by people who, whether their wear straight ties or otherwise, should know better. It is time that we begin to understand that all we are doing by that sort of debate is making people believe that their own cannot represent them, and unless we come face to face with that problem, we are going to be in very great difficulty. I am not afraid to deal with it.

When I say that we do it for the satisfaction, that is what I mean. I am not relegating it to anything but the satisfaction of knowing that if we make a contribution here, we are making a lasting contribution and when we have to go out there and fight against exploitation, when we have to go out there and fight against mini wages, against maxi prices, it is a trade union person who understands those issues and we are not afraid in this august Chamber to make anybody, particularly members on the other side,

understand how we feel. In the other Chamber, they also know it, so it raises a question: if you know it, why do you choose in your writings, on your platform, and wherever else you are in the seat of whatever, to try to make out otherwise to the working class people that they are better led by somebody whose stated agenda, as well as their unstated agenda, is not consistent with the aims and the aspirations of the working class people of Barbados?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not accept the proposition of the honourable Member for St. Michael Central that trade unionists are above reproach. It came through....

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: On a point of order, Sir: I never said that trade unionists are beyond reproach, nor did I imply it. As a matter of fact, I accepted that trade unionists are not thin-skinned and that they can accept criticism. But there should not be malicious attempts made by the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party to mislead the public.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I also do not accept the comment earlier about 'until people understand that no one can represent working class people better than a trade union.' I do not understand that one, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There are three of them in here. It makes the other 24 of us redundant. I will never concede that I cannot represent working class people as well. 4.00p.m.

(Aside: Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Better.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But you did not say it Trotie. I wrote down what you said.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: I am not going to be one to jump up all the time. But I said nobody can better represent I am not suggesting that trade union people alone can represent. I said nobody can better represent.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I did not do any violence to his comment, Sir. I quoted him exactly. The word better was in there, too.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have it here, Sir: "until people understand that no one can represent working class people better than the trade union".

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Something has obviously stunned the honourable Member. He keeps blaming the leadership of the Labour Party for a perception among the people, not having to do with him necessarily, or the leadership of the trade union. But he knows that it was at its height in October, 1986, when there were lay-offs and dismissals from the Transport Board, and that the butt of public criticism, and of the criticism from the workers at the Transport Board, was a man called Prince, not either one of the Honourable Members in here, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member, continue your speech.

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

The argument was that here was a trade unionist who was not defending the interest of the workers at the Transport Board, but, rather, was promoting their dismissal on grounds of party affiliation. It had nothing to do with the Members of Parliament And from time to time, if either union appears to take a position not in harmony with the perceived desires of the workers, the question about conflict of interest will arise.

Sir, a few months ago, the President of MJPW made a statement that his union was not going to be concerned with salaries and wages, but with conditions of service.

(Aside: He was reported as having said it.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:'HeneveT **denied it**

Aside.

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

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Members on the back bench from the union never asked workers not to make unreasonable demands for money and so on, that there are other things that they should be looking at in the next two years. I am sure that the honourable Members on the back bench have not done that. But I know that as soon as the President of the NUPW made his statement, the workers were concerned as to whether their legitimate interests were being actively promoted in the direction in which they wanted, that is, money! If the leadership of the Barbados Workers Union had taken a similar position -1 do not know what position-they have taken - again the public disquiet would be aroused, because there would,

instinctively, be a feeling that the union was not doing its best to get more money for them.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. no, I never said that You never took the position at all. I said I would like to know what position you are taking. But it will come out in the fullness of time.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When we get to Labour, perhaps.

It is these perceptions, Sir, by the public that cause the *unions'bona fides* to be challenged from time to time.

We are blamed for Senator Walcott losing his seat in St. Michael West, or whatever it was at the time, the Deacon's Road area. I am not aware of the type of campaign that was run in that area in 1971. But what happened when he lost the seat in St. Peter? Do you blame the Labour Party, too? A campaign of malice, or did it have something to do with a box of panties? What caused the lost of the seat in St. Peter? That is why I say Members must not be too thin-skinned about antagonisms that will arise from time to time in the society.

Sir, I do not think we should spend all the time on trade unionists in Parliament I wanted to make a point that I think I have got through, Sir, that we should set certain examples aimed at easing the tensions in the society and aimed at, perhaps, unifying the society by our own conduct in relation to each other. I think we are doing well. It is up to the people to follow.

On a more direct point to this Head, I should like the Prime Minister to consider, with a view to next year's Estimates, having the Draft Estimates come to the Debates Committee for the Debates Committee's input. I think it is the proper body to make representation on behalf of Parliament. It is going to be the 350th year, and the opportunity should be taken to sample the opinions of the Debates Committee and, hopefully, have some information fed to the Ministry of Finance. I am not saying that the Debates Committee must now come to Estimates Committee, not at all. But when you are starting to prepare the document in September this year, we should have a meeting of the Debates Committee and discuss what we have in view for next year. That, perhaps, would solve the problem, Sir, of having a separate, bipartisan committee meet to discuss the programme for the 350th year. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition said that we should, as far as possible, have a bipartisan attitude to the events next year and perhaps there should be a special committee. I feel that since the Debates Committee presently consists of members of both Houses and on both sides that we can use the same Debates Committee as the body to help with the co-ordination, or think-tank, whatever you want to use it for. I think we have a body there that can, perhaps, usefully make an input into Government policy beyond the ordinary things that we do ever so often like appointments, advertisements, wages negotiations. 4.10p.m.

I would like the Prime Minister or the Leader of the House - to tell us - I am not looking at any particular Capital Head now - what are the plans for downstairs and how soon those plans will be brought to fruition. The east wing down there needs to be upgraded in accordance with the plans, and I think the House deserves to know what is Government's programme for the redevelopment of this building, and what is envisaged as being the types of facilities that will be provided for honourable Members downstairs.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, I can probably understand why the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) is not in a position to understand the measure of hurt that was felt over the last ten years in which the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) could speak of the campaign that was carried against himself, the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) and Sir Frank Walcott, as he was a candidate for the Democratic Labour Party in 1976. It is possibly, because from my own experience, I have not seen much of his presence in the St. Michael constituencies during those elections.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member allow the debate to continue uninterrupted?

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I am on record as having called for more responsible speeches from persons who are set up as leaders in this community. Apart from the personal injury that is done when you try to pull down institutions and the relevance of the institutions to the well-being of your community, Mr. Chairman, you destroy the very foundations of the society in which we all wish to live.

We as parliamentarians may from time to time, think it necessary, and sometimes we say it is politics, to take a dig at each other. It is not always seen in the detrimental light, because we can pass a joke in doing it in some areas. But we also say that we have a society that is characterised as having short memories. We sometimes say that we have a society that is very captive. It is an audience which, as

long as you can speak well enough, you can captivate and can bring to" the point of following blindly the kind of comments that are made. It is in this light, Sir, that as parliamentarians, as representatives of the political organisations, we should see our responsibility as a building process in terms of educating people along the better lines of their development

I suppose, Sir, that when you couple all that happens in the life of a politician, you can look at the end product, *t* when he would have retired from public service, and look at what is his lot. And if we start from the very beginning and create those areas of distrust, mistrust, those areas of question as to the calibre of the persons, we are not doing ourselves as a country, and as a society any good. Therefore, I would like us, when we are looking at this matter of legislative service, not only in the things we say, but in the areas of concern, to demonstrate for the proper representation of the people we are called to represent that we give every care and consideration to doing the best, and giving them the best that we can.

I am sure, Sir, that if we follow the example of doing our best whenever we can and wherever we can, we cannot be lost for it. We cannot be thought any softer, anymore fragile for it. We have to realise that it is a society that while we pass this way and wish to make a contribution, that contribution must be one of worth towards the development of the people whom we wish to serve.

That is all I want to say at this point, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Prime Minister is probably going to wrap up all of his comments in one speech.

I wish to intervene at this time, although I do so rather reluctantly, to deal with a few of the comments made by the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman). I understand his remarks to be directed particularly to who are suitable persons to represent the country in Parliament. My own view is that everybody in this country has the right to offer themselves for parliamentary office if they think themselves qualified, and the electorate of Barbados has the right to accept or reject those persons. It is as simple as that.

I also want to put the position of the Barbados Labour Party in this matter, very carefully and clearly. The Barbados Labour Party takes the view that anybody, trade unionist, lawyer, doctor, carpenter, mason, once he has the interest in supporting and representing the people of Barbados, has the right to run, Sir, and run for any political party he wants to run for.

This is the 50th year of this party, Sir, and I want to repeat that the Barbados Workers Union was formed because of the interest which the Barbados Progressive League, and subsequently the Barbados Labour Party, had in organising workers and trying to break the back of the plantocracy in this country. This is neither the place nor time for me, as leader of the party at this stage in its history, to recount or to recall the problems or the disagreements which occurred in the 1950s. Suffice it to say that I believe that both the Barbados Workers Union and the Barbados Labour Party have made outstanding contributions to each other's development, and in the process, have made outstanding contributions to this country. 4.20 p.m.

I have never questioned the right of the trade union to endorse or not to endorse any particular candidate. Coming as I do, Sir, from the tradition of a party that believes in a close association between the working class movement and the political directorate, I can appreciate the concerns of the honourable Member when he says that he has been attacked merely because he is a member of {he Barbados Workers Union. Certainly, we do not subscribe to that attack. Individual members of any political party might have their view; it is not the view of the Barbados Labour Party.

In Government and in Opposition we have had to deal with the Barbados Workers Union. We have sometimes disagreed with the union's position, as they have disagreed with ours, but we have always considered such disagreements were on *bona fide* positions. During our last tenure in office, my analysis is that we had better relationships with the Barbados Workers Union than perhaps with any of the other unions representing workers in this country. There were not always times that we saw eye to eye as to what the interest of the public should be *vis-a-vis* the interest of the workers themselves, but I am sure that whenever the time comes for us to return to Government, that sort of approach will characterise the approach which we and the union will take.

I have spoken about my own view on members of the union on any particular issue, never in a personal way, and I want to clarify that and get it out of the way. Let me say, however, Sir, that part of the politics of Barbados, and indeed of most communities, not only ours, has been that sometimes personal invective becomes the order of the day. I do not believe there are many of us in here who have not suffered from the tongues of, maybe, other politicians, and certainly members of the public.

I remember in the by-election in St. Peter the things said about the honourable Member for St. Peter, some as jokes, some seriously - he belonged to the Rastafarian Movement, he was a member of the Communist Party. You get all of that.

I have been painted in so many different guises that when I first sought to represent the people in Christ Church West, I had to put up with a position once of going into the house of a nice old lady in Forde's Road and she expressed some surprise when she saw my pigmentation, because she told me they told her that I was white. Obviously, I was not fit to represent the people of that constituency. I have done so, I think satisfactorily, for some 17 years, and with the assistance of God and the people, I hope to represent them much longer in this Parliament I think you will get a lot of that, Sir.

I believe, again, as I said last year, and I am sorry if I have to repeat myself, that political life in Barbados is changing, and changing in a way that sometimes we, the leaders, have to bring our followers behind us. Political life is changing such that you can get on opposite side of the political spectrum today, leading two respective parties, two persons who on a personal level have had a close friendship and a high regard for each other. I do not believe it is sometimes fully understood in my party, or indeed in the party of the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Hon. L. E. Sandiford). It poses a tremendous problem for us in public life, because when you get disagreements on matters of principle, some people can characterise those as though there are disagreements on a personal level.

I never tire of reminding people that within the Democratic Labour Party, at the highest level of the Democratic Labour Party, I have a relative, and I will defend him up to the hilt, as I would my brother or anybody else's. I do not think that we should preach to our supporters in any way that our political differences must be narrowed down to the level of personal differences, so I want to get that part of it out of the debate.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: With the Prime Minister? What for? Not on a personal level, never! We might disagree on policy, as we have disagreed on policy before.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Why not? Even my disagreements with my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons), has not affected our personal friendship. We disagreed when he, unfortunately, broke from the party to which I belong. I wish he was still there, but he has broken away and I have to accept that.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not know. The honourable Member is asking me *sotto voce* with whom I am friend, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, I asked about the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes).

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Of course! No problem on that, Sir.

I believe I have heard the honourable Member for St. Michael Central speak already about the need for teaching Civics in the schools. I think we need seriously to address these problems as part of our whole parliamentary education in a way. Even persons who are coming for political office sometimes need to get a course of lectures in this field, on both sides of the House.

When we come into the House, there are areas in which the Government and the Opposition will differ, and differ fundamentally and seriously. In my experience, those differences become more and more pronounced the closer we get to an election. That has been my experience of parliamentary life, both in this House and observing it from the time I was a student with an interest in politics. We must make people understand, however, that there are times when the House will agree to disagree and there are times when this Parliament will agree with one another, but I believe we must always do so on the basis of principle and not on the basis of personalities.

It would be puerile of me to think that, from time to time, your temper does not get raised and you may shout across and make a remark, sometimes which you regret. I recall on one occasion the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) telling me to know my place, Sir, and immediately he had finished it, I realised he had regretted it, as much as I had regretted the occasion that led to that. We both realised that that was in the heat of the debate. I think the point must be emphasised in the country that there is room for genuine disagreements without having to personalise the matter.

I would like to see, if the honourable Member wants to know, more members of the Barbados Workers Union wanting to run for the Barbados Labour Party. I must say that.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: My problem is I have too many now.

I very much believe that all sectors of the community, business, law, trade unionism/ teaching all classes of the society, should have some voice in the Parliament. I would hope that our country has now reached the stage, after the fight that successive Governments have put up, and particularly the party to which I belong, in fighting for enlarging the franchise in this country, where they all should have the right to representation. 4.30p.m.

I just want to say this to the Prime Minister. When we facilitate the work of Parliament, at short notice sometimes, we do so taking into account that we realise that, from time to time, Government has to get its business done. We do not always agree with everything that is done, but we do not want any lesser or greater construction to be placed on our acts at that time. My party when in Government has come down and brought Resolutions at short notice that have been facilitated.

I will end where I began in this debate. I am not now the father of Parliament; I think the Prime Minister would have been in the Senate before I was in the House and is perhaps the longest serving member in Parliament as a whole, although we both came into the House of Assembly together. We no longer have, regretfully, in this House persons who had a wealth of Parliamentary experience, those who have passed on by death and otherwise, but I believe those of us who are left behind must now let the country know clearly that the personal attacks on Members of Parliament is not something that the political parties encourage. I certainly would not be encouraging members of my political party, and if they do so, they would have to do so without my approval, to be attacking persons on a personal level because they happen to follow one particular profession or other. The profession of a trade unionist is as much as the profession of an economist, is as much as the profession of a lawyer.

It is significant that in Britain and elsewhere - this is another point that worries me in public life - if a Member loses his or her seat, that Member can fit in somewhere in the niche of the overall public needs. It is a question that we have not addressed adequately. One of the reasons why probably so many lawyers have been attracted to, and remain in, Parliament is that we have the easiest facility of moving in and out and going back and practising our profession. There is a difficulty which confronts other Members, and this still occurs. I think the country must understand that if it wants the best representation, it must make provision for this sort of situation.

I am not now lecturing the country, as the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) sometimes says that I am here to do, I am merely using the language of his distinguished predecessor in the seat of St. John, who would sometimes speak candidly in this way. We have to understand we are moving on. When I look around the House, I see the representatives of the people in the broader sense than one could have characterised this House certainly in the Thirties and the early Forties. Nowadays, you have a franchise in which people are free to choose people representing the broad mass of the people of Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member may wind up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The battle is a different battle, it is no longer a political battle, and I hope, therefore, that the honourable Member will understand that the Barbados Labour Party as a party had no official policy at all, or unofficial policy, in which it is attacking any Member who because they belong to any union, and particularly if he belongs to the Barbados Workers' Union. We could not possibly take such a policy, because our *raison d'etre*, to use the very exact words of the honourable Member, has been that we were close to the union, and we were one and the same until our temporary separation.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN (St. Michael East): Mr. Chairman, this is just to respond to the question asked by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) with respect to what is happening in this Chamber.

As this Honourable House is aware, a contract was awarded to a private firm, M&M Construction, in 1986 to undertake the work of renovation of Parliament. That company went into liquidation in June 1987, and the following month, the Ministry of Transport and Works undertook the responsibility for the work done in Parliament. The work was divided into two phases, the first involving the renovation work done on this floor in this Chamber and in the Senate. Some additional work has to be done in the offices on this floor, and with the installation of an elevator, that would conclude the work of phase one.

Phase two involves the building of a lunch room downstairs and some other recreational rooms, the better utilisation of space for recreational purposes by Members of this Honourable House.

There is a phase three, which is in a preliminary stage, involving work to be done on the west wing of these public buildings. It is envisaged that within the next couple of months, this work will commence by repairs being effected on the roof of that building.

That, in sum, is what is planned for the next financial year.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON (St. John): Mr. Chairman, I only wish to say a few words which are not at all contentious. I should even like to be as generous to say to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that I have forgiven him for his earlier irrational outburst, which might be construed as a personal attack on me. I did not construe it in that way, and I am now stating for the record that I forgive him. That was one of those moments when he, obviously, as he described it, probably said something that he regretted. I accepted it in that spirit on that occasion.

The point that I want to make, Sir, is that while he spoke, I became aroused by what he was saying in respect of perhaps the fact that both he and the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Hon. L. E. Sandiford) represent, in a real way, persons who have a wealth of talent, not only on the political development of Barbados, but in terms of their experience here in Parliament. What concerns me as a new Member of Parliament, and as a young person, is that, very often, putting aside personalities, when one takes an independent stance on any issue, not in this forum, but in fora outside of Parliament, the first people who are inclined to try to drive a wedge between, a thinking person and the other thinking person, who may have different kinds of thought, are Members of the opposite political party.

i have had occasion to try to stimulate debate on the Civil Service. The Opposition accused me of attacking the Civil Service and tried to drive a wedge between me and the remainder of the Administration, particularly members of the Cabinet who had to work with the civil servants, by suggesting that I was making a vicious attack and cursing the civil servants. I was merely trying to throw out ideas. Probably you may have suffered the same thing in your youth as a parliamentarian. I accept that

There are other things that concern me. If you are so inclined, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, to point out what the Barbados Labour Party's policy is with respect to the trade union, you have to be of immense concern that the persons who are pushing this idea that trade union members should not be members of Government are the young members of your party. Toppin and columnists in the newspaper. I will not refer to any names. 4.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On this thing about name calling, the particular Order is Order 28, Rule 10(a) and (b), and I have had occasion to read the rule in this House before. It says: "No reference may be made in debate to the character or conduct of any person except in his official or public capacity."

If you desire to refer to the character or conduct of any person in his official capacity, then you must give notice. That is my interpretation of it, and that is why I never interrupted. As far as I am concerned, neither of the persons you mentioned just now has an official or public capacity, so call their names.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is supposed to be the-character or conduct of those two persons, so he may call the names. That is my ruling.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not being contentious. I would like to bring all the facts to light, so calling their names will, perhaps, assist the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, when he goes to his private caucuses, in speaking to them sharply about the Barbados Labour Party policy or intended policy. They are the people who are making the point consistently that the persons who are members of the trade union in this political party cannot serve two masters. I have seen reference to that on several occasions.

This is not the first time that the young people in the Barbados Labour Party seem to be at significant variance with what the Leader of the Opposition suggests to be the Labour Party's philosophy. All I am saying is, if we are going to have all of this accommodation in here, if we are going to have the lectures on the way parliamentarians should behave, if we are going to have the high principles of the Barbados Labour Party enunciated, then it is incumbent on the Leader of the Opposition to bring his younger members in here and let them understand what the Barbados Labour Party policy is. You cannot be fish and fowl, too, so it is unreasonable, in my view, for the Leader of the Opposition to state in this setting what the Barbados Labour Party's position is, but at the same time, his foot soldiers and the foot soldiers of the Barbados Labour Party are out there doing irreparable damage not only to our political development, as he calls it, but to the trade union movement, and that is the thing that probably concerns me more than anything else.

We have seen on several occasions where the Labour Party's policy has been enunciated in here, but when it reaches the columns written by* those persons, the identifiable ones, it is put over in a different way. It is unfair to the individuals -1 accept the point the Opposition Leader makes - and it is also unfair to the Democratic Labour Party, which is a party that has, in large measure, fielded the majority of trade union candidates, as far as I can recall, in our history. Therefore, if we are to be accommodating and you are going to put the Barbados Labour Party's policy in that context, you are required in the 50th year of the Barbados Labour Party to let the public know that that is how you feel, because unnecessary

pressure is being placed on the members of the trade union in here, and-in their other capacities, when that kind of slur is being placed on them in this community.

My other point concerns independent talk. As a member of the back bench, it was the Barbados Labour Party that had promised in its manifesto to pay special attention in respect of parliamentary affairs to the role of back-benchers.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If you read your manifesto, you will see it.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, do not help me. You say you are so'understanding of the role of back-benchers, but as soon as a back-bencher takes a position, you can flog it and suggest that it was at variance with persons on the front bench. All you are doing is causing all of us on the backbench here to become wrapped up in what is going on without having the benefit and the opportunity of taking independent positions from time to time. If every time I have to say something in here, you have to declare that it is my personal view as distinct from the policy of the Democratic Labour Party, and I feel that undue pressure is brought to bear on me in that respect, it means that we will never achieve the high level of national debate that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition calls for.

You make a speech about the civil servants and it is invariably taken by the Opposition to be an attack on the civil servants. We have tried to speak about the Task Force Committee on Employment. Again, that is attacked, although in private quarters members of your own political party and the Opposition may agree with you and all of your suggestions. When you say to them that you disagree with the formulation of some of the ideas, you receive attacks in public. If we are going to improve the level of debate, if we are going to have serious debates on economics, on exchange rates, the topics that the honourable Member for St. Peter and I would love to debate in public fora, not only in here, and if we are going to have the opportunity to take positions on these things in public, it means that we have to have a concept of ourselves as parliamentarians that transcends those petty attitudes, particularly those that relate to whether you are a member of the Workers Union and how best you can represent people.

I represent people in court every day of my life, but I also have independent ideas. I know sometimes whether I agree with the law, but it does not make any difference, because that is the law. It is my duty as a parliamentarian to come in here and to do what I can do to change it, but it does not mean that in representing people in court, and not changing the law in Parliament, I am unable to serve both masters adequately.

When the Honourable Leader of the Opposition found himself in the anomalous position - although he said it is not such an anomaly, and he is going to provide the evidence - of taking legislation before the High Court and having it struck down - the one he passed as Attorney-General - we could very well have said he was trying to serve two masters. But I think that those of us in the legal profession, perhaps, understand his intellectual disposition - I am saying that as a compliment - in other words, his ability, perhaps, as a politician to see things one way and as a lawyer - and I may have that capacity, many lawyers do - another way. There may be a little jibe every now and again, but it is not brought in here, as a high principle, and people do not seek to castigate him for it.

Really, it is not only the members of the trade union. It has deeper significance in this society. There are a lot of people entering politics today who suffer from what persons in other levels of society would consider particular disabilities. They did not go to certain schools, they are not professionals. Some people view it as being a disability if you do not have a degree in Law, or you are not a doctor, and therefore, you should not be in Parliament I am not going to get into that debate today. Those are things we have to look at as well, because perhaps, some with the best talent suffer, not only because of the pressure that is applied to them as non-professionals, as we know it in Barbados, but also the considerable pressure that is applied on them when the Government they were once in is no longer in office and they are trying to find some gainful employment. Those are really some very serious considerations. 4.50 p.m.

Address these matters and speak to the young members of your political party about them, because they are about the place touting those ideas which are doing considerable damage to this country, and most of which are only personal attacks on individuals. It is as much at variance, with the Labour Party's policy on this issue as the CYC is at variance with the Labour Party. Those are things you must look at. You cannot come in here and enunciate these high principles and your young members are taking different positions, because if I were really to analyse what the Labour Party of tomorrow will be, well then, you all will be angels compared to them.

We as young people in the Democratic Labour Party, the Young Democrats, went through difficult times in 1976. But we came through them because we then committed and applied ourselves to serious analysis, to assisting Members in their various constituencies, and also to discussing and

debating issues through the Academy of Politics and in our own forums. That is what the Young Socialists should be doing today.

We now know what the Labour Party's position is. Carry it out on the street and let the young people of your party, who are not understanding that position sufficiently, or do not want to understand it, begin to understand it, and if they achieve that, to carry it out on the street and let people know that we are not scum in here. Those are really the issues that you have to deal with.

What you have said is nothing new to me. The only people who get cursed in this country are politicians. If you curse anybody else in this country, you are attacked, and the ones to curse you for cursing anybody else are politicians. We talk about the Press, you attack us; and when you are the Government, you talk about the Press and we attack you. The only persons that can be cursed by everybody else with impunity are politicians. We understand that. So to say that is nothing new. Tell that to the persons who are not sitting in here today and the persons who aspire to political office. Those are the people you should be discussing it with. Encourage them to come in here and see the institutions and how they operate, the law courts and those other kinds of institutions. Do not make these high points unless you are going to follow them up, and ensure that in its 50th year, the Barbados Labour Party, as strong as you claim it is, can become stronger, so that in its 75th year, when I hopefully, am still around, I will be able to have useful debates like this one in this Chamber.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, I have decided to get involved in this debate only to make a few observations regarding the financial aspects of the vote that have been put to Parliament, to remind us that we are members of a Committee of Supply, and that the approval of the expenditure of funds is a matter that the Committee of Supply must concern itself with. But I really could not allow some of the comments made by the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) to go without comment. He adopted a very sanctimonious attitude where he freely offered advice to the Barbados Labour Party by which it should develop the League of Young Socialists and the party. We thank him for the advice, Mr. Chairman, and must remind him, of course, that he has already criticised the honourable Member for St. Peter for very often offering gratuitous advice as to how the DLP should run the Government. We accept his advice, Mr. Chairman, in that kind of spirit.

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Me? Not in my official capacity!)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I must say, Mr. Chairman, that he never misses the opportunity, no matter what the subject is, to refer to the League of Young Socialists. We had that marvelous situation, Sir, where on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, with the specific issue at stake, how Government would spend over $900 million during the course of the next financial year, the substance of the honourable Member's speech was the League of Young Socialists. I really must say, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that the honourable Member for St. John is very consistent in that he attacks the League of Young Socialists in the House and the young Dems out of the House.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Extremely consistent, Sir, and I commend him on that consistency!

He also, Mr. Chairman, was extremely sanctimonious about how we should allow independent thought to develop in this country. He made the comment that the fact that he takes a position that might be different from that of his party should not be held against him. I want only to urge him that he should whisper the same views to a certain Mr. Douglas Leopold Phillips who, week after week, uses the fact that sometimes I may differ from my colleagues to mean that it is some tremendous division within the Barbados Labour Party. So his sanctimonious and gratuitous comments, Mr. Chairman, arc accepted in the spirit in which they were meant.

As regards the funds for Parliament, which really is the subject and ought to be the focus of our debate, Sir, I must first of all, say that I am glad to sec that there is a provision of $20 000 in this year's Estimates for a Library for Parliament. We are expected in this Parliament, Mr. Chairman, to be informed and give enlightened comment on matters of high national policy, but it is quite clear that the existing research facility at the disposal of Parliament is inadequate for the purposes. It is very often the case, Sir, that we have to make comments, and sometimes criticism, on the basis of a situation that is quite dated. So I am glad to see this subvention here, and as I look, year by year, $20 000 is not a lot of money compared to an overall financial position, and I would like to see every year this particular Head built up.

I would also like to see, Sir, the Debates Committee used as a forum where parliamentarians could make suggestions as to what type of material could be acquired by Parliament, so that when we come to the House, we can be in a position to speak from a position of more information.

I also think, Mr. Chairman, that sometimes some of the information that ought to be coming to the House does not come to the House. There is no reason why the House should not be provided with timely information on things

like Barbados' reserves, in much the same way that we get the report of the Accountant-General on a month-to-month basis. Much of this information is on computer, and it eventually has to come to the House, so its timing is the only issue. A lot of controversy could be minimised if the House could be provided with a lot of the information that is now on computer, and which is not now being made available. Again, Sir, the Debates Committee of the House could look at the broad area of the range of information reaching the House to see in what direction we could amend it

There has been a lot of debate, Mr. Chairman, on the conduct of parliamentarians, the relationship of parliamentarians with each other, and parliamentarians and the rest of the society. Perhaps the time might be coming when, through the auspices of the local Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, a code of ethics might need to be drawn up, to which politicians should subscribe, to take a lot of the acrimony and artificial content out of Barbadian politics.

I must confess to you, Sir, that, in my view, Barbados is progressively becoming a fairly fretful society, and a lot of the fretfulness of the society is inspired because there appears to be a widening partisan divide. A part of this widening divide is subscribed to by politicians who sometimes create artificial contests among themselves. I recognise the need for proper contests between politicians, but there is also a lot of artificial contesting as well.

Most of us in this House know, Mr. Chairman, that you get a lot of criticism for not being seen, and how often you are seen, in constituencies. This is an artificial contest. If there is a fire in a constituency, and the politician does not reach the fire before the fire engine, it is an issue between politicians. It is an artificial contest, Mr. Chairman, it is driving a lot of us to a state of, sometimes, frenzy. The sheer range of things which we bring into the realm of politics and elevate to positions of high principles, sometimes, which, in effect, Mr. Chairman, are of no substantial value, is, to my mind, diminishing the quality of political and public life in Barbados, and it has to be addressed. 5.00p.m.

It is not, in my view, sufficient to say that the problem lies among our supporters. The problem, in many respects, Sir, is also in us. I am really very serious,when I say that we as politicians have to give some consideration to regularising that relationship in a way that is more formal than presently exists. If we could give some consideration, through the auspices of the Parliamentary Association, to the drafting of a code of ethics that could minimise some of the more unpleasant aspects of public life for politicians, as well as make it binding on people who want to come into politics, I think that public life in this country will go forward and that we will continue to attract in Barbados persons of the calibre that we want to attract to be the representatives of the people of this country.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): First of all, I would like to thank the Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB Forde), my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, for indicating that our friendship still subsists. I am never sure nowadays.

Laughter

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I never know whether he had changed his mind, because we have had to be in some contest, and he led his party into a bailie in St. John, and I led the Democratic Labour Party inio ihat same by-election contest, and that party over there was humiliated in that particular contest, and we now have a young and bright representative from St. John to succeed the Father of this House. I hope the blows which the Leader of the Opposition took during that contest have not really turned his mind against the political fray, ll seems as though every time he comes up in contest, he draws a blank. Today he finds himself voting against the provision for the entire Public Service in this country. I do not understand how that can happen.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir: The honourable Member well knows that if we voted for the Government on the second reading of this Bill, we would be sanctioning his prospective increase in taxes.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just allow him to put his explanation.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: At the risk of offending the Chair, Sir, I wish to draw to Your Honour's attention that we are in Committee, and the Leader of the Opposition, who has been the longest serving Member in here, knows....

(Aside: Who said so?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He said so.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Second longest serving Member.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He is not that either!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Third longest serving Member.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He is not that either!)

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Fourth longest serving Member!

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He is not that either!)

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: I done. I have tried my best.

(Aside: I am up in there, too.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Oh dear. He qualifies as one of the long serving Members.

Sir, the honourable Member knows that he cannot deliver a point of explanation in Committee for something he said or did in the House.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, you cannot explain your vote in the House in Committee. He knows that, Sir. Do not let him carry us down any dark path.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, I really cannot accept that one. Thanks, nevertheless.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, it is perhaps very appropriate that we should have spent some time as a Parliament looking at the provision for Parliament, and some of the hopes that Members have for further improvements and development in the services of Parliament, so, that as the elected representatives of the people of this country, we can perform at even higher levels the work that we have been elected to perform.

In respect of the first question that was raised by the Leader of the Opposition relating to the Constituency Assistants, we have provision in here which we would expect to take effect from April 1. This was a matter which, I believe, was raised last year, maybe some other time also, by the Member for St. Michael Central. It is also a matter which I have been referring to from the days when I was in Opposition.

We are proposing that the Constituency Assistants should be paid at a fixed sum, which will be Z34,1 believe, which would be a salary of $12 624 per annum. We are also proposing that there should be deducted from their salaries/wages all of the costs which I referred to earlier today, namely National Insurance, Social Security Payments, and those contributions that should be made, and, as usual, PA YE deductions. So they would come into line with other employees in this country, and there should be no doubt as to how they should operate. Whatever further steps may be needed to rectify the other outstanding problems will be taken. But as of now, my understanding is that when these Estimates are approved, funds will be available to pay the Constituency Assistants at the level which I have just indicated.

I believe the Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) raised the matter of the Estimates relating to Parliament, going to the Debates Committee. I really do not think that I can promise that at this stage. I can agree, in principle, that Estimates relating to Parliament should go to an appropriate committee of Parliament for consideration. I put it that way because there are different components which make up the Head of Parliament, for example the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Estimates. We have agreed, in principle, and it has been put partly into practice, that those Estimates should go to the CPA itself for consideration. But I am not saying openly that we are going to the Debates Committee, because we have under consideration a restructuring of Parliament itself, and the services of Parliament, and this may involve the Debates Committee itself. 5.10p.m.

I have said before that I wish to see Parliament given the legal status and capacity, as the great independent institution in this country, that it should have. I am not satisfied that at the moment it necessarily has that kind of status. I am speaking in relation to the management of Parliament. Therefore, we are developing some proposals whereby there may be some changes. But this is a matter which we will consider and discuss, and on which we hope we will get the bipartisan or non-partisan support to which the Leader of the Opposition referred.

I am sure this should not be a controversial matter as such. Other Parliaments have done it, and I believe that as we look towards the 350th anniversary, we should get all of our arrangements relating to Parliament in place.

As far as that particular anniversary, the 350th anniversary, is concerned, we will soon finalise the planning machinery for a series of events to celebrate the 350th anniversary. We have not quite finalised them yet, but as soon as we have got a little further in that, the necessary consultations again will be done and we will put that in train.

One of the items we have under consideration, and which has been agreed, is the hosting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting here in Barbados some time next year. I would expect also that there will be a special session of Parliament to consider and reflect on the 350 years of parliamentary democracy in this country. That would be a separate event. We have some other activities in view. It will be for the committee to fit these into a

particular programme of events, but we will ensure that all the national events that take place that year will have some kind of bearing and relation to parliamentary democracy in this country.

As far as the provision of money for the library is concerned, I think the library has suffered down through the years because when one set of persons is in Government, maybe they have access to information, like the latest computer printout on the reserves and so on, and they do not let the Opposition know that kind of information. They do not even let them know when they are going to the IMF, so that kind of information is not available. I can assure you we are going to put an end to that and we are going to set up a proper library in Parliament so that the needs of members can adequately be served.

I do not think there can be any complaint, I do not think the Member for St. Peter used the right examples here, because I believe that the best flow of statistical information in any area of public activity comes from the Central Bank of Barbados. I do not think there is any other area that puts out as much statistical information for public education as the Central Bank of Barbados. I am not sure how more timely you can get. Well, you can be more timely but I am not sure how desirable it is that that information should become available, as the Member is suggesting, but we will put the information at his disposal. I can even borrow a book from out here and put in the library for him. Do you see what they read out here? John Kenneth Galbraith!

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: How about 1968? You do not know he produced more than one book? He produced more than one book. I can tell you he is reflecting on economic history.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I know that a little earlier, the Member for St. Thomas was reading the renegade from Reaganomics sometime last year, I believe,....

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Year before.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is year before he was reading it? I know he was reading Stockman. From time to time we do that. We will develop the library.

I do not think there were any other points raised that have not been answered. Did I omit anything? I think I have replied to these matters and this Head can now be put.

The question that the sum of $1 458 583 under Head 12 - Parliament - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be suspended until 5.50 this evening.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 5.50 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly. 5.20 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the sitting was suspended, the House was in Committee of Supply, To that it must revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

HEAD 13 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - $23 407 711 - (AS AMENDED)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $23 407 711 under Head 13 - Prime Minister's Office - as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

I wish to draw attention to two points that have been raised. This Head includes a number of subheads. Subhead 1, is General Administration, Subhead 2 - Prime Minister's Residence, and under that particular subhead, from time to time some queries are raised, and I wish clearly to inform this Honourable Chamber of the expenses that have been made in respect of the Prime Minister's residence.

In the fiscal year 1984-85, the sum of $619 716.04 was spent on this particular subhead. The actual amount for Current Expenditure was $281 096.57, and on Capital,

$338 619.57, for a total of $619 716.04 during the year 1984-85. During the fiscal year 1985-86, the sum expended was $313 541.76, of which $170 897.19 was Current Expenditure and $142 644.57 was Capital Expenditure. For the year 1986-87, some $92 933.27 was expended, of which $77 832.86 was Current and $15 100.41 Capital. In the current year, the sum of $78 608.95 has been spent up to the end of February.

The point I ani making, Sir, is that even if you add the allowance which is paid to the Prime Minister as a sum in lieu of occupying the official residence, there is a saving to the public Treasury. It is unlikely that the sum expended on Ilaro Court for this current financial year will be more than $100 000. But let us say that it is $100 000, and you add $18 000 as an allowance that is paid, the sum will come nowhere near the expenditure on Ilaro Court -1 am talking only of the Current exercise now - for 1984-85 or 1985-86.

People are always in a hurry to make comments, but the comments sometimes bear no relation to the costs involved. I do not wish to detain the House on this particular matter, but newspapers tend to be very interested in this kind of information, and I prefer to give the information on the floor of the House so that the information is available publicly and the newspapers which wish that information can have it now.

Another subhead, Sir, deals with the Defence and Security. There were some statements. I do not wish to misquote any honourable Member, and if I misquote or give the wrong slant to what was said, I am always prepared to withdraw the particular statement and give the correct information, but I understood the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) to say that there was an increased proposed in the 1988-89 Estimates on Defence when compared with the current financial year.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Leader of the Opposition also said it? I did not remember that, and I was going by what the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Hon. M. A. King) said, that he cannot remember what the Leader of the Opposition said. Did another Christ Church Member say so? I cannot remember that particular point. 6.00 p.m.

In 1985-86, we had $17 million, approximately, expended. In 1986-87, approximately $14 million, and in 1987-88, the original provision was $16 520 000. There was a supplementary of $1 368 332, giving a total of $18 288 332, and the supplementary related to increases in salaries and related matters.

The amount being requested is $17.8 million, which is, indeed less than is actually being provided in the current fiscal year. I think it is, therefore, giving the wrong impression to build up an argument, which the Member is saying still stands, on the premise that what we are asking for in the coming year is more than what has been provided in the current year. If you start from a wrong premise in logic, if you are arguing logically, you are bound to end up with the wrong conclusion, and I wish to draw that to the attention of the House at this time.

With those comments, Sir, I beg to move that this sum for Head 13 stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, I want to address some of these subheads because I think we should be a long time in the Committee on this Head 13, and I want to begin, as the Prime Minister began, on the official residence of the Prime Minister. Either we wish an official residence or we do not wish an official residence. To me, the question is absolutely clear, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The Leader of the Opposition has caught my eye. I wish he would begin and finish his speech.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Leader of the House, who is speaking *sotto voce*, as Leader of the House should really set a better example. He knows that when the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker is speaking, any Member, whether on his feet or otherwise, must keep quiet. Since he has been in the House as long as I, I would expect him to understand the rules quite clearly by now.

The point I am raising quite clearly is that either we need the official residence or we do not need the official residence. I believe very strongly that this issue must be settled once and for all, if it is not to continue to bedevil the political life of this country.

Both political parties have had their say on this particular issue. In the last General Election, this matter became one of very hot debate, on the issue that the Barbados Labour Party had overspent on an official residence, and the then Democratic Labour Party Opposition took the view that Ilaro Court was unnecessary, as I understand it. If it is unnecessary, let us get rid of it as an official residence, but if it is an official residence, as far as I am concerned, it is what it is said to be, the official residence of the Prime Minister, and in those circumstances,

one would expect it to be treated as an official residence. It is as simple *as* that.

I remember the late Prime Minister, now deceased, the then honourable Member for St. John, made his position that he was not going to live in the residence for personal reasons. I quite understand that, if he has strong personal reasons.

I realise that the Prime Minister went on record in his constituency saying that he was only going to live there if his constituents said that he must live there. I believe that that is an unfortunate statement. It is not what his constituents say, it is what the country says that is important in this issue. 6.10p.m.

Hon. L. E. S ANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation: I want to make it quite clear that nothing my constituents tell me in a duly constituted meeting is unfortunate. That is how I am in here. I do not know how the honourable Member is in here. I am in here on the instructions of my constituents, and I listen to them and they listen to me. So I cannot agree with him that there is anything unfortunate about that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is not what his constituents tell him, it is what the honourable Member tells his constituents that might be unfortunate. That is the point I was making, Sir.

I believe that in an issue of this nature one has to decide once and for all in Barbados whether or not we are going to continue to have an official Prime Minister's residence. Certainly the position of the Opposition is that we ought to have an official residence but it must be the residence of the Prime Minister.

(Aside: Are you serious?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member wants to know if I am serious. Another Member says that one is in ' a glass house. I am extremely serious about the matter, Sir, because it is one of the issues that is bedevilling, and has bedevilled, the political life of Barbados. I think that it ought to be set to rest, and that is why I am serious on it. I am speaking on the issue here in Barbados now as to the position that I think the country must take on the issue. The honourable Member may talk as much as he likes and disagree with me, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The same goes if an official residence is provided for whoever it is, whether it is Prime Minister, Chief Justice or anyone else. It becomes an official residence of the country. That is the position that I take on the matter. It is not a question of sniping at the particular holder of the office at any particular time. I regret when debates have to get to that position that we are getting into the political realm on that sort of area.

Sir, we may argue as to the level of expenditure. I would expect that the earlier expenditure on the Capital renovations have largely now come to an end, and therefore I expect a decrease in expenditure on Capital for some time, unless we are doing any major clearance on what is the south eastern side of the building. Likewise, certain aspects of the Current Expenditure will, Of necessity, abate, because although they are not under Capital heads, I would believe that most of the provision that it was necessary to make in the nature of supplies, would now have been made, although from time to time one must expect in these Estimates, maintenance and replacement in particular areas.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You would have to change the place that is called Adams. You know the service called Adams?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what is the honourable Member rising?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Wedge.....

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sitting, Sir.

Laughter.

. *(Aside:* Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Wedgewood! Adams!)

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am not sure what is the particular trade name of any particular crockery or linen, or whatever they may have there. Because you will see, Sir, there is kitchenware, bed linen and other supplies under that Head.

(Aside: They want bed linen and they do not even sleep in the place!)

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am told by the honourable Member that there is a Wedgewood brand under the name of Adams. I do not know of the particular brand, but I am sure that if it is Wedgewood, it must be reasonably good service that happens to be there. But if I found one with the

name Sandiford on it, Sir, that is in Wedgewood, I would not change it The honourable Member knows that.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: You would not change Sandiford, but you would change Adams!)

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I will disappoint the honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I would not even change one with the name Taitt, except that Wedgewood has never thought it proper to include that name on any of its illustrious ware, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am grateful.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: But if it is Wedgewood, Sir, it is very good earthenware that has been recognised throughout, Sir.

I really think that the reason, regardless of whatever criticism this may invite about in glass houses, has been that the issue of a residence for the Prime Minister has been bedevilled in the bipartisan arena. That is one point.

The second thing is that it was a novelty in Barbados when it first came in. One must recognise that. In the past, the historical position was, even when we had a Premier at first, that he lived in his own residence.

I can remember hearing the argument in here that you should not even have paid Members of Parliament. I heard the then honourable Member for St. Peter laying to rest that type of argument. I strongly believe that the country must provide its leader, and I am talking about its Prime Minister, with an adequate and suitable residence which he must use as the official residence. I will not be moved from that belief, regardless of what is said. Of course, Sir, if it becomes a political issue, as it has become on many occasions, people will find it difficult to resile from that position. And I do not believe that this argument should be whether we are spending more or less, as the argument seems to come down through the years - if you add on the amount of personal allowance it would still work out as less. As I understand it, the Prime Minister has to make that argument to satisfy the articles that have been occurring in the Press and elsewhere on this particular issue.

I do not think that, in future the Committee should have to be debating the principle of whether or not we must have a Prime Minister's residence in this country. I am not saying that from time to time I have not seen in other jurisdictions a debate on this issue, as happened in Ottawa recently. That happened when Prime Minister Mulroney took over as Prime Minister; there was some argument as to whether carpets, which had been bought about two years before, ought to have been changed at the time, and obviously, there was sniping about it. But I have not seen any sniping at all on whether we should or should not maintain a residence for the Prime Minister.

With respect to Defence and Security which the Prime Minister has raised, we have been saying that reality will show the Government, when it moves from the Opposition into the reality of power, that it is quite easy to formulate a policy outside, before you have had the access to the necessary information, and it is another thing to have to go through completely with that policy. The honourable Member will recall that on defence and security, both political parties, let me put it this way, may have at some time or other articulated a policy that cannot stand. We did not have the experience, although it is pooh-poohed by the other side, of Sydney Alleyne prior to 1976. We have had that experience.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member may doubt that, but I believe that from the perspective of where he sits on the Defence Force, and from the other perspective, where he has much more information than would even be available to his other Cabinet colleagues - not that they have not got general information, but he would have specific information - he would understand the point.

I am deeply conscious, having been a Minister of the Crown, of how I must speak in a debate such as this, and I promise the honourable Member I would recognise those limitations. But one must recognise that there is information that would inspire Government's policy on the necessity to retain in Barbados, a certain level of readiness, all of which is not, and cannot be provided by Her Majesty's Royal Police Force. And one must recognise, therefore, that expenditure on defence and security is not at this stage in the life of Barbados, a luxury, and will not be a luxury in the life of Barbados for a long time to come. I do not believe that the criticism which was levelled about defence and security was going to be reduced to a small commander unit was ever a realistic assessment of the security needs of Barbados.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Are you going to do this every year?) 6.20p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member wants to know if we are going to do it every year. I want to hear the Government articulate its policy quite clearly. I have

heard the idea that the Defence Force was going to be run down by attrition, that, therefore, one is not going to be replacing people who leave, for whatever reason, and so on.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: One is going to reduce it by attrition.

Whilst I concede that one has to keep this Head of expenditure within reasonable bounds, I must say that the policy as enunciated by the Government, when in Opposition, is not a policy that it can follow now when it is in Government. It cannot follow it in the way it enunciated it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute to wind up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I would like to hear from the Prime Minister quite clearly whether or not it is still intended to run down the Defence Force by attrition. I also would wish to know from the Prime Minister quite clearly what is the current position of Barbados in the Regional Security System within the bounds that it is open to him to speak openly in the House on these matters.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, I want to make a few comments arising out of what the Leader of the Opposition has said in respect to the official residence of the Prime Minister. Ilaro Court is not the first official Prime Minister's residence in this country, Culloden Farm was. When the Barbados Labour Party won the Government in 1976, they took a decision that they were not going to live in Culloden Farm, and they went so far as to put whoever they liked to live in it, and then they abandoned it. So when you come to the decision that a Prime Minister decides that he is not living in a particular house, that concept did not start with the Democratic Labour Party, it was a concept that started with the Barbados Labour Party, so I cannot understand the schizophrenic attitude of the Barbados Labour Party coming in here and talking about a Prime Minister refusing to live in an official residence.

I live only a stone's throw from Ilaro Court. The Prime Minister and myself grew up in the same neighbourhood. We are simple people, but there are people in this country who like living in mansions with four, five and six bedrooms. It is uncomfortable to ask a simple Barbadian formerly to live in a four-storey house in isolation, because that is what Ilaro Court is, a house in isolation. Every morning I get up and I look through the window and I see it. It is an isolated residence, set apart from people. We have got to be realistic.

There is another element to it. If we in Barbados are going to set standards for all young and upcoming people, we cannot take a residence that cost $4 million with mahogany panels and scrape them off and paint them white, and then go in there ard live in that residence and set that up as a model for how young emerging people in this country must aspire to live.

An official residence is what it says. An official residence does not mean that you have to sleep there every night. The White House is an official residence of the President of the United States. But the President of the United States also has a lot of other residences. He has a summer home in Florida. He has one at Camp David.

The point, and the point that the Prime Minister has made, which is very germane to this discussion, is that it does not cost the taxpayers anymore money because he happens to live at his simple abode in St. James where he grew up. I see nothing philosophically wrong with the concept of the Democratic Labour Party, and this is what we must get absolutely clear - we are talking about philosophy - there is nothing philosophically wrong with living in a humble abode in a developing country. There are people, like the Leader of the Opposition, who prefer to live in a plantation house. That happens to be his style. There is nothing wrong with that, this is a democracy, but do not try to impose your values on other people. We in this country, especially in this Honourable Chamber, must set the standards for our young people, and instead of coming in here and criticising the Minister for doing what our Lord and Saviour taught us to do, that is to live a humble and simple life - that is the essence of Christianity - you should be complimenting him.

If you brought the argument that it cost the taxpayers more money and that it was a burden to the taxpayers to live in that house, I could understand that argument, given the fact that you voted against the Estimates. I do not know for what reason, you have not explained that yet, but I guess you will tell the electorate the reason for it If you could make the argument that it was a greater imposition on the taxpayers, I could understand that. But you cannot impose false values in a country that the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), the shadow Minister of Finance, says is a country with serious economic problems.

You are sending the wrong signals, and the point I want to make is that we must lead by example, especially the example of a Prime Minister. If you go through the Caribbean and talk to Caribbean people who come to Barbados - Trinidadians, Jamaicans - they are impressed by the simple life that the political leaders in this country lead. I hope we never change that standard and try to emulate the position of the plantation owner who lives isolated from other people.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: To reply to the points.....

Aside.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Of course, he is winding up.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Do you have something else to say?

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will sit down and wait then.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, when I came back to Barbados in 1970, Culloden Farm was an official residence of the Prime Minister of Barbados. I believe it was a place that was not in isolation - that it had a car park, some horses, some cows and some pigs belonging to Patsy Springer all around it! 6.30 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Invited by the Democratic Labour Party to Culloden Farm? Are you making sport, or what? I was not invited anywhere, and it did not matter. In the period 1970-1976, I never went there, I was never invited. Do you go somewhere when you are not invited?

What I remember, Sir, is that it was the Democratic Labour Party that bought Culloden Farm as an official residence. The then Prime Minister, who liked a simple lifestyle, had an aircraft. He borrowed US $169 000 from CitiBank to buy that aircraft. Simple lifestyle!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: He did not gamble, though.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You want me to tell you what he used to do?

(Asides: Yes!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would never do it.

Simple lifestyle! He had a plane! He used to go fishing down the Grenadines on yachts with the white people like Denis Atkinson and them!

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is Denis Atkinson not white? He is poor backra then. The hypocrisy in here is thick, it is cutting me.

Simple lifestyle! He had a house, "Trevor", in Black Rock.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: In my discussion I never mentioned the late Prime Minister. I do not understand how the late Prime Minister comes into this discussion. The Leader of the Opposition was talking about the present Prime Minister's residence. I spoke about the life of the present Prime Minister and I want it to be clearly understood what I said, because I do not want anyone to take what I said and twist it. I never mentioned the late Prime Minister.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Now we have reached the stage where the honourable Member wants to tell me what I must say and how I must debate. I sat down here and did not say a word when he spoke. He can tell me that I cannot refer to the history of Prime Minister's official residences in Barbados without talking .about Errol Barrow? I reserve that right to deal with Errol Barrow and his lifestyle.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think that ....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let us get it right.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, the parameters....

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member listen to me, please?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am cool, man. Vociferous, but cool.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Mr. honourable Member for St. Thomas, I will set the parameters of the debate within the context of the Rules of the House. I have not said that you cannot continue the way you are going, so just keep on going.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am much obliged, Sir. The history of official residences for Prime Ministers in Barbados started with the late Errol Barrow - the Right Honourable, LL.D., B.Sc., all of that - who before he became Prime Minister was living in Black Rock in his own simple house, but after he became Prime Minister, made the decision to move to Culloden Farm. After he became Prime Minister, he moved in and effectuated that desire.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Before he became Prime Minister.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was there even before he was Prime Minister. Thank you! Even as Premier, as leader of the country, he deemed it appropriate that he, the maximum leader, should have a residence separate, apart and isolated, among the trees, in Culloden Farm, a former plantation house, and had all of Patsy Springer's pigs and race horses on it to keep him company. I did not hear the arguments then...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you mean I was not born? I am grateful to the Honourable Minister of Education for letting it be known how youthful I am.

He saw nothing wrong with living in splendid isolation.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: He was living in the Bay Land.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is that the Bay Land? It is the constituency of the now Prime Minister, so nothing was wrong with it. It was known that he was not happy there, because it proved to be too restrictive after time. Government took a decision to buy that place in Two Mile Hill as a cultural centre and left it to run to ruin.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How much money did you spend on it?

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Elections came and we lost the Government)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh! All right. The Honourable Minister of Health said they did not have a chance to do what they intended to do, because they got chased out of power. The Labour Party came in and re-ordered the priority. We decided that it was an appropriate house for a Prime Minister and fixed it up as befits a Prime Minister. The two Labour Party Prime Ministers lived there. One died in there.

One of the members of the Press bench told me that the problem with Ilaro Court is that it has ghosts.

(Aside: Hon. L. E^ SANDIFORD: f can confirm that.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I always believed that the Prime Minister of this country believed in obeah and voodoo. He is telling us now that he saw ghosts in there. A whole Prime Minister is saying that he will not live in there because it has ghosts.

(Aside: Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Tall and gaunt.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The ghost he saw was tall and gaunt. The ghost of Tom is still haunting you.

Sir, he really must explain to the House how is it that he cannot live there. The Cabinet meets there - that is daytime, so ghosts do not come out in the day, I suppose. I do not know if he sleeps there, or if he swims there in the swimming pool. There is money in here for some swimming pool.

He admitted that he slept there. How many nights did you sleep there? Abut eight or ten? Around Independence time you were getting a little nap there, too. You have not told us about that, but I know.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am rising on a point of order: The Member - I believe unwittingly - said that I did not say that I was living in Ilaro Court for eight days or something like that, according to his figures, but I gave this Honourable Chamber that information. 6.40 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was around January or Christmas time. Why could you be so happy to remain there for seven whole nights and you can't be there for the balance of the year? The Prime Minister comes under Item 10 for $5 000 to buy some bed linen. What need have you of bed linen if you do not sleep about there?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, look at Item 10. Don't you even know what you are ordering? Or is this for the staff?

The truth is that the Prime Minister likes to be up there. The Prime Minister would recognise that in Jamaica there is an official Prime Minister's residence. In Trinidad, there is one. In Guyana, for as much egalitarianism that Burnham was professing to practise, there was one.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Two? That makes it worse. We have always had one in Barbados, so what is the real objection to this Prime Minister staying there?

I understood former Prime Minister Barrow's position. He had personal and domestic reasons that informed his decision not to live there. Climbing up those steps, his knees were not too strong, he had a little heart trouble and so on, and I understand that. I will not deal with the domestic considerations.

But this Prime Minister is in good health and has tried-out living in the place. The precedent is there throughout the world, but the Prime Minister is afraid, this is natural of the public opinion or ppprobium which may now come down on the Democratic Labour Party, having regard to the earlier position it took on Ilaro Court prior to the last election, and so he is seeking shelter in the argument that he is not going in there unless his constituents tell him to go. That is the essence of it, a lack of courage, but he would go up there for seven nights towards Christmas 1987.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All we are asking for is some consistency in regard to the official residence. How many cars does the Prime Minister have available to him? About four! There is MP-2, M-50 and others. What is this foob'shness about life-style? You have all kinds of cars available.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time has expired for the honourable Member.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I should just like to deal with a couple of the points made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons). Whatever he has said underscores the logic of the argument which I have advanced in this House. I understand, putting his argument at its best, that he is saying that Ilaro Court is unsuitable as a Prime Minister's residence. I am paraphrasing.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: I have the capacity to say what I mean quite clearly. What the honourable Member is reporting that I said, I never said it, nor did I intend to say it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I understand, Sir, and I interpret his statement as amounting to a clear statement that in his opinion, Ilaro Court is not suitable as the Prime Minister's residence. He is obviously not arguing against the retention of a place for a Prime Minister's residence. He is obviously now arguing against the use to which it is put.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: On a point of order: I said that that residence is not suited for people who are used to simple lifestyles. That does not mean, and it cannot mean, that it is not suitable for a Prime Minister's residence. An official residence of any Prime Minister any place in the world is a place adorned with glory, but a simple person may choose, despite the fact that there is an official residence, to live in humble surroundings. That is all I am saying, and I stick by that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member does not want to commit himself to its unsuitability as a Prime Minister's residence, so therefore I am taking it that it is suitable as a Prime Minister's residence, but what he is saying is that any person who becomes Prime Minister must have a discretion as to whether to use it as a place at which to sleep - let us get around the argument - not to use as a residence, but to sleep - so the argument must be then, in his opinion, as though we are arguing as to whether a Prime Minister sleeps at the residence or does not sleep. That is what he is saying. Let us get the position clear.

The problem is that we are really getting *ad hominem* rather than looking at the general position. I want to go back, however, Sir, because there is quite a lot of *ad hominem* asides and reports and statements on one's feet, and the first point I want to make is that Culloden Farm was a plantation house. For the benefit of the honourable Member who had spoken on this a bit earlier - he may not know it - it was a farm, and a plantation residence as well, and at the time it was bought, it did, of course, enjoy a certain amount of privacy.

It was used as an official residence, and it guaranteed a certain amount of privacy, and I believe in those days, if one looks at the file, of security as well. The development that has taken place in that area undermined that privacy, and the security, to some extent

I do not mind whether the Government sells Ilaro Court, keeps it or uses it for certain other purposes. As far as I am concerned, one ought to maintain an official residence for a Prime Minister. That has always been my position, whether who lives in there is by the name an A, a B, an S, a C. I believe that that is the correct position that we should take in this country. We must decide either that we are going to keep an official residence and use it as an official residence, or not.

The honourable Member says that in some countries there are several residences. This may well be so. I do not believe that we are able to afford in Barbados those sorts of luxuries, but I believe that if we have an official residence, it must be used as an official residence, and I will not be moved from that point.

There is no point, Sir, talking about people who want to live in plantation houses or something of the sort. I think those asides are terribly irrelevant for the purpose of this debate.

I will again say I am sorry to hear that the Prime Minister is concerned about a ghost at Ilaro Court. My

urging on the Government still is that the position really must be clarified, and clarified once and for all. 6.50 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, in this Committee it would be improper for me to suggest who should say what. Each honourable Member is entitled to speak on any item and say whatever he wishes to say. However, Sir, I feel that in that vein, I can say that I am embarrassed as a Member of the House that this debate is taking place.

What the members of the Barbados Labour Party have to do is to admit that Tom Adams was wrong. Let us agree that the honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, has made his point of principle. But I listened to the Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) delivering an argument, and he left a whole chasm in it. He went to Culloden Farm and moved from Culloden Farm to Ilaro Court, and then travelled a straight road or a winding path.

The fact is that the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable Member for St. Thomas have to admit that Culloden Farm was the official residence for Prime Ministers in Barbados. There was no question of security. There was no question of privacy. The Queen of Barbados came here and went to Culloden Farm.

Let us admit that Tom Adams had taken a position when the property was being acquired in this House, and as a result of that, and based on his capacity for trivia and for holding grudges on the most minute possible issues, he determined when he became Prime Minister, with a majority of 17 to 7, that he, Tom Adams, was not going to live in Culloden Farm. And he desecrated it by allowing Slims to go in it and to have gambling and prostitution in it. Let us agree on that.

After that, he built his house in Walkers, St. George, and he told me in there that he was not moving from Walkers till his mortgage had reached a certain point. If we are going to make it trivia, let us deal with that.

He then went to Ilaro Court after you all spent $3 million on it. The argument was riot that it should not be an official residence, or it should be. The argument was that the Democratic Labour Party took the position that you spent $3 million on an official residence, that you were extravagant with the people's money at a time when the economic situation was rough, that Tom Adams and company ordered some extravagant furniture and did some strange things at Ilaro Court.

Subsequently, it became the residence. But in this House we agreed in principle that we would give an allowance to a Prime Minister. What you were saying then - and we agreed, there is no record of our having going against it, because it happened when you were the Government - was that if a man lived in the official residence, he would have one kind of condition of service, and if he does not live in the official residence, he would get another kind of service. That was the point of principle when we all agreed that a Prime Minister could choose to live in the official residence under one set of conditions or live outside and have another set. We cannot approbate and reprobate.

If you wish to say that when you become Prime Minister you will live in it, say so, but do not come in here now pillorying this Prime Minister as if he has committed a crime. He is doing what you said he can do, and he is following in the footsteps of Tom Adams, the Prime Minister, who set up those standards and fixed it at $1 800 then. That is the point of principle, Mr. Chairman. Why are we representing 27 constituencies and spending time today - we have all of this to discuss - discussing matters - and I am going to get into trouble now - that we did not have the courage to discuss when the Right Honourable Member was Prime Minister? Why did you not tell him that he should live in Ilaro Court?

I believe that we have to stop being mealy-mouthed about things in this country. What is good for Peter must be good for Paul. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. And what is good for Tom can stay with Tom!

I am not getting involved in any more discussion on it, except to say this. Let us agree on what we are going to agree on. We cannot talk, as you did earlier, about the change in the quality and about the evolution of representation of capacity and ability and then reduce it to the trivia of discussing Ilaro Court. I accept your point of principle, that you believe that there should be an official residence and all Prime Ministers should live in it. It is not the last point of principle, but it is one we can understand. Let us move on. We are not Joan Benjamin in here. We are not the people that call in. My friend makes fun of me and he calls me the cement man. That is his privilege. I do not call him anything, for reasons which he understands. The point is that we make a little fun sometimes in Parliament, but let us move on.

Mr. Chairman, I beg that we do not discuss this part of it anymore. Let us move on.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, this Head 13 covers a large number of various topics, some of which have to do with economic affairs, and I have a very specific interest, therefore, Mr. Chairman, in discussing some of the subheads that fall under the Prime Minister's

Office, under the auspices of Economic and Social Planning. But as we have laid the debate to rest as regards the official residence, just let us agree as to a number of incontrovertible facts, the first being that there is a thing called an official residence in Barbados. Next - that that official residence is Ilaro Court. Thirdly, that it is used, also, in an official capacity for official functions. Another incontrovertible fact that in pursuit of that, we will this year spend $106 000 on matters such as kitchen-ware, bed linen, other supplies, maintenance of the pools and the ground. This Committee is being called upon to approve that $106 000, which I suppose it will do in due course, and that is another incontrovertible fact. That we will spend $50 000 in capital funds in interior and exterior decoration of the premises is another incontrovertible fact.

The only question, and what seems to be the issue of debate, is whether the scope of Ilaro Court's status as an official residence should include the sleeping in or the not sleeping in it. The Prime Minister has said that, as far as he is concerned, that is a matter for himself and his constituents. Let us leave it at that. But it is an official residence used for official purposes and we are paying for it, and, as I said, the question as to whether the nature of it as an official residence extends to a Prime Minister sleeping in it does not alter its status as an official residence.

He has said that he has his own criteria and his own guidelines as to whether he wants to sleep in it or not sleep in it If it is his will, as a Prime Minister of a country, for his constituency branch tell him where he must sleep or where he must not sleep, Sir, that is his style, he is entitled to it It is, perhaps, not our way, but it is his style of leadership. That is another incontrovertible fact. Mr. Speaker, that is my position on Ilaro Court.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: "Mr. Chairman", I am not the Speaker yet. Take your time. I will get there one of these days. 7.00 p.m.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This Head, Mr. Chairman, includes a subhead where provision is made for economic and social planning, and that is the part of the subhead that excites me most of all. As I understand it, Sir, the current Development Plan will expire at the end of this financial year.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Eighty-three to 88.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I think we might be in fact overlapping.

Obviously, Mr. Chairman, I have a broad interest in that particular area. I would, of course, want to enquire as to the status of the preparations, and I am doing so very deliberately.

A lot was made of the fact that the Employment Task Force was created by the Democratic Labour Party and it was established in such a fashion as to allow a very wide public participation in the drafting of an employment strategy. That employment strategy has come under a severe battering from the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson), and to my certain knowledge, it has never been debated in the House. But I start at that point, Mr. Chairman, because much was made by the Democratic Labour Party of the democratic process by which various entities in the society were allowed to make an input into the preparation of the ill-fated Task Force Report.

The preparation of a country's Development Plan, particularly at this critical time, is a very substantial and important development in the country's economic affairs. I recall, Mr. Chairman, that, for the purposes of the preparation of the last Development Plan, the most deliberate effort was made to ensure that the net of consultation was cast as wide as possible. I must tell the House, Mr. Chairman, that the trade unions of the country - and I have to make this point very deliberately, Sir - were invited to serve on the various committees that the Barbados Labour Party established to prepare the last Development Plan, and they were represented at all of the planning meetings over which I presided as the co-ordinator of the preparation of the Development Plan. The private sector was also invited to participate, and Senator Gertrude Eastmond, who now sits in the Senate on the side of the Government, served as one of the persons who, from the private sector point of view, participated. No less a person than the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller) also served, as a result of direct invitation by the Barbados Labour Party, as a member of the General Planning Committee which helped prepare that Development Plan, together with a wide range of professional organisations which had a specific skill to bring to bear as regards planning matters in this country.

It would seem, however, Mr. Chairman, from what we can glean about the Development Plan, that a lot of effort is not being made to capture the widest possible input of the general society in charting the destinies of the Barbadian society in the years to come.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want to interrupt the honourable Member, but I am a bit worried about the point of relevancy. What you are saying is important, I accept that, but the point of relevancy has me a bit worried.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Economic and Social Planning is a very broad head.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want to be contentious. I just wanted to be satisfied about the point of relevancy. I was unsatisfied about it.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Well, Mr. Chairman, if you are making an important point, would you say that an important point is not relevant?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member knows what I am taking about. I do not want to be contentious about it. Just show to me what is relevant. Go ahead.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, before I started I made it clear that Head 13 is a wide area that includes many different subheads.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member continue? I am satisfied about the relevancy. Continue now.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am enquiring as to the status of the preparation of the National Development Plan, since it seems to have been a very low-key initiative. For sure, it has not enjoyed the high public profile that has been accorded to the preparation of the Employment Task Force. I am sure that there are many persons in the society who would wish to make contributions to the preparation of a national Development Plan, and I do not think that it is proper that a Development Plan should be prepared in a vacuum or in camera. If we could hear from the Prime Minister as regards the plan, I would be very grateful.

I am also very pleased to note that the Government has taken the advice of the Opposition and has now agreed to streamline the bureaucracy responsible for matters pertaining to state enterprises. Last year the Opposition had to comment on the fact that the Government, in the process of trying, so it claimed, to reduce waste and inefficiency in the Public Service, had in fact established two state organisations to do the same thing. You had a management and accounting department in the Ministry of Finance with responsibility for undertaking the affairs regarding the operation of state enterprises, particularly their management, accounting and financial affairs, and a separate state enterprises department had also been created to do essentially the same thing. It is therefore very pleasing to the Opposition that our words of criticism, meant constructively, have been taken into account, and that the state enterprises unit is no longer in existence and that at least some streamlining has been brought to bear as regards the manner in which Government proposes to deal with those institutions.

Technical assistance is a subject that very seldom enjoys debate in this House, and it is deliberately provided for under subhead 5 of this Head. Technical assistance can be a very important developmental input in assisting a country to overcome its development problems, but I notice this year, Mr. Chairman, that the amount that is now being provided for technical assistance has been reduced. I would wish to get information from the Prime Minister as to exactly what is the specific aspects of technical assistance that are being provided here for under Subhead 5. The reduction is, obviously, to be regretted, because it simply must mean that there has been a reduction in the amount of technical assistance that we are receiving from other countries. I am making the point, Mr. Chairman, in the light of certain developments having to do with our relationships to international organisations, that Barbados, so they say, is due to graduate from access to concessional financing from international institutions. But there is still a continuing need for this country to be able to share in the technical skills of a large number of organisations to which we are making subventions through these Estimates from year to year.

If, Mr. Chairman, the situation is that, simultaneous with our having difficulties in getting access to concessional financing, we are also going to find that the technical assistance available to this country from international organisations is being reduced, then the whole question of our continuing subventions to these international institutions, I think, Sir, would have to come under the serious scrutiny of Parliament. 7.10p.m.

Mr. Chairman, if we were to go through these Estimates and total how much we are contributing to international organisations by way of grants, we might well find that the amount that we are contributing to international organisations by grants is far higher than what we are getting out of these international organisations in the form of technical assistance. And the cost benefit of that, Mr. Chairman, therefore, becomes not so much a partisan issue, but a national issue, because Barbados would obviously be disadvantaged if we can no longer have access to concessional financing, and if at the same time, Sir, we are going to find ourselves in a position where we cannot even get access to technical aid which we are paying for by way of our subventions approved by Parliament. I would therefore be very grateful, Mr. Chairman, if the Prime Minister could open this area and let us know what might be the situation as regards the relationship between ourselves and these international institutions, and what this particular threat might mean.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. *L. E.* SANDIFORD: I am replying finally.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not want to delay the Prime Minister on the reply, but I want to follow on a bit from where.....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Probably a full 15 minutes. What do you want to do? Adjourn it? Adjourn it then, it does not matter. It finishes at 7.20 p.m.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I want to follow on from where the honourable Member of St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) stopped, and I want to underscore the points which he has been making in relation to the item "Technical Assistance". It has been my experience that in some instances, the only form of assistance which we obtain from some Governments is by way of technical assistance. Certainly the United Kingdom is one such Government from which we have very little of a bilateral aid relationship, if any aid at all, and therefore, we have to in some instances provide counterpart funds to make use of such technical aid as there may be provided. But in a way, it is the type of aid which can be extremely useful. I am not saying that all of it is useful, because in my experience we have had one or two experts provided under the technical assistance programme who have not produced the type of material that could be beneficial to Barbados, either in its developmental, political or social planning.

I think that this is a very important item, but the House very seldom gets an opportunity to consider this item, except generally, at this time of Estimates, and the information concerning the countries from whom we get technical aid on a bilateral basis is not readily available. Some of it is usually made available in the annual publication, or should be, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but a lot of that information is not available to Members of the House. It would be useful for the Prime Minister, if he has the information available now, or at some time during the debate, to tell us what is the level of technical assistance that we are obtaining not only from international institutions and organisations, but from countries with whom we conduct diplomatic relations. Particularly, I would like to know the level of assistance which we are obtaining from countries, such as Japan, with whom we have an adverse balance of trade. It seems to me that if countries such as Japan, whose workers benefit substantially from the earnings of Barbadians by way of the imports which we get from Japan, cannot provide us with an opportunity to trade on reasonable terms with them, this is a Head which they can use, if they do not want to give us a bilateral relationship, to provide us with another form of aid.

It is also a Head under which we can obviously obtain transfer of technology. I am singling out Japan in this exercise particularly, Sir, because in a way, I find that it is one of the countries with whom we trade which has not manifested towards Barbados - it may have done so in the Pacific countries - a very generous attitude. I would wish to know specifically whether or not we receive any benefits from them.

I want to know what is the overall level of technical assistance in dollar terms that we have been receiving. I have not seen any recent figures on this aspect of the matter either. I would also like to know whether the level of technical assistance programmes that we have with some of the specialised agencies of the United Nations and some of the agencies in the Latin American system is still being maintained, or is Barbados still being graduated out of some of these benefits. If so, as the honourable Member has said, we certainly have to do a cost-benefit analysis of our association with some of these organisations.

But, Sir, the Head does not only invite debate on the technical assistance we receive. It also directs our attention to the areas in which we give technical assistance. I note that the cut is about $134 000 this year, and I wonder what are the areas in which that cut will be implemented.

We always boast of the fact that we are able to provide the other countries of the Eastern Caribbean, in particular, with levels of technical assistance, and from time to time, making available to them some of the knowledge and skills which we have managed to cultivate and develop in Barbados. I believe that this is beneficial to us not merely in promoting good relationships on a human level, but also in terms of the opportunities which it offers this country for maximising trading and other economic benefits.

Perhaps, we must see this item too, as a lever not only to give, but a lever to promote better external trading relationships, whether those relationships are in the form of selling direct goods, as we understand it, or manufactured products, or whether the promotion is in the way of selling our services. If the technical people from Barbados who may go to render on a governmental level technical assistance down the islands have done a good job, they leave behind them an example of the skills which they have, and in due course this can lead to further trade for Barbados. 7.20 p.m.

I think, Sir, that it was under this Head that we also sought to give technical assistance further afield. I recall we had a programme going with Namibia for some time, and with Zimbabwe before that country even became independent, and under the aegis of the Commonwealth Secretariat, Barbados was able to extend facilities as part of

its foreign policy initiative, particularly in the attitude[1] which we took to the racist policies then being pursued in Southern Rhodesia, as it was known, and in the strong stance, which we have taken in this country, both political parties, against the dastardly regime in Pretoria. Therefore, this item, although it comes under the Economic Affairs and may look to be an item not worthy of the Committee's time, invites debate and consideration from the Committee because of the several policy implications which it has for the conduct of Barbados' external relations and internal economic relations.

Sir, I am hoping that we will have a further opportunity before the Prime Minister replies - I think we have probably gone over the time for the day - to have a look at various other aspects of Government's affairs under this Head, including the Government Information Service for which the honourable Member for St. Michael North East (Mr. L. L. Brathwaite) spoke on the last occasion. Perhaps we will get a clear statement as to whether that Ministry is now being housed under one roof, or what intentions the Government has for that particular department of Government. I believe it has been dispersed in various buildings, and that as it has moved with Ministers from time to time, it has moved from place to place.

I did not share the total criticism which the honourable Member may have made on one occasion about the uses to which GIS has been put. I carefully watch its programmes as often as I am available at the time at which its broadcasts have been made, and I have noticed that there is quite a high standard which is coming from the technical and the other officers who are carrying out this function in the Government Information Service. I cannot say that they have been in a propagandising way.

I adverted earlier in this Committee to that particular article that I have seen. I saw the statements made by the two members who spoke in giving background information to the Estimates and to the Budget, and I want to say that their presentation was at an extremely high professional level, and that is what I would urge very strongly for all of the officers in that department. It is as it says, it is a Government Information Service, and it is not there to produce the programmes in respect of any particular party, whether it forms the Government at the time or not. It has to take into account a much wider role than merely a propagandising role.

If I may speak again of a programme in which I participated recently, it was a programme in which the Barbados national interest was placed.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Prime Minister is saying that he gave opportunities. The Prime Minister ought to be aware that on several occasions members of the Democratic Labour Party would have appeared, not that it was given any opportunities. I do not know if the Prime Minister has seen my letter. I do not even want to refer to it, but I will speak to the Prime Minister on that.

Despite the manner in which the approach was made, I participated in the programme, not because of opportunities, but because there are areas where the national interest of Barbados, in my view, comes before a partisan interest. Therefore, I think the Prime Minister, if he wants me to take his statement very seriously about giving opportunities, has to recognise that certainly the style of leadership which he will find is that on national issues, such as whether or not we should jointly say - and the Opposition has taken that stand since it became the official Opposition in this House ....

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member must know. We are the official Opposition in this House, to co-operating with the Government, even when they come down and want a measure to go through the House in one go. Sometimes we have co-operated to the extent that you will hear a comment being thrown at us.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On national issues, as we consider the national issues of the promotion of the candidacy of Dame Nita Barrow, our position has been that we see no necessity to take any divisive stand at all. That is very clear, and in those circumstances, I would hope that when we are looking at the Government Information Service, we can take a wider approach on an issue such as that.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be now suspended until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow, March 16.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 10 a.m. on March 16 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 7.30 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. Byer in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House has reverted to Committee of Supply.

HEAD 13-PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - $23411911(CONT'D)

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You were the last person who spoke. Somebody else must speak.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, just before the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) concluded his speech yesterday evening, he made mention of an observation which I made at an earlier sitting as regards what I wished could be an expansion of the capacity of the Government Information Service to cover more effectively debates of Parliament in some regard, and generally to inform the people of this country, who deserve lots better than they are served by the news media, printed and electronic. My attention was also drawn to the fact that a columnist from one of the daily newspapers has taken me to task.

For some reason, the honourable Member for Christ Church West seemed to understand that I had been levelling criticisms at the CIS, which, indeed, was not my intention. My intention was to seek wider scope for a more unbiased dissemination of matters which 4 think relate, and very strongly so, to the people of this country. And my basic reason for joining the debate at this time is to renew a call for the Government of this country, which has a responsibility to keep at as high a level as possible matters of an educational nature for the people of this country, to expand the role of the Government Information Service, not to print, as some people want to believe, the DLP side of things, but to so disseminate information to the people of this country that they can have a balanced view of what is happening in this country.

It seems to me, Sir, that there are people who believe that as soon as you ask for the people to be informed, you are seeking some scope for yourself. The people of this country are the persons who have to look for the ways and means of employing people in the Government Service. The people, of this country are the people on whom the newspapers of this country depend to purchase their newspapers. I admit that there is a measure t)f revenue coming from advertisements and the like, but if there was no readership, the advertisements would be useless. So I believe the people who are involved in the news media in this country should realise that they owe it, as a duty, to the people of the country to provide the kind of information that can educate them along the lines of what is happening in this country.

I need not worry too much about what the newspaper thinks about what I said, because it seems that what they are doing is admitting that the newspaper is not carrying a balanced reporting of the matters. Indeed, when I looked yesterday morning at the *Nation* Newspaper and saw the coverage which they gave to what happened in this House the previous day, one believes that not much was said or done on the side of the Government. But there are people in this country, large numbers of them, who do not have the opportunity, because of pressure of work and for many. other reasons, to come and sit in this Chamber and hear the debates as they are carried on. And they are not going to get the information from the news media in this country as they are presently operating, purely because the news rnedia in this country seem to have the feeling that they have a right not to say things as they ought to be said.

I am not going to take up the attention or the time of this Chamber any further on this matter. But I make a further call for some consideration to be given to the expansion of the services of the Government Information Service to effectively cover and to give unbiased coverage of matters which pertain in Parliament.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. Chairman, I listened to the honourable Member for St. Michael North East (Mr. L. L. Brathwaite) with great care, and he has explained that the statement which he had made was really a call for an expansion of the role of GIS, and he has made it in the context of the broadcast of parliamentary debates. I believe that is a matter to which the House will, no doubt, in due course, turn its attention. It is a matter, perhaps, Mr. Chairman that should engage the attention of the Debates Committee itself. It is not unusual now for Parliaments in many parts of the world to broadcast parliamentary proceedings, taking into account not only the need to inform the public, but also the need not to bore the public

so that the public may have an opportunity to choose judiciously the sort of programmes that it can listen to.

I have no difficulty with the broadcast of parliamentary debates myself. I am not here expressing a view of the Barbados Labour Party, since that matter will have to be canvassed in greater detail, but I have no difficulty in parliamentary debates being broadcast. Now that we are having more channels on the television stations, there would be an opportunity for choice among persons. I think that in broadcasting such debates, great care will have to be exercised, however, to ensure that we comply fully with all of the laws and conventions which govern such matters.

Sir, the honourable Member complains, as, in fact, the Government has complained, and continues to complain, about reports in newspapers. That is their particular gripe. If the honourable Member listens, as I do, to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, he could not in any objective way say that that particular organisation favours the Opposition in any manner whatsoever. I have certainly listened to, and had taped, its broadcasts of what has transpired in this House so far in this debate, and from the meagre attention they gave to the speech of the honourable Member for St. Peter, you would not believe that he has spoken in the debate at all. 10.10a.m.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. James South (Hon. N. K. Simmons) is going to say because he said the same thing for four years. At least it is worth saying. Particularly if the honourable Member is not prepared to understand it or has not got the capacity to comprehend what is being said, one has to keep trying.

One must make the point that that station is obviously not prepared to be fair in the manner in which it broadcasts either statements made by the Opposition, or in treating events of the Opposition.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: I thought I would never live to see the day I would hear you say that.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You thought you would never live to see the day? I marched against CBC you know, and will march again if it becomes necessary. In any other country, would you believe that a national broadcasting station would boycott, as they did, the conference of a major political party? The point is that the station obviously is in the situation that it believes that it is not the station of ,;,e peon!? of Barbados.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. James South, who is a good heckler, says that the workers do not feel so. The honourable Member should really carefully try and find out who it is run by and who sends directives to it.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! Order!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Ask your Prime Minister and he will tell you what directive he sent on the Swaggart programme.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You asked me a question, I have given you an answer. You don't want the answer now? You want to know who sends directives? You ask and I will tell you.

Sir, if we are going to talk about the reporting of parliamentary debates, one has to ensure that those debates are fairly handled by any broadcasting station, and I believe that the House has it within its power to deal with that matter. But I am not satisfied that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation shows any respect whatsoever to the Opposition and to the head of the Opposition. I have said so in the public domain and I say it here in this Parliament, and I think we are in future going to have to look very carefully at the policy which obtains in maintaining a monopoly for a television station such as that. Perhaps if it had more competition it would recognise that it has a duty to spread and go after news.

I want to enquire, particularly under the Broadcasting Authority Act, whether any applications have come to the Government for the establishment of another television station. If they have been some, how have they been treated? If no application has come to the Government for another television station, would the Government be prepared to entertain such an application?

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member wants to know? The honourable Member has been in this House for a long time.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) wants to know what

Head. He must look under Head 13, Subhead 10, Subventions to Cultural Organisations, the Broadcasting Authority. And if he does not know the power of the Broadcasting Authority, it has authority to advise the Minister on the award and the grant of licences to people, including the licences to CBC.

I want to enquire whether or not the Government's policy contemplates permitting more than one television station to operate in Barbados at all, and if so, when?

In my view, it is all right having monopolies, but when the monopolies believe that they must bow and scrape and do various things in limited circumstances, and they do not conceive it part of their duty to recognise that a political party that has been 50 years in this country, both in Government and in Opposition, and which, other than for the purblind, has made an outstanding contribution in -the life of the country, deserves to have its national events properly covered, then something is wrong in the body politic, moreso if that is going to be the position of a national broadcasting station. There is no way that I will be silenced on this particular matter, Sir, because I think that the policy must be clear. If it has not been in the past, let it be clear for the future.

It must be very clear that the television station understands that nobody is asking CBC to be kind, and I am not going to stomach rudeness from any employees or board members of CBC, whether past or present either on this issue. I demand the respect for the political party I represent, not for myself, on an issue such as this, and I am not asking about it. There are institutions in this country which make lesser contributions to the country which can find their voices noised over the radio on every sort of flimsy thing that they want to talk about, and on the television station, and you cannot continue to ignore this in the life of Barbados.

We should probably move to the stage where there was really the Broadcasting Authority having an independent role as other broadcasting authorities have, and perhaps it is right to look at a complete recast of that Act to see in what way the Act could possibly be formulated in a manner to ensure that these organisations or institutions comply with the licences that they are granted in as proper a way as possible. I may have to revert to this subject if it becomes necessary to answer a few matters.

I want, before the Prime Minister gets to his reply, to ask three questions on the Defence and Security position that I had not asked yesterday.

In last year's debate in this House, the then Prime Minister said that approximately 45 members of the Defence Force were to be assigned to the airport for intelligence and security duty. Perhaps they are there, but on my visits to the airport, I have seen no sign of them. What has become of that proposal? The proposal was they were going to redeploy Defence Force personnel for guard duties at the airport Is the Government still so minded, or has that part of the policy been abandoned?

He said he did not know the size of the Defence Force. Is the Government now aware of the size of its Defence Force? Does it consider the size of the Defence Force to be in keeping with what it would want for a Defence Force in Barbados?

I am not going to ask the Minister, having, as I said yesterday, served on the Defence Board, to reveal the size of the personnel, if I want that information otherwise, I would feel that I am in duty bound to write to him on a different level for it, because there are certain reasons why one normally does not publicly announce the information. If the Minister feels, however, that he can answer, fine, but I am not asking the Minister at this level. But I want to know whether the size, whatever, is considered adequate for the defence of Barbados to the extent that that obligation has been defined by the Government. 10.20 a.m.

It was also being suggested that at some stage the Defence Force was running covert activities. I want to find out what are the covert activities that the Defence Force was running. That was suggested last year. Honourable Members obviously do not follow up on debates. I want to find out what are the so-called covert activities that they were running, if the Government is now satisfied that the Defence Force is fully accountable to Parliament and to the Cabinet, as I have always understood it to be so accountable, and I wish to hear a review of their policy position on this issue at this-time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have no intention of spending the rest of the day on this Head, but I believe that some of the operations of CBC need to be scrutinised and need explanation from the Minister responsible.

If I understood it, the STV system was designed to attract finances which would go towards assisting CBC in balancing its budget and becoming more economically viable. We have heard very little about STV beyond the publication of newspaper ads inviting members of the public to subscribe to the service, and the hope that there was for STV has apparently diminished. There are now fewer connections of the service than disconnections from the service. In addition to that, there are persons who are trying to have the service only for a three-month period and then abandon it. So the long term viability of STV seems to be compromised or threatened, and I wish to hear from the

Minister, for the benefit of the public, what are the Government's plans for this service. Who is heading the service? There was a time when Mr. Fernandes - before he went to VOB - was in charge of the planning of the service. Since then the Deputy General Manager was put in charge. My information is that he is no longer in charge, but somebody well-known and close to the Prime Minister, a lady, is the person who had administrative responsibility for STV.

I would like to know from the Prime Minister what are plans for the island-wide availability of the service. Has CBC put in all the repeater stations that are necessary to ensure island-wide coverage? Is it a fact that CBC is secretly negotiating a deal - not secretly, it is secret to you but it is known to me - with Cable and Wireless to sell off the STV portion to Cable and Wireless, and of course, by extension, to give Cable and Wireless a greater share in the communication services, because they already have a substantial interest in the Telephone Company and in BET. If so, we want to know. If there are secret or delicate negotiations, do not give us the details -1 respect that - but let the country know that STV has not proven viable at this stage as a branch of CBC, and that to cut CBCs losses, the Government is looking for new avenues. If that is the position, tell us, because there is talk about it, and my information suggests that there is a stratum of truth and fact in it Suffice it to say that at the moment STV is clearly a massive failure.

The Government does not have to continue with STV as a loss entity. No one would quarrel if Government has to cut back its losses and reorganise its intentions.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Barbados Labour Party did not start the implementation of STV. We started the planning for STV. If we did not start the planning, all of it, as the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) is shouting, it originated with the Democratic Labour Party. There are only two parties that could have responsibility, so make up your mind. If you are not going to concede that we started the planning, then the planning and the implementation must have started with your party.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It deserves talking about. You have whole pages of the newspapers with ads for people to sign up and send in and join the service, and it is not something that is worthy of discussion? It has now been reduced...

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order: I think it is a contravention of the Rules and the spirit of this Honourable Chamber for the honourable Member for St. Thomas to give the impression that they have to draw something out in relation to CBC and that we have not said anything about these matters. The honourable Member knows very well that he asked a Parliamentary Question in this House on STV. Parliamentary Question No. 71, and we gave a full reply in here, to the extent that there were no supplementaries on it. So to give the impression that nothing is being said about STV is really to mislead this Honourable Chamber, and I submit that that is not in accordance with the high standards of debate that he normally conducts.

I am sure that this is lack of memory, just as it was lack of memory when he talked about nothing being said about Ilaro Court, when a question was also answered in here on that particular matter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am very grateful to the Honourable Prime Minister for reminding the House and proving the validity of my comment that I had to draw the Government out. If I did not ask the question about STV, the Government would never have volunteered the information, because the Government never of its own motion and volition volunteered for public consumption the planning and the details of STV. I had to ask the question.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: The honourable Member is definitely misleading the House. The honourable Member knows that there was a full debate in this Parliament on the amount of money to be spent in the development of CBC when we came to get a guarantee of $14 million. The honourable Member may have been out of the House, but it is his duty to know, and to say that it was not discussed is a downright untruth, and the honourable Member knows it. I know that he knows it, Sir, because during that debate we discussed the treatment that had been meted out to him by Nigel Barrow when he was Chairman, and he joined in that, so I know he was here, Sir. 10.30 a.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I was not saying that at no time was CBC discussed. What I have said is that there was no discussion by the Government of its own motion in relation to STV. I have not started to deal with CBC, generally, yet. I am dealing with STV. I am saying that the Government had a duty to tell the country about STV. The first question that was asked was mine, and the first information we had about STV was as a result of my question. The Prime Minister is agreeing with me.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We had a discussion on CBC.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member get on with his speech.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tell the two senior Members over there.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You do not have to pay them any attention. Just continue.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to talk to you and ignore them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like that You can get very lonely here, you know.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I have said that it has been a massive failure.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition has complained about the extent of coverage which the Opposition Party gets on CBC. I am not one to complain, because I have a way of dealing with CBC. I do not let them cover me. As recently as Sunday, I moved the microphone from in front of me and said, "I do not want to be covered." At a political meeting in the St. John by-election, I said, "Move the things from in front of me. Do not carry me."

I was very concerned that CBC came to Dunscombe a few Sundays ago for the re-opening of a very important church, the Dunscombe Moravian Church, which was restored entirely out of voluntary contributions by a lot of poor people in the Dunscombe, St. Thomas area. They filmed about two and a half hours of films, Sir, and in the film clip that was shown on television, you had the Bishop or Archbishop of the Moravian Diocese from Jamaica, who came down specially for this. A number of persons were there who made speeches. The film clip was less than two minutes. Although it could have been a nice feature, it was reduced to that, and as it came to be shown on the film, they cut completely, to the obvious delight of the lady presenter of the news. I cannot call the names.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. I was showing how the editing was done in such a way to be embarrassing both to CBC and to me. I do not pay it any mind, but people in St. Thomas have commented about it unfavourably.

We do not have an opportunity to see the reports of the debates that are going on this week, Sir, but from all the information from people who are monitoring on our behalf, we are getting less than adequate coverage.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will never complain about the newspapers, in or out of Government.

Arising out of the confusion in respect of the BLP's Annual Conference, we were promised an investigation. To the best of my knowledge, the result of that investigation has not been made known to the public or, indeed, to the leadership of the Labour Party.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, I had better leave that until I come back, because it would take a little time: I will deal with the problems of the Annual Conference later on.

I wish to say, at this stage, that if the board of CBC has no confidence in the General Manager of CBC, then the board should have had the courage when he asked them to tell him to his face. He had to ask them a few weeks ago at a board meeting, "Do you have any confidence in me?"

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You were in Court the morning when I was told?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Every year they come with this and I have made my position clear. It was not a question of nobody having confidence in me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I will come back to it later on.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON (St. John): Mr. Chairman, CBC is a matter on which I can speak with considerable authority, and not only as a former board member. As a school boy, I worked in the Licensing Section. I worked with the production in television. I trained as an announcer at CBC. I was raced off the premises at CBC the week before the 1981 election.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I will get to that. It will come out, because the Opposition Leader is bringing all of his venom and feeling against CBC, so I have to tell him some things. If at the end of the day we have to be bad friends in this debate, or for life, so be it. Anyone who challenges me, or attempts to challenge me, I will respond. I am not afraid of him. Bring all the files you want from anywhere in the world. The point is that I have considerable experience with CBC. I do not have anything to say about the period in which the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) was Chairman, because I honestly wish to say....
10.40 a.m.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You cannot find fault)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: .....I am not going to cross swords with you today .....that as far as I understand .....

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:..... he was a reasonable Chairman....

(Aside: The best!)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: .... of CBC.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Under the Labour Party.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, to be the next Chairman under the Labour Party is no boast.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Even if you say you were the best, I may accept that, but not the best ever.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: CBC has a very important role to play in this society, not only because it is the only television station, but also because it is Government-owned. Therefore, it must have some very solid policies in terms of things like news policy, cultural policy, which inform the background to its presentation, whether on television or radio. The honourable Member for SL Thomas raised the matter of STV. There are a number of misconceptions that he has. He may have those misconceptions because he may, rightly so, have distanced himself from CBC after his tenure.

STV, or the Satellite Television Project, was an afterthought. There was no planning about anything. Nobody can talk about STV being planned. CBC brought an antenna down here and then they did not know what to do with it. They broadcast CNN news for a few hours in the morning and the antenna remained at the Pine. There was no plan prior to the acquisition of that antenna, and there was just a hodge-podge of ideas direct from, I believe, Culloden Farm, under the hand of the former Minister, Nigel Barrow, indicating how that antenna was to be used and how the STV project was to be executed.

When I went on the CBC Board, there was no way that we could have stopped it. They had already acquired millions of dollars in equipment, part of which was en route to Barbados, and part of which was lying in containers on the premises at the Pine with no airconditioning and it was deteriorating. In fact, it was because of the acquisition of that equipment that we also had to proceed with the construction of the building. So everything was just thrown in the laps of the board members who were appointed after May 28, 1986. And it is a tribute to the former Minister of Information, the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) that he wisely appointed one or two persons who served on the former board, although that may now be to our detriment, because you are always well-informed, and I know the source of your information, we all know. But at that time, the only way we could have executed the project was to have appointed persons who served on the former board, so that at least there was some continuity, because nobody knew anything.

If you have anything to say about the present General Manager, I can tell you a lot about the former one. Friends do not come into it; he might be my friend, but I can tell you and the former Minister can tell you, that I told him that I believe that just as an enquiry was launched into the National Assistance Board, and enquiry should have been launched into STV. It is just that we have no choice. The profitability and development of CBC would be major concern, and rather than retard it and throw away $22 million, we had to forge ahead and forget the enquiry.

But if you want to ask questions of the Minister of Information about the STV, that is perfectly legitimate. There are some questions, I am certain, not even he can answer, because there is no information on the files.

Why is it that CBC could purchase three different brand names of computers which are not compatible? There was overseas expert advice -1 do not even know the brand names, I think one was Zenith - but a local computer expert called me aside one day and said he had put a proposal to

the former Minister which would have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The former Minister Nigel Barrow.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no!

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am sorry, I withdraw it

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The first one slipped through.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The former Minister under the Barbados Labour Party, now a writer in the newspaper and lecturer, I believe, at the University of the West Indies, I mean, with respect to "lecturer".

Three different brand names of computer were bought. The computers came down here, and week after week CBC had to bring back experts from overseas to try and get the computer system compatible. That was one of the problems.

There is only one thing that explains the purchase of three different kinds of computer, and I am going to say it now for the record! Somebody got a rake off! They went to each computer company, did their negotiations, and they got a kick-back somewhere, because nothing on this God's earth can explain to me, as a thinking person, and to you, why in 1987, when we have computer technology here in Barbados and people who can advise us, people came in from overseas and advised us. And they abandoned all of that advice and they purchased equipment that was not only defective and costly, but was not compatible!

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Name the people.)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not getting in that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. He would only name the people when he gives me notice about that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But the honourable Member for St. Thomas would not mind if I name them.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Everything that was said was perfectly within the Rules of the House, as far as I can see.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I said what is my opinion. There are more than 300 people in Barbados who have association with CBC, take out the three that you think should be taken out and you can apply my remarks to those three.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: There was also the purchase of equipment relating to the installations in people's homes. The decoders were defective. The antennae purchased were the cheapest possible.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The overall antenna.

I honestly tell you I was so exasperated at one point that I am glad the by-election came to relieve me of my responsibilities at CBC because of the wickedness that I had seen perpetrated up at that CBC. But it does not only relate to STV. I will leave the Honourable Ministers to reveal that information, both the former Minister and the present, because they can give you more information. I am certain that if the immediate past Minister was alive, he might very well reveal some more information, because he received information from overseas a few weeks before he died.

CBC now has been instructed by a writer in the *Advocate* newspaper under the tide "Special Correspondent", and now by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, that all of a sudden, it must have respect for politicians. I want to remind him of a few things. If he were so concerned then, he could have whispered in the ears of his colleagues. In 1979, myself, Senator David Comissiong, a young attorney now, she was a school girl then, Liz Thompson, and a writer in the *Advocate** Terrence Coppin, participated in a discussion - I want it written into the Record. All of you in here have heard it already, but it must go in the Record so you can deny it if you want to - and the panelist was Mr. Hutson Linton. We had to do the programme twice, I might add, because the first time we did it, he said that Parliament comes from the Latin verb "parler". 10.50 a.m.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: They had to start it again a week later to get it right It is the French verb "parler".

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We participated in the programme. I was not any politician. I did not have any predeliction either side. I was 16 years old and at school. The fact that I went to Combermere has a particular

significance otherwise in relation to the Democratic Labour Party, but I had no particular bias.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But I knew it was a French verb and not a Latin verb. CBC was so notorious then for errors that I did not think that they would have done the programme over, but they did.

I participated in that programme. A week later, a gentleman, who eventually became a candidate for the Barbados Labour Party, told me something and I was subsequently shown a memorandum under the hand of the then Prime Minister, J. M. G. M. Adams, which said as follows: "Such raw, caustic and hostile people should not be allowed back on television". And the four of us were banned from CBC! He did not have any respect for the views of young people. Two weeks later I was at the Academy of Politics, and to some extent, that is why I am in here today, to remind you every morning when you wake up, because your former leader does not get up anymore - he is now resting in St. Michael's Cathedral, and for all those who say something bad about him, you wish the Lord to deal with them - so that you can think about what I had said to remind you of the kinds of attitudes that the Barbados Labour Party displayed towards young people.

And then you turned around and you banned Gabby. The former Chairman said he personally stopped "Boots" because it was offensive to the Defence Force. A week later, I went by the Defence Force to visit friends of mine. The boys were playing "Boots" and dancing. I am certain that if it was offensive to them, they would not have played it. I went to Trinidad to Law School and they played "Boots" and "Cadaver" every day. But we in Barbados banned one of our prominent and distinguished calypsonians. But you banned him because he was supposed to be the DLP's candidate for Bridgetown, or so you thought.

The Leader of the Opposition must understand when he talks about respect for the Opposition, that the honourable Member for the City (Mr. P. J. M. Miller) was banned. I returned from Trinidad and Tobago for the second by-election in St. Peter to participate in a programme. Advice had been given to CBC nearly two months before that I was the person who would appear on television for the Democratic Labour Party as its representative. But the day that I arrived back here, a memo was issued from the Minister's office saying that only prospective candidates could participate in the programme. But if there was time when he suffered embarrassment and humiliation, it was then, because they then declared me as a candidate and I went on the programme.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It was done over lunch by the former Right Honourable Member for St. John. He said: "You are not a candidate - well, you are going to run against Bree St. John."

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am serious about this. All of a sudden there is talk about the Opposition getting no respect. There has never been a time in the history of CBC that the Opposition has been given not only as much airplay, but as much quality airplay, as has been given under this Administration on CBC. When we spoke in the period up to 1986, they would cut out a lot of rubbish and bring it on television. When the Honourable Leader of the Opposition speaks, even as he speaks about the former late Prime Minister, and even as you can see in his eyes the difficulty that he has in getting those words to issue from his mouth, CBC brings it fully. When he practically said that he wants the Lord to deal with people who had to say anything about the former Prime Minister, they brought it. I consider that a threat. He was a Prime Minister, and anybody in this country who felt like criticising him in life or in death is perfectly entitled to do so. All these threats about the Lord will deal with you if you ever open your mouth about Tom Adams - but CBC carried the threats!

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It does not haunt me, though.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another three minutes to wind up.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Okay, Sir.

We get this sanctimonious approach that we are getting now about CBC must respect not the Opposition Leader, he said - because he is not worried about him, he gets all the coverage he wants - but he wants the rest of the Opposition to be covered night after night, as when they were in Government and Ministers were covered night after night, which even caused a prominent writer in the newspaper to say that one particular Minister, - "every time he speaks on TV, he looks like an elephant with a broken leg using crutches". Every night we had Ministers of the Barbados Labour Party on television opening a centre or giving a party somewhere. They had a ball!

I believe that there is still time for an enquiry into CBC, and if it has to be a commission of enquiry, we can

do that, too. There is enough evidence of people not doing an honest day's work up there, people that should have been dismissed years ago.

A number of persons were dismissed from CBC and cost the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation nearly $2 million to pay them out, because all of them were dismissed wrongfully. And the particular Manager of CBC then, who now operates somewhere else, was responsible for nearly every one of those persons who was dismissed. As far as I am concerned, if you have a Manager that cost your corporation nearly $2 million in damages or settlements as a result of wrongful dismissals, he should be dismissed. But instead of being dismissed, when we were ready for him the very day - the day of reckoning did not come for him - he went elsewhere.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You may wind up now.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I will come back with some more on CBC, because I do not think that we should allow it to go abroad that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has been in any way. disadvantaging the members of the Opposition since the Democratic Labour Party was in office.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I will try not to make this debate as acrimonious as the honourable Member who has just sat down.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is attacking the Chair if he says that there was an acrimonious debate while Your Honour was in the Chair. He is suggesting that Your Honour allowed acrimonious debate.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I can stop you! I can talk to the Chairman.

I submit, Sir, that the honourable member cannot begin so. If he wishes to indicate that it is his opinion, he should say so. But he cannot start by saying that, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FQRDE: I will try, Sir, to deal only with the facts of this matter and to put them very clearly for the honourable Member, who seems to have very great difficulty with the name "J. M. G. M. Adams," for reasons which he clearly understands and I really do not understand. I tell him that I am not interested in his personal position, dispute or whatever vendetta he may have. That is his business. I am not interested in that, Sir.

I want to deal with the view that I take, and I take it very advisedly, on how any station that is a national station should behave. There are certain standards that the country has to ensure are followed, and if they have not been followed in the past, they must be followed in the future.
11.00a.m.

The honourable Member begins to talk about banning. He does not recall - and I am sorry I have not brought the letter here, I normally walk with it - that the first massive banning of anyone from the air waves in this country for life took place under the former Member for St. John when Mr. Gladstone Holder, the then Government Information Officer, was taken off the television station and all radio stations for life.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The Government Information Officer?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He was not allowed! I have a copy of the correspondence which passed with Mr. Gladstone Holder, and I am going to bring it into this very Committee at the appropriate stage, and I am going to make it available to this House. He was banned for life!

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Barrow said he could sing on TV.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Oh, he could sing but he could not talk, and he was the Government Information Officer!

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am repeating what the honourable Member said, that he could sing but he could not talk. That was the beginning of the banning era.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Why do you not say that he resigned from the Broadcasting Authority under you?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has just made reference as well, if he wants to know, to the banning of Serenader.

I have sat in this House, and in a Committee of this House, in a debate taking place when the then Peter Morgan was Minister of Information, and the directive which was sent out in those days was to only report the positive side of things.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) likes to heckle from his seat, but he would know that those things have taken place. I have heard Members, on both sides, recount in here

incidents of which they disapproved. I am not going to be hamstrung by accepting that those are necessarily proper standards. What is the honourable Member trying to tell me after so many years in public life?

I say that CBC has the same standards applying as were applied towards Gladstone Holder. It is still doing it now. If the honourable Member is satisfied that after 25 years of operating a television station, that he is going to justify it by thinking he is going to attack and cite instances of which he disapproves, he is mistaken as to what view he has of public life.

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I will, but you have a right to speak to your colleagues.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You have to say that if they were wrong, they are wrong now, and they are wrong for all time. And you have to point out where the station has to go. There is nobody more sanctimonious in the way he gets up than the honourable Member!

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! Order! Allow the honourable Member to continue his speech, please.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am not surprised, Sir, that the Government does not know how to maintain order in the House, despite the massive numbers they have in here. Just three members of the Opposition, but you would think that we had the 24 and you all had the three, the way you react!

Sir, I think that one has in these matters to see what future standards we are going to set, and that is why I was very clear when I started to speak under this Head to say that I believe that we have to lay down standards by which the electronic media, in which the Government is the sole shareholder, must operate. We must ensure that those standards are enforced regardless of who is in power, and if we cannot get to that stage in Barbados in 1988, then we could all as well pack up, as far as I am concerned, because this issue will continue to be a very sore issue in the public life of the country if either of the political parties is going to believe that the television station is private domain. It is the public domain, it is public property, and it must operate like any proper television station any part of the world.

If the honourable Member can condone CBC failing to come to an event sponsored by a political party,....

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order: I have not made reference at all during the period in which I spoke to that event which CBC did not attend. I am going to deal with that later, and he has to wait until then to say whether I have condoned it or criticised CBC.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: What I am saying, Sir, as nobody, including the honourable Member, can give any succour to CBC for this type of behaviour. Mr. Ed Broadbent told me at the time that if that had occurred anywhere in Canada,....

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Who cares about Broadbent?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ....the broadcasting station would the next day be lambasted by all the political parties, not by one political party.

The honourable Member for St. John shouts from his seat, "who cares about Broadbent."

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Who does?)

(Aside: Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Not even the Canadians care about him.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I expect to hear that folly that I heard from another honourable member sitting in the back, who looks as if he is the Member for the City, but I would expect...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition must....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: .....better....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am speaking. I do not think that is fair to the Member for the City. A number of things that you have said, in all fairness, I have allowed to slip by because I am not thin-skinned, but have some respect for the Chair. Anything you say like that is a reflection on the Chair. I know that things can get a little hot and ruffle some feathers, and so on, but Members must learn to restrain themselves. Do not forget, there is still Order 40 Rule 2.1 remember the Speaker reminding honourable Members about that yesterday, so Members, try to restrain yourselves.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Tell your members to shut up.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But the Chair must be heard in silence. Even now you are still continuing with that.

Members, please restrain yourselves.

The Honourable Leader may continue.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I accept your ruling, but I must also make this point, whenever there are Members speaking *sotto voce* and asides go into the

Record, you must concede that one must reply to them, unless they comply with the Rules as well.

I have been in this House long enough, Sir, 17 years, and I have never disrespected the Chair. I have always gone back on any matter that the Chair has found me wrong on, without any recriminations whatsoever and full apologies, but if the honourable Members from their side are going to think that they can heckle us non-stop and do not get a reply, Sir, that is past human ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I was speaking in relation to the Member for the City. I am not saying that you were disrespectful in any way to the Chair. I just wanted to put the position pretty clearly in relation to what was said in response to what the honourable Member for the City said as an aside. I know that all Members can respond to asides, but it must be done in good taste. 11.10a.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the point I want to make, and I will continue to make, is that we must now ask that standards should be set for all time. There are certain aspects of political affairs that seem to be settled on the basis that you did it before, I do it now, it is in order. That seems to be becoming accepted as a rubric on which the national affairs of this country must be conducted, but I do not accept it, and I am not going to urge it as a standard for the country either and that is why in an instance of this nature, I feel in duty bound to bring it to the House, to discuss it in the House and to hope that the House can see a clear way forward in which we should set standards for a national broadcasting station to conduct its affairs according to what we would accept to be a high standard in this country. I am not satisfied that CBC has been performing in this way.

Sir, the honourable Member talked, made an allegation and left it in the air, about the purchase of computers and that somebody got a rake off. I have been in politics too long to hear these allegations. All I would say to the honourable Member is what I said the last time I heard a tremendous number of allegations being made - and I have made my position clear as Leader of the Barbados Labour Party - call out the allegations. You can read the records of the House and hear what I have said. Wherever the Government finds corruption, all you have to do is to take the evidence, give it to the Director of Public Prosecutions and prosecute the people. Do not get into Parliament, behind the parliamentary veil of privilege, and throw out the little things here that may be grasped. Act, as you are in duty bound to do, under the Prevention of Corruption Act, which is part of the Laws of Barbados. If you have the information, go and give it to the Director of Public Prosecutions and to Her Majesty's Royal Barbados Police Force otherwise shut up. Stop making allegations unless you are prepared to stand by those allegations, regardless of whether it is 300 people or three people or whoever is involved. That is the Opposition's position on that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, in the preliminary part, I thought I should have gone back slightly to point out some of the offensive things that took place at CBC under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, and I now agree entirely with the Leader of the Opposition when he says that we have to look forward and perhaps consider ways and means of improving the quality of service at CBC, also to come to some consensus with respect to political broadcasting at election time, and therefore, at the period when the rules under the Boundaries Commission apply. I do not disagree with him on that.

He made his allegations, followed by his colleague, and therefore it is incumbent on us to put the matter in perspective. You cannot have a situation where the Opposition can only criticise and not expect to bear some of the burden of the criticism for any of CBC's offensive policies. That is all I was seeking to do, and will continue to do.

I have said already in this House that I spoke to both former Ministers about having some enquiry into some of the practices at CBC. I am not in any position to go before the Director of Public Prosecutions with the information. I have spoken to them and they will know what to do in due course. With the National Assistance Report, I hope that what I have read in here will provide sufficient information for whatever needs to be done to the perpetrators of this corruption. A similar investigation should take place at CBC, and that information can be passed on.

These are public corporations, taxpayers' money is involved, and there is a' level of accountability that is required under the administrative laws of this country. He knows well about it and he knows that as a Minister, he would not carry out some of the practices that some of his colleagues carried out, and he has a duty, therefore, to distance himself when the time comes. If he fails to do that, then he must take the full blame along with the others. If you are not going to distance yourself and say that your colleagues were wrong, when you thought they were wrong, then you are going to find yourself forever sitting on that side, or outside for that matter, after elections.

I have no difficulty with any individual in respect to CBC. I have said how I feel about the corporation. I have expressed my concern about directives from Ministers of the Government direct to CBC, even where the individual was not Minister of Information. You said I had a difficulty with him. He did not hire me! He did not exclude me from his Cabinet! He did not fire me! He has never said anything about me, to the best of my knowledge, in here or

elsewhere that I could not defend! I had no difficulty with him!

At CBC, as soon as this Administration took over, a number of serious efforts were made to improve the quality of conditions. The first and most important aspect of it was personnel. If the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) was sitting in another capacity, he could tell you some of the difficulties he, as a trade union leader, has had to deal with at CBC. He can tell you about the fact that the new board, represented by me at negotiations, indicated that we would have a proper policy with respect to increase in salaries, appointments and also the provision, if possible, of a pension scheme and a health scheme. All of those were things that we had discussed with the union with respect to CBC.

It was not just looking at the matter of news content and so on, but I will come to them. We had an ongoing dialogue with the union, as part and parcel of the wage negotiations to improve the conditions of service and, more particularly, to ensure, as was the common practice in other statutory corporations, that Ministers could not send people down to CBC with a letter, and that they get a job completely off scale, receiving salaries that were not comparable to persons performing similar or the same task in a corporation. That is what happened at CBC.

There is valid cause for civil servants and for people in statutory corporations to have concern for their job security. Many of the practices that took place at CBC, the National Assistance Board and other statutory corporations took place because politicians sent people to corporations bearing letters, never appointed them, but kept them in a state of abeyance so that they could control and manipulate them. They were still doing it up to 1986 with respect to the Civil Service. That is one of the complaints that I was raising. As far as I am concerned, if you treat a man like that, he is bound to sabotage you at some day. If you treat him like a dog, and you think that you are leading him by a leash and that he has no job security and he has no self-respect, he is bound to pounce on you, and if politicians continue in this way, at the end of the day you can only end up getting a situation of sabotage both in the Civil Service and in statutory corporations. And a number of people have been sabotaging the policies at CBC.

The new board sat down with the management and staff of the corporation at a meeting chaired by the former Minister, the honourable Member for St. Michael West. We hammered out a news policy document, all kinds of policy documents, and we went through those documents with a view to hearing how the members of the corporation would apply the particular aspects of that policy document. We were very particular, in listening to their concerns, about dealing with sensitive political matters, and we were also particular about things like banning and the law of defamation. That has never been done before, for all the talk about CBC. I am certain that the honourable Member for St. Thomas can tell you that nothing like that has ever been done before. 11.20a.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: When I was the legal adviser to CBC, I gave three lectures on Saturday mornings to the staff on the law of defamation. That was before I was Chairman.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not speaking of your role as a professional. I am talking about CBC's board, the Minister and the staff members' meeting. I am not talking about people teaching lessons, for or not for remuneration, at CBC. That is a different matter altogether. I am talking about meetings which should take place annually between the management and the staff of that corporation.

There is a lot of grave concern by members of staff about the conditions under which they operate, and a lot of it is justifiable, so we tried right away to put in place the news policy document and other kinds of programme policy documents so that something could go on the record. Many of these documents had been knocking around at CBC for years, but nothing was ever done. They were never implemented and, least of all, as was the wont of the Barbados Labour Party, they were never discussed, because as soon as discussion began, people used to get on their high horses and decide rather than discuss - they would just issue directives that people should not appear on television or this kind of news should not be brought. We sat down and discussed it, and I can say that there was a lot of conscientiousness in that discussion.

The only politician on CBC's board was me, and therefore, the only person that had any concern about whether the Democratic Labour Party was being fairly represented or not was me. On each occasion when I tried to raise my legitimate concerns, unfortunately, those concerns fell on deaf ears, because the rest of the board was not interested in that, and probably, rightly so. They were more concerned about the quality of programming and other aspects of CBC.

The new building was, in many respects, modified so that the staff at CBC could enjoy better conditions of service. That is an important point, because whereas the staff had no say whatsoever about the kind of building that was going up at CBC, it was this board that displayed the plans in the corridor and asked the staff for suggestions on how best they could function in that building. A lot of members of staff in companies and corporations in this country have to endure changes mid-stream without any

discussion whatsoever, but that matter was discussed critically.

There has been a serious attempt to improve the quality and level of local programming at CBC. You have seen that for yourself. Many of the programmes may not be new, but at least, a number of them were brought back, including the same programme "Understanding", that I referred to, "Bus- Yuh Brain", the nature/naturalist programme - I do not even know the name because I honestly do not watch a lot of television. There is a lot of local programming now on CBC which was absent before.

Even with respect to ESPN, the Sports Channel, we also tried our best to ensure that sports that were not particularly relevant to Barbados would be replaced, by regional and international cricket.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: This is what we were trying for, I am not saying that we were successful. It is not easy to do that kind of thing. You do not seem to understand what is going on. You think you just go out there and beg somebody for a tape, or wait until Garner comes in and says, "Look, give me one of these tapes and let me put it on the air." There are certain contracts you have to sign and certain other kinds of things you have to do.

Do not try to pooh-pooh the thing as though it is foolishness. Broadcasting in today's world is a serious matter. It is not a joke that you can say, "Ah, now you- are talking. I have not seen any cricket." The honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) would not know, therefore, I can excuse him, but the honourable Member for St. Thomas would know that these things are serious things that require a certain level of planning, and this is what we were aiming at. There was an entire effort by the new board and its chairman to take a serious look at CBC.

While we were trying to do that, we were also burdened with the considerable problems that related to the fact that we were caught mid-stream in the STV project. We were incurring expenses on the recurrent budget that related exclusively to STV because the Labour Party had not worked out the financing for STV properly. We had to make changes, I believe, to the loan structure. All kinds of things had to be done to put STV on the road, and when we finally thought we were going somewhere, the computers were not compatible. The antennae were the cheapest that were ever bought anywhere in the world, or could be found. There was a mass of confusion. The decoders were defective. It was really a simple matter of frustration.

Members of the board were to the stage where they were asking everybody else when can STV start. The engineer had one story, Administration had another, Programming had another. That was the problem, the mess that was left for us to clean up.

CBC is a statutory corporation employing nearly 300 people. I have heard it said in here before and I agree with it, that there is a need for a radical change at CBC. The structure that was imposed on it, where it was divided into Radio, Television and Common Services, was a disaster. I have heard the honourable Member for St. Thomas say so, and he was wise in saying it. There was no sense whatsoever in it, and it cost the corporation large sums of money to maintain the bureaucracy necessary for both the Radio Department and the Common Services.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I could go on for hours about the kind of things and practices that we found at CBC which a genuine effort was made to correct. Last time this matter came up, there was some change in the Information portfolio, so I do not think that it was addressed as thoroughly as it should have been. There were a lot of things that were not said which I am saying now, which I know that the public was not aware of.

I am finished with the policy on news. That is something the Opposition Leader and the Minister will sort out But if there is to be any future in CBC, it means that we have, in a very serious way, to examine the entire corporation and see if it can be properly recapitalised and administered.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time is up.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to participate at length in this debate - the Minister, I am sure will deal with responses to queries that have been raised - but because I was the first Minister on this side of the House after we became the Government again to be responsible for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, I believe, I have a responsibility to set the records straight on a couple of things.

First of all, the philosophical framework, Mr. Chairman. I believe that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, as its original instigator, the British Broadcasting Corporation, can be a source and a force for good in the community in which it resides. I believe that the BBC is to Britain what CBC can become to Barbados. But of course, because of our size, it would be extremely difficult for the corporation to work in exactly the same way. It ought to be recognised in Barbados, nonetheless, that even in Britain, where the BBC is considered to be the

most independent agency of its kind in the world, there have been fierce debates between the Government of the day, the Opposition and other interests in the community concerning the appointment, for example, of a chairman of the British Broadcasting Corporation a couple of years ago, last year, or year before. So controversy on CBC and the direction of CBC will not die merely because we discuss it However, I believe that every single human being in this community has a vested interest in what happens to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

When I became the Minister, I sought to put into practice what I believe, and what I know the Democratic Labour Party believes, that we can have as nearly as possible an independent Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. Arising out of the attitude under which the Democratic Labour Party had suffered in the ten years of Opposition, in which we had clear uncontrovertible, incontrovertible, whichever is correct ....

11.30a.m.

(Aside: Incontrovertible.)

Hon. B. M. TATTT: - they prefer "in", Sir.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT:..... incontrovertible evidence that we had been directed off the CBC - I need not go into a litany of the woes - suffice it to say that the first official function I performed as a Minister, immediately after having been sworn in at Government House, was to announce that there would be no further bans at CBC. And from that day forward Elton Mottley has been able, and continues, to utter his voice on the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation again.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATIT: You would recall that he had been banned. Elombe was able to go back on.

We had a number of recommendations that Father Hatch should be taken off because of his political views, which are no secret to anybody who listens to him. I indicated to the chairman then, and to the new board, when I met, that the Democratic Labour Party was not interested, nor I, in suppressing anybody's views. What we were interested in doing is having fairness on the people's television and radio station.

In pursuit of that, Sir, we sat down at Sam Lords Castle, the Minister of Information, myself, the chairman, the deputy chairman, the other members of the board and all of the senior members of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation's staff, and we spent a whole day and hammered out two documents of policy, and we had an agreement on those documents of policy. There were to be four in the final analysis - up to when I left, I could vouch for the two - and the first one is this document called, "The News Broadcast Policy", which became effective in December 1986, and the programming policy embodied in it became effective in January 1987,1 understand.

I am saying this because the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, whilst speaking about the way forward, said that we must agree on principles. Those principles were hammered out, and that is why the Chairman of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation was able to write him a letter of apology immediately after it became known that CBC, for whatever reason, had expressly breached the rules within the policy framework that had been laid down. The policy was no longer the whim and fancy of a particular Minister at a particular time, but it was a policy, agreed by all, that could be clearly identified and interpreted, and it was on that basis that he received an apology.

I believe that the Leader of the Opposition would have made a much more complete presentation if he had remembered to include in his presentation the fact that he had received, for and on behalf of his Barbados Labour Party, a full and complete apology from the Chairman of the Board. I do not know if he wanted one from the Minister, but if he did, he would be asking us to breach our policy, that we do not participate in, and do not intend to participate in, the direct running of the corporation. If he is going to practise the honesty which he always tells us that he practises, he should have announced that he received the apology, because it was there for the world to see. And he should put it in the Record.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: He marched after he received the apology because he had set the march in motion.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am being told by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) from his seat that the chairman's *bona fides* were not believed by the Leader of the Opposition. He should have said so, if the Leader of the Opposition did not believe in the *bona fides* of the chairman and did not say so, that is a form of dishonesty which ought not to be practised by people in public life. But I do not know. That is for them to work out.

When I became the Minister, we set out this policy document, which is now there for all to see. It may be subject to change from time to time, but it is not now a matter that is open to question. It includes in the heads, Principles and Standards, Journalistic Principles,

Journalistic Policy, Good Taste, On-air Personnel, Manipulation of Public Opinion.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would be grateful if the honourable Member would make it a document of the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I was waiting until the right time to ask him to do that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, with the greatest respect, I am unable to make it a document of the House....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is it secret?)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is not secret, but it does not belong to me. You can ask the substantive Minister if he is able to get a copy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But I would have thought that since you are quoting.....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have not quoted, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, he is not dishonest. He is just wicked. I withdraw that, Sir. He is clever, not wicked. I am merely citing the heads under which policy fell.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am waiting, go ahead.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not own it, Sir. It is simply a document I have borrowed for ease of memory.

Indeed, the policy on political broadcasting is so clear that it stated, as I remember it, that unless the matter was forbidden by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, which as you know now has full and complete responsibility under the Constitution for political broadcasts - not only for political broadcasts in season, for what is deemed to be a political broadcast - was to be carried. The amendment that was passed by the Barbados Labour Party now puts the matter of election broadcasts and their definition in the hands of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. So that is not a matter for the CBC. But to the extent that the CBC is able to bring to bear on its policies, matters relating to political broadcasting, they set out a policy and a framework within which they must operate. And CBC was expected under the policy, in all cases, to observe all journalistic principles and ethics, including overall political balance. CBC was enjoined in the policy not to limit the Press Conferences by television and radio crews where these were primarily for news purposes.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. If I quoted, I would have to make it a document of the House. I am sure the Minister would, if possible, make it a document of the House. But it is available. It is not a document that is a secret. It is simply not mine.

All the Leader of the Opposition is calling for has been put in place and is now a substantive part-of the CBC methodology. I really believe that the Leader of the Opposition owes it to the country, when he is making the presentation in which he is suggesting that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way CBC is treating the Opposition, to give all of the facts, completely, totally and without bias.

The programming policy is set out in the same way. The headings include such matters as the philosophy, the formulation of programmes, the percentage breakdown and definition, local programming, outside broadcasts, public service broadcasts and community broadcasts. It was an attempt, generally, Sir, to allow the people who work in CBC to know the parameters within which they are expected to function. 11.40a.m.

The people who worked at CBC, as I observed it when I was Minister, had got so accustomed to, and confused by, political interference over the period preceding my taking over that they did not even understand and started to complain that the Minister had not visited the station since he became Minister, had not called to give any direction. One senior officer actually told the chairman that. He did not understand why they had not heard from the Minister. The Chairman asked him, "On what?", and he said what he thought, but I do not wish to repeat it, because it is not germane at this point. The point is that they had become so accustomed to interference of a very petty and sometimes puerile nature by previous Ministers in the Barbados Labour Party Administration that they had lost all sense of camaraderie and goodwill.

The morale at CBC is a thing which needs to be built back very slowly and surely. It has taken a long time, because, in many respects, the morale of the staff is completely shattered. Among the things that created that sense of disillusionment at CBC were the cramped conditions under which they had to work. In that respect, the Government of the Democratic Labour Party hustled forward plans that had been lying in abeyance for a very long time for the construction of modern facilities. I believe that the Minister will be in a position to say how far they have reached. What I can speak about is Jhe speed with which the Democratic Labour Party Administration, recognising that the corporation would never function well

unless it had the right environment, moved to have the new - construction at the Pine done in an expeditious way.

You will recall that the CBC had gone from pillar to post They had decided to buy property on Whitepark, and there was a controversial situation within the context of their administration. I am not here to give chapter and verse on the history of that. All I am saying is that we finally got the project on the way, but even in that context we discovered that we were able to save the country a substantial amount of money, because a decision was made which one could never understand. No one will ever understand that decision made to borrow money in the petro-dollar market to put up the project at CBC. It fell to the Democratic Labour Party Administration to return the loan to local currency. And when they were saying that we should get hard currency because we were going to be buying the equipment in a hard currency area, the equipment was already in Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, as you are mystified, so were we. It has never been explained why we were going to be making a loan in foreign currency to build the project at CBC.

I believe that public life requires a certain balance when one is making presentations and I have tried in this business of CBC to keep the matters within certain constraints. But if the Leader of the Opposition wishes to discuss this matter in all of its detail, I feel able to do so, Sir, in such a manner as would not redound to the credit of many of the people who have been policy formulators in the Barbados Labour Party. I stop at this point, because I do not wish to get into that, and I know that my time is up.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, I believe that I should make some small contribution to this particular debate, and I am putting my comments against the background of the need for us to examine the role of the CBC in national development. I am therefore not going to concern myself to too great an extent with a recital of those numbers of dismissals which I have had to deal with during that period that is best forgotten, except that when one lives a nightmare, one cannot easily forget it.

I think that if we speak at some length on this matter, it is because we recognise that a broadcast and telecast station which is public-owned and Government-controlled has to have a particular function of importance for educating, entertaining, and enlightening our nation. And notwithstanding the kinds of difficulties which have existed, it is necessary that the CBC and the policy-makers continue to recognise the tremendous role, and the importance of that role, which the CBC needs to play in our development, particularly as a Thud World country. I think it would be true to say that "developed countries" would have a different approach to this matter from the one we need to have, because our tradegies of a developing nation are going to be different in many respects than the tradegies of a developed nation, and, therefore a role of a broadcast/telecast station of the sort that CBC is, would need to be a more important part of that developmental process.

In such regards, I think it is necessary for us to have the entire staff - management workers and non-management workers - begin to feel that he and she are parts of an organisation that has continuity. In fact, I think that it is important that the staff at CBC begin to believe that they have job security, providing they are willing, ready, and able to do the work for which they have been employed. This, I think, would to a very great extent improve much of the morale problem which is currently existent at the CBC.

I do not think that anyone, regardless of which political persuasion that person is, would want to deny that here has been for a long time, for many years, a perception - certainly between 1976 and 1986 a fact - that once you did not observe, not necessarily the instructions, but the wishes of some of the directorate of the CBC, your job was in jeopardy. And I do not want the Member for St. Thomas to believe that I am going to recite dismissals of the Winston Worrells and the others, because I think that Barbados knows that good enough by now. I want, instead, to make the point that it is my view that even now, although the dismissals have ceased, there is still the problem of the need for improving the morale.

I am aware that, whenever there is a change in the Government, large numbers of persons call for the dismissal of people. I have made it very clear, and I did warn, that if there were dismissals, I was prepared to offer my professional services to represent those persons who may still have not got their dues paid up. I was very pleased when the political leadership indicated that it was not the view, and I never thought it was, of the Government that because it had won the honour to serve, people should lose their jobs. Nonetheless, Sir, the morale problem does not fail to exist purely because there is a feeling that jobs are secure. I think the problem has to do with several things that come out of the past, and I would like to advert to some of those things. 11.50a.m.

Part of the problem has to do with the fact that a number of people who have worked loyally, dedicatedly, for many years, find themselves severely disadvantaged because they were superseded. Notwithstanding the

enthusiasm with which they attacked their jobs, they found that persons have been brought in to the corporation and given positions senior to their own, or when they were given comparable jobs at the same job categories, given salary levels higher than the ones that they had. That is a problem which even a person with the patience of Job would find a difficulty with.

I am pleased to say that in recent discussions with the CBC, they have indicated that they are prepared to look at those areas which we will point out as areas where supersession has taken place, with a view to endeavouring to correct them. But much damage has been done in that area, and I would wish to sound a note of warning, that the Government needs to be careful that it does not remove the incentive which workers have to put in their time and their effort loyally into a workplace and believe that in so doing, they would be able to get the benefit of reward, not only from the payment they get for that job, but the opportunity for onward progression when such vacancies or opportunities may arise.

Part of the morale problem, one might say, would be partially settled, because we have managed to get the CBC to recognise the need in a corporation of that sort for salaried workers to revert to the establishment of increments. In that regards, I want, with your permission, Sir, to make reference to one columnist in the *Nation,* a Percy Smith, who two years ago made some sniping remarks in an article suggesting that the negotiator of the CBC-BWU contract had not negotiated to the best advantage of the work force. Regrettably, I gathered that he had so trimmed his sails that although he came very close to the line, my attorneys said that I was not able to benefit in any monetary manner from the maligning of my character. But one day, one can never tell, the crease is still there and he may be drawn down the wicket.

In that 1985 contract, the Barbados Workers Union had endeavoured to have increments, as we have been trying for a long time to have increments, be the order of the day, because we feel that if you have an establishment, especially one where there is a severe morale problem, to a very great extent if you use the strategy of increments, you might be able to satisfy those persons who are giving loyal service, who are working hard. You might be able to give them some kind of remuneration above the minimum of their scales, and that that would go some distance towards helping to make for a greater motivational aspect for work within the job situation.

The CBC was unable to give us those increments, and we therefore, were forced to take the best possible agreement that there was. But it served the interests of those persons, informed though they were, to misuse the information in a way that was slanderous. I am satisfied that on this occasion, with the reversion of increments, we might be in a better position to have the supersession problem dealt with and part of the morale problem dealt with.

I do not say all of the morale problem, Sir, because it is my view that if CBC is going to progress, what is required as a matter of urgency is for immediate steps to be taken for the improvement of employer/employee relations at the workplace. The labour/management relations must be improved, and that cannot be improved alone by the persons who constitute the board. There has to be, among other things, the institution of a knowledgeable Personnel Manager. A person who knows what he or she is doing must be appointed as a matter of urgency as a Personnel Manager, at a corporation of this size, and must be able, from the beginning, to show by the power of that person's knowledge, and not only by the power of the punitive measures that can be employed, that that person is able to control, direct, train and stimulate the work force.

Furthermore, there can be a look at the quality of the broadcasts and telecasts - I am not suggesting that efforts have not been made over all the years to do this - and an effort made.to receive inputs from the workers at all levels, without there being the view that the only people who are able to think and come up with fruitful ideas are management persons. The suggestion, which has a lot of currency in Barbados, is that non-management workers do not have great ideas. If we were to recognise that non-management workers, especially at the CBC, might have much more ideas, and if an effort is made to capture those ideas by regular staff meetings, and to use those ideas in the formulation of plans for the CBC, I am suggesting that the corporation might be better able to advance more rapidly.

If performance appraisals were conducted on a regular basis - annually would be the best way that one could think of - and if the persons who did the performance appraisals were persons who were able to demonstrate that they know what they are doing and have the respect of the work force, the workers would be able to recognise within that management tool the kind of institutional framework which would help the CBC to be a better run organisation. In that regard, it may even become necessary for there to be some form of restructuring, because I have said before, and I am prepared to say again, that CBC is over-managered but under-managed, and until there is the deployment of labour in such a way that the maximum returns from labour are to be received from the employers of the labour, CBC cannot get optimum satisfaction from the labour that it now has in its employment. I would think, Sir, that it is therefore very necessary that there be some brainstorming sessions at the corporation, brainstorming not in an effort to give anybody a burst of a blood vessel, but with a view to have a transfusion of ideas for the benefit of the corporation.

One final point, Sir, since I recognise that I have run short on time. With the holidays coming up very shortly, those persons responsible for the programming of CBC should recognise that there are some STV pictures which would require parental guidance, some which suggest that there is the need for a review of the timing in which those pictures are shown. It is my understanding, Sir, that some of them are shown through the daylight hours. I think that it is necessary for us to have a look at that. Although I cannot speak with authority on the pictures, because during the daylight hours and during night time hours I am working very hard in the interest of the workers, it is necessary, since I received the report, that I pass it on, so that we do not have the problem of parents finding themselves under difficulties with the wrong kind of shows being the shows to which their children are exposed during this holiday and in subsequent holidays. 12.00 noon

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, when I last spoke I was dealing with the General Manager, and the last honourable Member's speech has fitted neatly with what I was coming on to say a few hours ago, and you cannot sweep it under the carpet. Implicit in what the honourable Member who just spoke said was that the current problem of low morale at CBC, has to do as much as anything else with the attitude of workers to management, and the respect or lack of it. That is central, according to my information.

The truth is that the board, when the General Manager was away recently in the United States on extended leave, was bad talking him behind his back, and he must know, and when he came back, he asked the board at a meeting, "Do you have confidence in me?" Not one of them had the courage to look him in the eye and say to him what they were saying behind his back. But it got back to him, so the man must feel destabilised by his own board. That is the problem with the workers. They walked up and down and made sport at him, and this is a matter that has to be addressed.

Morale is so low at CBC that well-known persons involved in the union aspect of CBC, who have been there for many years, have been heard to say that it is so bad now, it has never been as bad as it is now, and if they could get a job in their particular sphere of activity elsewhere, they would leave. The persons are not known to be supporters of the Barbados Labour Party.

The construction of the new building and the opening of plush offices will not in themselves alleviate the problem of morale. Other things will have to be done.

The way the Minister spoke, it would appear as though the Democratic Labour Party built this new structure. I get tired every year going back over the same old history of CBC. It started out with 34 employees in 1962-63, and by the time I left in 1981, it had 133, and when I went they were in the same building as when the station was started. There were 133 people on top of one another in very cramped conditions at CBC, and I took the decision to move some of them down here at Palmetto Street, and I built what they called two chattel houses to the east of the station, put the News Department in it, and gave a little more elbow room. But it took a long time to persuade the Government of the Barbados Labour Party that what we needed was a totally new complex. After many years and looking at alternatives, we decided to expand at the Pine.

It was not going from pillar to post, as the Minister of Health said, in relation to the decision on White Park. We looked at White Park, it turned out to be unsuitable, and we reverted to the original site. This Government has done the same thing. Is this running from pillar to post - looking at the Home Centre site for the Supreme Court, purporting to acquire it and then abandoning it? Does that mean you are running from pillar to post, or that your final decision would be informed by a better approach.

I think the ground was actually broken for the start of the project at CBC prior to May 28, 1986. But it was done because we realised that the facilities which had served well in the 1960s could not serve with equal satisfaction in the 1980s and beyond.

I do not want to get too involved in the negative aspects of personalities at CBC. The honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) started it and he has called on the Government for a commission of enquiry into CBC. Well, fine, let them have the commission of enquiry. You can go back as long as you like, but it must include before me, during my time and after. You must enquire into the $17 000 of the sports club money and the two men at the corporation that held part of an employee's terminal benefits to make sure that the CBC sports club got back the money! You must enquire into the person who imported equipment on false invoices and then had to defer it when it was found out that he was engaged in fraud! You must enquire into matters that preceded me, come through me and after me! You will get a lot of truth, so do not just limit your enquiry! And make it open to the public so that people like me can come and give them blows! Do not just slur people!

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You carried away something, too?

The Government should be concerned that a number of senio%staff have been dismissed or have had to leave., The Minister of Health should be concerned that two days before a man was due to qualify for his severance payment, instead of that, when the Minister of Health was responsible for CBC, that person was fired. You all call his name in here everyday. 12.10p.m.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: The honourable Member for St. Thomas should get his information right As far as I recall, the particular individual was still at that time, according to what came before the board, on probation, and it was a question of renewing the probationary period.

I do not know about the severance payment I would have to speak to the individual about that. If that was so, it would be unreasonable, but based on what came before the board, the person was still on probation, and it was a question as to whether to retain the post or not to retain it. It had nothing to do with severance payments.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We will continue this after lunch, so I will get the.....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member made reference to the Minister of Health when he was responsible for Broadcasting and sought to suggest that the Minister of Health was aware of somebody at the corporation who was in some position, and so on.

I wish to give this Committee the categorical commitment that I did not know of anybody who was coming up for any severance pay, that severance pay was never canvassed with me, that the matter was not a mattet which came to me, and in keeping with my hands-off attitude with the corporation, that it is diabolical and wicked for anybody to have told anybody that I at any time participated in, or directed that....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, no!

Hon. B. M. TAUT: I am on a point of order.

He would not even listen. I am saying it was diabolical and wicked of anybody to go and tell anybody that I participated in any such treatment, or directed that anybody should be so treated. I did not know, do not now know, do not wish to know.

If the Barbados Labour Party has their public relations officer working in any corporation, it is their business to find out how that person functions. It is not my business. Inside the corporation, the board made its decisions, and the record will show that by the time the matter was settled....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member making a speech?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. I was on a point of long order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has a certain degree of self-righteousness about him that he has never done anything. He did not know, and if we did not know him so well, we would really believe it. He reminds me of himself.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am certain the honourable Member would want to have the last reference struck from the record"if we did not know him", going with what you said before.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is it too sarcastic, Sir, or is it true? You can rule whatever you want on that, Sir.

This reminds me of 1976. The honourable Member for St. John was looking back this morning historically. When the honourable Minister of Health was then very influential as the campaign manager for the now Minister of Agriculture in the St. Philip North by-election, he refused to allow my face to be seen on television during the by-election. On the very night of the election, he persuaded Peter Morgan, who was then responsible, to keep Simmons off the television.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has risen on a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member is misleading the Committee. At no time in my entire life have I ever sought, or persuaded anybody, to keep the honourable Member's face off anywhere, especially, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. My recollection of that time is that he was so green an ineffectual that, had I had my way, I would have put him on the CBC to ensure that he would fail. In the event, he managed to win by a small majority.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You want to hear about how....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no! Before the honourable Member speaks, let me draw your attention to Order No. 28, Rule 8: "The name of Her Majesty the Queen or His

Excellency the Governor-General may not be used to influence the House."

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have not used the name.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But the reference to ....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was telling the honourable Member, Sir ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not understand this. But certainly, you know that.

I am going to remind Members of Order 40, Rule 2 again.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will honourable Members keep quiet?

Yesterday the Speaker reminded honourable Members of Order 40, Rule 2. He did not put it into force. I might have to. At the end of the day, my one alone might be in here. I am very serious about it. The Chair must be heard in silence. When it starts to talk, honourable Members are chatting all the time. I have something important to say, that is why I would interrupt the debate.

Continue.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: I am glad that your Honour ruled, because ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Hon, B. M. TAITT: I am drawing to Your Honour's attention information which I think is germane to the debate in connection with the ruling you just made, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the relevant order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That the Opposition are seeking to get you to chase them out so they will get sympathy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order. I am not concerned with that. I am here to make sure that the Rules of this House are kept and that the debate is done in an orderly fashion, and if I have to send out the Opposition, or if I have to send out Government Members, I will do it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You will not have to send us out, Sir. For two years you could not run us out of here. We are not running.

Sir, I want to deal with people who have left, including those who have now left the Chamber.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am going to give the honourable Member another four minutes to wind up, given the breaks and so on.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A number of senior people have left, Feraandes, Hinkson, Gibbs, Seon. You are hearing that some of them should never have been there. It is a remarkable thing that in the private sector, the other station picks them up. But the one who causes the most interesting comment is Gibbs, who was a very good presenter for many years, and absolutely impartial and firm in his dealings with both sides. He could not be pushed around, very professional, the essence of good broadcasting. The system and what was happening both conduced to his departure. I will tell you why, Sir?

After CBC refused to cover the BLP Annual General Conference, an investigation was conducted - about which we are still to hear the results - and Gibbs made his report. I am not saying that what I am going to give now, in every detail of minutiae is precisely what happened, but the parameters of his report suggest that, first of all, on a Sunday CBC then had only one photographer, who was attached to the News Room. One may question whether with so much activity on a weekend it was good policy only to have one photographer available. But that is what Mr. Gibbs found, that there was one photographer there attached to the News Room on a Sunday. 12.20 p.m.

. If Sports wanted to have an event covered, they would have to make arrangements to get a photographer and a reporter, assuming that the original photographer had been assigned elsewhere on a non-sports event. On the morning in question there was one photographer and one reporter. The reporter turned up late. The photographer had been there, and the Sports persons in charge took that photographer, who should have covered our conference, and assigned him to go with him and cover cycling. In the event, the Labour Party's conference was not covered by television, although I do recall seeing a reporter there with a tape recorder doing it for radio.

Why Mr. Gibbs had to leave was that having written his report, the chairman, not the General Manager, wrote Mr. Gibbs and hauled him over the coals for the reason that, on a previous Saturday, someone known as the Octopus had had a luncheon which CBC had failed to cover.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member may wrap up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Gibbs was very upset at the tenor and content of the chairman's letter, and made it known to the General Manager. In those circumstances, he could not take the chairman's folly any longer and he had to leave.

But it is because at CBC there is what the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) spoke of, this low morale and lack of leadership and sense of drift, that the corporation failed to attract another broadcaster of good professional repute to replace who has now gone to VOB and is its Manager following Alfred Pragnell's departure from VOB.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time now.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I will have to comeback.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, I will be relatively brief in this debate. The honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. H. J. Thompson), who spoke earlier, was good enough to indicate to the House that he was the only politician on the board of the CBC. He however, did not say that he was also a member of its Establishments Committee, which might explain why there was ho need for Ministers, as he said, to have to send persons with letters to the corporation. I intervene in the debate to refer directly to the points he has made to the House as points of fact, the points of supposition, which have been entered into the Record of the House. I think we have a responsibility to react to them.

He made a broad statement that the STV system was not a planned system, it was concocted as an after-thought The best information available to me is that the first recommendation of the board that was put as regards this whole general matter was a recommendation for a cable system in Barbados. This system, and I am speaking on the basis of information presented to me, was judged not to be acceptable because it was thought that a cable system was better suited to a highly-urbanised situation, and that if it were to be implemented, then only that part of Barbados which is regarded as being highly urbanised, stretching from St. James into Christ Church, would have been able to benefit from the facility. It would have excluded even his constituency in St John, to say nothing of your constituency in St. George South and mine in St. Peter. That is the broad background as regards the decision to go with STV. We can differ as regards to judgements on these matters, but at least two alternative options were analysed, and the honourable Member for St. John should at least point out that there was judgement exercised as regards the decision not to proceed with the initial recommendation that a cable network facility should have been instituted in Barbados.

It is significant, Mr. Chairman, that all of the proposals that have been put by the private sector have been for cable, because of course, they understand the profitability that would ensue from having such a facility operating only in a very narrow urbanised situation. But we would have had, if that decision had been implemented, a totally inadequate and discriminative situation as pertains to the overall needs to the country of Barbados. I thought that I should make that point first and foremost, because one of the major initial opening points brought to this House by the honourable Member for St. John was that it was a haphazard decision. It was not. It was a decision taken upon the basis of an evaluation of a series of different options.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, the Member for St. John made wild and sweeping allegations that the antenna was bought and one did not know what to do with it, that the equipment was purchased and allowed to rust out, and that more specifically, there was some possibility of rake off or corruption surrounding the purchase of three different types of computer facility for the STV project. The information that has been provided to me says that all of the equipment bought for the STV project was bought as one package.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order: You are not representing the facts. Two different computer systems were purchased, Adams Russell, which was used for programming, and Zenith, which related to the decoder. If you do not know about it, it is no point speaking.

With respect to STV, although the board may have considered whether to go with cable or with satellite, the point is that the prior board did not leave any plans for the new board to move on from. The question as to; whether to decide to go with cable or satellite has nothing to do with CBC's plans. That is a judgement that could be made by anybody. You were the Parliamentary Secretary in the State Enterprises Unit, you could have made that judgement. Do yoij think any board could make that? I am talking about planning for CBC and in CBC and the existence of a plan.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The equipment had been bought in accordance with a plan, and if you will recall, Sir, the antenna had been purchased with a view to having it installed by July of the year and have the STV system in operation by that time. If the equipment was subsequently left to rust out, it would have to be because, as the former Minister of Information has already said in this House, immediate on assuming office, the Democratic Labour Party undertook a complete review of the project, which was supposed to have been operational in July. We akeady know what were some of the decisions taken as regards the securing of personnel to erect the antenna.

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is why it could not start in July. Get the facts.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Minister took a decision, Sir, to.....

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You do not [1] know.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: .....employ them in the wet season, postponing the time in which the equipment could be installed. If the equipment was left to rust out, it was left to rust out, because a decision was taken to do a complete review of the project and bad operational decisions were taken as regards the installation of the equipment, and I put the blame directly at the door of the Democratic Labour Party.

The honourable Member for St. John has, as he said, this expert information, given his privileged position on the board. But some of the equipment that had been bought was equipment relating to the fact that three or four channels rather than two were to be installed. If there were a change of plans, obviously, some of the equipment that had been bought under the auspices of one project concept would be made immediately obsolete because of a new project concept being entirely implemented.

As regards the very serious charge of kick-backs, which he has advanced not as something for which he has proof, but as something based on the supposition arising from the fact that two different types of computer systems were bought, the information available to me is that only one person had anything to do with the general purchasing of that equipment. I am not here to cast any aspersions on any person's character, even by implication linking them to the fact that the honourable Member for St John has made a supposition as regards possibility of kick-backs.. But the information of which I have access would suggest that only one person was involved in the purchasing of that equipment, and that person is the member of the board who has been retained by the Democratic Labour Party to be a member of the present board. 12.30p.m.

There is no question, Mr. Chairman, that all has not gone well with the STV project, and perhaps the question the House ought to be exercising itself with is, what are we going to do with the particular initiative? I am not going to run the Government. It is for them to make the decision. They have made decisions, even in respect of their overall economic policy, which they have said has been shown to be in need of adjustment, and they have not.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us stick to what we are discussing - CBC.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I will come back from that point, Sir.

The Minister of Health, the former Minister of Information, made a point which I thought ought not to have been allowed as a serious point in the debate, that because the equipment was to be purchased by a foreign exchange loan, it was of no use and was renegotiated. The point is that the equipment would have had to be bought in foreign exchange in the first place, and it was obviously, therefore bad financial management to have had to pay for equipment in foreign exchange, have a foreign loan which had not yet been liquidated, and not use it to pay for the equipment. The society's general foreign exchange resources would have had to be used to pay for the equipment in advance, and if you had a loan in foreign exchange to pay for it, it would have eased pressure on the country's balance of payments if that loan had been followed through. So what he congratulates himself on as a piece of financial genius is just another piece of folly, which can be attributed to him, putting pressure on the country's balance of payments. If the equipment is bought from abroad, it had to be paid for in foreign exchange, and if you have a loan that has to be paid for in foreign exchange, pursue that option. He should not get the House to congratulate him for his financial folly.

As I said, I only intervened in this debate to try to put what is the information available to me in counteraction to some of the very, very serious charges that have been levelled by the honourable Member for St. John, and the general point I want to close on is that the general situation now at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is a very unhappy one. Indeed, it is true to say that that corporation has had a very unhappy history, in both financial and operational terms. It is one of the few corporations which has never had a proper capital structure. I do not know why it has obviously to limber on in that particular position, but from the very inception, it has not had a capital structure. It needs a capital structure, and to the extent that I was involved in the State Enterprises Unit, as Parliamentary Secretary, we were at the point of evolving a capital structure for the corporation consistent with the capital development programme in which it had become involved.

I am not going to get myself tangled up, Sir, on the quality of its programming. Like the honourable Member for St John, I do not have the time to see a lot of the CBC programmes, although I would have thought that, given the fact that he prides himself as being one of the pioneers of this new development in local programming, at least he would watch his own handiwork. I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, whether the fact that the Member for St. John does not watch the local programming is an admission on his part as regards its particular quality.

There is absolutely no question, Mr. Chairman, that there is a lot of tension *a£* CBC regarding the general conditions. It is true that the corporati^has had to work in dilapidated conditions for too long, •cramped and quite •unsuited for the operations of a modern television facility. I dare say that the new facility that i{ will get possession of will in some way relieve the outstanding difficulties of the corporation, but there can be no doubt that the corporation continues to be plagued with a very rapid turn-over of staff, and we can be sure; Sir, that whenever you have a situation where there is a rapid turn-over of staff in a public institution, there has to be some underlying problem that explains that particular situation. One would get the impression from the statements being made by the Member for SL; John that all is now well with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. I think that he has a responsibility to tell this House why, despite the fact of his having tried, as he says, as the politician on the Establishments Committee, to put in systems that will make all the staff happy, we continue to have this rapid turn-over of staff even now until this day.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The impression should not be given in here by anybody, least of all by the Barbados Labour Party, that STV could have begun in July. It was a physical impossibility. The points that the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) makes are valid points, particularly the one about the under-capitalisation of CBC. But the existing redevelopment project for CBC does not even answer that question. Essentially, whatever funds were available would be available for the building and for the STV project, but the existing Channel 3, as it was then, and Channel 9 operation continues to suffer. Unless a total redevelopment programme is entered into successfully, then there can be no proper development at CBC. 12.40 p.m.

He was the person responsible for state enterprises, and he is the one probably who should b$ able to give the House of Assembly more information about the genesis and the execution of the redevelopment project of CBC. But the particular thing about STV that must be known is that there were a number of matters that had to be addressed, including problems with the antennae. A Canadian firm did that. As far as I am concerned, their work was shoddy and the kinds of excuses that they gave were inadequate.

There was the problem of the compatibility of the computer system. I do not make computers, nobody on the board makes computers, they were purchased from outside of Barbados. The fact that they were incompatible was a serious problem.

Contracts between subscribers and the corporation had to be drawn up between all kinds of people. Work had started at CBC and no contracts had been drawn. Can you imagine that? With all the talk now that we have, relations had been entered into and contracts were not in existence for large sums of money, millions of dollars, and they had been entered into prior toi the change of Administration. There was no way that the then Minister could have continued that project with that existing state of affairs and I am saying that state of affairs was concocted for one reason. I have already stated it, and I will repeat it as often as I can, because I believe it to be true. That confusion was created so that certain people could benefit.

Staffing had to be looked into. The marketing programme for STV had to be dealt with. The new building was also being constructed.

He said that the equipment was lying at CBC. Where was it going to go? You must have gone to CBC prior to the change of Government. You could not put another filing cabinet in there, so where was this equipment going to go? You had brought the equipment here, but there was no building to put it in. One of the solutipns, as I understand it, was to put an air conditioning unit on the container. If not, we wou}d have had to run up serious charges storing those containers elsewhere.

If you do not know the facts to these things, say so. As an economist and as a person who is familiar, as I understand it, with figures and with that kind of economic analysis, pursue it from that angle. Do not be sidetracked by persons who may wish to deal with other issues, even if I am one of those persons. Do not let me sidetrack you from your mission, which should be to inform, this Parliament as best you can about how this project could have been executed. You will know, if you looked at the figures, that STV could never come on stream by July, and that cannot be changed by any attempt by the former Chairman of CBC or the Minister writing editorials or under the title of "Special Correspondent", or in many of his other faceless contributions to the Press to say otherwise. None of those comments that were made about STV project should have started in July was justifiable.

We found ourselves with a situation that was practically unmanageable. A change of Government in mid-stream in an exercise like that will have its effect - I accept that - and it was better, therefore, for us to take certain definitive decisions until we were aware of what was going on. I am sorry that when we became aware, we did not have the building beginning and all kinds of other things, because we could not pursue what we wanted to pursue. Then, of course, another election intervened. If not, I was taking upon myself to bring whatever relevant information

should be brought to light. It is public funds you are dealing with.

The Administrative Justice Act was passed by the Barbados labour Party and you were the people who were talking about integrity in public life. It is no point us getting up and talking about these things and then pooh-poohing them later on as soon as Governments change. Admit that some people are not fit to govern, whether as Ministers or as chairman of boards or as members of boards. The sooner the Labour Party comes to that conclusion, based on the evidence that is placed before them by their commission of enquiry into electoral defeat, by the National Assistance Board Report and by the information I will provide, the better off we all will be.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I agree that, in many situations, some people are not fit to govern. That was proven conclusively in 1976. We remember the episode of the cheques which involved two Ministers in the previous Government They were clearly proven as being unfit to govern. I am grateful to the honourable Member for jogging, my memory as to those events.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member said that somebody was proven unfit to govern, having mentioned the words "two Ministers of a previous Government" in relation to cheques. I do not know whether the reference to unfit to govern is with cheques or the Ministers. Nothing has been proven, and the honourable Member knows it to be untrue. He is misleading the House. Cheques were shown in this Chamber. I was a Member at the time, and nothing was proven, they were just laid on the Table. I know that that is untrue from the facts that I had. Nothing was proven, so do not come and mislead the House saying that something was proven. ,'

Mr. D. A. C. 'SIMMONS: We are on STV, Sir. It had all of its problems, and in a newspaper ad of December 12, I suppose it was, TV programmes for December 13 to 19, 1987, four pages of information; went out to the general public about STV. All we are seeking, now that it has been put in place, despite whatever were the previous problems, is some information from the Prime Minister about the present situation and the future prospects, the prognosis for STV, as I indicated earlier.

Channel 18 is one of the channels that you can get this STV thing on. I do not have it, I have no intention of getting it. I challenge the Minister responsible in the light of the comment of the honourable Member for St. John about increased local programming, to tell this House whether so far on Channel 18 any local sports programme has been shown and whether any local documentary programme has appeared on the educational side.

I submit that the type of sports programmes that the public, not me is getting on this channel are sports programmes whose relevance to Barbados is dubious and remote. The honourable Member for St. Peter was an excellent cricketer. He knows what I am talking about.

A lot of the programming has been da.ted, but has been put out for public consumption. It consists of thing! like basketball. That is a fast developing sport in Barbados - we do not have any particular problem with that - and our young people can hopefully learn something from it. But there is ice hockey, skiing, drag car racing, men climbing up greasy poles and all types of foolishness, American football. 12*.50 p.m.

There was a bi-centennial match at Lords last summer, I saw it, an important event that was never shown in Barbados. Greenidge made 100 and nought. Thejre'is a programme called "Lords 200 Years." That has never been shown in Barbados. There is some other films in there. I must tell the General Manager he must write and get some. I am sure every Barbadian would like to see some of the film clips of the Ws playing in England in the 1950s. Many of us have only had limited sight of the Ws, but these films are available in London at the BBC. Some of the film clips were then used in this programme, and if CBC can get it, they can negotiate some contract or something. It was shown last Sunday; "200 Not Out", I think it is called. I am sure that Barbadians would be interested.

The kind of programming that is coming on Channel 18 still is not addressing the problem of cultural domination from western programmes. I am not going to be unrealistic - I try not to be unrealistic in this House - there is a problem with money. Local programming, however much we desire it, costs a lot of money, but I am not satisfied that an attempt is being made in a meaningful way to increase the eontent of local programming.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Gordon Matthews what! I do not watch those kinds of programmes. I have never seen Swaggart, except passing from the kitchen to my bedroom and seeing him on in that sort of way. While passing on a Sunday morning to go and get coffee, the rest would have him on, but I do not watch that kind of film.

The interesting thing about the Gordon Matthews programme is that it is an "Hour of Power" that is screened for half an hour. I think even the title is wrong. Perhaps the Prime Minister can pull4he plug on that caption and get it righted, as he did with Swaggart.

Sir, take the channel with the entertainment. There were 26 movies aired between March 13 and 20, and not one of them was a recent production. It was a lot of old stuff. They are pre-1985 movies.

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Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Our fellows bought them? Well, we have now taken out those fellows and you have the Prime Minister's sister in charge, and I am sure she will bring the same kind of efficiency to the department as he has brought to the Ministry of Finance and the Prime Minister's office. If you know what the problem is, you have the person there.

I must confess - let me just put it in the Record, because a lot of people do not get the accolades that are due to them - she is one of the most efficient senior managers at CBC. I never had any problems and we had an excellent relationship when she headed the department down here, and I have no doubt that she will bring all the qualities and attributes that she had down here to the management of STV, now at CBC. Since the Prime Minister understands the problem, that it was our fellows that bought a lot of old-time programmes, we will look forward in the new financial year to some new, relevant and up-to-date programmes under the dynamic leadership.

Mr. Chairman, what I think the Minister must try and develop at his level - this is going to be a whole new area, Sir, and I think we are one minute away from lunch time....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have about four minutes to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think the Prime Minister should give the necessary impetus to the management and try to get the Caribbean Broadcasting Union to operate more in the interest of the region than they have been doing in the past in terms of a greater exchange of regional programming. At the moment, I think the bicycle is only between here and Trinidad and Jamaica, but it needs a central authority to co-ordinate the exchange of programmes, the types of programming and to do the exchange on a regular basis.

CBC has always suffered in the past from a lack of funding. They have been operating on a shoestring budget, and at the level of the Heads of Government, I think it is appropriate to discuss cultural penetration by foreign programming and how as a region we can counter it. It has serious implications. What we are feeding into the living rooms and bedrooms of people in the Caribbean and people in Barbados every day are "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" and all of that, and lifestyles of people from North America, and sub-consciously, and in some cases deliberately, our local people are trying to ape and seek after the acquisition of these foreign lifestyles.

Do you know what is going to happen? You are raising the l«vel of expectation of the Caribbean person to such an extent that it is going to put, by his very demands, unnecessary stress and strain on the local economy. He is going to want all the goodies that he sees on television in the States in Barbados. He is going to pressure us, and we are the ones, the politicians, who are under perpetual strain to give more, give more, give more, and I am quite sure the society cannot sustain it. 1.00p.m.

We cannot completely shut out what is happening in the outside world. W& have to be aware of the information explosion that is going on internationally. All of it is not inimical to our better, interest. The whole area of information data companies down here, CDS and those, information handling companies, is an area that the Government could usefully study. We started them. So there are aspects of the information explosion which can be positive for us and aspects which are negative.

I will have to continue after lunch.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move, Mr. Speaker, that this sitting be now suspended until 2.05 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 2.05 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 1.05p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House reverted to Committee of Supply, Mr. BYER in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House has reverted to Committee of Supply.

HEAD 13 -PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (RESUMED)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I was very sorry that I did not hear the full speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), but I had, unfortunately, to leave the Chamber just at that time. But he was reading from a document in which he said that there are new guidelines set for broadcasts, a policy on news. I hope that we will be able to put that new policy to the test very shortly and that the House would see the outcome of the policy as to whether or not it includes giving fair treatment to broadcasts on behalf of both political parties.

The only time that political broadcasts seem to be automatic in Barbados is at the time of a General Election, as a result of the changes made to the Constitution by the legislation of 1981. At such a time, it appears that the country is mature enough to listen to both political parties putting their points of view, and although there may be one or two small disagreements as to the content of such broadcasts, it is now accepted that Barbados is mature enough to take political broadcasts from both sides of the political fence and any other fringe parties that may have been formed, or are in the process of now being formed. We have catered from time to time for new fringe parties, some of which have dropped out of the race. I do not think they have been able to survive the pace of the 50 years of the Barbados Labour Party, or the 30, I believe, of the Democratic Labour Party.

I think that the country is at the stage that we should be mature enough, as happens in most striving democracies for us to contemplate political broadcasts being a normal feature of the public life of this country. I cannot understand the fear that there seems to be in listening to what the political parties may have to say on current issues. Sometimes, you get the impression in Barbados that the areas will only be heard when you are not in active politics, or when you are on the fringe, or in fact, only if you are in Government. I regret that very much. We boast in this country of 350 years of parliamentary rule, and we boast of the maturity of the Barbados system, and in some respects, we are a model, but this is one respect in which we certainly do not seem to be in the vanguard of development.

The honourable Member has not made his document a document of the House, for the reasons which he has explained. I would hope that this policy, since it affects the broad mass of the people, is published and made available, so that it can be seen, and that those of us who have a say on public life will be able to see whether it is a reasonable and sensible policy, to give constructive comments on the policy, and even more important, see it implemented.

Mr. Chairman, I said that I will shortly put the policy to the test, because my party will be celebrating its 50th anniversary later this month, commencing with an ecumenical service on March 27, and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, like all the other media, is going to be asked to come and cover the service. As befitting such an occasion, a jubilee anniversary, and as has happened in every other country I know of, we are going to write, and we have written to them, I believe, for the right of the chairman of the party to make a broadcast about the event. They can scrutinise the script as much as they want. I want to see now whether that policy is going to be properly tested and whether it is going to be respected. 2.10p.m.

I said, Sir, that we have dwelt in this House on the past. I want to move into the future. I believe, as I said yesterday when speaking on another item, that we are now at the stage that we can get over all of the humps and bumps and try to straighten out some aspects of Barbados life, that we can set an example. On electoral reform, we have had, from both sides of the House, allegations and counter allegations. But this is an area that I believe we can, and should, and ought, and must move forward to. It is going to be put to the test within a few days' time to see how you respond.

I would also have liked to have heard the Honourable Minister who had responsibility for the subject for some time, and who is very familiar with the media, give his views, and perhaps his Government's views, on the idea of political broadcasts, not only the broadcasts in Parliament, and on the policy that ought to be followed. Obviously, when you are in Government, you have an advantage, and there is always the tendency to hold that advantage to your chest. I have said it before, when you are in Government, prepare to be in Opposition, and when you are in Opposition, prepare for being in Government. But I think that one has to recognise that this is an area that calls for some sensible development, some formulated policy that is acceptable.

It is not only for the two main political parties that I make this point. There are other persons who may not be represented in Parliament, but who have serious political parties, who would want to have some sort of say. Parties come and parties go. There are not many of them which have survived in Barbados. When I was a kid growing up, I heard of the Congress Party, the People's Democratic

Movement, the Electoral Association, Barbados National Party, a whole host of them, and I understand there is the Barbados National Progressive Party in the making.

(Aside: Who are they?)

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Caddie.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not know who they are. The point is that many are called, few are chosen. It seems there are only two political parties that have really survived in Barbados for any significant length of time. As the two dominant parties, we have both been in and out of Government, and we both have recognised what it is, I hope by now, to be in Government and to be in Opposition. I believe that the way is clear for us to see, as I said yesterday, what issues should be fundamental and on which there ought to be some national or non-partisan consensus. I believe that the area of political broadcasts can be one such area. I cannot go any further than saying that. I am not in the position that I can formulate that policy. I can enunciate it now, and maybe if it is not implemented before, the opportunity will be presented in order to put it into execution. I believe, however, it is the right policy that we must follow, and I look forward to seeing it put into full execution.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, we have had a fairly long debate on this particular Head, and I do not propose to speak at length in replying to the points that have been made.

I should like to start by indicating that if I make any comment in relation to the Press, it is not because I am anti-Press or anti-journalist, I was a journalist myself.

Aside.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I write under my own name when I have to write. I do not look for any other names.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Whenever I make a comment about the Press, it is in relation to a specific matter which I consider either to be a breach of accuracy or a distortion of the context within which certain comments may be made.

In today's issue of the *Nation* newspaper, on the front page, in the lead story, I am reported to have said in this House that I will not appoint anyone to articulate the policies and programmes, I believe that is what is said, of the Ministry of Finance who is not a member of this House. That would be patent nonsense for me to say, and I never said it. What I did say was that I would not put anyone in charge of the Ministry of Finance who is not a Member of this House. But it is patent nonsense to report that I would not put anyone to articulate policies and programmes relating to the Ministry of Finance who was not in this House, because there are persons who are in the Other Place, whether connected with the Ministry of .Finance or not, who have articulated financial and economic matters as they relate to the Ministry of Finance. Indeed, there are people outside of Parliament.

I made the point that I would not appoint any person to be in charge, so long as I am Prime Minister of the Ministry of Finance who was not a Member of this House. And I did point out that Clyde Griffith, like Owen Arthur....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You mean the Member for St. Peter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I did not mentipn the Member for St. Peter, because he was a Member of this House when he acted as Minister of Finance.

That is a specific misreport of proceedings in this House. These are coming one upon the other. Something has to be wrong. I am not putting anything before the Committee of Privileges yet, but this House has certain procedures in relation to misreporting of its proceedings and the breach of privileges of this House, and these things should be known. 2.20 p.m.

We all have a very grave responsibility here in terms of information, public relations, and the media, and I speak now in relation to that area for which I have responsibility as Minister, and that relates to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. I want to make it clear from the outset, as the Minister of Health indicated, that he kept at arm's length from the Corporation and allowed the board and management to conduct the day-to-day affairs of the Corporation. That is a very sound policy to follow. Where there are breaches of policy, or where there are patent ways in which a corporation may be failing in its public duties, or there may be some way in which it is not performing at a level as it should be, it may be incumbent to draw these matters to the attention of the management from time to time. I do not think anyone will quarrel with that But in terms of interference or intermediation.....

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I have never pulled any plug on anybody. That, again was a headline. I never used those words anywhere.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That happened in St. Thomas.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Let me make it clear, I never used any words about pulling any plug. It is a nice phrase - nothing to quarrel about.

The stopping of that was in accordance with the very contract under which the particular programme, the Jimmy Swaggart programme, was operating. The contract included a term or condition under which that contract or the programme could be terminated, and one was a direction from the Minister responsible for Finance. Under legal advice the directive was given. The corporation had the matter under consideration. That is just the finalisation of the particular matter. In the national interest - right? Fine.

On this question of interference, if I was interfering or living on top of CBC, I would have known that the Leader of the Opposition was going to give a talk on Old Year's night, or New Year's Eve. I do not know which one he is quarrelling about. I would have known that if I needed to have that information, I would have been told that it was coming on or something like that But I never sought to find that out at any long time before it happened or anything like that

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: He is talking about systems in place. They are in place. You can announce through the newspapers that you are going to address the nation.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: But we have a different leadership in this country now and we are giving you every opportunity to demonstrate your leadership qualities in this country. You have not done it so successfully during this debate, because you are still struggling with that vote against the Appropriation Bill.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: A measure before this Chamber on appropriation and talking about taxes! Nothing about taxes is before this House and you are talking about taxes!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: He himself during the debate on the second reading did say, as he had said before, that he intends to stimulate the revenue, Sir. He could only do it by some kind of taxation. Do you want to hear them?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You get this kind of reference to taxes and there is no tax measure before the House. This is an Appropriation Bill and you voted against the Appropriation Bill!

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You do not want the very Clerks in this House to be paid? The very staff of Parliament which is serving us now? You do not even want money provided for them to be paid, those who work in this very Parliament which you have spoken so eloquently about?

The point is that we will give you the opportunities, as we perceive them, in a genuine democracy. There is a constitutional position for the office of Leader of the Opposition and we respect that, and we will give you the opportunities. We will have no objection to them, so long as you do not believe that you are running this country, because you have already gone into that particular phase, and I had to warn you of that already.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: CBC gave you an opportunity to deliver an Old Year's Message or a New Year's Message and you did not know what kind of message to deliver. You harangued the nation! In very bad taste!

I do not know if that is what the staff that we provided for you at an executive level is providing for you to read. If that is happening, you are being very badly served. I remember last year giving you the assurance that we would provide a staff for you. You must be able to do better than that.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Let me tell you something here. I have a very long experience, as you know, in politics, and people tend to underestimate. But I am not only a practicing politician, I am also a student of politics. I am a political scientist. So I understand both the practice and the theory of this thing, and as you know, no one can survive in politics for the length of time that we have survived ....

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There is no Harrison College mafia. Look, I have all the Combermerians here beside me. What Harrison College mafia? Look down the line, front and back! If you talk about a mafia, myself and the Member for St. Peter know the school in the north.

CBC is a statutory body in this country, and it has a responsibility to provide news, information and education to the people of this country in a balanced manner, and that is what anyone who is responsible, from the policy point of view, for the corporation, should be interested in ensuring takes place. It started with a radio station and in the following year, I believe 1964, it went to black and white television, and then some years after that to colour. It is basically not doing any more than that. Some small operation called Liberty or something like that has been opened at CBC. It is popular and the revenues are going to the FM station. But we would want to know that at that particular station, both radio and television, there is a balanced presentation of whatever event they are covering. 2.30p.m.

We have a lot of problems at the corporation and there is no point trying to conceal this. There are problems, and there have been problems. The management and the board are conscious that there are problems there. But problems do not disappear simply by wishing them to disappear, you have to work on them.

I make bold to say that part of the problems at the station at this moment, arises from the fact, when they talk about morale, that management may be trying to impose certain standards and then you get resentment to the standards which are being imposed. People call the station, people make reports about obvious errors, obvious mistakes in the programming, in the announcing, in the pronounciation, whatever it may be. A whole host of complaints are made, but people are never amenable to discipline, and that is part of the problem in our society. That is why, if people make a mistake, people seem very reluctant to be able to say they are sorry and will seek to ensure that it will not happen again, or words to that effect. It is a basic courtesy which we seem to be losing very fast, and it is in the workplace. I am not blaming the workers only for the problems there, because there may be problems at the management level too.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Member for St. John was not part of the problem, he was part of the solution to the problems, but each Administration and each chairman of the board tend to inherit problems. If you take the income of the board and the operating expenses, simply those, you will see that the board has been losing money, in 1983,1984,1985 and 1986.1 believe they made some small profit in 1987.1 cannot even call it a profit, a plus balance, when you take those two things into account, not depreciation and the other charges that are imposed. It is a very big task.

There is a problem with STV. The Member for St. Thomas asked about STV. The programming on STV was ordered more than two years ago. I believe that the station is making efforts, or have made efforts, to get some new programming and results of this should be seen shortly. The important thing is when a problem, or a set of problems, is identified, that you seek positive solutions to those problems. There is a problem in the area of programming which is largely one of funding and also one of imagination.

I want to make it clear, whatever may be the advantages and disadvantages of cable as opposed to STV, so much money and so many commitments had been made in respect of STV that after examination, we felt it was better to go ahead with STV than to jettison that altogether and go on to some other system. Two advantages I have heard for cable, without going too deeply into the technical considerations of it, are that you stand to get perhaps a better signal from the cable TV, and secondly, that with cable, the opportunity for many more channels exists. There are pluses and there are minuses for each particular method of deb'vering television programming to a population, and I am not here to assess them.

In terms of the many channels that cable would have, for the very reasons that the Member for St. Thomas may be advancing, I do not think that we need all of those channels in Barbados at this time, because we are unable right now to provide the kind of balance in programming when we have four channels. We have Channels 9, 14, 18, 22, which brings in the CNN, and we are not yet able to provide the kind of balanced programming, taking into account the local needs and this talk about cultural penetration, which seems to be a fad word at this time. I have an open mind on this thing called cultural penetration, I do not go along with that too much. No one would accuse the Leader of the Opposition of not being a good, solid Barbadian and he was able to go into all of the cultural penetrations of British culture and come out a cultural Barbadian.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am speaking about my friend, the Member for Christ Church West.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: What about the Member for St. Thomas?)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I might have to find a different phraseology now for the Member for St. Thomas, but he is also a very sound, solid Barbadian, cultured, and he knows about agriculture also. He told us about seasoning and thyme and so on out in Welchman Hall 1 and 2, so he can be agricultural when he wants to be.

I think there is a lot of talk and misinformation about this thing called cultural penetration. We have been raised in this society, gone into other societies, and without damage to our psyches, or without damage to our outlooks and so on, we are all patriotic Barbadians interested in the growth and development in this country. 2.40 p.m.

Having said that, it does not mean that we must open up all of our cultural avenues to everything that is thrust at or thrown up out of other cultures. It may be good occasionally to know about the lives of the rich and famous, but I do not know that we should necessarily be fed week after week with that kind of diet. I do not think that that is good for this country. There must be some kind of balance in these matters.

The Leader of the Opposition wants cultural penetration from Canada. He brings the Leader of NDP, or whatever it is, to Barbados for cultural penetration into the Barbados Labour Party, and is now complaining when there is not more cultural penetration for the entire population of this country. He says it was not reported.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The doctrine of democratic socialism is an international doctrine.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On the one hand, they do not want any cultural penetration, and whether by accident, or whatever, the thing is not telecast and the penetration does not take place, they complain.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: But I never made any complaint. The gentleman came to pay a courtesy call on me, I received him at Ilaro Court, and we had a very useful exchange of views. But I did not complain that they did not carry that report of my meeting with him either. They certainly did not carry it in the main -news, and if they carried it, it was at the dead of night. I did not make any complaint about that, but apparently, that was a big thing for the Leader of the Opposition - he must march on that. I did not make any big fuss about that

This question of cultural penetration can work two ways. Right now on the television station there is one line of critical thought which says that we get too many soaps - why they are so called, I do not know - from the United States, and the corporation started to bring in some, or entered into a contract to bring in some, from some other culture, and they went to the Australian culture. I think there are some soaps coming over with a distinct Australian accent, and I understand there is some resistance to that, and that people prefer to hear the American soaps. So it is something that works both ways.

As far as STV is concerned, as I said in answer to a Parliamentary Question in this House, we are committed to STV and we will take all necessary steps to ensure that improvement takes place in that service. That is the framework within which we are going. We will talk with anybody having any proposals about cable or whatever and we will see, when the useful life of the present equipment comes to an end and we have to take another decision, whether to replace or to go to something else. We will plan and prepare very carefully for the next stage in the delivery of television services.

We have a problem right 'now with the antenna. I understand that there is something wrong with the tile, or something like that, that has to be corrected. I understand also that there is some claim about a sum of money being owed for additional services by the consultants or the team which put up the three-ton antenna, or whatever it is they put up. I am not too sure about those technical details.

I believe the honourable Member for St. Prfer made some reference to the weather and so on. You all are well briefed on these, so I do not really need to go into the details on this.

The signal is very weak in certain areas and there is need for booster or repeater stations or some equipment to be set up, and this will be done to improve the signal so that we can get more subscribers into the programme.

We will have to make sure that the corporation is put in funds to carry out the task that it has to carry out, and the management will have to see that the problems, whether there are problems of morale, of deployment of staff, or of finances, and must have clear ideas and proposals to put before the board for implementation, and then the board must take those decisions in terms of policy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has about expired.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Just briefly, the honourable Member for St. Peter raised some matter about preparation of the Development Plan. We are not necessarily going to follow the same methods and techniques that you used, but we are going to carry out the necessary consultations in

arriving at the Development Plan for 1988-93, and this will be in place in due course.

The technical assistance profile of this country is no different from when you left it. We are still members virtually of the same kind of multilateral organisations. We get assistance also in certain areas on a bilateral basis. Our own active programme of technical assistance is not as strong as we would wish, but that as you know, is a matter of resources being available for that. We make certain contributions to the funding agencies no different from the ones when you were in office.

I think I have replied to most of the questions that have been raised, and I think, Sir, that we can move on.

Thank you very much.

The question that the sum of $23 407 711 under Head 13 - Prime Minister's Office - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 69 - CAPITAL - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE $3 165 195 (AS AMENDED)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $3 165 195 under Head 69 - Capital - Prime Minister's Office, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I beg to second that. 2.50 p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, in his reply on the Current Expenditure on the former Head for half an hour, the Prime Minister spent the time on CBC and he, obviously has the opportunity to reply to the queries raised in relation to the Barbados Defence Force. I take the opportunity to ask, in addition, for some explanation of the expenditure which is taking place, particularly, under Item 25.

There is provision for the part payment of the cost of a new boat and for incidental expenses. Could the Minister tell us what that relates to other than just saying it is a new boat? Is this a replacement for the boat which was damaged in the Grenadines, between St. Vincent and Grenada? Is there a contractual arrangement being entered into with an overseas supplier, whether it be the Crown Agents or one of the other suppliers in Britain? What is going to be the cost of the boat and what is the purpose for which it is being used?

Sir, from time to time there has been some discussion, I will put it no higher than that, as to the respective roles of the Defence Force and the Royal Barbados Police Force to perform their respective duties within our territorial waters and outside of the territorial waters in the wider area over which we now exercise a jurisdiction, although not an exclusive jurisdiction. I am not sure whether the problem has been solved as to whose primary responsibility it is to look after the issues of law and order within the territorial zone or beyond, or whether the Prime Minister is now satisfied that there is adequate machinery in place for co-operation between the two arms which have responsibility for surveillance of the security areas of Barbados. I raise the problem, particularly in the context of the sort of equipment which is going to be provided. I have seen it reported elsewhere that the police are also asking for equipment to perform their duties in guarding the coastline. Is the Government satisfied as to whether or not there is any duplication here? Would it not be possible for them to use similar craft, or the same craft to any extent? If so, to what extent? I think it is important that we should know this.

I think each one of us has to be very conscious and aware of the fact of the problem of drugs. I do not believe that the level of smuggling that occurred in our neighbours has yet reached Barbados. There has been a considerable amount of smuggling reported on in the Grenadines from time to time, and I think documented now. I do not believe that we have the problem in the same proportions in this area, but I would expect that the problems which we have must be attended to, and attended to in an effective manner, to ensure that either the problem is totally eradicated or that it is kept under proper control.

I do not know what is the strength of the marine arm of the Defence Force either in terms of number or, indeed, naval power. I know that we had taken steps to convert some of the ships, what were the shrimp boats, so that they could be used for part of this purpose,, and we had also acquired, with the assistance of the Crown Agents, a much more effective patrol boat for the balance of the area.

Sir, prior to the change of Government, there was quite a lot of agitation, spurred on by the Democratic Labour Party, as to the level of drugs and the penetration of drugs within this country. Since the Government has now come to office, it has, obviously, had an opportunity to have access to all available sources of information. It has had an opportunity to have a sober reflection on its position, and I have seen statements coming both from the Prime Minister and the Minister of Legal Affairs to the effect that the problem in Barbados is not a major problem.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Relatively speaking, he says, it is not a big problem. If it is not, relatively speaking a big problem, it is not a big problem, relatively speaking, which

is that it is not a major problem, so the honourable Member must realise that

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order: I do not wish to interrupt the honourable Member, but since we are doing the Estimates and we have a fairly large number of Heads,, which include, as I understand it, a Head under which you can discuss the drug policy, and since the honourable Member did not lay the foundation to show where he is going, if he is filibustering, he should let us know so we will understand that it is filibustering. But to be raising drug policy under this Head, I submit, is improper, and the honourable Member, since he talks about how he has been in here 17 years, knows better.

If he wishes to discuss the Coast Guard's attitude in relation to drugs or any matter like that, that is the proper way. But for him to start launching off on the policy of drugs, it seems to me he is not being relevant. We are here to discuss drugs with him any time, but under the appropriate Head.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did not know where the honourable Member was going. I was just allowing him some latitude; at the appropriate time I would have made my intervention.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: At the appropriate time, Sir. The honourable Member knows the parameters within which a debate in here should be conducted, and I must say to the honourable Member, as the Prime Minister says, you do not survive in this House in 17 years unless you understand and know where you are going. The point I am making here, Sir, is that if the problem is not, relatively speaking, a serious problem, what are the needs and how are they being provided for within the context of the size of that problem? I want to know whether it was going to be dealt with by a combination of both arms of the forces, what are the existing arrangements and what is the assessment of that problem. 3.00p.m.

That is not the only area in which the Coast Guard has a responsibility. It has a responsibility under the KO Conventions and it has a responsibility under other laws dealing with our maritime affairs. However, I think part of the problem we have for this arm of the Defence Force, the naval arm, is the problem of the proper demarcation of the boundaries of Barbados under our maritime legislation. I wonder what steps - I have not seen anything recently, either in the publications from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or otherwise - Government has taken to deal with the demarcation of those boundaries. It is of the greatest importance within the context of our relationship now with the outside world in the areas of our marine life, and in the context of the problems confronting us in relation particularly to the drug menace.

I also note here, Sir, that there is provision for various other items, and I assume that they relate to part of the rescue aspects or missions of the Defence Force. I need some clarification on the use of some of the machines that are being bought under this particular Head of the Estimates, what exactly they are being used for and whether or not I am correct in assuming that they are the electrocardiograph machines. Is there any duplication here? Does the Defence Force have its own use for such a machine?

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I know they have a limited facility. I want to know how far this facility is going to be extended.

I see there is an intention to refurbish Harrison's Point and Willoughby Fort. I want to know whether the Defence Force is still having any role to play in relation to the former St. Lucy base and what is the overall use which the Government intends to make of this area.

I believe that the north of the island is an extremely important area from a security point of view, and I realise that there is no security other than the Crab Hill Police Station, which is usually maintained at the level of about four men, no more, sometimes only one, I found it with one when I came in, and I believe it at one stage went to four people. There is still need in the north of Barbados for security, in particular in relation to the northern coastline of Barbados.

I saw in the Press only a few days ago an allegation, I do not know from what quarter, that that is a soft area for people who may be coming in to bays and coves and using the area for purposes which are not legitimate. I wish some idea from the Government as to whether those reports have any validity, and if they have any validity, what steps are being taken to deal with them.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member wishes to know whether I am discussing the Arawak jetty. I am not talking about legitimate business. As I said earlier, under the Head of Security, I try to speak in a very restrained way on this to demonstrate to the Prime Minister the sense of leadership which he wants to see demonstrated, and which is demonstrated so often on this side. The only thing is he is not learning fast enough.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I cannot responsibly talk on a subject like this in an open manner, because I think it would be contrary to the best interest of Barbados. Whether I am in Government or in Opposition, I have a duty, and I am sure the Prime Minister has one. If there is information that I at any time believe will damage Barbados' security interest, I would feel that, as a duty, I have to pass it on properly to the Government. But I am a little bit concerned about that report which I saw in the Press on the matter, and I wonder whether the Government, within the confines that we can debate this issue, is in a position to make any statement on that matter.

Mr. E. BOURNE (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman, just a few words on the conversion of the shrimp boats to control boats. I will not be long.

The last Government wasted a lot of money in such a conversion, out of ignorance.

(Aside: Establish whose ignorance.) Mr. E.

BOURNE: Out of their ignorance! *Laughter.*

Mr. E. BOURNE: A boat is not like a house where you could add on a room and another room and change the roof.

Laughter.

Mr. E. BOURNE: The hull of a shrimp boat is what is called a displacement hull. It is a boat not built for speed, but built for carrying load. A patrol boat is a boat with a planing hull, a boat built for lots of speed and a lot of manoeuvrability, and I do not care how much money you spend on a shrimp boat, it would not be able to catch a moses.

Laughter.

Mr. E. BOURNE: So if you are thinking about patrol boats, do not think about a shrimp boat, think about building a proper patrol boat. Do not waste the taxpayers' money on shrimp boats, except you are looking for shrimp.

Thank you, Sir.

Laughter.

Hon. M. A. KING: (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition has got into this thing about whether the drug problem is serious in Barbados or not. The problem about arguments of this kind and use of words in this way is that they are conveniently manipulated by those who want to manipulate them to achieve the particular purpose and objective which is sought. The Leader of the Opposition knows that quite well.

(Aside: You knew it, too.)

Hon. M. A. KING: Yes, I know it, too. And that is why I find it necessary to get up and respond immediately to it. Because you will mention it in the House today and tomorrow you will see big Press reports about it interpreted in the way in which they want to interpret it.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: But you raised it, so I have to deal with it in a limited way because you are talking about the extent which the Police Force and the Defence Force may co-operate in certain areas.

What we have said about- the problem is that, in relative terms, in Barbados we should not regard it as alarmist. We have said that for this specific reason, we understand what the nature of the problem is in Barbados.

We do not produce marijuana here. All the drugs which are consumed and used in Barbados are a result of importation, we do not have the same kind of problem in relative terms which the producer countries have. They have the problem, in addition to what happens to their citizens, of controlling supply and all of that. What we are saying is that we do not have the problem to that extent We have the problem as far as importation is concerned, and once we perceive that to be the major problem, our approach has to be to take all reasonable steps possible to try and choke off the supply of drugs which come into the country by effectively policing the airport, seaport and beaches where drugs are likely to come in. 3.10p.m.

We know that the major areas where drugs come into the country are through the airport and the seaport. I see the union has spoken about containers being used as a method of getting drugs into the country. We know that some drugs are slipped into the country through uncontrolled points on the west and south coasts and by yachts and things of that kind. That is why equipping the Police Force appropriately, and the Defence Force, to deal with the problem of policing the maritime waters of Barbados. That is terribly important.

The Defence Force has a number of vessels available to it. The larger vessels like the Trident, which is a large vessel which can patrol long distances and have considerable speed, ...

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: The honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) is telling me not like the shrimp boats. This is quite true. The shrimp boats are different kettle of fish.

Laughter.

Hon. M. A. KING: The important point, Mr. Chairman, is that the Defence Force has the facility for patrolling the maritime waters of Barbados. We want to ensure that that capability is maintained. We have always felt that that is the area where the greatest emphasis, as far as the Defence Force is concerned, should be placed, and in having an effective Coast Guard patrol in our country.

In relation to the drug problem and the Defence Force, there has been co-operation between the police and the Defence Force in dealing with the problem of interdicting drugs through maritime avenues. From time to time, patrols take place on Defence Force boats with police personnel on board, and there is, we are glad to say, total co-operation between the Police Force and Defence Force in relation to the use of Defence Force boats for patrolling the maritime waters of Barbados.

In addition to that, Mr. Chairman, we recognise that in relation certainly to the inshore areas of Barbados, the areas near the coastline where it is not so easy for the large Defence Force boats to patrol, it would be necessary to have smaller vessels available. We approach that problem by moving to revive the Harbour Police and providing smaller vessels for them to patrol the inshore areas of Barbados. In this regard also, the United States Government has offered to provide, and we have accepted two of what are called Boston Railers, which are smaller than the Defence Force boats, to assist in the patrol of the areas of Barbados nearer the shoreline.

If the honourable Member is asking what is the relationship between the police and Defence Force in relation to these matters, there is no problem with co-operation so far as patrolling the maritime waters of the country is concerned. There is total co-operation, once the additional boats are provided for use by the police and Defence Force, the problem of dealing with illegal drugs so far as those imports through the beaches and the inshore areas of the country are concerned will be far more effectively dealt with.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: In reply to this particular Head, just two questions were raised. One related to the role of the Defence Force, and I would like to say what we have been saying all jdong, that this country needs a force to protect the sovereignty and independence of this country, to prevent and serve as a first line of defence against any incursions from abroad, and to come to the aid of the civil power in any cases which may arise internally where such aid is deemed to be required. There is no quarrel about that. Our position has been, therefore, that we must find and develop the kind of force that meets out requirements, and that it is manned and equipped and has the necessary logistical support to carry out die mission for which such a force may be required.

What the former Minister of Defence, the late Member for St. John, said was that certain posts in the Defence Force would not be filled, so that, by a process of attrition, there would be some reduction in the actual operational strength of the force. That has happened.

The Leader of the Opposition states that he was speaking with some reserve. If he wishes information on this, I will be prepared to give that information to him. But he is well briefed.

Asides

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Was he a member of the Defence Board?

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, he was. Both of them.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: He was a member of the Defence Board and he knows these matters.

The Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has not spoken in this debate, but they are knowledgeable in this area and they have information. He certainly would know that a boat went somewhere and was wrecked - the George Fergusson - and a sum of $1 584 622 was paid into the Consolidated Fund coming from the insurance payment on the boat. So we are seeking a replacement, but we still have some details to work out as to exactly what kind of boat, the capabilities, the size and whatever. We have not quite finalised those, we are examining this whole matter. As soon as we arrive at a decision we will proceed, but there are funds there in the Estimates, and this note relates to that. 3.20 p.m.

I take the advice of the Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne), who is very knowledgeable in these areas. We converted a number of shrimp boats, and that was because they collapsed the shrimp industry, a thriving industry, put a number of people, including women, out of work, and then had no plans for the boats.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Prime Minister is misleading the House on this point. I know he is trying to

score a little political point. It is not correct that the shrimp industry was collapsed under the Barbados Labour Party. The records will show that the industry was virtually collapsed. Not only that, the company had not made a profit. And the honourable Member also knows from the files now that the shrimping grounds were denied it off the Brazilian coast and off French Guiana, as well as our own Guyana.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They had no plans for the boats, actually, and decided to convert them for duties which the Member for Christ Church East is saying that they were unsuitable for, and he has spoken very learnedly and very perceptively on the difference between displacement hull and planing. We will have to see that over time the Coast Guard gets the kind of vessels that it requires to carry out the mission which it serves.

There was something about the use of a machine. Is that the ECG machine? The equipment is needed for the decompression chamber, or hyperbaric chamber, whatever they call it. Some of it is for communication equipment and for other purposes.

I think those are the questions that were raised, Mr. Chairman.

The question that the sum of $3165195 under Capital Head 69 - Prime Minister's Office - as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 18 - AUDIT - $264 686

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $264 686 for Head 18 stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 18 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE - $3 713 698 - (AS AMENDED)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $3 713 698 for Head 15, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Sir, although not too long ago we had some discussion in here on the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, I want to revert to this matter to find out from the Prime Minister whether it is intended to have an enumeration process, and if so, how soon. I think it is very important that there should be an enumeration process for the whole island, done a* early as possible, in order to determine the numbers accurately, and even done ahead of the completion of whatever work the Electoral and Boundaries Commission still has to do, according to the law, to make its report, so that that report should be done.

I see that there is an increase under the Head, but in the explanatory notes which accompany these Estimates, there is no particular mention made of that fact. It is an important fact for the electoral process of Barbados, and although on January 31 every year the Electoral and Boundaries Commission is required by law to publish the up-to-date list of voters, and it has done so, yet I can recognise, looking certainly at the list in my own constituency, that there is a need for a new enumeration process. I would hope that that process can be started extremely early in this financial year and completed as soon as possible. It would not only provide all those persons, including Members of this Honourable House, who are interested in the electoral process with information concerning the existing constituencies, but it would certainly provide some basis for coming to an accurate analysis of what changes, if any, in boundaries are required, having regard to the provisions of the existing constitution of Barbados.

I wish to know whether it is intended, outside of the amendment to a matter which is before this House and which I cannot at this stage raise in this Committee, to deal with the problems of the reform of the other bits of legislation which govern the conduct of elections in our island. I have raised this before. It does seem to me that there is a necessity for a new Representation of the People Act and rules under the legislation dealing with the problem of the conduct of elections. I would have thought, Sir, thai we could consolidate this in one main measure.

I have said before, and I repeat, that recent legislation in the Commonwealth countries to whom we look for precedents is now there in abundance, brought in after great thought and care, whether one is prepared to follow the recent legislation in the United Kingdom - I believe they had an Act updated and consolidated up to 1985 with regulations made subsequently under that Act - or whether we are prepared to follow the updated legislation in Canada. Most of the provinces have updated their legislation, and at the Federal level, there has been recent legislation as well. There is enough precedence available for us to follow, if indeed we need that precedent 3.30p.m.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: There are certain problems that we have had, for the benefit of the honourable Deputy Prime Minister, who obviously is very interested in this subject. I do have a recent publication out of Canada, published this year, about three or four volumes, the title of which I could make available at some time. They have, merely simplified the legislation. They had similar problems, as we continue to have, mostly problems of people in the wrong registration district and that sort of thing. They have had to deal with that to get them out of the system, and we can benefit to some extent from their experience as well as our own local experiences.

I believe, Sir, that the best time to deal with this matter is early, when the political atmosphere is not over-heated. Whenever it gets hot and the tape is looking as if it is going to be called and the shot is going to go off, the runners are on their mark, that is where we are in problems. That is why I am asking for a sober atmosphere, and that as toon as possible we get this type of matter out of our system to be dealt with as soon as possible. I trust that we can deal with that matter as urgently as it is necessary.

I believe that this Head too covers the National Insurance Department. There has been concern for some lime in the National Insurance Department about some of the problems that are presenting themselves in co-ordinating the private pension plan that exists in Barbados win the existing Social Security system. It is a very technical area and there are not many people who take an interest in this.

A decision has been taken to obviously have an integrated Social Security system for Barbados by which every person over the age of 65, regardless of income, would qualify for some form of state pension. Under the National Insurance system, the intention is that once you nave worked for the qualifying period of weeks and years, you will get a contributory pension when you reach the qualifying age limit If, however you fall outside of that category, you still, under the system existing in Barbados today, get a non-contributory pension at some $10 less than there is for the contributory pension, the minimum pension.

What we have gone ahead and done is probably set an upper limit for insurable earnings of, I believe, $2 600 a month. The result of that is that to some extent, the state has entered into the realm where it is now seeing after the operation and funding of pensions at a level that is above the normal average wage for the whole of Barbados. The Barbados state security scheme is therefore unusual in this regard, and it can have reasonably serious implications for the future provision of the Social Security pensions for the country, as well as implications for private pension plans. The persons who are funding private pension plans would need to know carefully the direction in which the state pension is going, because you can have over-funding, in which case there is too much provision, so a person could come out at state pension plus his pension from his employer, by which he can literally be getting more than he was getting during his working life, when conceivably, the view is that your needs might be lesser at that time. Usually the limit set is about two-thirds during your earning period. There has also been the remission of Income Tax, which even makes the position worse.

! believe we have to look sensibly at this problem. It is a problem that one is not able to grapple with very carefully, because it is a technical problem and there are not many people who have probably gone into it I have recently been advising on some pension schemes and the problem has come forcibly to my attention. In fact, more and more these issues are coming before the law courts. One came by way of an inter-regional organisation, and we can find ourselves unwittingly conferring, if we are not careful, greater advantage than we had intended to confer under the National Insurance Department. So we must carefully look at the guidelines of where we are going over a period of the next five years under this department and what is intended to be done at the level of policy, and try to deal with this as best we can. I think that private pension plan people are concerned about it.

The other thing that needs very urgent revision, and that concerns me, under the Social Security legislation is that the tax laws dealing with this aspect of our affairs is now very outdated in the light of developments that are taking place. You cannot find in any consistent way - it is in the Income Tax Act and in little bits of regulations here - the provisions dealing with this matter. Once again, we have not followed through on it, and I think it is too important to such a large mass of people for us not to grapple with it.

What is probably necessary is for one or two people with the expert knowledge within the Ministry of Finance to look at this. The Government has access to actuarial advice, usually through the International Labour Organisation. I do not think that there is an actuary employed in the Government service. I make bold to say, however, Sir, that the time has come when, because of the growth and the value of the Social Security funding in Barbados, there should be the employment of an actuary in this department.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He has said he cannot pay them, but he may be able to remunerate them partly on the basis of salary, together with allowing them to undertake some private practice, because the honourable Member for

St. Philip North (Hon. W. O. Franklin) should be aware now that there are young Barbadians who are qualifying in this field and who have a great interest Wherever I find someone with mathematical ability needing career guidance, I have been advising some of them to get into the field, because I believe in the Caribbean we do have the expertise and the ability to manage this aspect of our affairs, and the money that we are still paying in foreign exchange and sending out, even with private insurance companies getting advice in this area, should be kept in Barbados, and it may be possible to provide those consultancy services in Barbados.

Unfortunately, my time has run out.

3.40 p.m.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE (St. James North): Mr. Chairman, it seems that when the Honourable Leader is on the Opposition benches, it is only then that he can see the need for an early enumeration exercise, because if we go back to 1981, we will remember that it was his Government which, just six months before the election in 1981, made some changes to the boundaries and conducted an enumeration exercise which created a lot of confusion in the electoral system. But his call for an enumeration exercise at this time is not something that we should have any difficulty with on this side. I believe that it is important not only for those of us who are Members of Parliament, but for all people who live in this country.

If we look, for example, at the list which was published at the end of January this year, we will notice that there are some constituencies which have in excess of 9 000 electors at the upper end and that there are some others at the lower end which have less than 6 000. It would appear from looking at the list that there may be some need to make some adjustments, in constituency boundaries or some other kind of adjustment, if we are to have a more even number of electors in the constituencies which are distributed around the island. So I believe that the call for an early enumeration exercise would be something which would go a long way towards assisting in having a fair election, whenever that time comes. I think that one of the main problems we face in our elections is our electoral list, and if we can have a move towards eliminating the problems that arise in settling of the electoral list at election time, that would have the effect which is desired in this regard.

The leader of the Opposition made some remarks in respect of the National Insurance Office. I would like to make two brief comments in that connection, particularly, to do with old age pensions.

There are many senior citizens in this country, old aged pensioners, who visit my constituency office - they also come to see me in my office in town from time to time - because there seems to be some uncertainty in many of their minds about certain provisions of our Social Security legislation. Many of these persons are Barbadians who may have travelled abroad and lived out of the island for a limited number of years and have returned to the island, and in some instances, they are not getting a pension abroad, but by virtue of their residence overseas, they find that they get difficulty in negotiating their pensions when they return to live in Barbados. I believe that the CIS or one of die agencies of Government should be able to conduct a programme so that we can have this information easily available to our senior citizens so that they would not be in any doubt as to where they stand in relation to our Social Security legislation.

We had a long debate this morning on the use of the television. I believe that, for example, television can be used as a means of bringing this more fully to their attention. And, of course, the newspapers and radio can be used as means of bringing our senior citizens more in touch with what their entitlements are under the Social Security legislation of this country.

It appears to me that there have been many cases of senior citizens, old aged pensioners, who have died, but whose pensions are still being drawn, and their cheques being cashed, by persons who were receiving pensions on their behalf. I would like the Minister responsible to give us some information as to what steps Government is taking to restrict this particular problem that seems to be surfacing in the National Insurance Office.

I believe that we should have a system whereby when persons become deceased, the National Insurance Office could be notified either by virtue of the Registration Office, where deaths are registered, or even through the funeral directors. Some agency should be able to pass this information on, and perhaps, it might be helpful if we could have some information as to what means is going to be adopted to resolve this particular problem which seems to be surfacing in that department.

With those brief remarks, Mr. Chairman, I give my support to this particular head.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: My time ran out, Sir.

Under the same National Insurance, there was another problem that has come forcibly to my notice. It is another aspect of the problem adverted to by the honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne), and it relates to the Barbadian who has lived overseas for some years and has returned here and finds himself or herself in two positions - there is either an existing Social Security provision in the country where they have lived for several

years and they have qualified under that system and expect a pension here; or there is no existing Social Security pension and yet they do not qualify here, because they are not in a position to add together the periods that they have lived abroad with the periods that they have lived at home.

Under the existing legislation, as I understand it, let us take the first category of persons. If a person who has lived overseas in the United Kingdom, and has become eligible for Social Security pension in the United Kingdom, returns to Barbados and lives for the qualifying period - I am not sure whether it is ten or 12 years after having attained the age of 50 - that person still, because of one of the rules of the legislation, will not qualify for a non-contributory pension in Barbados. The person does not qualify at all, but the person is at a disadvantage, because under United Kingdom legislation, that person cannot receive the same pension as if the person was living in the United Kingdom.

The result is that you can get a lady or a gentleman who is entitled to £40 a week or month, or £55 a week, losing £15 because of that position. And the result, therefore, is that they are suffering. If the full £55 was coming to Barbados, we would have the benefit of the foreign exchange aspect of it, so it is beneficial to the country, we would have much more purchasing power. 3.50 p.m.

It also affects both countries. I use the United Kingdom, but it is also true of the United States. They are at a disadvantage and we lose as well. And the reason for this is that there is no existing arrangement between ourselves and the United Kingdom for an exchange on Social Security legislation. There has been a lot of talk about this for some time, and I believe - certainly I remember when Mr. Humphrey Walcott was there as Director - some steps were taken to negotiate a National Insurance treaty with the United Kingdom, the United States, and maybe Canada. Nothing has come of it.

I think this is now becoming urgent, Sir, because many of our senior citizens are returning, and more will return to Barbados, it is their ancestral home. Once they have earned that Social Security cheque, they want to come back, they want to spend probably six months, sometimes more than six months, of the year here to escape the rigours of the cold and be in their native country. They have taken a natural pride in being Barbadian.

Within my constituency, a lady has told me she was deeply disappointed because she refused to take the citizenship of, I think it was, the United States, simply because she is a Barbadian, but now she is back home, she is losing in this respect. Such persons feel that if they are being penalised that way and we cannot negotiate a treaty, they should not be disqualified from getting the little extra pension which they are losing through no fault of their own. I think it is probably UK and Canada, probably not the US.

We have the other situation, Sir, where a person leaves Barbados at a pretty early age, through no fault of his or her own, has lived overseas to the age of 55, and returns. Inevitably, in almost all cases that I have come across, those persons have been remitting funds home and contributing in a way to Barbados, we have not yet fully moved away from the very good concept of the extended family which has sustained many of us, God knows, in Barbados. The extended family was a concept that Barbadians have known - you go abroad and help the others to move up in education and what not and Barbadians take pride in that. But when those persons come back, because of the existing legislation, they cannot really qualify.

I have been researching the problem because I am getting several cases in my constituency clinic on Saturdays. You can qualify if you can add the years before, if you lived here, I think, something like up to the age of about eighteen or so. It is a very small loophole that you can beat the legislation, but, as I said, it is technical because of the way in which the law is drafted.

The plea of the honourable Member for SL James North for using the GIS for simplifying the legislation and explaining to the public was a good idea. But I think we need to do a bit more. I think we need to examine and clarify the legislation to see whether or not there is not a case for assisting these persons. I concede that there will have to be some cut off point, because some of the persons may not have contributed for a reasonable period of time, but it seems that we need a bit more consideration in this area.

So what I would like to see then in the area of the National Insurance is a stated goal, a goal saying what would be the reasonable level at which an insurable earning for a state pension should be placed, and that goal stated for a fairly reasonable period of time to allow proper planning to take place in the private pension area. Secondly, I would like to see a review of those areas in which we have an absence of Social Security treaties with other countries, particularly, those to which most of our nationals have gone. It comes forcibly to mind even within the Caribbean, because people who have lived in Trinidad and Tobago, for instance, have suffered. Thirdly, I wish to see a review of our legislation to the extent where that legislation may discriminate against some of our citizens who have lived abroad for a period of time.

Whilst I am aware that there is a triennial review of the Social Security legislation in Barbados - the fourth point - I believe that we ought - I know that there is some review taking place now - to look more closely at the

investment portfolio of the National Insurance funds. A great proportion of that portfolio is being invested in short-term deposits for about 13 months. I think about 45 per cent of it is invested in Government paper, Treasury Bills or debentures in one way or other. And while I must be the first to admit that part of those funds should be used for the developmental purposes of the country, we are dealing with a very serious part of the national savings of people, and perhaps, more so than anywhere else, very largely the working class, and it is necessary for us to have the best advice on the investment of that portfolio. I feel we must look at the portfolio very carefully to get the right mix both of bond and equity funds.

Honourable Members should be aware, for instance, that in some private pension funds, equity investment have yielded returns in the region of over 13 per cent, which is a fantastic rate of return, and at the same time have had capital growth, despite the crash on the stock markets. These are local pension funds in Barbados. The Social Security system has not seen that growth, although I would not advise it to take the same degree of risk that private pension funds can sometimes take, but the result is that pensioners who have benefitted from private funds have been reasonably better off than pensioners benefitting from, really, the same system. I would hope that we can look at this one.

I believe the Social Security system is so critical to all of us that we should put our conjoint minds together and try to improve it. I know that there have been one or two problems, and it is an area that really concerns me. I am one of the people who will benefit in a few years' time. Although the years roll on too fast for me to like to see nowadays, in another ten years or so I will benefit from the contributions that I have made to the scheme, Sir.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: At the level of Prime Minister, though!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Whatever level it is, ...

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE:....! will benefit from that scheme, Sir. But it is not only because of my personal interest at that level - everyone who is a member of the scheme will get a pension - it is because of my real concern.

We must have the expertise, and we can have the expertise. Maybe it is an area that the Minister of Finance should have a look at to see whether or not the Government cannot have wider advice available to it. I know that there is a board set up. As I said, in this field I would like to see the type of board that would bring a wider knowledge to these matters, based on expertise.

There are within the system persons in Barbados, who can deal with the matter. There are a lot of young Barbadians now, particularly black Barbadians, who have gone into fields that before we would never have trespassed into, because we would never have got the opportunity. I am happy and pleased to see them in these fields, actuarial science and what not, and that they would be given an opportunity in this area to contribute in a sensible and patriotic manner to building up what is a sound system, and which, if we harness and use it properly, can assist not only in development, but increasing the wealth of our citizens in respect of their security in their old age.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I wish to assure the Leader of the Opposition that I will take into account some of the points that he has raised. In respect of the enumeration, however, these are matters which are now under the direction and supervision of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. I can only say that I am advised that that commission is proposing to carry out an island-wide enumeration some time in the early part of this year. I believe some time between May and June of this year. That is an action taken in their own discretion. 4.00p.m.

I believe all Members of the House would wish to see that this enumeration is done in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Indeed, we have heard it canvassed from time to time that there should be scrutineers accompanying the enumerators on this exercise. Whether that will be done, or whether there are constraints or factors preventing that from taking place, is to be seen. But if everything possible is to be done to have as accurate an enumeration as possible carried out, I know that, for some Members, it is felt that that might add to further fidelity in the system.

As far as the National Insurance agreements are concerned, there is an agreement which exists with Canada and indeed with the Province of Quebec. I see that with Canada, there is a provision province by province.

Efforts have been made to reach agreement with the United Kingdom, but I think that is making haste very slowly. I think there is not much positive that we can say on that. Other priorities come into the way of getting a conclusion on this.

No consideration has been given, I am advised, on a reciprocal agreement with the USA to date.

The general points which have been made, we take into account and explore them.

As far as the investment of NIS funds are concerned, we are always looking for ways and means to get maximum returns on these investments. I believe that safety in investment, the blue chip areas has been the guideline for the investment of those funds. But we will take the point which has been made, and we will take a further look at the way in which these funds have been invested and the kinds of balance in the different instruments and the different kinds of paper that may be invested in. But the board and the staff of that particular scheme have been working in a very dedicated way to carry out their functions, sometimes, as happened in the past, under very trying circumstances.

The question that Head 15 - Cabinet Office - $3 713 698 (as amended) - stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(AS AMENDED) - $3 177 000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $3 177 000 under Head 19 - Ministry of Finance as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St Peter): Mr. Chairman, ordinarily one does not raise many questions relating to the Ministry of Finance in this Committee, since, of course, many of the Government financial issues can be addressed during the Budget Debate. But there are numbers of specific issues that I want to raise, particularly in the light of the absence of Appendix G from this set of documents.

My first comment relates to the management and accounting departments of the Ministry of Finance and Planning. I have already expressed my great pleasure that, on the advice of the Opposition, the Government has at last consolidated the system by which state enterprises are to be managed from a financial point of view, in so far as an exercise of that function can be discharged by the Ministry of Finance. The point of issue here is that the rationale extended to the establishment of the State Enterprises Unit was to control the growth of subsidies and transfers to state enterprises in Barbados. But what we have found this year, Mr. Chairman, is that the subsidies and transfers to state enterprises, both non-profit and non-financial, have increased, whereas subsidies and transfers to the household sector have decreased.

On page 4 of the Memorandum of Estimates 1988-89, you will see, Sir, that this year we will be asked to provide $58.5 million in subsidies and transfers to the household sector. But that is down $60.4 million from last year. The point I am making is that the state this year will actually be subsidising households, whether by way of Welfare payments, cash and kind, and benefits in whatever form to a lesser extent than was provided for in the Estimates of last year, while on the other hand, subsidies and transfers to state enterprises are to increase. Subsidies and transfers to the non-financial public enterprises are to increase from $94.5 million last year to $99.6 million this year, and in the case of non-profit institutions, from $15.5 million last year to $18.5 million this year. It seems, therefore, clear, Mr. Chairman, that something obviously has gone wrong with Government's policy. Government's policy was simply that there was to be no reduction in Government subsidies and Government support for the household sector, but that Government would be making a more serious effort to control growth of subsidies and transfers to either non-financial or non-profit institutions. The exact opposite has happened! 4.10p.m.

Last year the Appendix G was a very important source of information to us to enable us to understand what has happened in relation to the state enterprises. In its absence, I am therefore forced to ask a number of specific questions. Exactly which are the state enterprises which now force that overall situation in which subsidies and transfers have been increased? Are there any state enterprises which have moved from out of the black into the red subsequent to May 1986?

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I did not limit you in the range of your discussion, you are not to limit me in the range of my discussion. When you taught me at Harrison College, you taught me to think freely.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are we debating or are we conversing?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to really get to the grips of what is Government's existing policy as regards the management of state enterprises. This becomes pertinent, because you will recall Sir, that at the very start there was a broad commitment given in the DLP manifesto to the sale of enterprises which were making losses, and there was also the commitment given that the volume of transfers would be decreased as part of the overall policy of keeping expenditure under control. It therefore becomes a matter of concern to the House when, rather than being decreased, transfers to the state enterprises are in fact increasing, and on behalf of the Opposition, I am seeking to enquire what lies at the base of this particular development, particularly in light of the fact that transfers to the household sector this year are to be decreased below those provided last year.

For which state enterprises has the overdraft at the Barbados National Bank been increased? Is this so in the

case of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation, in particular? Has Government been pursuing a policy in suppressing the amount of subventions on-budget and provided for in the Estimates, and sending state enterprises to the Barbados National Bank to meet up their increasing operational deficits?

I have every good reason to believe, Mr. Chairman, that the amount this year that is being provided on-budget, for example, for an institution like the ADC, is an amount that does not in any way compare favourably with the operating deficit that is being realised by that corporation. I am sure that it pertains in other institutions as well. If we are going to remain faithful to the policy commitment that was given by the former Minister of Finance, when he said that to know the overall deficit that might eventually face the Government, we have to know by how much each state corporation is adding to that deficit whether it is shown in the Estimates or not, I think it becomes important for the Government to state which of the institutions now have run up increased overdrafts, and whatever else, with the Barbados National Bank and other banks, and to what extent the transfers are being reflected here as representative of a true situation where those state enterprises are concerned.

The rationale for the State Enterprises Unit, as I might have mentioned before, was that one conceived of a situation where Barbados had to put in place a long range financial plan, and that long range financial plan required that the subventions to state enterprises be controlled and reduced, or at least in any case brought within manageable proportions, as a deliberate part of the effort to control the rate of growth of expenditure from year to year. The fact that the transfers and subsidies are increasing would seem, at face value, to imply that the State Enterprises Unit has not yet begun to address how best to control those deficits. And this becomes all the more pertinent in light of the absence of Appendix G, because certainly what Appendix G was able to do for us was to show us what were the operating deficits of the respective state enterprises, what was the amount being provided on-budget, and we were in a position to know what were the deficits to be met by banking system credit.

Mr Chairman, under the Ministry of Finance and Planning, there is also Energy. The House has not had a long debate on energy for a period of time. I am not proposing today to go into an extensive debate on this, but there is a particular matter that has been long outstanding, as the Minister of Finance is aware.

In the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, there was a commitment given that the Government of Barbados would immediately enter negotiations with the Barbados Light and Power as regards the return to the public and the state of the $39 million in deferred taxes which would have accumulated. That was a commitment clearly stated and given. The Opposition wants to know, Sir, what is the state of those negotiations, whether there is any immediate likelihood of the $39 million being redisbursed to the state and to the public within the course of the next financial year.

As regards general energy policy, it would seem to me that the •Government has obviously committed itself to a policy whereby any increases in the price of oil will be passed through the energy system by way of increases in the fuel charges, and hence reflected, not at all in an increase in the price of gasolene, but certainly in the increase in the price of electricity. To my mind, that method of enterprising is a way of penalising the overall economic system.

I am very conscious of the fact that when last energy prices were set in Barbados, the price of crude was about US$9.90 per barrel, and since we have had no statements of energy policy since then, I would be very glad to hear the Prime Minister's specific statement as regards what is Government's particular policy and thinking as of now in regard to the general policy for energy in this country.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES (St. Lucy): Mr. Chairman, I venture into this debate, maybe out of a concern about a definition of state enterprises, whether or not in that general sweep which the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) has identified is included some of the commercial ventures in which the Government is involved. Sometimes it is difficult, if one were to follow very strictly the definition on which the Opposition,operates, to know exactly when to enter into a debate. Since some of these enterprises fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce, I consider it timely for me to make a few comments. 4.20 p.m.

Let me start off with the Arawak Cement Company. I believe that the honourable Member for St. Peter would be interested in that particular operation, as indeed all honourable Members of this Chamber ought to be, because it is an operation in which there is considerable investment on the part of this country. It is a joint venture between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the investment made was in the region of $200 million.

Unfortunately, Arawak Cement Company has had a most unfortunate history, and if one were to look at a historical analysis of the finances and into the operations of the Arawak Cement Company, one would see the kind of

difficulties in which this country was placed by what could only be described as the most cavalier management of that company. I say that because when the Democratic Labour Party came into office, we found the total absence of any systems operating at the Arawak Company. There was a% situation in which the General Manager reported directly to the then Board of Directors on financial matters. There was not an opportunity for the person who was in charge of the finances to make a presentation on the financial operations of the company to the board. The result is that a lot of problems of the company were hidden in the way in which the former General Manager presented the financial operations of that company to that board. It was not until after we had to terminate the appointment of that General Manager that lots of things came to light.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the matter is *sub judice, I* will not entertain any reference to it.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I would like to tell you where the General Manager should be.

We asked for a management study of the company, and the study which was done revealed that there was a total lack of systems. There were no personnel records. There was a computer which was bought about 1985 for in the area of $1/2 million and which, for practical purposes, was not used until 1986 or 1987. It was just there lying doing absolutely nothing.

Cement was sold and nobody cared about collecting the money for the cement which was sold and returning it to Arawak. We now find ourselves in a situation where about US$5 million in cement was delivered in Puerto Rico and Arawak has not up to this time been able to recover that money, because as far as we can see, it was sold to a small company which had no access to Puerto Rico, and it would seem as if it is going to be extremely difficult to recover that money. All of that took place under the Barbados Labour Party Administration. Nobody seemed to care very much about what was happening there. The company, it would seem, was left to run on its own steam.

We put in a new board, and to some extent we have had to change up the management We have a number of recommendations, all of which have not yet been implemented, so it is quite possible that further changes will take place.

When the new management went in, in a report submitted, a report which I asked for, it indicated that there seemed to have been a total collapse of financial record keeping due, in part, apparently, to a loss of confidence between the former General Manager and the Finance Manager, resulting in the latter's dismissal early in 1986.

It was also discovered that, early in 1986, there had been a batch of cheque forgeries, totalling $115 000, perpetuated by a clerk in the Accounts Department. However, the amount stolen was fully recovered through a tip-off from the bank, and the clerk was dismissed.

The point is that such activity could only have taken place and gone undetected because of ineffective auditing procedures in the department. Much closer attention should have been paid to the operations of Arawak from the beginning.

We also had a situation where, according to the report, there seemed to be little or no control over travelling and entertainment expenditure by the managers. At some time in 1985, American Express credit cards had been issued to about ten management staff in Arawak's name, and were apparently used both locally and overseas, monthly approval of each card holder's account being apparently given, if at all, by the card holder himself. In short, there were some people in the management structure who were authorising their own expenditure.

The consolidated account had reached £70 000 in late 1986, and remained unpaid by Arawak, with the result that all cards were cancelled by American Express, and they also initiated legal action because they wanted to recover their money. That is yet another amount which Arawak has to pay. The management was able to put in place a scheme where the General Manager alone would authorise expenditure on behalf of Arawak. 4.30p.m.

I do not want to go into all of the details, but there was another situation where it was found that certain questionable commercial arrangement had been entered into by the former General Manager, sometimes without the board's approval. These included the dock crane lease purchase agreement, which led eventually to a board decision to stop payments to Ribardi Trading Company.

Asides.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Leave out the shipping, too? The point is that there were so many things which were wrong, and I cannot understand how people could sit down and allow these kinds of things to go on.

In shipping there were some questionable arrangements. It was discovered that Arawak was paying twice for one crane, paying one company .....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I will give you the confines if you are going into that.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I will ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will tell you what the rule says. "Reference may not be made to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending in such a way as might in the opinion of the Chair prejudice the interest of the parties thereto" so you know how the confines operate.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: These are allegations. He asked me not to touch on the shipping, so I would not

We have had to introduce some changes there, mainly as a result of the management study, and at the moment, a technical study is being conducted. We hope that when that is concluded, we would be in a better position to see really where we are with Arawak.

From a financial position, we have seen some improvement in Arawak's performance. When I give you the figures and you take them in a total situation, you will see that the improvement is not like a drop in the ocean, but it may be a drop in a bucket of water. There has been some improvement, but the situation in the past has been so bad that we still have a lot of ground to cover.

I do not want to go through all the figures, but some of these, I think, would give you an idea of what I am talking about.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have three minutes in which to do it.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: The plant started operating in 1985. In 1985, the operating loss was $9.5 million. In 1986, the operating loss was $9.7 million. In 1987, the operating loss was $11.7 million. In 1988, it is anticipated that the operating loss for the financial year which ends on March 31 this year will be $930 000. This is because of a number of measures which have been put in place, and indeed, Arawak is collecting money, and it is selling cement now on a cash basis.

We are in a slightly better position, but we are still far in the woods, because we still have our finance charges to pay, which are in the region of $8.7 million. We still have depreciation of $8.5 million to look at. When you look at the finance charges, and depreciation, you would find that in 1988, it is anticipated that the total loss would be about $18.1 million, as against in 1987 $30.2 million; 1986, $29.9 million; and 1985, $28.4 million. This is the size of the problem which we have, but, as I said, the performance in 1988 is expected to be much better than in the past.

We are hoping that as a result of some renewed efforts on behalf of the management of the plant, we will be able to further penetrate not only the available markets in CARICOM - and remember that Arawak is not the only cement company operating in CARICOM, there is one in Trinidad and Tobago, and one in Jamaica for which we are competing in the CARICOM market - but we are also looking beyond the non-CARICOM territories. Indeed, Arawak has been selling further afield.

That information ought to be put very squarely on the table, because people and the House ought to be told very clearly the magnitude of this particular problem which was inherited by the Democratic Labour Party. We are trying our best to contain the loose way in which the company functioned before, and, most importantly, to contain the losses and, hopefully, turn it into, in the coming financial year, a profit from an operation point of view. But, of course, we would still have the depreciation and the finance charges to deal with.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Chairman, I know the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) has a particular interest in ADC as well as the portfolio of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and he was seeking to find out from the Prime Minister if there had been any increase in the overdraft facility for ADC. I will seek to get that information, but as far as my memory goes, the only additional facility ADC had this year was the facility to allow them to pay for the cotton, since they, not BSDL, are now paying the farmers for the cotton. I will double check, but as far as my memory goes, there has been no increase in our draft facility.

I am not so certain, Mr. Chairman, that the honourable Member would like to hear the additional information I am going to give him, but I will give him regardless of what he feels. I have before me the draft Financial Statement for the period ended June 30, 1987, which is the first one that has come under my Ministry. The operational loss for that year is $1 599 250, reduced from the operational loss of 1985-86 of $3 030 158! 4.40 p.m.

Since 1981, all the plantations under ADC have operated at a loss. I am pleased to report the performances of the plantations this year. Bath: 1985-86, operational loss of $293 483; 1986-87, an operational loss of $123 216, or a decrease in the operational loss of about $170 000. Morgan River: operational loss of 1985-86, $303 893; 1986-S7, $267 698, or a reduction in loss of approximately $26 000. Dodds: operational loss in 1985-86 of $162 770, 1986-87 an operational surplus of $8 469. From an operational loss of $162 000 to an operational surplus of $8 469! Haggatts: operational loss in 1985, $250 621; in 1986-87 - this is the only one that fared worst - $267 519. River, which I want

to talk a little bit more later on, operational loss in 1985-86, $771 000.67; $616 959 this year, a reduction of about $155 000. Spencers: operational loss in 1985-86 of $634 262 being reduced to $404 534, a reduction of about $230 000. Springhall: operational loss of $350 853 in 1985-86 to an operational surplus of $11 813, or 'a turnaround of about $361 000. Turners Hall: operational loss in 1985-86, $108 301, to an operational surplus of $45 470, or a turnaround of approximately $153 000. Wildey: an operational loss in 1985-86 of $154 000 to an operational surplus of $14 921.

It is also of interest for the Member to understand the compilation, since he has been charging that ADC has not been carrying out its mandate to take part in the diversification effort. In 1981-82, the total revenue of BADC was $2 000 239.48, of which $2 187 756 came from sugar cane, or 97.7 per cent of the revenue, and 2.2 per cent from non-sugar. In 1982-83, the total revenue was $2 062 678, of which $1 993 976, or 96.7 per cent came from sugar, as against $68 703 or 3.3 per cent from non-sugar. In 1983-84 there was a revenue of $2 477 271, of which $2 365 748 came from sugar, or 95.5 per cent In 1984-85, there was revenue of $2 597 900, of which $2 180 845, or 84 per cent, came from sugar. In 1985-86, their last year, there was revenue of $3 324 733, of which $2 776 627 or 83.5 per cent came from sugar. In 1986-87, revenue was $5 887 077, of which $2 828 867, or $48.05 per cent, came from sugar, and $3 058 210, or 51.95 per cent, came from non-sugar revenue.

Aside.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Non-sugar!

Aside.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: In 1986-87 -1 will give you the sheet - rotation crops, $59 494; pre-selling vegetables, $11 106; other crops, $35 240; tree crops, $6 097; Cotton, $587 510; root crops, $9 500; peanuts, $74 432; cotton seed, about $59 000.

The problem with ADC now is a fairly sizeable interest on a loan. At June 30, 1986, this was $6 626 020, the amount we took over when I took over the portfolio. This is causing ADC a fair amount of problems, and the last information on the loan, up until last year, was that it was a little over $8 million. I will get the material figures for you. At some time I am going to seek to have this matter discussed with the Ministry of Finance in an effort to see what we can do to remove that kind of yoke from around the neck of ADC.

I just brought this information for the attention of the Member for St. Peter who posed the question. I will double check with the Accounts Division of ADC to see if they have had any additional facility overdraft from the bank.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I did indicate when I rose that there were some other commercial ventures which fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade. These are the Barbados Rour Mills, the Grain Terminal, Barbados Feeds and Super Poultry Farm.

The Flour Mills, Grain Terminal and Barbados Feeds have been realising a profit Super Poultry Farm lost money in 1984 and 1985, but we have been able to affect a turnaround in 1986 and 1987.

The figures are as follows: In 1984 - I will give round figures - Barbados Flour Mills made a profit of $2.3 million; the Grain Terminal, $907 000; Barbados Feeds, $625 000; and Super Poultry lost $45 989. In 1985, the Rour Mills made a profit of $3.6 million, the Grain Terminal, $1.038 million; Barbados Feeds, $1.172 million and Super Poultry lost $154 581. 4.50 p.m.

In 1986, Rour Mills made a profit of $2.6 million, the Grain Terminal, $1.064 million; Barbados Feeds $1.512 million, and we were able to effect a turnaround in Super Poultry, and that made a profit of $169 249. For 1987 - the financial year of these companies end on December 31 -. the Rour Mills made a profit of $2.8 million, Grain Terminal, $1.3 million; Barbados Feeds, $1.2 million; and Super Poultry $395 895.

I think it is important for us to note that the Barbados directors, and certainly the Government, indicated to Maple Leaf at the end of the management contract which was in operation, which came to an end at the end of 1987, that we wanted to enter into a new arrangement. Basically, what will be in place will be a technical agreement and not a management agreement, as previously existed, because we have been able to Barbadianise the management structure at Barbados Mills, Barbados Feeds and the Grain Terminal. By the middle of this year, all the managers, with the exception of the head miller, will be Barbadians. We feel that the mills have been operating for a long enough time, and there are people in place that Barbadians should take over their management and the operation. To that extent, a Barbadian was appointed as Deputy General Manager, and he was sent to train and develop experience in the whole range of operations which would normally fall under the ambit of the General Manager. We are satisfied that this arrangement will be to the benefit of this country, because of the fact that management would have exposure to a wider area of management skills.

In collaboration with Maple Leaf, we are examining other possible areas of joint venture cooperation. If we come to any conclusions, they will be revealed in the fullness of time.

Finally Sir, if Super Poultry Farm, which has shown its potential for making a profit on our investment, is to keep up with the competition in poultry processing in Barbados, obviously its operations will have to be modernised, and that is being undertaken. I think those of you who pass in the Black Rock area would recognise that the outlet in Black Rock is being modernised - some buildings are being put down - and we are hoping that we will be able in the not too distant future to put up a new and modem processing plant at its major processing operation.

We think that these entities are well managed. Rather than taking money out of the Treasury, or Government having to commit money or give guarantees to keep the doors open, as with Arawak, these corporations are actually making a direct contribution to the Treasury.

Thank you, Sir.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER reported to the House accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.30 p.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 4.55 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 19 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(AS AMENDED) (CONTD)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, the information given by the Minister of Trade is important in many respects, and I think he has done the House a service in being so ready to disclose that information. In the first place, it suggests that there are public enterprises in which the state can get involved by way of equity ownership and which can operate at a profit The proponents of Thatcherism - divestment, privatisation or whatever - will be confronted by the stark reality that state socialism, or capitalism, - some writers classify it as state capitalism - can in fact work to the advantage-of a country.

In so far as those enterprises connected with the feed supply industry and the poultry industry are concerned, it is not only since the present Government has been in office that they have been shown to have been profitable. But our greatest concern, necessarily, must be with the Arawak Cement Company, if only by reason of the fact that there is a more substantial capital investment in Arawak than in any of the other enterprises mentioned by the Minister.

But Arawak is itself in a special situation. It represents an attempt at closer Caribbean co-operation between two sovereign Governments, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Barbados, and in any strictures which we may level against the management of Arawak, I think we should always be conscious that Trinidad had representation on the board, and, obviously, still does.

I do not know the composition of the present board, but the relationship, three to two or whatever it is, is the same now as it was, let us say, in 1985-86. In 1985-86,1 think Trinidad had representatives - Mr. Frank Barsotti, who was a very senior civil servant in Trinidad, Permanent Secretary to the Prime Minister or in the Ministry of Finance; another gentleman called Mr. Koh - and Barbados had the Director of Finance and Planning, Mr. Emtage; Mr. Alfred Clarke, who was a very prominent business lawyer, and I think, Mr. Andrew Gaskin. It is a matter of concern, it must be of national concern, that with a board comprised as it then was, the kinds of leakages that we have heard about from the Minister could take place.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Members on the other side would prefer if I said haemorrhages.

I am not entirely convinced about the allegation in respect of the Sharpe company in Puerto Rico. I gather that it may not, in fact, have been as bad a situation as the Minister would have us believe. What the Minister is trying to say is that $5 million worth of cement was shipped to this company and Arawak never got paid for it. I am not so sure' if that is the entire situation. But, no doubt, if the Minister is still getting reports, or ensuring that that area is dug up, the full facts will be revealed in due course.

I dismiss the matter with the $115 000, where some clerk attempted to steal the money or whatever and did not succeed. They hooked him early so we did not lose anything. They caught him with his hand in the cookie jar.

What I am more concerned about is the allegation that, at the level of senior management, there were persons who were prepared to be corrupt. The Minister, myself and the Deputy Prime Minister have certain ideas and information which we shared last year, based on solid fact, about one or two persons down there.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: One or two? Which one?)

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

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: You know about two?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Later. We are not going to embarrass anybody in this debate. Suffice it to say that I am satisfied that the Minister has his finger on the pulse and will try as far as possible, by way of influence rather than interference, to make sure that certain areas are well covered and that, in future, the board pays attention to certain areas which in the past have shown a vulnerability. I think I have spoken in sufficient general language that the Minister will appreciate.

In that management structure at the Arawak, I think one thing that I can say of the Labour Party's Administration was that the political directorate kept as far as possible from the operation of the plant, and that is instructive, because it suggest that without some closer political oversight at what is happening at such an enterprise, the business can get away from management. The board was not an executive board, they would probably only meet on desultory occasions, once, a month, and all kinds of things could happen. If lower down your management structure is not integritous.....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Does not have integrity. I was using the adjective for those three words.

If your day-to-day management structure does not have the integrity to send to the board truthful information about the day-to-day operations, the board can always be kept in the dark, and I believe that that was the main problem with the Arawak until recently I said until recently, and I want to be perfectly honest about this. 5.40 p.m.

Day before yesterday, I mentioned to the Minister that I had information that Arawak was likely to break even on its operating side this year. We know the arrears, and I think we have to devise mechanisms so that the political directorate can have a closer surveillance, even if a representative from the Ministry is paid a responsibility allowance or whatever -1 am only thinking on my feet and aloud - to be in closer contact with the management. Some mechanism will be needed, because ultimately the political directorate is going to get the blows, and unnecessarily so, and it will be a means of tightening the screws on management and ensuring as far as possible that we can see early what is happening.

I would have thought that the accounts of Arawak Cement Company would have been audited by a reputable firm of public accountants and that they should have picked up early if there were any infelicities, draw them to the attention of the board in the usual way, by a management letter or by qualifying the accounts, and then, of course, if the board chose not to act in harmony with the advice that was given to it from the public accountants, I would have no difficulty in saying that the board would be guilty of dereliction of duty, full-time board or part-time board. You have a responsibility, as a board of directors, to deal with problems in the system if the auditors draw them to your attention. That is one of the directors' duties. I do not know, because I do not think I have ever seen any of the accounts of the Arawak Cement Plant. They certainly do not come in here. The Minister in reply, or later on, may be able to indicate whether in a timely fashion the accountants drew all the problems which have subsequently raised their heads to the attention of the board.

In summary, therefore, Sir, as we see it, the Arawak Cement venture was one inspired by the most altruistic considerations as an experiment in Caribbean unity,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have a minute more.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:..... ultimately to provide for the people of the Caribbean an indigenous product. Obviously, from time to time there will be problems in the establishment of any new venture, and one would expect there to be problems in the first couple of years of Arawak. I believe it was even anticipated that in the first few years there would be a loss. I am not suggesting, of course, that one would have anticipated the size of deficit that Arawak

ultimately came out with in the first few years of operation, but we are learning from the experience of the last three years that we will probably need in an enterprise of such magnitude a full-time executive board, or somebody liaising between the Ministry and the part-time board who is able to offer close supervision to what is going on. I do not know the mechanism, you can have an executive chairman, but you have to have somebody, who will treat it as a day-to-day job, reporting to a part-time board, but that chairman must be separate and distinct from the managers. We do not want the National Bank situation again, with "the Octopus" doing everything.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, in a way I welcome the intervention of both the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Trade and Industry in this part of the debate relating to state enterprises. I have not had articulated from the Government recently its policy in relation to state enterprises. It has had a reasonable opportunity now to look at all of the state enterprises, and I would really like some clear statement from it as to which of these enterprises it intends to privatise, or whether it has changed its mind on any of them at all.

I want to go a little bit more fully into some of these matters, Sir, because when you are very near to elections, or either just after an election or into an election, you usually get hysteria and schizophrenia that one does not normally witness when the reins of Government are settled very strongly on the shoulders of those who are fortunate to have won the battle; you usually get a little bit more sobriety at that stage. I believe that two years is a long enough time to see the sobriety, and certainly the debate so far has been characterised by a degree of sobriety.

The figures given by the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) certainly show that these state enterprises have paid, and in the case of the Barbados Grain Terminals and the Flour Mills, they have shown a profit from day one. The Government is not the sole shareholder in these. It is a Government commercial enterprise, Maple Leaf of Canada, which has formed a local subsidiary to hold its shares, but it is really the main shareholder of this company, and obviously it has been beneficial to Maple Leaf to ensure that there was proper management in place from day one, and to keep a tight rein on the day-to-day financial and other administration of the company. What is significant is that the Government's representatives on those boards were some of the same people who were also the Government's representatives on the Arawak Cement Company.

Super Poultry Farm was bought by Barbados Feeds Limited as one of its answers to the competition from Roberts Manufacturing Company Ltd. It was recognised that when Super Poultry Farm was bought, there may be for some period a loss position, but from my recollection of the sort of figures I nave been seeing, it was always projected that that company would come into a profit position, which it has now done.

I am very pleased to see that these companies are in a position to return to the Treasury part of their earnings. To that extent, it lessens the burden of taxation for the average citizen on whom direct or indirect taxes may otherwise be levelled. One has to say, on the balance sheet side, that if you are going to ask the political directorate to take responsibility for other companies that may not have performed economically, when you get on the credit side, you also have to give the praise to them for the performance that has ensued, just as yesterday in this Committee I adverted to the fact that Barbados External Telecommunications Ltd., another company in which there is a joint venture relationship between the Government and Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Limited, is in a position this year to pay into the Treasury on behalf of the Government something like $5 million in dividends. I am not sure what the Government's proportion is. 5.50p.m.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Accumulated dividends that you have got then. I believe that that is very significant

I believe the honourable Member said we should have bought more shares in BET. Let me say to the honourable Member that the intention of the Government then has always been that Cable and Wireless will off-load its share-ownership and that participation will be not by the state itself taking a larger slice, but by the share-ownership being widened to the public. There was a specific clause put in the agreement under which a proportion of the shares had to go to the employees. This was part of our programme for making sure that first, there was employee participation in share-ownership in this country. That is very important

The honourable Member is laughing. He knows that as a good democratic socialist and one of the people who was advising the Government at the time, I would ensure that these provisions were there.

We insisted at the time that the employees of Cable and Wireless West Indies Ltd. who were there at the time, should have share-ownership. I regret now that we did not insist that they should have even a greater share-ownership, but it is an important plan.

Secondly, we insisted that after a certain period, Cable and Wireless would off-load more shares to the local

public. And the definition that you will find in the agreement of "Public of Barbados" was very tightly drawn, if I may say so, to safeguard the local Barbadian national or resident. In some respects, it is a model agreement to keep share-ownership right within the hands of Barbadians or persons who can be seen to be CARICOM citizens with a residence and a connection here in Barbados.

Sir, what we have to ensure in these areas, if we are to transfer economic power to a wider mass of the people, is that Government uses its state enterprises in this way. To this extent, this was a model, and sometimes when I hear the statement that nothing was achieved under the Barbados Labour Party in the last ten years, I wonder, as a person who has been on the fringe of the economic changes going on, whether people have analysed the changes that have taken place and the manner in which those changes were brought about. Change has not gone as fast as a lot of us would want it to go, but it can go on, and the state can be a catalyst for change if the state wants to change, and this is one of the avenues in which the Labour Party saw and sought quite clearly to bring about change.

But I also have to issue a couple words of caution. When the state sits down in bed with private enterprise .....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Lie in bed then. Apparently, the Honourable Minister does not understand various poses, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I can assure the Honourable Minister that I am still producing.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are we in to weightlifting now?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: When you sit or lie in bed, Sir, with these enterprises, there are certain safeguards that have to be built in.

I must make a distinction between the state enterprise which is solely owned by the Government, or owned by the Government and another Government, like in Arawak case, and an enterprise which is owned by the mass of citizens alongside the Government and other investors, whether they be local or foreign. The Government's relationship must vary according to the various enterprises. I quite agree that what we tried to do at Arawak was to put in place a board of very reputable Barbadian citizens, or most of them. If I had any objection, it would only be to one of them, and none of the names that have been called in here are the names to which I would have had any objection.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: They are not the Trinidadians either.

We put in place a board. Unfortunately, there was not an executive director, as such, as you would find in a normal private enterprise, who would have some day-to-day management function so that you have direct control. Unfortunately, the board operated like a non-executive board, it went there only spasmodically, once a month, sometimes, twice a month, and there was not the same control that one really ought to have had. I have no doubt that the gentlemen whose names were mentioned by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), are all people of commercial knowledge, and of ability, but they were all very busy people, and no doubt, what has occurred at Arawak, is a matter that I do not believe any Government could take the blame for, except in the sense in which you understand that you have overall directorship. I believe that a different approach has to be brought to that. The management structure that controls would have to be different.

It is different, however, where Government is only a minority shareholder. The Government is a minority shareholder in a few companies, the Telephone Co., BET, and, I think, the Government is making a sad mistake, and the employees of the company would tell you if the Government has to monopolise, along with the major shareholder, all of the directorates of those bodies. It is an error. You are going to get to the stage where persons are not going to want to invest, if even the employees feel that their representation can only come either through the Government representative on that board, or the representation comes through the representation at the level of the major shareholder. This matter was raised at the public meetings of BET and the Telephone Co. Ltd., as the honourable Member knows. I am not a shareholder of the Telephone Company, but I am a shareholder of BET.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Of course, I have declared my interest, and if any more shares come on the market and I can borrow some money, I will buy a few dollars in shares. I might be able to come to an arrangement with my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.(Dr. R. C. Haynes), to borrow the money for a little while to help me buy a few shares.

I want to encourage, if even you buy 100 shares for $300 or whatever, the mass of citizens to look at the companies like these that are doing well. When there is a share issue, particularly the large majority, the 88 per cent

of Barbadians who happen to be my colour, which is black,...

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is 88 per cent. The 12 per cent is mixed.

In the long run, this is going to provide part of the solution to the problem that must bedevil those of us who are in public life at this turn of the century and that, therefore, we must get to know and understand business. The opportunities are being provided there. We are coming in share-ownership, because we are members of insurance companies and the policyholders of mutual companies, and the insurance companies are now owning a significant proportion of shares. But in a way it is divorced, and therefore, if you wish to have the direct say, you must use the opportunities through this way. 6.00 p.m.

There are other ways in which we can also get through this exercise. But I really would like to hear Government clarify its policies on the different approaches which it has to take. There is precedent for it I am not talking because I am being original on this point. I have seen the precedent in other state enterprises. It is an area that fascinates me and I try to learn a lot about it I would advise them to have a look at this area.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: In the other minute, Sir, I want to begin to talk about the supervision of the insurance industry. The insurance industry in Barbados is one of the fastest growing growth areas in the economy of this country. Whether it be the local insurance industry or the exempt insurance sector. There is a tremendous transformation taking place under our very eyes, without us sometimes understanding that change, where there is a shift in ownership of resources to the insurance companies. A company of which I am a policy holder - again I have to declare an interest - and a director, the Mutual, has started in the circumstances to expand.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who is pointing at me, is also a shareholder, although not a director, of that company, along with a lot of honourable Members here, Sir. I would like you to come, Sir.

These companies have started to expand, and expand such that Barbados is now looking outside of its borders, and outside of the CARICOM area, to become an exporter of capital, to the extent that it has a net benefit flowing in in terms of foreign exchange and otherwise. It is a very, very important change. It is interesting that the Barbadian, and perhaps Trinidad, policy-holders in these companies are now going to be the main persons owning assets. We will have to begin to look at this. The insurance industry here will need - the Government will have to get in place, since we are now becoming a global organisation, the type of machinery to deal with that situation to regulate, not to control, because there are certain parameters within which the industry must operate.

Sir, if there is one plus that one has to give to the Barbados Labour Party, it is the emphasis which it has placed on the growth of the offshore sector, particularly the exempt insurance industry. That has been beneficial to Barbados. The benefits are now being seen at the level of the increase that is coming from indirect forms of employment, but also in the foreign exchange benefit that has been coming into Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Maybe, you can stop at that point

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Alright, Sir, I will come back.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, during his contribution, the Leader of the Opposition .....

Asides.

(Aside: Are you winding up?)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, I am not winding up. It is not my Head.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the agreement which the Government entered into with Cable and Wireless to set up and form the Barbados External Telecommunications Limited, and referred-to it as one of the better arrangements of his Government, which I think is quite right, in some respects.

In 1982, the Government invited a man by the name of Mr. Weaver to Barbados, and he recommended that telecommunications should be in the hands of the Barbadian public. At the same time, Cable and Wireless offered to participate with the Government in a new venture. The result was that Cable and Wireless retained in the new company 65 per cent of the shareholding, the Government took 25 per cent and 10 per cent went to the public, including, of course, Sir, some of the employees of Cable and Wireless. The agreement included an arrangement whereby Cable and Wireless would, within the next two years, I think it is, off-load five per cent of its shareholding, and over the period of the agreement, which I think comes to an end in 1995, would sell off an additional percentage which would bring it down to a minority shareholder in the company.

Where I part company with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is that I do not agree that all of this should go to the Barbados public, and the reason for this is very simple. Who can afford to buy the shares in Cable and Wireless? Who would be the Barbadian public, apart, Sir, from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, who would be in a position to buy those shares? So the bulk of those shares would go to the hands of a certain category of Barbadian. I do not feel very strongly about their getting shares, but I feel that if the ordinary man in the street is to benefit from the shareholding of BET, the Government would have to acquire additional shares. I am not saying that Government should take all of the 15 per cent or 16 per cent of the shares to be off-loaded. I believe a fixed percentage should go to the Government and the rest should go to the general public. I think the only way in which the ordinary man in the street can benefit is for the Government to be able to benefit from some of those dividends and use those dividends as part of the general revenues of the country to assist the ordinary man.

Sir, the question of directors. Frankly, I do not feel very strongly on this question of directors. But the Government does not have all the directors on either the BET or the Telephone Company Board. Government only has three directors on the board of BET, and on the board of the Barbados Telephone Company, not seven.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Out of seven.) Hon.

P. M. GREAVES: Oh, out of seven. Oh I see.

I know that what they call the general public apparently has no representation on the board of either of them. That is a matter that can be rectified at the next meeting of the Board of Directors, or in due course. But as it stands now, I do not think that is a big problem to the Government.

So the position is that over the next couple of years we will be negotiating with Cable and Wireless so that the people of this country, which include the Government, will be able to benefit further from the mass benefits that have been accruing to virtually every country in the world in the dynamic area of telecommunications.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, a lot of interesting concepts have been raised in relation to the enterprises owned by Government, and I presume that one was talking about those commercial projects in which the Government invested the taxpayers' money, in the hope of having some appreciation of the equity invested and some return on that investment. 6.10p.m.

The question was asked originally as to what is the current status in terms of transfers from the Consolidated Fund to the various state enterprises and how does that fit into the overall original policy of the Government in respect of effecting efficiencies in this area to reduce the deficit of Government and the expenditures involved in such transfers. The fundamental point that has to be grasped is that in terms of assessing public sector deficits, it is not only the Central Government which forms the basis of the debate in the Estimates, but also the deficits that arise out of the overall public sector activity. Therefore, any policy position which addresses efficiencies and control in the growth of expenditure of Government, must address efficiencies in those operations outside of Government, whether Government is the sole shareholder or the partial shareholder. It was with that in mind that the Democratic Labour Party made a major plank of its platform the need to increase efficiency in all the state enterprises, both in the financial and non-financial sectors.

On the whole, it would seem to me that the improvements which were first initiated through the establishment of the State Enterprises Unit by the previous Administration have continued, as certainly we have seen significant returns, in terms of either reduction in losses or enhancement in profitability, in those companies which had a record of profitability. One could mention in the insurance sector, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, in the financial sector, the Barbados National Bank, which has and will continue to return, hopefully, substantial profits; the Barbados Development Bank, which is returning reduced losses; and as the Ministers have indicated in the case of the Arawak Cement Plant a decrease of the operational losses, which, of course, is a result of not only the tightening up of management in that area, but also of the fact that the demand for our local cement has gone up considerably over the past year, thanks to the tax concessions of 1986, the housing programme and the acceleration in building. These are all complex things.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) - I am not sure what was the point - mentioned something about Thatcherite approaches to privatisation, and then the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made some very interesting remarks about the spreading of ownership through the entire community.

Let me break it down. Let us say the Government totally owned a hotel, decided that it would sell off 50 per cent of its shares to its citizens and got $10 million out of those shares. The hotel is still owned by Barbadians, but the Government has $10 million, without resorting to taxation, which it can now use either to build another hotel, golf courses, or facilities around the place. So when you use the word "privatisation", one has to be very careful about its pejorative aspects.

It is a different matter if you privatise and sell to non-domestic interest. In micro-economic terms, what you really have to be doing now is to take an informed decision as to whether such an external sale is more beneficial to the country, because of the short-term returns in foreign exchange, or whether the longer term aspects would not be more harmful to the country. These are the kinds of considerations you have to balance.

Let me give you an example. When the Government of Trinidad seeks to sell off the assets of BWIA to deal with an immediate balance of payments problem, it must have taken that decision based on the fact that, looking over the years, it is the immediate problem which it must address. I hope that I have made the point

So when you use the term "privatisation", it is very important to recognise that the same process which the Leader of the Opposition is advocating in respect of companies such as BET is precisely the same process which can be carried through some of Government state enterprises with tremendous advantages in terms of the overall ownership in the society.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is too much noise from the Government benches.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Privatisation is an umbrella term that has within it a number of sectoral considerations that have completely different micro-economic responses and significance. If the Government owns an asset on behalf of the people, and in the public interest the Government determines that that asset may be disposed of to its local citizens, through partial or total ownership in that particular asset, what the Government does in that case is simply to shift the ownership of that resource from one pocket of the state to another pocket of the state without any losses to the state. What it can also do is to release the fully appreciated equity capital which the state had put in the original investment for the state to accelerate investment in another area.

There has been a lot of work on this particular aspect in the area of privatisation. There are many authorities now in the world on privatisation, and the Government of Barbados is now in a position where, if it has a serious look at its overall asset position, looking very carefully at those companies that are returning a profit, those companies whose assets are marketable, particularly now that we have a Stock Exchange in place, the Government can probably raise, I would think between $75 million and $100 million over about three years to help propel the further development of its capital programme without in any way depriving Barbadians of participating in the ownership of its capital assets.

The point I wish to underline and stress again is that it depends on the person or persons to whom you are selling. A Government selling to its citizens does not mean that it is dissipating an asset, because all it is doing is transferring the ownership from an entity called the Government, which holds it on behalf of the citizens, to its individual citizens. That is all that is taking place in broad economic terms. When you privatise by means of selling assets- externally, the different considerations arise. 6.20 p.m.

I believe, Sir, that it is important that I should make that kind of intervention. I have heard the Leader of the Opposition, as a lawyer, say a thousand times in this House that you cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time, but his speech, there was no question about it, was laced with sequential approbations and reprobations, perhaps not fully appreciating that that was in fact what he was doing, it does not matter whether the Government has minority interest, a marginal majority interest, or a total interest, when you talk of selling off shares to individuals the principle is the same. The principle you are endorsing when you recommend the Government selling off some of its shares, or making the shares in BET available to the general public, is no different conceptually from selling shares in any public enterprise to the citizens of Barbados.

I hope that this deals once and for all with the general principle behind the concept of privatisation, because you cannot say at one and the same time that the initial investment in the state enterprise is desirable to expand the productive capacity of the economy - have I not heard that a million times? - and then if an opportunity comes to use the same asset to further expand the productive capacity of the economy, you take exception to that. It does not seem to me to be a logical position.

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I know for a fact that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has invested in about 20 or 30 different things in Barbados, and when he has had full capital appreciation, he sells off and invests in something else, and rolls over his capital. How do you think he has become a multi-millionaire in a short period of time?

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir: the honourable Member is obviously misleading the House. Other than investing in my wife and my family, Sir, I have no substantial investments to talk about. I do have substantial investments in a lovely family, which I am sure will give me tremendous capital in due course.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have tried my best to project the Honourable Leader of the Opposition as being a prudent businessman, and I hope he is not objecting to that. But

surely you must advise your clients. If you buy a house and you make $20 000 on it in five years, and you realise that over the next ten years you are only going to make $5 000, then you sell the house and invest in something else, or you get somebody to buy part of it or invest in it, and you move on further. The same applies to Government investments. '

I believe that in the Ministry of Finance you will find studies, suggestions, by several authorities on privatisation, and it varies from country to country. What Mrs. Thatcher did in the United Kingdom is somewhat different from what could be done in Barbados and these other places. Her programme is not the kind of programme which would be attractive to Barbados. But the point is that you can tailor and modify a privatisation programme in such a way that you do not compromise the socialist goals of a political party, whilst at the same time you maximise the capital deployed by the state in the public interest.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that that brief intervention clarified the confusions which seemed to have developed in the debate.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, we have had a very good hour and a half at a very philosophical and intellectual level. All that debate is essential to a better understanding of the practicalities of politics, but I want in particular to deal with a very important, but mundane, matter under Subhead 14, Supervision of the Insurance Industry. The point I am going to make is going to be very brief and limited.

I want the Government to start investigating some of the foreign insurance companies which give coverage for motor insurance. You will know, Sir, from practice, the difficulties we have with some non-Barbadian companies run by some curly-haired people, who give the greatest possible difficulty in settling legitimate claims of Barbadians. It is working great hardship. I have warned a couple of them that I am going to make a general point in here during this debate and I expect them to pull up their socks. If it continues, I will call their names and embarrass everybody, because it is ridiculous after people, pay the premiums, which continue to go up every year, on the excuse that there are more accidents, and when you get in an accident, even where you are comprehensively insured, and the Barbadian company - take United - pays you out, that company cannot collect from the foreign company because they are refusing on all kinds of technical, foolish grounds, not within the terms of the contract.

I can tell you about an accident in Chapel Street. Do you know what the insurance man told me? About aero-dynamics! I said it happened on the ground, two cars hit. But he told me about aerodynamics!

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: The fellow might have been flying.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, the fellow just came through a major road sign, but I have added a little levity to dramatise it, Sir, deliberately.

It is a serious situation and I am concerned, because there are a number of poor Barbadian clients who have just been able to afford a motor car, get into problems, they are not wrong and deserve to be paid out

It is worse where some of the cars are financed by.say, the BDB, a taxi, for example, and has duty free status and so on. That first car is written off. To get a replacement to do your job as a taximan, you have to go and pay off duty down at the port, before you can buy the second one, and you have to find that money out of your own pocket, because another insurance company which is clearly wrong, but has no commitment to Barbados, is refusing to settle the claims.

The Minister of Finance is not in here, but I hope somebody will let him know, and I am glad that I have got some support on the Government benches. It is an area of great tension. Those foreign companies are maintaining a very poor record in the insurance industry, Sir, and we have to get the message through to them.

I said I would only be five minutes, Sir, and that is the point I wanted to make. 6.30 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, I really had not planned to join this debate, but I join to help the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) get the message across, because the message has to go forth that on these matters we are *ad idem.* There is no divide between the parties, or between the people, on this. We have some people who come into this country who set up businesses who seem to think that all of us went to school and got all this education and got elected and then we are ignorant and stupid.

I have been driving an American car from the time I came back to Barbados as a returning diplomat, and you know they allow you to bring in the car. For 13 years, Sir, I have driven the car. There is hardly anything, apart from the Prime Minister's car, that lasts 13 years, S-1025, a Toyota. Suffice it to say that the two of us had two long-standing cars. I am away, and I ask my friend who drives in the car to start the car for me, he goes on a frolic of his own, the next thing I know he cannot drive a left-hand drive car, the car, as they say in the jargon, is totalled. It is a 13 year-old car and you do not expect too much. They say that they had

some questions about the other fellow, who might have been trying to get rid of his car, but that is not my problem.

I came back in and ordered another American car, and the honourable Members on that side made me pay a lot of duty. I have one of the most expensive cars in Barbados. The car cost a little bit in Philadelphia, but the duty was high. No problem; it was paid. But the insurance companies in Barbados say that they are not insuring American cars. That is what happened to me. I had to threaten to discuss it in the House of Assembly. I was in the Opposition, but I was a Member of Parliament, and sometimes you have to promise them that you are going to discuss the matter in the House of Assembly. They told me, Mr. Chairman, that the insurance companies had come together and had decided that they were not going to be insuring American cars. I said that the Government did not say that they had stopped importing them, and they allow you to practise in this country. They did the same thing to the small motor cycle owners who do not have any representation *per se* in here. The insurance companies have them with their backs to the wall.

I told my broker to get in touch with the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, because I cannot deal with the curly-haired insurance companies.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is telling me that they are Indians, but the one that told me so was not an Indian, he was a straight-haired one. I do not! now any straight-haired Indians. Anyhow, I am told that they have some of those, too. I do not pay any attention, I was concerned with the money.

When I raised the question with the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, they started to tell me that they had joined in this conspiracy not to insure American cars. But on drawing to their attention that the matter would be discussed publicly, they recognised that they had to serve a different God. So my cars, and, therefore, my business, went to the Insurance Corporation of Barbados.

When I instructed the broker to give all of the insurances which I have to the Insurance Corporation of Barbados because they were willing to insure me, I then discovered that the company which is giving me a mortgage had a clause in their mortgage agreement that I must insure with a particular company. And I said the other day that it is immoral and somebody has called me and threatened me that they are going to take away the mortgage.

Well, they can take away the mortgage. The mortgage is not something they are giving me, it is something that I am buying. And it must be known by the poor people in this country that when you get a mortgage, you are not at the mercies of anybody, you are paying the interest on the mortgage every year, and they cannot function unless you do that, and this business of determining that you must either use a certain law firm or you must use another insurance company is illegal. The fact must be made known to the public of Barbados that no one can force you to treat with anybody you do not wish to treat with. It is illegal. The contract cannot be free, and therefore, I do not owe them anything.'

Seriously, Mr. Chairman, I think that we have, when these matters come up, to join forces to let the public know that they are under no obligation to accept unfair terms of any contract. There is no one who can force anybody to do business they do not wish to, nor can they withdraw legitimate offers that they have made. There are people in this country who seem to feel that they can mislead other people, and as a result, they do things that are not only immoral, but illegal. My contention is that we have to stand up, especially in the House of Assembly, and it is especially in the House of Assembly that we must make the point that these unfair contracts and unfair terms and other methods of illegal business which goes on in this country must cease.

Let us deal with the Indians. There are some decent Indians in Barbados and there are some indecent Indians. Somebody is going to say that the Minister got in the House and was racist. That does not put me out. There are some people that have come from outside Barbados, many of them came in here illegally, and they are now practising in Barbados in a manner which interfers with the moral standard which we have always accepted as a Barbadian way of life. They frighten the people in this country, and they also give the impression that they have friends in the Government, true or false, and therefore thdy can get away with anything. It is not true. We have one of them, but we would not deal with him specifically, because that is a matter which will have to come for discussion and it is not fair. But there are many of them who have to understand that if they come into this country they have to abide by the laws, rules and mores of this country, in the same way that when a Barbadian leaves here and goes to the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, India or anywhere else, he or she has to abide by the laws, mores and customs of that country. And the sooner we in Barbados let it be known that we are not going to be moved in this respect, the better we are going to be, and as far as I know, there is not an honourable Member on this side who does not feel the way as I have just said.

I rose to let the honourable Member know that whenever these matters come up, we are going to join, there will be no division in these matters. That is how I feel.

Mr. E. BOURNE (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman I came specifically to discuss insurance today, but the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) and the honourable Minister of Health have really stolen my thunder. It is not only the curly hair insurance people, it is all insurance companies in Barbados'. I cannot understand why it is that the small man should be short-changed on almost every occasion. I have three marine cases which bother me nightly. These cases belong to poor fisher-folk and that is why they bother me.

One boat, Mr. Chairman, was sunk at Oistins by another boat. The offending boat owner took the other owner and captain to his insurance company accepting liability and to this day they cannot make a decision as to whether he should be paid or not This happened since September. 6.40 p.m.

The gentleman tells me that his problems is they are worrying about not only the cost of his boat, but also about his loss of use. Now, tell me, in all things that are fair and reasonable, if a man is using an instrument, whether it be a car, a boat, or a saw, to make his livelihood, should he be denied payment for the time he has lost? This gentleman tells me that all he is asking for is $300 for his boat and $300 for himself, which is more than reasonable in a fishing season.

Asides.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Three hundred dollars plus $300, $600 per week. That is more than reasonable, but it would appear as though he would have to take a machine gun and shoot somebody.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Of course, the honourable Member is not advocating murder.

Mr. E. BOURNE: No, Sir, not at all. That is not the case, but what I am saying here, Mr. Chairman, is that if we do not look into the insurance industry, it is surely going to come, because the small people are irate and do not intend to be short-changed much longer. I bear the brunt of these attacks when it comes to the fishing industry, and also when it comes to the other side of the insurance industry, because I work as an insurance surveyor.

As the Honourable Minister of Health has said, our biggest problems are those insurance imports. I do not understand why they find it quite convenient to collect money and very, very difficult to pay out when the time comes. Anybody can walk in to an insurance company and ask to buy insurance for a car. All they want to know is your name, how old you are, how long you were driving, what is the value and who will be driving the car. You put a value on it, they give you a price and you pay. Nobody ever bothers to go downstairs to look to see whether it is a car, a box-cart, a bicycle, or a loaf of bread, but they take your money. A couple months down the road there is a write-off and then the fight starts. As soon as there is a write-off, people like me would get involved. I must give a value, and in some cases, neither the insurance company nor the owner is satisfied with my value, because they contend I am his friend, he paid $20 000 a year for his car and he wants $20 000. That is the way it is.

What these people should be made to do is inspect the vehicles and make sure that the insurer brings an approved valuation from a reputable garage, and when I say reputable, I mean reputable, because you have to search very hard to find many of them today in Barbados. It is common to go around to get certain values, and you can ask the same garage about three different times about the same article and get three different prices, depending on who you are and what you want it for. This is the way it is in Barbados, and I am saying that we definitely have to put a stop to this rip-off.

The insurance industry, as far as I am concerned, is a rip-off. The insurance rips you off and the unscrupulous people out there rip off the insurance companies, which, in turn, rip off us honest folk.

Mr. Chairman, with those few words, I add my support to the honourable Member for St. Thomas and to the Honourable Minister of Health.

I thank you.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I think I should respond to a few of the comments made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) in relation to the Arawak Cement Plant

I believe that all Barbadians must be embarrassed by what has happened at the Arawak Cement Plant. I can tell by the way in which the Opposition responded to this matter that they are embarrassed, and we are also embarrassed. As I said, we have tried to put some systems in place to correct a number of the difficulties and problems which have arisen.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas indicated that the Barbados Labour Party took a hands-off position as far as the operation of the plant is concerned, and would hope that there would be no political interference at the Arawak Cement Plant. I give him the assurance that the Arawak Cement Plant operates as a private company. It is a company registered under the Companies Act of Barbados. I am going to take a hands-off position, but, however, as long as I have responsibility for it, I will make sure that I

know what is going on at the Arawak Cement Plant, and I will insist that reports are made to me, and when reports are made to me by other sources, I will have them investigated, because I will have to be in a position to answer any charges which are made concerning the Arawak Cement Plant in here or outside. I want to make that very clear but I am not getting involved in the operation of the cement plant on a day-to-day basis. We have put a board in place in which we have confidence, and we would hope that the board would operate in the best interest of the shareholders.

He also indicated that the Arawak Cement Plant was an experiment in CARICOM relations. When the idea of a cement plant was conceived in Barbados, it was conceived as a joint venture between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Guyana When the Democratic Labour Party lost the Government, the Barbados Labour Party after, I suppose, many periods of agonising, indicated that they wanted to change that, and they went into a joint venture relationship with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

It is, certainly, a venture which has very important implications for CARICOM-type enterprises. In this particular respect, when the company was established, one of the major areas of concern was that it would be able to export its cement to the CARICOM region. Indeed, I think there was an arrangement where Trinidad was supposed to take a certain portion of the cement Since the company has been in operation, I do not think that that has taken place. As a matter of fact, in the meantime Trinidad extended and modernised its plant so that the plant in Trinidad could satisfy the Trinidad market. So we have had to reply on domestic consumption and on exports in the region. 6.50 p.m.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) indicated that one of the reasons for the improved performance of Arawak within recent years has been an increase in local consumption of cement That is a fact. The information which I have indicates that in the year 1984-S5, local consumption was 44 334 tonnes, in 1985-86 the figure went to 51 513 tonnes, and in 1986-87, it went to 69 026 tonnes. That included bag cement, cement in bulk and cement products. Our export sales have also been rising.

One of the things we have been looking at in trying to further increase the use of cement locally has been the utilisation of cement for utility poles. This matter was raised with the Light and Power Company and they have indicated that, for technical reasons, they may not be able to consider this. But I see concrete utility poles used in other countries so I am satisfied that the technology is available. All utility poles have to be imported from the United States of America, and if a company in Barbados is producing material that can be turned into utility poles, I see no reason why the Barbados Light and Power Company, the Telephone Company and those other companies which have to use utility poles could not consider using that material for poles.

I have only made a statement and in that is an implied warning. I believe that the companies ought to take a look at that, because we have, wheresoever possible, to increase the utilisation of cement domestically. I hope that that warning would be taken to heart by the utility companies, because there is a very easy way of doing it as we understand it They have to get permission to bring in the poles, and the Ministry of Trade issues them.

We have been trying to increase our sales on the CARICOM market, and we are still concerned when we see the importation of cement from extra-regional sources by some of the countries. There is no reason why countries in the region, if we are in a regional movement, should be importing cement from Columbia in the quantities in which they are importing. The same way that our CARICOM partners expect, and certainly insist, that if there is a product which they have and which is used in Barbados, Barbados should import that particular produce, we are insisting that we have a good product here, that the importation of cement from extra-regional sources should be discontinued and that we should have the benefit of that.

It is interesting to note that the kind of airing that Arawak used to receive on some of these radio programmes, as you will notice, have mainly stopped. One of the major problems which we have been able to resolve has been the problem relating to the truckers. We understand that it has been solved to the satisfaction of the truckers, and we would hope that the relationship which now exists will continue to exist, and certainly improve.

It is a fact that the cement is a good quality cement and we hope that the management and the board will continue to do the kind of job which taxpayers expect of them, and which we, as the Government, certainly expect of them. Because it is really a very heavy burden which we have to carry when we consider the amount of losses which have been accumulated at Arawak, but which, gratefully, we have seen a reduction of during the last financial year.

I thank you.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, having been instrumental in stimulating this debate here, I needed to get back into it, I confess, first of all, that I am very pleased with the manner in which the debate has been going. I hope that we can even pursue it into tomorrow, because there are a lot of matters dealing with insurance that need to be discussed.

I want to react, hopefully constructively, to some of the broad comments that have been made.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Are you winding up?)

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am not winding up.

Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) made some interesting comments, some of which might have been lost. I think that we should focus on some of the broader things that have come out of that particular discussion.

Like the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, I believe that the consolidated public sector, rather than just the Central Government, operations must be the focal point of financial development in Barbados. We inherited from the colonial management of the Barbadian economic system a focus on Central Government operations. That focus was good when the state was not involved heavily in an investment role in the society. But as the role of the state has broadened into a direct investment relationship with the economy, a public sector focus which links itself only with Central Government operations takes us farther ana farther away from an evaluation of the proper parameters of fiscal management.

The operative consideration, Sir, must therefore be the public sector consolidated deficit, which tends to be broader than the Central Government deficit Indeed if one were to take the entire public sector, outside the Central Government, you might well find that to the extent that some enterprises are in surplus and others are in losses, the surpluses of enterprises tend to be larger than the losses, or deficits, and as a result, the overall consolidated public sector deficit tends to be smaller than the Central Government deficit as such.

It is for that reason, Mr. Chairman, that in 1985 we took the decision to establish the State Enterprises Unit, because if you were to analyse what had been happening in Barbados as regards the transfers from the Central Government, operating as well as capital transfers, you would have found, Sir, that between 1983 and 1984, operating transfers from the Central. Government to statutory corporations tended to be rising at a rate that was faster than the rate of growth of overall Government expenditure. It was also realised between 1984 and 1985 that the 15 per cent increase in such transfers was turning out to be one of the most important sources of disturbance in public finances. So taken we established a State Enterprises Unit as a means of trying to bring a consolidated approach towards the management of public affairs in this country.

I say that, Mr. Chairman, because I feel that despite the little political embarrassment that was suffered last year, if we are to put the consolidated public sector at the centre stage of our financial management, the table which was Appendix G is critical to that. If, Mr. Chairman, we are going to be seriously managing not only the Central Government finances, but also that other part of the public sector system which cannot be described, as Central Government, then we need to know by how much, if at all, the deficits of the enterprises are rising, and how they are being financed, in much the same way that we need to know by how much the Central Government deficit is rising and the manner in which it is financed. 7.00p.m.

The information contained in that appendix is innocuous information. It contained a political point last year, which the Opposition put. But everybody must understand, Sir, that a statutory organisation, just like a Ministry, will put proposals to Government which the Ministry of Finance will have to evaluate within the context of the pool of resources available and recommend cuts as the circumstances would require. I think that while the Government has made a lot out of Appendix G, its absence from this year's Estimates is a mistake, and we need to get back, as was the case in the past, to an examination of the consolidated public sector finances.

As regards the points raised by the Deputy Prime Minister, I do not at all share his view that it would be a mistake for the shares of BET to be issued by way of offer to ordinary people in Barbados. We cannot start the situation in Barbados where the ban of ownership of shares is too narrow. The objective of setting up a Securities and Stock Exchange is not just to facilitate the trade in shares between existing shareholders, but to broaden the range of transactions so that at the end of the day Barbados can be converted into a property-owning democracy in which a larger and larger section of the population is brought into the business of buying and selling shares. In consequence, Mr. Chairman, new issues of shares by enterprises such as BET ought not be seen as something that should be swallowed up by the state. And if we are going to make the Securities and Stock Exchange become involved in a wider set of transactions than is the case at present, and if we are going to bring more and more people into act, as apparently the intention is, it would be a tremendous mistake. Mr. Chairman, for the Government to directly purchase the shares of BET in preference to allowing them to be bought by the general public.

There are many different ways in which one can impose and introduce controls to ensure that existing

institutional or private shareholders who have large blocks of funds do not get access to the few shares that are issued. That is the issue which the Government should be addressing. But it would be a very retrograde step, having established a Securities and Stock Exchange, to block the access of the ordinary Barbadian from having the liberty that is now exercised by my leader and other Members on the other side. The Government should not gobble them up. So I cannot agree with the position taken by the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of elucidation, Sir I never said that Government should gobble up any additional shares made available to the general public by BET. I said the Government should take part of those shares on behalf of the general public who would never be able to buy some of those shares.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am afraid that I misunderstood him, just as I am sure that some of his other colleagues might have misunderstood him.

As regards the Arawak Cement Plant, and speaking on hindsight, the errors made with the Caribbean Multilateral Clearing Facility are instructive from the point of view of the way in which institutional arrangements must always be made to ensure that an institution should never be allowed to financially approbate and reprobate at the same time. On hindsight, Sir, it might have been a mistake to have the Central Bank both exercise regulatory functions in relation to the management of our reserves and also have a day-to-day operational responsibility in managing a thing such as the Caribbean Multilateral Clearing Facility. I am sure that if the Barbados National Bank was the operational agency responsible for our relationship with the CMCF, the Central Bank might have been more timely in the exercise of regulatory responsibilities to ensure that problems would not have arisen. When you get institutions responsible both for operational decision-making as well as regulations, you are going to have a lot of break down in the kind of proper institutional relationships which should be observed.

In my view, Sir, anytime in Barbados we set up a commercially-oriented institution, the responsibility for overseeing its operational functions should not ever be deposited in the Ministry of Finance. It should reside in a line Ministry, because at the end of the day it will be the Ministry of Finance which will have the responsibility of having the final function of overseeing. In a sense, if one is to cite the source of the error, it would be in having that board report to the Ministry of Finance from the very start, when there was not a resident technical expertise to oversee the operations of an industrial enterprise in an executive way. I cite that merely drawing from the benefit of experience. It is said that good judgment comes from experience, and experience from bad judgment

As regards Agriculture, the Minister of Agriculture had a number of interesting things to say by implication. Because if what he is saying is true, there will be absolutely no reason whatsoever for any price support for sugar on the 1987 crop. The two estates that are reported to have made a profit are Dodds and Springhall. On that hangs a whole developmental process, which perhaps, I ought to get into, and probably will go into when we come to Agriculture. But in the case of the Dodds, it just goes to show what good husbandry practices can do on estates in the high rainfall areas of Barbados.

In 1983, when I was Chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation, we took a very deliberate decision to take out some of our best lands in the high rainfall areas - one-third of the lands in the best estates of, ADC - clean them up, get them back into good husbandry and then establish proper cost accounting systems to see whether or not is was possible to grow sugar profitably in Barbados. Dodds was an estate that was chosen, and in each of the three years one-third of the land was taken out, cleaned up and put back into good husbandry under proper agriculture. I am pleased, Sir, that as a result of that experiment, Dodds is now in a position to show a profit. 7.10p.m.

The Springhall experiment is even more interesting, because Springhall is located in one of the worst ecological zones in Barbados from the point of view of the growing of sugar cane. You will recall, Mr. Chairman,that in the sugar debate that passed, I drew reference to a regression analysis that I have seen done which analysed relationships between cost of production of sugar cane and ecological zones, because it is supposed to be a truth that estates in the better ecological zones should have lower costs of production than those in the worst. That regression analysis has shown that you had a situation where estates in a bad ecological zone, like Foursquare in St. Philip, were reporting lower costs of production than those in some of the better ecological zones of this country, leading to the conclusion that there had to be factors operative other than just the price of sugar.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has another minute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to pay a compliment. At Springhall Estate you have perhaps the most conscientious manager of any sugar estate in Barbados. When these things arise, we should pay compliments in the House of Assembly. You have a man called Mr. Franklin who made Husbands in St James realise a profit from the growing of sugar cane. He is managing the worst estate in ADC. He has been managing it conscientiously, he has been realising, on a per acre basis, a lower loss than any other manager in ADC, and the fact that the estate in ADC, operating in the worst ecological zone, can realise a profit, should send a

a message to us in this House as to the correct positions that we should seek to adopt as regards the sugar industry.

As I say, Sir, I hope that this debate does not finish. There are other things that I would like to say in due course.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the sitting be now suspended until 12.00 noon tomorrow, March 17.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 12 noon on March 17, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 7.15 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 19 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE (AS AMENDED) -$3 177 000 (Cont'd)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, yesterday when we adjourned, there had been some very interesting comments made by honourable Members on both sides of the House in relation to problems occurring in the insurance industry. I wish to add my voice to some of those comments and outline some of the problems, as I see them, which have occurred.

Sir, the insurance industry is to a large extent, now being regionalised, and most of the development which has taken place has occurred in the four MDC territories, particularly in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. We have gone through a period in which each territory, and particularly again the territories of Jamaica and Guyana, has imposed some restrictions on the operation of insurance companies within its domain. There has been no serious attempt to "Caricomise" the industry and to co-ordinate the various respective regulatory bits of legislation. The result has been that each Supervisor of Insurance operates within his own domain and there is not a sufficient exchange of information within the region to sort out some of the problems of which honourable Members spoke.

In the process, what has occurred is that foreign companies have been selling off their interests, so we are finding a large number of local companies being formed which then operate within the jurisdiction of each other. In my view, the time has come where at the level of CARICOM, we will have to pursue a very strong and integrated policy to get past the problems which have occurred. That is the first thing, Sir.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East (Mr. E. Bourne) spoke from his background of knowledge. He is associated very closely with these problems on a practical basis as they come to the fore. I believe the honourable Members for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) and St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) also spoke from their experience in relation to claims.

Sometimes there is an instance in which a company can find a money judgment being given against it, as has occurred here in Barbados on several occasions, the company ceases operation within our jurisdiction, and then it is necessary to enforce that judgment against the company within its Head Office jurisdiction. The particular cases have been startling, and this has occurred in relation to at least one, and possibly two companies in Trinidad and Tobago. The company waits until there is a change in the parity of the various currencies to effect payment, with the result that the person who has the judgment in Barbados finds himself being paid less. The only way to deal with that situation is on a Government to Government level, and I believe that we are going to have to pursue the matter at that level.

In addition, Sir, under the insurance legislation in Barbados the Supervisor of Insurance will now have perhaps to recommend to the Ministry of Finance, and also to the Exchange Control Authority, because a lot of these problems can be solved under some of the existing legislation, that there must be an upward movement in the deposit requirements which are required for not only life insurance companies, but general insurance companies operating within our jurisdiction. I recall that some years ago, when First Federation Life defaulted here, there were a whole host of small people who were hurt by that default,

and the company had just a piece of land and I think a deposit of about $240 000, that was all, deposited with the Accountant Geenral, and it had to meet liabilities which were higher than that.

In the case of life companies we are not getting that problem, because the deposit requirements have been higher, and the Supervisor of Insurance tries to make certain that at least 60 per cent - and in some cases as high as 75 per cent - of the contingent liabilities of the insurance companies to policy holders is held in government paper or securities acceptable to the Government of Barbados, or the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, as the case may be, and that paper is physically usually deposited either with the Supervisor of Insurance or with some other governmental authority. I feel we have reached the stage where we are going to have to ask for those requirements in relation to general companies which may be undertaking motor insurance business in particular, and it is in that field that most of the problems have occurred; although we have to look at the problem in relation to other general forms of insurance, particularly fire insurance. It is a pity, Sir, that the complaints which have been levelled, and which are wholly justified, have been levelled against companies that are Caribbean companies now essentially, and we have to ensure with whatever we do that these companies comply properly with existing legislation.

I said, Sir, that life companies do not have the problem posed by general companies. But in the life industry in Barbados we have had to deal with the problem where the Barbadian companies have resiled from writing new business in countries such as Guyana and Jamaica, because of retrogressive policies being pursued there, which eventually forced Barbadian companies back within their borders, whereas those companies continued to operate freely within Barbados and elsewhere. I think that, too, is unsatisfactory, and at the level of CARICOM I would advise the Government to pursue the sort of policy or briefs which I believe the industry has sent into the Ministry of Finance and to the Supervisor of Insurance from time to time on these common problems which are confronting them.

I believe also, Sir, that the Supervisor of Insurance's office will have to be beefed up and stiffened considerably, not only to deal with ,the new offshore business which we are attracting to our shores, but principally to deal with the proper regulation of the insurance industry and the myriad problems which are now coming to the fore. I do not believe that the section is yet properly staffed. 12.10p.m.

I also believe that we need a good deal of training in this field. Yesterday, I adverted to the opportunities which are now open to young Barbadians in actuarial science. I believe that our department of insurance, and it should probably move to a full department of insurance, must eventually be staffed by an actuary. If you are going to require persons to hold a certain percentage of their liability here, one has to be able to bring the expertise and the analysis from actuarial science to bear on setting up the criteria that are required in the industry. So I plead for beefing up the insurance department of the Ministry of Finance, and probably moving the department to the level of being a full department of Government

Some mention must be made about the growth of the offshore sector in relation to exempt insurance. It has been one of the most thriving parts of development in Barbados. Obviously, I would be failing in my duty as Leader of the Opposition if I did not pay tribute to the foresight of the Barbados Labour Party in pursuing this as a new growth area. The results are now there for all to see. Indeed, my recent information shows that only this week 15 new companies, which have flown from Panama, have been registered in Barbados. So there has been foresight.

This area has begun to contribute, and contribute quite significantly, in my view, to employment opportunities. It is opening a new field for our citizens, and as we become more and more educated and more and more business prone, obviously we need these opportunities. It also offers the probability of further growth as well, and I would hope that its importance will be recognised by the Government.

I do not want to go back through the various litanies of woes which other Members have spoken about in relation to the motor insurance industry. There are about two or three companies that have been the regular transgressors, and they are easily identifiable. I have had in dealing with one company to speak directly to the Supervisor of Insurance in Trinidad and Tobago, and to threaten that I would have raised the matter at the governmental level, this is only last year, to ensure that payment was made, and in those circumstances payment was made. It is unsatisfactory. There are too many people who still cannot get their claims dealt with properly, and these two or three companies have been giving a very bad name to the industry.

On the plus side, the Barbadian companies, particularly those that have been localised, either in the general or in the life insurance field, have performed extremely well, and I think it is a credit to the enterprise of Barbadians that we have now gone abroad. We have extended our tentacles outside of the English-speaking Caribbean and have begun to make our mark in the insurance field.

Only a few nights ago, we would have heard a lecture, as part of the Emancipation Series, on the development of

this and the way in which one local company was able to save the sugar industry for Barbados back in the 19th century when it was confronted with problems. I believe that the companies continue to make a definite contribution to the economic and industrial development of Barbados. Many of them are now using their pension funds particularly in the housing sector. Quite a few of them have used them to help in the sugar sector with the sugar industry, and I would hope that they will develop new forms of financing to help in the manufacturing sector. I am also pleased to see that they are in the forefront of localising the repatriation of pension funds, because as more and more companies fund the private part of their employees' pensions, much more money will be available for investment.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have just a minute.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The only other subhead to which I wish to make reference at this stage is the Central Purchasing Department, and it is by way of enquiry, Sir. I understand that a recent study was done by O & M into the Central Purchasing Department and that it has found that this department has performed well within the terms under which it operates. I wish to know whether this is true, Sir, and whether the study is of such a nature that it can be made fully available. I understand that there is no criticism to be made of the Central Purchasing Department and the manner in which it has carried out its mandate within the financial and other rules binding such a department, and perhaps the Minister, if it is possible for him to make a statement on it, will let us have some reaction to that point.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to encroach on the areas that have been covered by my Leader and colleague. I want to try to focus a bit of the weight on energy. As I said, Sir, it has been a long time since the House has debated energy. The last time the matter came to the House was by way of an order to adjust the taxes on various energy prices, and indeed, Sir, the last time that we had had a debate on it was at a time when the price of crude was in the vicinity of US$26 per barrel. The information available to all of us would indicate that the price of crude oil has fallen substantially since then, and with it, of course, the capacity and the scope for reduction in the price of gasolene has also arisen.

There are a number of issues that I want to raise as regards energy prices, and I take the first, and perhaps, the most important, energy. In the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, it is very unequivocally stated that the Democratic Labour Party will, in pursuit of an energy pricing and water rates policy, introduce legislation to exempt regulated public utility companies from the payment of Corporation Tax. It said, Sir, that the exemption of regulated public utilities from Corporation Tax would have created a situation in which the Barbados Light and Power Co. Ltd. would be required to return to Government and other consumers of electricity accumulated deferred taxes and accumulated investment credits totalling in excess of $39 million, and that a DLP Government would immediately enter into discussions with the Light and Power Company Limited to agree on arrangements for the disbursement of the $39 million to Government and consumers in such a way as to ensure that the cash position of the company remains healthy.

This, Mr. Speaker, is a very serious two-fold commitment, on the one part to abolish Corporation Tax for public utilities....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: By the way, did you quote the page of the manifesto?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is page 7 of the manifesto.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am watching it carefully. I know that he said it just now and I am just watching to see how it goes.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I raised this yesterday and it was not answered, and I ask again, is it still the intention of Government to abolish Corporation Tax on public utilities? Is it still the intention of Government to enter into arrangements for the disbursement of the $39 million as promised? I think, Sir, the House deserves an up-date on this particular matter. It is a matter that has been in the public domain for too long. The Government spoke in terms of immediate action, and I would think that one can agree that after almost two years, the notion of "immediate" is beginning to lose its meaning. 12.20 p.m.

Item 12, under Subhead (6) of this Head, deals with the operating expenses of, the Energy and Natural Resources Division. The interesting point that is borne out here is that the amount to be paid for royalties on crude, petroleum and natural gas to landowners are for the next financial year projected to decrease. This raises implications regarding the scope and the volume of crude oil and natural gas production programmes.

The fact is that for the years between 1983 and 1985, royalties paid by Government to landowners have increased steadily each year. In 1983, some $692 000 was paid to landowners as royalties for lands leased by Government on which wells were located, and that figure increased to $789 000 in 1984 and to $1.1 million in 1985. It is now anticipated that for the financial year 1988-1989 the

amount to be paid under this subhead which includes other things, will amount to no more than $583 000.

This decline in the royalties to be paid for the lease of lands on which oil wells and natural gas facilities are located, prompts the query as to exactly what is the existing status of Government's energy and natural gas production programme. We have recently seen the opening of the LPG plant, and we have also heard in recent times of plans by Government to continue to extend the system for distribution of natural gas. But the Estimates seem to be indicating that rather than there being an expansion of the programme to make those initiatives viable and to make further expansion profitable, there is to be a contraction in Government's energy production programme. If this is the intention of Government, given that we have not had a full debate on this matter for a number of years, then I would think that it would be useful if the Minister of Finance could bring us up-to-date as regards Government's operations in this area.

I must also, Mr. Chairman, enquire as to what is the existing situation in relation to Government's energy conservation programme. The fact of a fall in the price of crude oil should not lead Barbadians into a false sense of security, and should not be the basis upon which we have refused to acknowledge that, as a non-renewable resource, we must continue to exercise the greatest conscience in the use of energy.

I am aware that under the Barbados Labour Party there was an extensive programme within the Public Service to install capital equipment to reduce the cost of energy as part of the general effort to reduce the overall cost of Government's operation. The programme was being extended to the hotel sector, as the intention was to have the programme extended, as far as possible, to all the major producing sectors of the economy. But the figures on the consumption of energy for the last calender year will show that the consumption of energy in Barbados has risen by almost 10 per cent. The break-down as between the various sectors of the society will be highly differentiated, but overall, there has been some acceleration in the consumption of energy in Barbados. There can also be an increase in consumption consequential on an increase in the rate of growth in the economy. But the information to which I have access would indicate that the increase in the consumption of energy in Barbados last year was at a faster rate than an increase in any rate of growth that can be projected. I am therefore seeking to find out from Government if there has been any relaxation in the programme to introduce a comprehensive and integrated energy conservation programme within the public sector and extend it to the private sector as far as practical and as far as feasible.

I think that electricity prices should now be at a stage where they should be beginning to come down. I think that in the course of the next few months it should be entirely possible for there to be a reduction in the price of electricity. The investment programmes that the Barbados Light and Power have put in, those speed diesel facilities, and the increased use of natural gas, would have by now put that company in a position where the fuel charge as a component of the total energy bill should now be coming down, and the fact of increased efficiency, coupled with the decline in the price of oil and the price, particularly, of fuel oil, I think, should serve as a basis on which the consumers of the country should be very soon assured of a reduction in the price of electricity. I am interested to hear the Minister's views on this, particularly in the light of the fact that when the last price adjustments were made, there was a reduction in the price of gasoline, but that was in a very small way financed by an increase in tax on fuel oil, which is the major input used for the generation of electricity.

The point that I am not trying to make, but which perhaps, ought to be made, is that the price of crude oil that gave us 99 cents per litre for gasoline could have given us lower electricity prices, were it not for the decision to increase the Consumption Tax on fuel. But that is an issue that we have debated before and I do not intend to detain the House on it.

I really think that we need an update on our energy production. The Government has just committed itself to the opening of a LPG plant and we hear of very ambitious plans for the extension of the natural gas facilities throughout Barbados. But if one is reading the Estimates correctly, a reduction in the royalties for crude, petroleum and natural gas, and a reduction in the royalties payable to landowners, would be in itself suggesting* that there is a projected contraction in the programme, at a time when Government's capital investments would seem to warrant, not a contraction, but an expansion.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS (Christ Church East Central): I want under this Head, to raise the issue of franchises, largely because in recent times we have been hearing about a very consistent and considered attempt by MacDonald's Incorporated to try to establish themselves in our small country. I am concerned because it seems to me that some of these large corporations operating out of the United States of America, because of the immense wealth that they have at their disposal, believe that they can thwart the wishes of a nation as expressed through a multiplicity of institutions operating in the nation. 12.30p.m.

In the trade union movement, we have a large volume of information relating to the industrial relations practices of MacDonald's, IBM, American Airlines, Zerox and a number of these companies. MacDonalds has a boast that it is one of the most difficult companies to unionize. I have no difficulty in a particular organisation taking up a position about trade unions, because trade unions understand their responsibility in terms of organising. But there is a certain contempt when an organisation can make this boast, not only in the country from which it originates, but would want to carry that as a national policy wherever it goes, in other words, an attempt to internationalise anti-unionism.

MacDonalds is an agency that is guilty of that particular practice. Wherever they go, whatever the normal industrial relations climate, they try to thwart that climate by a number of anti-union practices. One practice, as I said, is to try as hard as possible to keep out the union, and they spend a great deal of money to thwart unions organising campaigns. They also try to institutionalise work practices where they concentrate on using young people and housewives on a very casual basis. They try to capitalise on labour wherever possible and to maintain low wages, so the service sector which is expanding, led by MacDonalds, becomes an area of exploitation in any community where they operate. These are facts. The information is there. It is available from the International Union of Food and Allied Workers and other trade secretariats to which the Barbados Workers Union is attached.

We find it puzzling why MacDonalds is so persistent and insistent that they must come into Barbados, even if it has to go around legally accepted channels. We are all aware that both the last Administration and the present Administration has refused a licence for MacDonalds. But there is more than rumour, I think, in what we are hearing recently that they are going to be setting up five different outlets in this country, starting in December, I understand, and then moving on after that.

Let me make it clear. I am not against a position where there is going to be investment in this country creating jobs. But I believe there are certain areas in which we have local expertise, where there can be investment by local persons and the proper types of jobs can be created locally. I do not believe that the area that MacDonalds is going into is any specialised area, that they have to come to Barbados and teach us anything. On the other hand, I believe that there is a possibility that they can come here and damage or endanger established Barbadian companies, including the well-established hotel sector in terms of the restaurant or the food and beverage area of these hotels, which are controlled by Barbadians. I hope that on both sides we can join together and let the people from MacDonalds and their local representative know that the people of Barbados must have a say on these matters if we are thinking in terms of the development of our country. We do not need MacDonalds or anybody else to come here and tell us how to make and sell hamburgers. All of these little retail businesses in food that are starting up by Barbadians can be pushed back by a large American multinational that is spreading all over the world, going even to Russia. We do not need them, and we have to be able to tell them that.

And when they are going to try some devious methods to come into this country, we have to let them know that we understand what they are doing. I understand that there are several disclaimers coming from the Ministry of Finance to the effect that they have not given a licence to MacDonalds. But we are hearing the people who are supporting MacDonalds saying that they are going to startup some kind of enterprise only using the "MacDonald's" name, but not being connected with MacDonalds. This kind of sophistry, this inherent dishonesty cannot be foisted on the public of Barbados.

I want to make it very clear that the Barbados Workers Union, in principle, is against the coming of MacDonalds, or any corporate entity like MacDonalds, to this country, professively anti-union, that will distort the industrial relations climate that we have in this country. I believe we have to join on this matter and let a clear signal be sent to the MacDonalds like that.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Chairman, a few words on energy conservation. Energy conservation is a matter entirely for the population. There is very little that any Government can do in this respect but to persuade each and every one of us to conserve.

Our energy, unlike the colder countries, is mostly used up in fuel for transportation, cooking and electricity. In the cold countries, car pooling is practised, that is, people who live in a particular area would decide that they would use one car, five or six to a car, as the case may be. Then the transport system is such that commuting is very easy, there is a good network of surface and underground transport.

The only thing that we in this country can do is to try to persuade people to use the car less, and try to use as little electricity as possible. The only area where I think that we might be able to save on energy is if we can introduce fuelling of trucks and cars with liquid petroleum gas, and I do not see this being done too soon. It is true that this operation is not a costly one, because it is being done in North America, a conversion costs about between US$800 and US$1 000, but at the moment we do not have the technology for such conversion. I think that it would be very difficult for us as a Government to, at this time think

about embarking on any serious energy conservation programme.

Thank you, Sir.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, I was hoping that by this time on the fourth day we would have touched some other Heads, but it seems as though we are going very slowly.

The honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) raised the question about energy policies and energy prices, and he expressed the sentiment that he thought that by now, within less than two years after the Democratic Labour Party was given the job of running the Government, we would have been able to reduce energy prices more than he has perceived. My recollection is that petrol prices in this country did go down since May 28, 1986.1 think it was the first time in probably over 12 years that petrol prices have gone down.

He is urging the immediate implementation of policies. I think everybody in Barbados is aware of the speed with which die Democratic Labour Party has implemented a lot of its policies. I want to remind the honourable Members on the other side that in 1976 they promised a free National Health Service, and after ten years it was not implemented. But we understand that at times there are technicalities which will prohibit you from putting programmes into place, that is if they are feasible. But then there are programmes which are not feasible that you can never put into place. 12.40 p.m.

I sat and I listened to the insurance experts at various levels, those working in the field and knowing the field, and those associated at other levels of the insurance industry, talking about the problems in the insurance industry. I was surprised that there is one aspect of the insurance industry in Barbados that I did not hear mentioned, and it is the problem of discrimination among black people at certain insurance companies in this country. There are insurance companies in this country which I know, have been dismissing black people and at times bringing in other people to work in their places and paying them even more money. There is also the problem of black people working in certain major insurance companies in this country, and working in a particular job for several years, being unable to get promotion, and then somebody less qualified comes in, works in a similar job that is created and is paid more money. I think this is something that we need to look at very, very seriously, and I am quite sure that there are honourable Members in this House who know what I am talking about.

It is all right to say that insurance companies are ripping off people because they buy insurance, but we have to look at the other aspect where people who are actually working in the insurance offices are meeting the full brunt of discrimination. The bulk of the money brought into the insurance companies comes from the very black people in this country who are insured. Therefore, people who work in the offices, some of whom have degrees, "expect that because of their experience and their dedication to the same companies, they should be in line for promotions when they come up.

I thought that by this time, since we have spent so much time on insurance companies, this particular aspect of the insurance companies in Barbados would have been brought out. I am not saying that that kind of policy is a policy peculiar only to insurance companies in Barbados. But I think that since we are discussing the insurance industry and we have dealt with it in such depth, that aspect of the insurance industry in Barbados should be brought out.

Thank you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I want to follow on on the statement made by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) and join him in expressing my consternation at the fact that the fast food industry seems to be having another invasion of foreign enterprise. I believe that Barbados has reached the stage in this sector of our economic activity where we do not need outside assistance in any form whatsoever.

There had been a policy demarcated by the Barbados Labour Party and, I believe, by the Democratic Labour Party in some areas, limiting and closing, off certain sectors of or economic life, particularly in the ancillary services related to tourism, from outside competition, except they can justify that there is some special technological innovation which has not yet been learned by Barbadians. I make bold to say that the food industry in Barbados has reached the stage that other than sending a few of our top chefs to learn a bit about international cuisine and to give our experience in this field, we really do not need outside intervention. In fact, I have been talking to some of the organisations in this sector, and there are a lot of them concentrated in my constituency - the whole of that Christ Church area, from the Prime Minister's constituency through mine and up tc Oistins, and the honourable Member - and whenever I have talked to them, I have said we have reached the stage today where we should be franchising our operations throughout the Eastern Caribbean rather than other people franchising to us.

What has happened is that some of these organisations have now landed on loopholes in existing legislation as a

way of coming through the back door. They do not have to come through the Franchise Act, but use registered users' arrangements outside of the legal framework, and they are beating the legislation. I think the Government must give the clear signal that, as a matter of urgency, it will amend whatever legislation is necessary to get full and prompt disclosure, because that is what is needed, and the Central Bank must use its powers to ensure that no profits go outside. Further, they must not be able to beat it by saying that they are buying supplies from outside and bring the supplies in through another way and send out the foreign exchange in that form. One must be wary of how these people operate.

I do not believe that we have any case in the food industry for any outside intervention at this stage, not even in the form of coming in through the back door by saying that they are taking some local shareholding and hiding it. I think that Barbados could begin to sell their expertise by way of their own franchises in the Eastern Caribbean to those islands that still need it In fact, there is a wonderful opportunity for us, together with the other countries, to use their local products and our own to build up a tropical Caribbean expertise in the field which we can market far and beyond the Caribbean.

I join very much with the strong statement made by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. I am very upset about some of the practices that I have read coming from MacDonalds. A CNN broadcast a couple of months ago highlighted the sort of practices that they use to get around proper trade union organisations and the rights of the trade union to organise in the service sector. I represent a constituency that is strongly in the service sector, a lot of the workers work in this sector, and we are very concerned about this development. I would like to see these areas closed off for the Barbadians entrepreneurs. Some foreign companies have come in before, but the tendency has been for a large number of those who were operating before to become localised, and you will find that the locals have bought out the foreign shareholder.

Do not tell me now that they are coming back in through the back door! This will be a most unfortunate development to happen in our country, and I hope, Sir, that we can on both sides of the House agree to this. I understand that both this Government and our Government refused a franchise to these people. But they have found a way of getting around those provisions, and I believe this Parliament has within it the expertise to deal with that sort of situation and to send the signal as clear as possible.

I would think that the Government should draw up another list, we had one before, of the closed areas. I am also seeing the same thing happening in industries along the west and south coasts, again in ancillary industries connected with tourism in some respect I am not blaming any particular Government, I am saying that wherever these practices arise and they slip through, we have as Barbadians in this area to tell them, "We do not want you there!" 12.50 p.m.

If you have got US$7 million to invest, there are other areas of our country that we will welcome you in. It is not that we are against foreign investment, but it is only fair that when our people have started to come on, they should be given an opportunity to be able to compete. I am sure that nothing that has been said by the honourable Member or myself can be construed as being against foreign investment, but it must be of the right type and on the right terms, otherwise we are going to find ourselves in a terrible situation in Barbados.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, I think it would be remiss of me if I did rise to express satisfaction that my colleague from Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) has been able to find support in the Leader of the Opposition in this very important matter. He always talks sense, Mr. Chairman, and therefore one can only conclude from the *sotto voce* remark on the other side that he will always be supported by the Opposition.

One has to recognise that an argument of this sort is sometimes reduced to the puerile, because there are several persons who, using the forums at their disposal, try to make out, either in writing or on the call-in programmes, that MacDonalds is better than anything else that there is, certainly in Barbados they say, and because they claim it is better, it is therefore necessary.

It is difficult for one to be able to claim that the one thing is better than another, and sometimes what a person is referring to is the speed at which service is rendered at these so-called fast food establishments, and very much capital is made of the understanding that one can be in and out of these establishments in very short time. I think that a developing country, as ours is a developing country, needs to look much further beyond such really limited scope for decisions that we will make towards matters that have significant national importance, and our decisions cannot be based on whether you can get in and out of one of these places faster.

Quite clearly, one of the reasons why it might be possible to get out of MacDonalds more quickly would be related to the rates of pay that they pay, always by the hour, and always for very few and limited hours for their employees, whereas other establishments which have been here in Barbados for some time have been persuaded to pay people by the week, and to have at least a minimal number of hours per week during which they will employ their

staff. So even in the worst of times within any one year, there would still be a guarantee that the workers will work for a minimal number of hours, very often in the region of 32 in one case and 35 in another case.

In this other establishment, school children and sometimes very young school children, some people might prefer to say child labour, or persons who just want to supplement the family income and work between 5.00 and 7.00 on evenings, or university students who have an hour between tutorials, are persuaded to take jobs, and the taking of these jobs have two effects we must look at. On the one hand, the number of people who are unemployed are denied the opportunity to have full-fledged jobs in the work force, and on the other hand, we have a situation in which, because of the infusion of that pressure into the cycle of employment payment levels, there is a downward pressure on the payments of wages not only at that establishment, but at other establishments across the island, with the consequent effect that the wages of other people in other establishments begin to be put under very severe pressure.

If beyond this, Mr. Chairman, one were to look at the connections involved in this, one would find that one cannot lose sight of the practices that we have come to abhor. It is common knowledge, accepted by both sides, that there is a particular anti-union - and I am not so concerned to stop there - anti-worker, anti-progressiveness in these kinds of employers. But in their connections we are being brought face to face with the fact that there is a certain compatibility, because we have got experience of situations where persons who have been working at compatible establishments, and who have had several years of employment in those establishments, who are young and able to work, have been forced out of employment at those establishments, particularly when they have been earning reasonably good wages, in the region of $250 a week or so. These compatible companies that would seek to have a relationship with the MacDonalds have brought in persons and have determined to pay them by the hour, at very reduced levels of pay, and even when those persons work a full week, we find the situation where they cannot get beyond $100 or $112 per week.

One only has to look at the payment levels at the laundries in Barbados to understand the point that is being made here, that workers, young people, with long service, are being pushed out of employment, and persons with no service, but prepared to take a job on the maxim that half a job is better than no job at all, or a bad job is better than no job at all, are being brought in and put into situations of very unpleasant working conditions at rates of pay less than half of what the other people were getting. We would obviously be very concerned about this, and anybody concerned with the position that we are here expressing must be prepared to recognise that we must bring to heel situations of this sort, and must be prepared to deal frontally with exploitation in any such kinds of guises that there might be.

I support the position taken by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, who has indicated that we have to be in a position to join forces to make the country understand that this is not a matter for emotion of what one likes, but rather a matter for protection of local entrepreneurs, thereby protection for our own people, protection of the opportunity for our local people to expand and to improve themselves. Because we cannot be talking about national development if we are going to fool ourselves that people are going to come here in large numbers or delegations from, maybe Chicago or wherever else that kind of Italian kind of person comes from, and that they are going to hold meetings in our country and set up five or more plants, only because they love the country, and that there is not going to be an effort to repatriate the profits, even for the air fares and the hotel bills. I would not like to .think that in this august Chamber we would have the kinds of persons, or in our country that we would have the kind of mentality, that would wish to believe that there will not be an effort made to ensure, whatever we are told up front, that there would be repatriation of profits - and there would be profits, Sir - profits to the detriment not only of other catering establishments in the fast food industry, but to the hotel industry itself.

I believe, Sir, that with the thrust that has been made over the years to localise, especially the smaller hotels, thereby keeping the profits from the tourism sector in the country, we would be making a very severe error at this stage of our development, and indeed at any future stage, if we were not prepared to nip this thing in the bud and to recognise that there have to be some immediate steps taken to be able to make sure that we do not find ourselves with a problem on our hands, which problem would be one that would not only cause us to suffer economically, but would cause the very fine industrial relations fabric of our society to be destroyed. 1.00p.m.

We have been able to boast over the years, regardless of the Government, that we have been able to enjoy an industrial relations climate second to none in the Caribbean, and I would venture to say second to very few anywhere in the world. That has been so because the people who have been involved, at the level of the management of labour, at the level of the guidance of labour and the labour itself, have been people who have perceived that they have a stake in this country, that this country belongs to us, and generally, we do not have any place to pick up our heels and run to. We have therefore to be able to understand, Sir, that wherever these persons are coming from, whatever the stated agenda that they have, there is a hidden agenda that

we have to be very careful to watch, and it is that the welfare of Barbados, our native land, must be brought before any kind of side-stepping or any sectoral interests that individuals might perceive that they are able to pursue in this matter.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Chairman, this will be a very short intervention. I am not a lawyer, and I do not pretend to know all the laws relating to corporations as to what can be and what cannot be in Barbados, but what is coming through to me clearly from all I have heard so far, Sir, is that these people are registering the name "MacDonald's" as some sort of trade name, and as one colleague said, are trying to get through what we call the back door by having a local company use the name "MacDonald's". If that is so, as I said, I am not a lawyer, one tends to wonder how much we can do in regards to that in the absence of the type of legislation that is necessary, which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke of, to stop that sort of so-called back door entry.

I think, Sir, that while we have been spending a lot of time talking about the MacDonald's issue *per se*, the problem is not whether it is MacDonald's or whoever, it is that we are looking at a principle, and possibly a policy, that should be not only adopted in terms of what we are continuing to debate, but in terms of something more solid so that these people, whoever they may be, or from wherever they come, whether they are from neighbouring countries or from extra-regional countries, must understand clearly that this is the way it is to be done.

I heard the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) say that his Administration and this Administration would like to preserve certain ancillary services, particularly in the tourist industry - I should like to think that it is for all of us - as locally-owned enterprises. If you are going to say that, we have to understand that there are other fast food operations which also operate without any franchise, and if you are going to say that we have to preserve this area, we have to ensure that we do it in a way that they cannot continue their expansion also, because while we were busy watching to see what MacDonald's was doing, a similar operation, foreign-owned, or a franchised operation, has opened another outlet. So it would not only be a matter of if we are going to restrict these types of operations locally - and by "locally" I should think the Leader of the Opposition means not locally in the sense that it is registered, but locally in the sense that it is something Barbadian - and the point is that although it may be 100 per cent locally-owned, it is still a franchise arrangement, and are they not still repatriating fees for using the name? Do they still not buy certain ingredients and certain materials that could in fact be procured either here in Barbados locally or from a CARICOM country? They are still doing that, so there are all kinds of other back doors, there is not only one back door that we have to look at.

I know of one case where one particular operator made it clear that the reason why they cannot buy any ketchup made in Barbados was because it was not available in what they call portion control, the little plastic sachets. When I drew to their attention, that it was being made in Trinidad and why didn't they buy it from Trinidad, there was no answer for that. They are still today importing from the United States of America. The then Minister of Finance, Mr. Adams, and I had occasion to speak about it. He said to me that there was some difficulty in the quality coming out of Trinidad. This is strange, because only recently I was told that the people who were here from MacDonald's, who had talks with other factories, were interested in speaking to me about the possibility of producing the same ketchup. But that is by the way, because I don't want to get caught up in believing that I would have to support or not support MacDonald's based on whether they give me business or not.

If in fact, we are setting up a local company and all you are doing is using MacDonald's name, I think that part of the problem we have here to deal with is a moral problem. There are other fast food companies operating in Barbados and they operate with certain norms. One of my colleagues in the union said to me that the two other franchised fast food operations in Barbados have unionised workers, and it is to be made clear to this local company, whoever they may be, if they can get in before the legislation is changed, that we would expect them to operate under these conditions. One member said that MacDonald's is going into Russia, but MacDonald's is going into Russia with a different set of policies than what obtain in the United States or Canada. So I do not see why if anybody comes in here, whether it is a foreign company passing for a local company or whatever, it should not conform to the legislation which we have.

At any rate, they have to depend on the public for support, and we have to recognise that we have an intelligent public, and we have to give them both sides of the story clearly so that they will judge, along with us, whether or not it is in the interest of Barbados, whether the pros outweigh the cons. They cannot expect to have a situation where they can walk in here and employ our people and pay them lower wages than they are accustomed to for that type of work. This is very clear to me. But if they are willing to understand that they have to operate under conditions that exist here now, conditions that we, the people of Barbados accept, then, as I said before, we have to carefully weigh the pros and the cons.

I do not think, as the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) said, that it is a matter that we have to get emotional on. It may be true that there may be some technology that could be of assistance to some of us, but we have to weigh whether we need that kind of technology that badly that we would sell ourselves short to get that technology. We have to also ascertain whether we cannot get the technology without them, and I am sure we can, so we cannot deal with it from an emotional standpoint. I agree Very much with the honourable Member for St. Michael Central. We cannot deal with whether we think the hamburger tastes better than anybody else's hamburger, because that is a matter of taste. 1.10p.m.

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: I am not trying to confuse the honourable Member because if the honourable Member does not understand what I am saying, like I am sure everybody else understands, I am saying that there are things that are for and there are things against. We have to determine which one is greater, and if there are more things against, then we say "No." Is that so confusing?

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: The point I am making is that we cannot be led astray by little foolish comments about an operation like that shutting down the fish seller in Baxters Road, because no matter how many MacDonald's come, myself and the Honourable Minister of Education will still enjoy steak fish in Baxters Road. So all I am saying in a nutshell is that I do not believe that we should make decisions on things of this nature which would affect other areas. That is the point I am making, in case the Member does not understand. It will affect other areas. We cannot make those decisions based on emotions.

Thank you.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Sir, I will now reply to this debate, which has been a very wide-ranging one, under Head 19. At least five different points have been made and I will seek to briefly respond to some of the major queries as I understand them.

The very last point that has been made relates to franchising and the role that that particular method of doing business should play in our economy, what areas should be demarcated for the Barbadians to engage in, and what areas may be appropriate for the importation of skills, technology and personnel in order to operate in those areas.

I think, Sir, we have to maintain a very broad view of this particular matter. It is a question of drawing the line in a particular way and for particular reasons, and that at different times in our development, we may have to change those lines somewhat on one hand or the other.

However, for anyone to operate under a franchise, they must conform with the existing law, which is the Franchise Registration and Control Act. They must apply for a licence, and there are certain procedures in relation to the application to that licence, and in relation to the determination of a decision in respect of the application. That legislation was put on the Statute Book some time in the 1970s. In fact, it was the Democratic Labour Party, as the Government in 1974, which brought the legislation. We were dealing with a situation emerging at that time, and as early as then we determined that there were certain areas which our people should be free to develop and they should not be overwhelmed by operations from multi-nationals and other kinds of operations from outside of Barbados. The name of the game, really, is the economic and social development of this country and the provision of employment opportunities for our people in order that our level of unemployment may be reduced. At the same time, we are also interested in developing the kind of skills and raising the expertise of the workers and employees in this country.

Since becoming the Government of this country in 1986, this present Democratic Labour Party Government has had some applications for the operation of those types of businesses. We have made it quite clear that we are not in favour of any franchise operation coming in in the area of fast foods, chicken or hamburgers or any of those areas. We believe that we can put together the skills, the finance and the know-how to provide an attractive product for the people who wish to use these particular products. So I would like to make it abundantly clear that, in accordance with our existing policies, this Government is not in favour of any franchising operations coming into the country in the areas which we have been discussing here this morning.

At the same time, we operate under a system of law, it is not a whimsical kind of Government that we are running. But we are conscious that people seek from time to time, not only those from outside of the country, but people inside the country, to find ways and means around existing laws. Wherever we find that there are these devices being employed to get around the principles that we are seeking to have operable in this country, we will seek to close the loopholes. In this particular case, we will take note of the developments proposed and we will seek ways and means of blocking any loophole which may allow an operation which is really a franchise operation to use some other kinds of devices to operate in this country. If it means looking at our exchange control foreign exchange

component, whatever it may be, we will look very closely at it.
1.20p.m.

I am very grateful to the Member for Christ Church East Central (Mr. R. L. Morris) for raising this matter. I know it is one that he feels very strongly about, and it is one that has found unanimous support on both sides of this Chamber. We will certainly seek to ensure that it does not succeed in accordance with the legislative framework that may be in place, or which may need to be put in place.

The second point that was raised related to insurance. I listened quite carefully and attentively to the points raised in this particular area. I can only say that we will certainly examine the issues raised and seek to do something about these particular matters. I do not think that those who have raised the matters expect that on the floor of the House we can deal with them, some of which have been fairly long-standing. But we will certainly carry out the investigation.

The point to note here is that we must have the necessary resources at governmental level to be able to identify the problems, then analyse the problems and ensure that we are able to effectively carry out the laws which we have on the Statute Book for the regulation of the insurance industry. In this particular connection, it is not really true to indicate that we do not have qualified Barbadians in the field of actuarial science. We do have persons who have qualified in that particular area, persons who are studying in that area and some who intend to study in the area.

There is a vacant post at the moment of Supervisor of Insurance, and the Public Service Commission of this country is in the process of seeking to fill that particular post I believe that interviews have been set, and I know that some qualified Barbadians have applied for that particular post But that is a matter outside of my jurisdiction. I hope that that post will soon be filled by the competent authorities and we can get down then to the thorough examination of the issues which have been raised.

Another matter related to the consolidation of Government accounts. I advised the Member for St Peter that the consolidation of Government accounts is a process that takes place on a regular, ongoing basis from month to month in the Ministry of Finance. He knows that. It has absolutely nothing to do with Appendix G. I do not know what is all this big talk about Appendix G.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Former.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Pardon me?

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Former).

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: What is this about the former Appendix G, which appeared one year out of all of the years that we have had in this particular country?

I think what the Member is really interested in is the flow of additional information, and Appendix G, as you welcomed it, included the particular column which would tell you what the different enterprises or statutory bodies may have requested. That is not in the records at this time.

We give information in respect, let us say, of the boards of management of secondary schools, and there is nothing really outrageous in providing information on the state of certain statutory bodies. But we have to take a decision as to exactly what information should be given. When we have examined this in due course, a further decision will be made in that particular regard.

The information that the Member for St. Peter is asking for in terms of the consolidation of Government accounts and so on is information which you will have when you are a Minister of Finance, or will have access to when you are a Minister of Finance or when you are a Parliamentary Secretary, or a Minister of State, dealing with some of these matters. I do not think the information is available to you now.

Aside.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They are not available to you now, and would not be available to you in many years.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There was a question raised about the State Enterprises Unit. I think there has been enough discussion on both sides on this. Information was given. We did not really bother with privatisation, so I can pass on.

The last item, as far as I can recall, related to energy. I regret that you were not up at Woodbourne in St. Philip recently when a facility was opened.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was not invited.)

(Aside: He would not have been far away.) *Laughter.*

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The public address system was very powerful.

Laughter.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think that what you missed on that particular occasion was a very clear outline of the role that energy plays in our economy and the way in which we are seeking to deal with energy problems. You would have heard some outline of energy requirements and our proposals in that particular regard. I do not think this is the occasion to spell out in detail that particular policy. I can send the Member a copy of my address on that particular occasion.

In response to the queries raised, our policy is to ensure that energy is available to individuals, households, businesses, the manufacturing and industrial sectors, and to those who need it in this country in adequate quantities. Secondly, we wish to ensure that the energy sources which we may have in this country are exploited to the fullest extent possible.

We have some reserves of natural gas and crude oil, and we seek to exploit those depending on the prevailing prices and in accordance with our capabilities. We have had, as a matter of policy, to cut back on our drilling operations because of the cost involved. There is a direct relationship between the price of energy to the consumer as it relates to the price on the international market Our policy is that if the price goes up, consumers in this country can expect, reasonably, that the price will go up to them. If the price on the international market, particularly from those sources where we derive our imports, goes down, they can expect that the price will go down within certain tolerance levels. I think this is well understood on both sides of the House. 1.30p.m.

As far as the utilities and the removal of the Corporation Tax as it relates to those companies are concerned, there is a clear and unambiguous statement in the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party. We have started to examine this particular measure. We have not come to any final determination as to how this particular matter can be, or will be, implemented. I can only tell you that we are examining it, and in due course, within the period of time allocated to us, we will come to a decision. There are five years within which to implement the proposals in the manifesto, and I am sure that the Member for St. Peter will not arrogate to himself the authority, or the power, or the hope that he can dictate to us when these particular measures should be implemented.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order: I give the Member the assurance that I have no intention whatsoever of being associated with the policies of the Democratic Labour Party!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order!

(Hon. B. M. TAITT: So you do not want to cross anymore?)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not sure what the honourable Member means by that. I am not sure he does not want to be associated with the policies of the" DLP.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That was no point of order.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Oh, it was no point of order. I see, Sir.

Aside.

(Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No point period!)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It was not even said.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They just said they agreed with our policies in respect of franchising. But now they are saying they do not want to be associated with the policies.

(Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Two-tongued.)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We are examining the ways in which this particular measure can be implemented, as indeed we are looking at all of the measures in our manifesto for implementation, and we will certainly seek to honour the promises that we have made. I will not deal with the promises that they made.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not think, Sir, that there were many other matters raised on which Members indicated they wanted a response.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Central Purchasing, we can discuss at anytime. I do not think that needs to detain us.

There was some point that was raised. I believe the problem did not come from that side, I believe that it came from this side, something in relation to antique cars in Barbados.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of elucidation, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me hear this one now!

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I raised the topic of cars and I made the point that the Deputy Prime Minister had intimated to me that, in relation to cars that were put together with string and other similar material, the Prime Minister was an expert.

Laughter.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I only spoke in this matter relating to BET.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: As far as I can recall.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Thank you, Sir.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not think there is any point for me to reply on this particular matter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Nothing of substance.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I only say that that car is still in very good condition and still in my possession, Sir.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Yes. Nobody will take it off you!)

Laughter.

The question that Head 19 Ministry of Finance (as amended) - $3 177 000 - stand part was put and resolved 'n the affirmative without division.

HEAD 20 - REVENUE COLLECTION (AS AMENDED)-$3295 964

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $3 295 964 for Head 20, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 20 as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 23 -LOANS AND ADVANCES (AS AMENDED) - $4 556 298

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. CL! nan, I beg to move that the sum of $4 556 298 for Head .3, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 23 as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 24 - PENSIONS (AS AMENDED) - $16000000

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $16 000 000 for Head 24, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 24, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 73 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - CAPITAL-$23 545 796

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $23 545 796 for Head 73, as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, under this Head, Subhead 3 provides supplies to enable the Government to purchase equity in various commercial ventures, and among the ventures specifically mentioned is one that we have not so far discussed in the Committee. In relation to the West Indies Shipping Corporation, I would like to enquire for certain information. 1.40p.m.

On the last occasion that this matter was discussed at any length in the House, the then Right Honourable Member for St. John made the point that Barbados had been considering, with its colleagues in the CARICOM region, the feasibility of establishing a wider shipping line or arrangement, and that a committee had been set up within CARICOM to report on this matter. We have had no further information on this exercise, and I would be interested to know whether any progress has been made with this particular exercise.

It is important, Sir, because as you would recognise, some of the countries that were originally members of WISCO - the West Indies Shipping Corporation - have signified their intention to withdraw, and I think that, as a result of their withdrawal, Barbados' contribution to WISCO will increase, or has continued to increase. Last year I believe it was something in the region of $400 000,1 have not checked the Estimates to see whether they particularised the actual contribution for this year. I would be interested to hear whether we have reached the stage of discussions where we can now get a clear policy in relation to the future of WISCO and the role which we will play within the West Indies Shipping Corporation.

I have not seen the accounts of this corporation for some time. I wonder what is the viability of the corporation.

I would also like some clarification as to whether it is still operating into Belize and the other CARICOM ports. It is still of importance for us to have a shipping line which is able to move goods within the Caribbean region at low cost. Whilst I recognise that CARICARGO is doing a very good job in the air in respect of helping our manufacturing industries, I believe that there will always be room, particularly in relation to larger bulk cargo, for the continual movement of goods of that nature within and outside of the Caribbean.

Only yesterday the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves), the Minister of Trade, made reference to the efforts being made to persuade one company here to produce light poles from cement. That is the type of cargo that we would also want to encourage other countries in the eastern Caribbean to use. Likewise, some of the very poles that are now being bought from the United States are also grown and available in Guyana. That is the sort of cargo that is available, and I think it is important that we have our own shipping line, and probably expand it, in conjunction with other persons. We cannot do it on our own, I do not think the economics would make much sense at all for us alone to go into an exercise such as this, except in the small schooners area, which already our friends in the Eastern Caribbean, particularly the Vincentians, are masters at.

We had a very good boat building industry. We have begun to do it now in the luxury class area, bui we more or less have lost part of the initiative which we had in that area. It is an initiative, however, that still is in abundance in other CARICOM states, but it seems to me Uiat when we get into the bigger liner class, we will need to share this exercise with the other countries of CARICOM.

If the projections for development in the region are as announced by respective Governments, we have to look to the occasion when we are moving our goods not only intra-CARICOM but extra-CARICOM as well. Believe me, Mr. Chairman, we cannot rely on other nations to plan for us into the 21st century in this respect. As the world becomes more and more competitive and we need to sell extra-regionally and to rationalise our export industries, we will find that we must have the capacity to move our materials up and down the region. It is with this in mind that I have raised these queries concerning WISCO.

Under this Head I am asking for an update on the efforts which have been made about the graduation of Barbados from the various windows, particularly loan facilities with concessionary terms, of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank. I believe that both of the political parties that constitute the government of this country have made their positions extremely clear on this issue.

It is unfair to Barbados and to the smaller developing island nations of the Caribbean for the World Bank to adopt the same criteria towards us as it adopts to bigger countries. I have said before that it makes a contradiction, as far as I am concerned, to hear that Barbados is being graduated out of the category of nations eligible for certain types of financing from World Bank sources, whereas bigger countries with vaster resources - in Latin America and elsewhere - are allowed to benefit from these windows. In fact, we have reached the stage now that the countries which are prepared to give us loans on concessionary terms are still able to borrow from the World Bank on reasonable terms, while Barbados, if it must get loans, has to go on the competitive markets, commercial markets in London, Frankfurt, Tokyo, Geneva and elsewhere.

I know that the successive Governments have made strong representation on this matter within the halls of the World Bank. I believe part of the problem resides not always with the executive arm of the World Bank, but also with those few nations who wield the power because they own more of the shares in the World Bank than others of us. Some of them are friendly countries and so-called friends, and they more than ever ought to be sympathetic to the case which is being urged for these Caribbean nations. Our economies are still brittle. We are a bit fortunate here in that we have been expanding and widening our economies beyond the monoculture of sugar, that we now have a wider base in some manufacturing, tourism and the service sector. But the more and more we are dependent on any particular sector, like for instance, in the Eastern Caribbean, where they depend on bananas to a large extent, and now tourism, it only takes one bad year'to set back the economy two or three years. In those circumstances, if we find ourselves confronted with having always to run to the market-place, to get financing at terms that are not as favourable, our development can be reversed substantially. In fact, it does not even take a bad year of trading, it takes only a natural disaster, as happened to one of our sister territories, Dominica, to set us back considerably, and it seems that there is not enough common sense being shown in the world institutions to countries such as ours that have striven so hard to pull ourselves up by our own boot straps. 1.50p.m.

We have not been begging them, Sir. It is one of the features of Barbados that I think we should emphasise. Barbados has been almost unique in this respect, that wherever we have borrowed money from anybody, right throughout our history, we have repaid every cent of it from our citizens. If we borrow now and per adventure we have

to pay back in ten years' time, whichever Government is there will make sure that we honour our commitment.

So we are not asking the World Bank as though we are going cap-in-hand. We are saying that the justice of the case of an institution to which we contribute, given all of the other things, demands that they should bring a different treatment towards small island developing economies than they mete out to bigger nations. We have not got the same degree of manoeuvrability, and the problem becomes pressing particularly where we find ourselves in a situation that you can find a rescheduling of debt taking place in relation to bigger countries whose debts are in the billions of dollars, not like these small territories. The total debt of all of the East Caribbean nations, even including Trinidad and Tobago, and if you added Jamaica, would be like a pebble in the ocean of the debt held by three or four nations in Latin America.

Mr. Chairman, no one commercial bank has had to write off and reschedule debt for the Eastern Caribbean. I think Jamaica may be a little exception in this respect. The commercial banks have had our commitments to them honoured. Their shareholders have benefitted from the remission of profits made at our expense. Yet we can find that the World Bank is treating Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean in this way, and I have not heard any support coming in any way at all from the United States of America, Canada or the United Kingdom, three countries that expect us to support them in everything they do, whenever they want to do it.

I cannot remain quiet on this point. I can assure the Government that there is a complete bipartisan approach on this matter, and in whatever way we can, wherever we go and talk to anyone, whether in Government or in Opposition, in any country, we use every facility to raise this as one of the general matters in which Barbados has an interest. There is very strong bipartisan support on this issue. I know that our diplomatic missions have been making representations, but I think we in this Parliament should, whenever we get the opportunity, also make our views felt on this particular issue of financing.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure if the Leader of the Opposition wishes a reply on the WISCO thing, it comes substantially under the International Transport Ministry and we may come to, that a little later. But as he has stated, some of the countries participating in this company have indicated their intention to withdraw, and this would obviously have an effect on the position of Barbados as a contributor. We are committed to the need for a regional shipping line. Studies, I believe, have been commissioned on that particular matter, but they are not yet at an advanced stage where any statement can be made.

As far as graduation from the multilateral institutions is concerned, last year I attended a series of IMF, World Bank meetings in Washington, and I did speak on behalf of Barbados and the other territories in CARICOM, and this whole issue of graduation was one of the themes of my address.

It is particularly galling for small countries such as Barbados and some of the other countries of the CARICOM to be faced with this particular threat of exclusion from funding by the multinational institutions for development simply on the basis of the once criterion of per capita income. We believe that there is need for a working out of a new set of conditions to govern these particular matters. Special attention will have to be paid, should be paid, to very small countries which are not abundantly endowed with natural resources, and which should therefore have a special claim on whatever funds may be available for developmental. purposes for the Third World countries, particularly the small countries of the Third World. This is a theme which we have been stressing from the Seventies. We have been concerned about these possibilities and we want to ensure that our access to funding on suitable terms continue to be available to help in the process of development.

We are pleased to know that there is no division of opinion on this particular matter, and we will continue to press the case forward for a review of the threat that is hanging over the heads of small countries, including Barbados. I believe the date which was suggested was something like 1992 when we might be excluded, but we are using all our resources to get a change of heart and view on this particular matter of graduation.

The question that the sum of $23 545 796 under Head 73 - Capital - Ministry of Finance - stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 3.00 p.m.

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. 2.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (AS AMENDED) - $29 993 611

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS (St. James South): Mr. Chairman, Head 39 - Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development - includes Central Administration, Labour and Employment, Welfare Services, that is the General Welfare Service, and the National Assistance Board, with responsibility for Housing Welfare, Assistance in Kind, Home Help. We also have responsibility for Community Development, which includes Youth Affairs and Women's Affairs, and the Environment, which includes the National Conservation Commission and the Environmental Unit.

I beg that this Head stand part.

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

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON (St. John): This particular area is one that is of significant interest to me, that is to say, the overall Ministry that was created, that of the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development

Many years ago prior to my entry into the House of Assembly, when I was interested in coming to the House of Assembly and listening to debates, I remember one particular speech delivered by the honourable Member for St. Michael East (Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman) what I call "the miasma of welfarism speech". He was then sitting on the benches of the Government under the Barbados Labour Party, and I listened very carefully to what I thought was a well-reasoned and progressive approach to community development in Barbados and how it related to the development of the National Assistance Board.

Recently, we have had an opportunity to look at some of the aspects of the development of the National Assistance Board since that time. If we look at the report that was submitted by the committee of enquiry into the activities of the National Assistance Board, which was laid in this Honourable House some time ago, you will see some very revealing things about the manner in which statutory corporations, but more particularly the National Assistance Board, was administered by the Barbados Labour Party. Some very definitive things are said.

When I had cause in here more recently to point out areas that I considered to be of particular concern and that could lead to greater corruption and vice in our society, I have been asked to lay the evidence. It is not always easy to be able tq, do that on your own, and these things must be done in a fairly dispassionate way, and that is why a committee of persons as distinguished as Mr. Oliver Jackman, a man, as far as I know, not known for any particular political persuasion, and others, took the opportunity to investigate the National Assistance Board. We should take a very close look at some of the things they have said.

They spoke about the Cabinet Paper that went before the Barbados Labour Party Cabinet for the reorganisation of the National Assistance Board, and they expressed their reservations about the manner in which the National Assistance Board and changes in its structure came about. I am certain that that is a point that members of the Opposition would probably wish to find some comfort in. But they were all a part of that system, and they agreed with it, and if they want to rehash that, that is their business.

*

I am concerned that the responsibilities of the National Assistance Board were carried out in a high-handed manner, and were carried out, as far as I am concerned, with the greatest level of victimisation and partisanship, and many of the things that were done can also be described as wicked. Many of the actions demonstrate the level to which people will take action for their personal benefit and aggrandisement as distinct from the benefit of the people of Barbados. We cannot have in a society like this, statutory corporations being used as means of feathering the nests of particular individuals in the society, to the detriment of poor people and persons who should benefit most from these programmes as conceived by the political directorate.

There was an entire disregard for all of the principles of administrative norms or law, and fair play was put aside all together. I can speak with conviction on this, because I know of the plight of people living in the constituency of St. John. As far as I am aware, not one house was fixed

under the Housing Welfare Programme in the constituency of St. John, unless it was by the direction of the candidate of the Barbados Labour Party or some other official of the Barbados Labour Party.

(Aside: Oh dear!)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: "Oh dear" is right! I have to speak about St. John, because I am concerned that victimisation in this country should have reached such a level that none of the services funded by the taxpayers of this country and conceived for the development of the people of Barbados was ever during the ten-year period 1976 - 1986 distributed in a fair way, particularly in the constituency of St. John.

There are no honourable Members of the Opposition in here, as far as I know, other than acting in their professional capacity, who have been mentioned in this report. There are some who vicariously benefitted, particularly during the St. Peter by-election, from manipulation of the National Assistance Board. I refer to page 10 of the report: "When Mr. Aaron Truss became Minister of State...." (and that was after the flood in St. Peter - he was better known as Minister of Flood Relief) - "...the Board was instructed to purchase materials from Marshall Trading Company."

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: This is what the reports say! "When Mr. Aaron Truss became Minister of State, the Board..." - (that is the National Assistance Board) - "....was instructed to purchase from Marshall Trading Company." That was during the second St. Peter by-election.

All of the talk that went on in this House of Assembly about the money that was thrown around in St. Peter is rue. There is now accurate evidence of it, and all the aspersions that were cast on the characters of members of the Democratic Labour Party who spoke in the St. Peter campaign, all of the lies that were told on them when they sought to reveal the high-handed attitude of the Barbados Labour Party in seeking to land a candidate, are now exposed for the public to read and see. Of particular interest this should be to the Press, I would hope. Page 11 "...the Senior Housing Officer had advised.... that the material from Marshall ....(Trading)..... was of an in crior quality". 3.10p.m.

If you read the whole report, you will see that at one point the purchase of material via Central Purchasing was stopped, and that contracts were awarded to the Barbados Lumber Company and Manning, Wilkinson & Challenor. But a rationale was given for this, that the honourable Member for St. Michael East at that time felt, and justifiably so, that there was too long a waiting period when the Central Purchasing Department did the ordering. And the contracts were given out to two reputable companies, whose materials were not thought to be inferior, companies which, as a matter of course, extend credit to poor people in Barbados for the purposes of building houses and so on. But all of that was stopped as soon as Mr. Truss became the Minister of State, and the contracts were given out to Mr. Marshall. And Mr. Marshall does not have any clean bill o[r] health. Let me tell you what the report says about him here:

"Mr. Walker..... "

Laughter. He is, as far as I know,

the Chairman:

> "also expressed other reservations about Marshall Trading, mentioning that Mr. Marshall, the proprietor, was alleged to have been seen at Verona canvassing for contracts, and was reputed to be "passing money" to employees at Verona. On one occasion when he, as Chairman, had directed that some materials be ordered from Manning, Wilkinson & Challenor, the name of the firm was removed from the order form by a staff member.... "

All of that, as far as I can understand it, took place prior to the by-election in St. Peter. Therefore, I am saying that somebody vicariously benefitted, and that individual should say in this Chamber, because I have high regard for him, that he did not know of these things. This is serious business.

. *Asides.*

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If you think carefully about it, you will realise that a person may very well be elected to this House of Assembly....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: .....as a result of this kind of maladministration and it may haunt the person for the rest of his life. But I do not believe that the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) knew anything about it.

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Do not back down.)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not believe you knew anything about it. I am saying so. I am a man, I can say that.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You will have a chance to do that.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I say that it would be unfortunate, if as a result of maladministration, these kinds of practices, a person enters this House of Assembly. If I discovered that it were so in my by-election in St. John, I would state my case in here today. But I can tell you that not immediately prior to the by-election, and at no time subsequent, have I received any favouritism. I believe that only two houses have so far been fixed in the constituency of St. John. And the year has passed. I have had to suffer like every other Member of this House of Assembly on the Government benches because of the waste and the scandal that occurred at the National Assistance Board. These things must be said. I am not afraid to say them, because I think it is important that we get a sense of balance about these things. And when people want to reveal things, this report itemises very carefully for public consumption what went on at the National Assistance Board.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am now on page 7. I skipped a bit, but I am returning now to the report. I do not want to give my opinions on this report. It speaks so well for itself:

> "....there is no internal procedure for processing the application further...."

that is when you make an application for assistance under the Housing Welfare Programme:

> "....unless the applicant or someone acting on his behalf raises the matter again."

So can you imagine that hundreds of old and indigent persons in this country went down to the National Assistance Board and filled out forms and felt that they were honestly going to receive benefits or some kind of assistance for the plight they were in, but the applications were basically thrown away, unless somebody raised them. That has to be a scandal: It means that there are a lot of poor people in this country, who are suffering on a daily basis, who would have gone down there hoping for some kind of assistance, understanding that that was a Government that said it was humane and pursued social policies for the benefit of working class black people, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition would tell us in here week after week is the policy of the Barbados Labour Party. Those working class, black people went down to the National Assistance Board, filled out forms, and the forms were practically thrown away or forgotten, unless a politician sought after their case for assistance. Can you imagine that? In the 1980s in a country like Barbados that tries to boast as regularly as it can about its social development programmes!

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He defends it! -

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He defends the Government. I am not saying he is going to defend this report, because I know what he is going to say about this.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I know what he has to say. And if it is not said, something is wrong.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: And when you are picking candidates for the Labour Party, you had better read this report first. Some people must get dropped in the early.

Laughter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I continue on page 7:

> "The "case reports" made by Housing Officers which the Committee has seen make it clear that officers involved have no training and little aptitude to the tasks they are asked to perform, and are thus incapable of eliciting from applicants the kind of information needed to assist the Board in coming* to a reasoned decision."

So the board is disadvantaged from the beginning. It is not receiving the relevant information on which to make an objective analysis in relation to the provision of assistance for persons who come before them.

I quote:

> "....there were occasions on which the materials issued were found to be in excess of the requirements of the job."

Where are those materials? What happened to those materials?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another two minutes.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not worried, I will be coming back.

I quote from page 8:

"....decisions on applications were made by the Chairman himself..... or by the Director."

"....repairs were undertaken without reports by Housing Officers, or without estimates, ... without even the approval of the Director.

And in one instance:

"the Minister gave direct instruction to the Director for repairs to be done to certain houses."

Dr. Waldo Waldron Ramsay, the report says a former Deputy Chairman, can give more details of what went on at that time.

"The keeping of accounts at the National Assistance Board has been repeatedly criticised by the Auditor General."

If we turn now to the employment of people at the National Assistance Board:

"The main criterion for employment seems to have been the political connections of the individual."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This is on which page?

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am now on page 9.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Proper note taking.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you. I am now on page 9, Sir. The report says:

".... it can be concluded that in the period when Messrs. Bradshaw and Trotman respectively were the Ministers responsible for the Board, it was common practice for posts to be created, and appointments made - with salaries arbitrarily assigned - sometimes without the prior involvement of the Board."

Can you imagine anything worst than that for a Minister of Government?

(Aside: No!)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time. Time.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I have to ask. I will end there for now.

Laughter.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman, it must follow, as the night the day, that I would have to be involved in this debate. There were certain issues raised by the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) which referred, first of all, to the fact that somebody benefitted vicariously by certain programmes, and it would be remiss of me if I did not draw to attention, since he raised the whole thing about elections, that people actually bragged before the 1986 election that there would be some $2 million available to win the seat in SL Michael South East I was absolutely flabbergasted, because I did not think that politicians in Barbados had that kind of money at their disposal. But when the report came out and I read it, I got some insight as to what the whole discussion was about! 3.20 p.m.

The issue in St. Michael South East, which I will address with respect to this report, goes deeper than that. The tragedies of the National Assistance Board happen to fall heavily on the youth of SL Michael South EasL because it is the youth of SL Michael South East who were used primarily in this programme. Lots of strange things went on in that constituency. Young people who were employed were given some very false impressions about what life is all abouL People got jobs, and they had facilities which other people did not have to be aligned to a particular political party and an individual.

I quote from page 8 of the National Assistance Report, Section 38:

"The Committee had cases drawn to its attention in which repairs were undertaken without reports from . Housing Officers, or without estimates, or, as far as could be ascertained, without the approval of the Director."

We know that in St. Michael South East there were a lot of people. Some of them employed, who obviously could not qualify for the National Assistance Board Programme, had their houses repaired. Meanwhile, we had ^jme old people, over the age of 80, who were living in houses such that when the rain fell, there was no interruption of the water, because the houses had literally nothing on the top, and yet these old people could not get their houses repaired.

It went so far that there was one old lady whose house was taken away from her by the Minister; she was put in a welfare house and the welfare house that she was put in was put in the back at Roberts Road where the old lady could not get out, and that old lady suffers from severe arthritis. And the reason given to the old lady was that she would support me. It also meant that an old lady who had her old house that she could leave to her grandson or her

granddaughter if she wanted to, now finds herself in a welfare house which, when she dies, will be the property of the Government. That is a very, very wicked act for any Government or any official to condone. But I am sure that this present Government is looking into that case, and I will not rest until that old lady gets back a piece of her property that she can give to her offspring when the time comes.

1 recall that leading up to 1986 election, my patients who live in the Church Village, St. Philip area, would come to me with the most alarming stories. They wanted to know how some people in the Village, who obviously could not qualify for assistance, overnight were having houses put up in Church Villag" and around that area. They were very, very concerned *Jbout* that. At first I thought it was a fabrication, but I found out later, from listening to story after story, thst these things were actually going on.

I recall that we had to come to vote money for the National Assistance Board, because the $2 million, I think it was, that was supposed to be spent over the year, was all spent in the three-month period leading up to the election. There was an incident in St. Peter where, in a month and a half, the money was spent. In St. Peter, after the very flood about which the honourable Member for St. John spoke, there were several people whose houses were flooded out, and I brought to this House the names of the individuals in St. Peter whose houses were flooded out and brought to attention the fact that those people were living along with their children, some in Haynesville, some in some place in Black Rock, and that the children had to catch buses and go to St. Peter to school and some of them had to pay two bus fares.

Meanwhile, a man by the name of Mr. Green,....

(Asides: Hon. B. M. TAITT: H. Pen!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: ....a candidate in the last St. Peter by-election, a man, as far as we knew and our information showed us, who had no fixed place of abode at the time of the flood, was the first person to be the beneficiary of a flood victim house. And when he moved into that house, it was reported that there were two fridges and three stoves. The house was overstocked! But the victims of the flood remain thrown around this country, and some of them, I think up until today, have not been able to be housed.

As the honourable Member for St. John said, these are serious matters. One of the things that is very, very important is the image we create on the minds of young people. We must make sure that we set in place systems that ensure that that sort of political corruption, because that is basically what it is, will never take place again.

I know as a fact, and we will get to that later, that a system was set up within that Ministry through which welfare cheques were given to people who did not, and could not, qualify for welfare cheques, and that of course, was an attempt to buy the votes of people prior to the election.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: What ¯a shame! Wickedness!)

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: All of these are things that went on under the last Administration. So when we talk about proper accounting and the fact that the Democratic Labour Party has to put in place serious programmes so that we can streamline the financing of agencies, we understand what we are talking about. This is the kind of wastage about which we are saying that if you set programmes in place, you can deliver services to people, and you can deliver those services at a higher quality and with more economic gain. It is no mystery when we come into this Chamber and talk about proper accounting systems and the fact that, if you monitor what is going on, programmes can be better delivered for the services of the people of this country.

I will, if necessary, have more to say on this. But I am quite sure the honourable Members on the other side will join forces with us and agree that things like these should never happen in Barbados again, and that all of us in this Honourable Chamber should join to ensure that.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3.30p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, one is concerned that there are proper standards of conduct and behaviour in all departments of Government and in statutory boards for which there is ministerial responsibility. That is a given. The report of the Jackman Committee, in paragraph 98 concluded.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: For completeness would you give the page as well?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: At paragraph 98, page 21, it:".....concluded that, on a balance of probabilities, there was significant - possibly substantial - dishonesty and improper use of public money and materials at the National Assistance Board.

But then it goes on to say:

> "This conclusion is not based on evidence which would stand up in a Court of Law, but rather on an accumulation of circumstantial indications....."

There is some consistency with that conclusion in paragraph 103, although in paragraph 103 there is an inherent contradiction in what the Committee itself finds. I am not going to call them confused people, I will just read it.

It says:

"It is the view of the Committee that no useful purpose would be served by the setting up of a formal Commission of Enquiry. The Committee is well aware that its own investigation, by reason both of its mandate and its structure, has been able to do little more than skim the surface of the problems which the National Assistance Board has experienced during the period under review. A further and more detailed enquiry would be likely to pinpoint a number of instances of malfeasance and misfeasance, and might conceivably obtain, on oath, hard evidence that might merit police investigation and possibly lead to prosecutions."

If a further and more detailed enquiry is likely to pinpoint malfeasance and misfeasance, and evidence which might lead to prosecutions, why seek to cover it up in the first sentence by saying that no useful purpose would be served by the setting up of a formal Commission of Enquiry? The two things cannot stand in the same paragraph.

But I understand the perspective from which this report is written. If you do not have enough to achieve a conviction in court, or even start a conviction in court, by couching it in this kind of language you have enough for politicians to make political capital, to speculate, inveigh against people and destroy whoever is sought to be destroyed. That is my view of it, that it stops short of recommending court and prosecution to allow public speculation to run rife.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You never heard about lawyers disagreeing yet on the same side of facts? Or even on the opposite side?

The history of the provision of housing accommodation for the worse off in the society in this country goes back many years to the days of "Mottleyism" and welfarism. Some time in the late Sixties, the Housing Authority, the National Housing Corporation, as an aspect of its responsibility, assumed the responsibility for housing persons who wanted welfare housing and so on. When the Honourable Minister of Transport was Minister in charge of Welfare, he tried to develop a sophisticated integrated system of welfare benefits, and National Assistance Board assumed responsibility that used to be under the National Housing Corporation.

But Members in here have very short memories in regard to the provision of housing. The honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) would not know, because in 1976 he was probably 14 or near there and he would not have been *au fait* with much of what went on, but I wish to let him know today, and direct his attention at the appropriate time, that in the area of housing welfare and the provision of actual houses, as well as rented accommodation, the Democratic Labour Party has a record of corruption, malfeasance, misfeasance and bad behaviour second to none in the whole Caribbean, including one over there now!

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

D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will justify what I say.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The honourable Member .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has risen on a point of order. Things were going on pretty good so far, do not let them get out of hand.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I was not addressing my remarks to you. I just said things were going on pretty good so far, do not let them get out of hand.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member, by virtue of his experience, is aware that if he is going to make the kind of charges which he is doing today, he has to establish certain guidelines. He said that the Democratic Labour Party, blah blah blah, has a record of malfeasance, misfeasance, including one over there. There are 24 of us over here and he is going to have to identify the one or withdraw his remarks now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am concerned, I am not so sure that those kinds of words can be levelled at Members of the House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Strike them out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, no. I would like the honourable Member to listen to me in silence. That is one of the privileges that this Chair has and one of the respects that should be accorded to it.

I am prepared to allow the honourable Member to continue as he is going, but I want you to be mindful of

the Rules of this House in so far as certain words are concerned, and certain unparliamentary language as well.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, if you strike out all those words that I just said, I would be quite happy now.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member continue? I am not ordering anything to be struck from the Record. Just continue. When the time comes for me to order something to be struck from the Record, I will do it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You will see whether my conclusions are right or wrong. It is going to be very bitter. It is a good thing you all let us know when we adjourned for lunch that you were going to deal with Head 39 - we came armed. 3.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member continue his contribution?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Hanschell Commission was set up to report into the Barbados Housing Authority and the National Housing Corporation for the period April, 1969 to August 1976. Welfare houses were under the Housing Corporation in those days. I am going to refrain from making any subjective comments or drawing any subjective conclusions. All I am going to do is to read into the Record of this House a number of matters involving the administration of the Housing Authority in those days. Take paragraph 47 of the Hanschell Report, page 24. It is already a document of this House. Mr. Hanschell concludes:

> "In conclusion, hereon, it is perhaps not inappropriate to summarise the more important and glaring aspects of the matter that clearly constitute "malpractices" within our terms of reference and finding accordingly.
>
> (a) The obvious conflict of duty and private interest involving Mr. DaCosta Edwards as Minister of Housing on the one hand, by inaugurating and directing the special repairs programme in question to the tune of $1 % M, and the substantial private interest therein of his father, Mottley Bryan on the other, since Bryan not only lived in the same residence at Melbourne, Belmont Road, as DaCosta Edwards, but was closely associated with Sidney Watson as "front man" in a $1M repairs job for the Housing Authority, which job was awarded to S. Watson by DaCosta Edwards as Minister of Housing, and the base of operations for the said job was the same Melbourne, Belmont Road. All this during the latter half of 1969 and first half of 1970 whilst DaCosta Edwards was the said Minister of Housing.
>
> (b) The misuse or abuse of ministerial power by DaCosta Edwards as Minister of Housing in connection with the *$1%* M repairs programme in question and the irregular selection of Sidney Watson for $1M allocation or share thereof without any advertisement or tender in • accordance with the approved and proper practice as prescribed by Financial rules constitutes malpractice."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am reading the whole of paragraph 49:

> "Mr. Laurie B. Marshall, a member of the Board of the Housing Authority, appointed by the Democratic Labour Party during the period April '69 to April 1973, and a member of the Sub-Committee of two with Stanley Linton, approved applications for loans to general workers. Subsequent to the termination of his appointment as a member of the Board, he was then re-employed by the Housing Corporation as a Collector of outstanding loans. Listen to some of the things he did."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think you had better stop there. It is time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Sir, what I find painful about the contribution of the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), is that the honourable Member is a seasoned honourable Member. He goes back into history and'he drags up an bid report. The electorate of Barbados spoke on that report and that is why they put the Barbados Labour Party in office - they put the Barbados Labour Party in office to stop them from the corruption that you identified.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir The three undersigned Commissioners were appointed by His Excellency the Governor-General on March 23, 1977. The people started the report after we became the Government What foolishness you are telling me!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will excuse the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur). He is really a child in these matters, and as much as he will seek to be forced ripe into participation, I am going to excuse him. But the honourable Member who is now leaving the Chamber and the honourable Member who just sat down campaigned on the issues that he just raised.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, they can talk until the cows come home, I am here for them.

The report which the honourable member just read disappoints me, because I never thought the honourable Member for St. Thomas would call in answer to the Jackman Report the malfeasance and misfeasance of the past. What he is saying, Sir, is that malfeasance and misfeasance must form a substantial part of the political life of this country and that he endorses it I am disappointed that in an answer to the very lucid, clear and impassioned presentation by the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) - the honourable Member for St. John is the youngest Member in this Honourable Chamber....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Exuberant.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do not mind the exuberance. It is the manner of the exuberance that I am concerned about.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Especially after lunch, Sir, exuberance has a tendency to manifest itself, but he is not to be judged in all the standards that we would normally judge the more mature Members like the honourable Member for St. Thomas. The honourable Member for St. Thomas is a senior Member and a senior advocate, so he knows what he is doing.

It appears to me that what he is saying is that his client, who features in the report that he read, is to be used now as a scapegoat to answer the very legitimate and clear protestations of the honourable Member for St. John in relation to a new report, which was denied by the Barbados Labour Party. The issue we are discussing now is not whether there has ever been misfeasance or malfeasance in Government The issue is that the Barbados Labour Party, and in particular the honourable Member for St. Thomas and the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) participated in a charade in this country in which they sought to suggest that the Democratic Labour Party was wicked and despicable, because we sought in a campaign to highlight the absolute corruption that formed part of the methodolgy of the Barbados Labour Party Government They carried corruption in a Government to a high pinnacle in the administration of this, country when the Barbados Labour Party was the Government in the last ten years, and we made it a point of principle in a campaign in St. Peter, and the reason why we say from the benches to the honourable Member for St. Peter that we are not attacking him....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If you feel that we have attacked you then, feel free to feel attacked.

The point we are making is that we were not addressing it to him, we were addressing it to the hierarchy of the Barbados Labour Party, because in the by-election.....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We have not got to you yet, we will get to you. The honourable Member for St. Peter wants noticing and we will notice him, but we are not ready for him yet.

Mr. Chairman, I have no difficulty in saying what we said, because we said it outside of this House, that the Barbados Labour Party Administration was corrupt, and we are saying that this report confirms what we said, that you were corrupt. We are not hiding our heads. We are not going to stand and say that it is only an official report. 3.50p.m.

What Jackman said in this report is that he and his commission has no doubt that if they can take evidence on oath, the police would have to lock up some people. The honourable Member quoted paragraph 103 and suggests that Jackman has a logical inconsistency. Oliver Jackman is not a person who is likely to make errors of judgment. The chairman of this commission was very careful in language. You could accuse the chairman of a number of other things, but not sophistry. The chairman is very clear in what he is saying, and if the Democratic Labour Party Administration wishes to, and was minded to, they could follow the example of the Barbados Labour Party and set up a commission of enquiry, as you did, to lock up Errol Barrow and company. But we do not think we should use the money in that way.

So do not try to suggest that this report is a fallacy. Do not try to pooh-pooh this report because the honourable Member for St. John has the audacity, as you perceive it, to highlight certain aspects of this report. It is his right as a young Member. He represents the youth in this country, and the youth of this country cannot understand how the Aboabs and the rest of them could have become part of the body politic in this country in the manner that they did under the Barbados Labour Party that went to office in 1976 on a platform of decency, respectability, responsibility and high standards of public life. That is what we are saying to you when we discuss this report.

We are saying that you represent the small nucleus of what may possibly be described as decent in what is in the Barbados Labour Party, the remnants of a decent Barbados Labour Party. The Barbados Labour Party is a serious party, and the ones represented in here are the ones who

must be decent. The party is a serious political party and we cannot pretend in Barbados that it does not exist, and you must not pretend. You, except for the purposes of political propaganda and manifestation, agree with us that you have managed to rid yourself of the elements which constitute a body of this report.

This report is only the tip of the iceberg. When we had said in this country that there was corruption in the Barbados Labour Party, we have been accused of misleading the people. But we know that you know, understand and agree....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: How do you mean, do not preach to you? Paragraph 42: "The evidence provided to the Committee makes it clear that the majority of the staff of the N.A.B. was recruited with little attention to qualifications or experience relevant to the posts to be filled. The main criterion for employment seems to have been the political connections of the individual." From statements made to the Committee, including the statement of Mr. Ralph Walker, ...an unfortunate young man who was at the time - not misguided - blackmailed into running for the Barbados Labour Party. I say no more, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. I said "blackmailed." I am not going to spend any time on him, because he is a decent young man. He made one small error in his life, running against me. But he is not the first and he will not be the last. He who served as Chairman of the National Assistance Board.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas keeps dragging up the old report of the commission of enquiry of Mr. Hanschell, whose report was taken to heart by the Democratic Labour Party, whose report formed the basis of an expiation by the Democratic Labour Party.

Look at the 24 Members of this Honourable House. There are Members in the Honourable House who can stand the test of time and the test of integrity, and, therefore, to quote this report in response to your position is all right. We have all night. This can be the last Head.

We have no difficulty, but we are going to take you to the cleaners if you do not respond in the proper way. We are not going to sit here and allow you to mislead the youth of this country. You cannot mislead the older folk - the older folk have tested you, they have put you in the balance, they have found you wanting and they will not be fooled.

But the young people of this country need to be reminded that there was corruption in the Barbados Labour Party. I almost said you were corrupt, but that would not be proper, because those three honourable members cannot be described as corrupt.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Leader of the Opposition has a corruption of ideas, but he is not corrupt, Sir. Those three honourable Members are not corrupt, but they must not seek to defend the Barbados Labour Party and the Administration that was put to rest by the people. You must not seek to defend the impossible. You went in to St. Peter.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: .....and carried a Member who was a Minister, who ran against the honourable Member for SL Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman), and you know that you took the people of Maurice Byer Polyclinic and offered them bribes. Yes, you know it! Do not look at me and split up your face! You know it, and I am saying it!

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The honourable Member, Sir, is imputing very improper motives in the use of his language. He is saying "you". I am asking that those remarks be withdrawn.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He must know, Sir, that "you" means the Labour Party. Let me exonerate the honourable Member for St. Peter. The honourable Member for St. Peter did not himself offer any bribes. Let me withdraw any imputation which the honourable Member even remotely heard. I am talking about the Barbados Labour Party hierarchy. ' »

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I want this point clear. I am not very clear about the "you" and I would need some clarification about that If it is an imputation on the misconduct of the honourable Member for St. Peter, it ought to be withdrawn.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No. Let me explain, Sir. It has been traditional in the House of Assembly - he is new, here, Sir - that when you say "you" and one has been talking about the Party, one means the Party.

I have already said that those are three honourable Members, neither one of whom is corrupt. So I do not mean any of them. 4.00 p.m.

But the Barbados Labour Party in St. Peter was corrupt. I am saying, Sir, with full knowledge of what I am

saying, how I am saying it and where I am saying it, that the Barbados Labour Party practised corruption in the St. Peter by-election.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Very well, Sir. I will be back.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the last honourable Member, the Minister of Health, sought to castigate me because I was reading from a report into the period of a time when the Democratic Labour Party formed the Administration up to 1976. He said these words:

"We are saying that the Barbados Labour Party was corrupt We went to the people" meaning in the elections of 1986:

"and said so, and this report proves that."

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order, Sir: If he says that that is his understanding of it, all right.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: And you said that this report proves that? You cannot say that I said that and quote me and then misquote me. If you are quoting me, quote me properly. I am not embarrassed about anything I said. It means you are writing it down wrong.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Go and ask the shorthand writer to read it back, Sir. I am quite happy with that.

I am claiming the same right to speak within the framework as set by the Honourable Minister of Health. They used to say in Scripture exams, explain with reference to the context. I want to explain to this House, with reference to the context, pre-1976, that we in the Barbados Labour Party accused the Democratic Labour Party of being corrupt, especially in the area of the administration of housing welfare, and that in pursuance of those charges, we set up a Commission of Enquiry by the Governor-General. It reported, and I claim the right to use this report to show how they proved corruption. Now we have the confines of the debate narrowed down!

It is very painful for me to do this, but I have to read, since I have been challenged by that side, certain findings of the Hanschell Report, most unfortunately in relation to the present Deputy Prime Minister, who was the Minister of Housing.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You all walked into this. I said when I got up, put on your helmets, because I have a new ball.

Sir, I am not commenting, I am only reading from the report, the exact words. Page 44, paragraph 83:

> "It is therefore our opinion and finding that Mr. Greaves' direct intervention and continuous *ad hoc* collaboration with the Chairman, Senator Carew, and the Senior Housing Officer, Miss Howard, in the circumstances outlined, without any participation of the Board in the selection of tenants, constitutes malpractice, responsibility for which".....

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You all laugh. Alright.

> ".....is attributable to Mr. Greaves, Chairman Carew and Miss Howard in that order. The personal intervention of the Minister" .....
>
> ".....served not only to undermine the authority of the Manager in controlling the staff concerned, Miss Howard and her subordinates, but also to effectively by-pass the Board and inhibit its participation, a vital function"
>
> "Even after a Tenants Sub-Committee of the Board was reappointed in May 1975, similar irregular practices continued," ..... "the..... alleged priority
>
> cases in Exhibit 84 and Chairman."

. Deighton, "....Griffith's authorisation"

Deighton Griffith was Chairman of your party.

Asides. Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Treasurer.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Senator appointed by you.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was a Senator, and he was threatening the party, too. Miller was Treasurer for about 20 years.

It continues:

> " ... before reference to the aforesaid sub-Committee, Miss Babb (successor to Miss Howard as S.H.O.) testified that these cases presented no special urgent circumstances as compared with the many other waiting applications (over 10 000)."

That was page 44, paragraph 83.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am only dealing with the Minister. I have not got down to the other officials. There is no Minister that is accused in the Jackman Report of doing anything corrupt. They may have intervened,.....

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:.....just as the Deputy Prime Minister intervened.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This debate is going to get killed shortly. He intervened.

Laughter.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir: No Deputy Prime Minister, with references to myself, intervened in anything. I did not intervene in anything.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, you and I have represented people before the magistrate or the jury, they have been convicted, and even after conviction, they still say, "I am not guilty."

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Hanschell proved him guilty!

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And he is still denying it!

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Page 49, Sir:

Mr. "The episodes and finding regarding both DaCosta Edwards and Mr. Philip Greaves"... (whom I reasonably believe is the Deputy Prime Minister)

> "....which are referred to in some detail in Chapters 2 and 4 of this report, provide apt illustrations of the problem aforesaid in actual practice, viz. instances of improper or wrongful Ministerial intervention by both Mr. Edwards and Mr. Greaves, whilst holding the office of Minister of Housing in 1969/70 and 1971/76.....in the day-to-day operations and functioning of the Barbados Housing Authority and N.H.C."

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If you want to hear every specific thing that they did, we can read that you know.

Over the page, Sir:

> "With regard to Mr. P. Greaves and our findings in Chapter 4, his case for resignation is not perhaps or censurable or blatant in the same degree.....as Mr. Edwards. But in view of the Burton Report.....

And this is the point of departure.

(Aside. Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Keep quiet. Do not talk with them.)

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Man, I tell you keep quiet, little man.

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do not arrogate to yourself that responsibility. That is my responsibility. Do not usurp my authority, please.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

> "But in view of the Burton Report ..... and the serious irregularities and inefficiencies referred to therein, some of which resulted *inter alia* in criminal prosecutions of N.H.C. staff, and the Special Auditors' Reports....."

And this is the point of departure.

(Aside: What page are you on?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Fifty-one.

> ".... we are also of the considered opinion in his case."...." (Mr. Greaves)..... "that he too should have voluntarily submitted his resignation as Minister of Housing in accordance with the precedent aforementioned.... and this is especially so as the said Burton Report 1975 was never released to the public Jid very little, if anything, by way of implementing its recommendations..... appears to have been done during the year or more after its submission and the

general elections in September ' 976, in which both Messrs Edwards and Greaves ..... "

and my words now, Sir, fortunately:

"....lost their scats as Members of Parliament, and

their party...."

even more so fortunately:

".... lost the Government"

What Hanschell is saying is that the Minister did nothing about the report of the Burton Commission, which included one person, who is well-known as "public nuisance number one", otherwise known as "the Octopus". 4.10p.m.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member, in his enthusiasm, might be misled, but the Burton Repot came into the Democratic Labour Party two months before we left office. So if the Burton Report was not released - physician, heal thyself.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Hanschell is a very precise man.

(Aside: More than that.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: More than that - very precise!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Another three minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What he said was that "Nothing appears to have been done during the year or more after its submission." It must mean that it was submitted to the relevant authority, the DLP, and a year or more passed after it was submitted. What two months he is coming here to lie about? Sorry, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Put that a different way. Mr.

D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will withdraw it, Sir.

Sir, here it is the Burton Report revealed, and if the Minister speaks, he will have to say it, a number of corrupt practices in the Housing Authority. He may say that he did not get a chance to do anything. But Hanschell is castigating him, because he said it happened in his time and the proper thing to have done was to have resigned, but, instead, the Minister appear to condone by his inactivity, what Burton found.

At page 53 you will find all kind of things - failure of stewardship.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Another minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: "......an even more conspicuous absence of any relevant directions from the Minister regarding the blatant abuses, irregularities and malpractices that were going on under the virtual noses of the relevant Ministers, in some cases with their complaisance and implied approval such as have been identified above in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. It is largely for this failure of stewardship on the part of the Ministers concerned, both Edwards and Greaves, quite apart from any personal participation by them in the specific malpractices already identified, that we have formed the firm opinion and view aforesaid with regard to their clear obligation to resign in such circumstances. Their conspicuous failure so to do, especially in Greaves' case, after the report of the Burton Committee.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Stop at a convenient point.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:..... was submitted between June and September 1975 in three parts, merely confirms their individual rejection of the standards set for such holders of high public office as outlined aforesaid."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman ,

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Just one point before the honourable Member speaks. The honourable Member quoted generously from this report, but omitted to quote that it was ti i Deputy Prime Minister who appointed the Burton Committee.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Let me talk! I can speak for myself!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, I have no intention of even attempting to defend anything that I did between the years 1971 and 1976 as Minister of Housing. Whatever I did then, I would do now all over again, Hanschell or no Hanschell. I have nothing at all to be ashamed about in terms of what I did as Minister of Housing.

In 1976, the then Leader of the Government, Tom Adams, along with the Attorney General, whose friend

Hanschell was, and still is, set out to discredit a former Democratic Labour Party Government. Hanschell was only a cog in the wheel. The intention was to discredit the whole Administration led by Mr. Errol Barrow. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition knew that there was, and always had been bad blood between Hanschell and Barrow. He witnessed it in the law courts. As a matter of fact, the same Errol Barrow, I am told, had to defend the same Leader of the Opposition against the same Hanschell at one time. I am not going into that There has always been bad blood. What better person to bring in to head a commission than Hanschell to do the dirty work of Tom Adams. That same Hanschell -1 want it reported.....

(Aside: He is wicked!)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I would like to say that, Sir. I said it before on a public platform.

How could having discussions with the heads and chairman of my own departments be improper intervention. Can you imagine that kind of foolishness? Catching at straws to show that someone behaved improperly?

I used to have regular meetings with all Heads of Departments, the Chief Labour Officer, the Head of the National Insurance and Chairman of the Housing Corporation. Every month I had meetings with all of my Heads of Departments, including the chairman, Senator Carew, as he was then, and then Deighton Griffith. At no time did I see anyone of them alone. My Permanent Secretary and whoever the deputy was were also present - always - and occasionally they would bring along the head of the Welfare Housing Section.

In 1975, after a few things that I did not like happened at Housing - my office was at Marine House, not Country Road - resulting in an officer being charged before the law court, another officer leaving the country in a hurry, and another officer being fired, having claimed that he was robbed of the rents he had collected a day before when in fact, it turned out that he had not been so robbed, I decided that to bring some further order into Housing, I would appoint a Committee, headed by the then Permanent Secretary responsible,for Organisation and Methods - O & M - now Sir Carlisle Burton. I went to Cabinet with it. It was not a report of a Commission of Enquiry, something that was to be laid. This was a departmental enquiry to eliminate the problems in the Housing Authority at the time, for the better running of the corporation. I appointed Sir Carlisle Burton on my own volition. The Senator responsible for the Civil Service was also a member. I went to the Cabinet with the names and got them appointed. The Burton Report came a few months before the elections, and a few recommendations made by Sir Carlisle Burton had already been implemented. 4.20 p.m.

This whole thing is absolutely distasteful to me and I have absolutely no intention of going through all this rubbish; self-serving nonsense by the Barbados Labour Party.

That was not the only thing they did. Do you see this registration of tenancies and registration of properties, and where a person has a house to rent he should go and register it? All that was part and parcel of it, because they had a strong belief that Ministers of the Democratic Labour Party Government at that time had a lot of houses and were hiding them, and in order to flush them out, they decided that any time a person has a house he wants to rent, he must now go and register it. They saddled the whole country with this absolute nonsense for a mere $2.00 because they believed that we in . the Democratic Labour Party Government had houses that they did not know anything about and they wanted to find them. I hope they found them! All kinds of idiocy!

I heard the same Member for St. Thomas go before the Hanschell Commission the very morning the Commission had its first sitting and make a sweeping statement. He said that some house in St. Andrew could not be found. Nonsense! He made that statement and everybody grabbed on that statement. When the evidence came to be taken on these matters, no evidence was given on that, because the house had never disappeared. But they claimed the house had disappeared. That is the kind of idiotic nonsense and atmosphere in which the Hanschell Commission was born, and Hanschell reported.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: And died.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I do not know if he is living or not.

He had been pressurising our Government, the same Hanschell, for years. That is a fact

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: To buy Hanschell Land)

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Please, do not get involved in that Do not let them lure you into anything.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is a fact. To relieve him of Hanschell Land, the tenantry in Eagle Hall.

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Bosvigo.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is right. There were about three of them, Sir.

All of this was part and parcel of the venom and pique that Hanschell had for the Democratic Labour Party, particularly for the leader of the Democratic Labour Party.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: The same cannot be said of Jackman.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: This, Sir, was the genesis of the Hanschell Report, which, quite frankly and truly, should be where it should go, in the wastepaper basket.

He said: "The Minister should have resigned because the Burton Report was not released to the public." Have you ever heard such rubbish? Of course Hanschell would like a Minister to resign! He would not have said the same thing about any of the Ministers on the other side.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Except Henry. He did not like Henry.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, I have heard they were great friends.

He would not have said that of any of the Ministers on the other side. But it was not necessarily aimed at me, I only happened to be a member of the Democratic Labour Party, it was aimed at the leader of the party. I was never in any doubt about that, and those of us who happened to be Ministers and serving with that leader .....

(Aside: Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Would have fallen under the hammer of his wrath!)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That was the problem, and those were the circumstances of the Hanschell Report. I will have more to say about it later on, I am sure.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, this is the afternoon of what is usually referred to in history as pork barrel politics. I do not know of a time in the history of most countries that the provision of welfare assistance has not led to some great contention. It is not unusual for it to lead to the type of debate we are having here this afternoon, in which, to the obvious delight of some members of the Government, they believe tf u Head 69 is a Head on which the can score some points.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Head 39.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: He has his mind on 69.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Minister of Tourism was showing me a very nice brochure earlier.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Head 39 will, of course, excite a lot of debate.

First, I take, and have always taken, the stand that wherever there is corruption in public life, all you have to do is to deal with it according to the laws of Barbados; very carefully; extremely carefully. If the Government possesses evidence of corruption, against whoever the finger points, carry out the laws of Barbados! You are the Government, do not keep hurling allegations of corruption! Prosecute people, regardless of whoever they are! Bring them before Her Majesty's court, subject them to the full rigours of the law! You have to prove their guilt, they do not have to disprove their innocence, except the burden of proof shifts after the normal rules of evidence have been fulfilled.

That the Government is seeking, however, to pillory persons and to name in this debate a few people, without the courage to bring the persons before the law court, makes me say that quite clearly, this is a political exercise which the history of these sorts of things shows quite clearly occur from time to time. Whether it be in New York, the United Kingdom or in Barbados, one has to recognise this debate for what it is really, a political exercise.

I want, secondly, to say on the report which is being discussed, that I would have thought the Government had the courage of its convictions, even if it does not want to go before the law court, and would have appointed a proper commission of enquiry to operate under the Commissions of Enquiry Act where you can take sworn evidence and people can be cross-examined on that evidence. One of the things about this report, about which I have very serious reservations, is the fact that the Government departed from its original promise to have a commission set up under the Commissions of Enquiry Act with the powers which it gives commissions of enquiry to subpoena people on oath, to punish them for contempt if they refuse to offer the necessary evidence, to ferret out information if it wants to, and obviously persons who may perjure themselves before such a commission would be subject to the laws of perjury. In fact, I feel like my friend, the Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), a bit disappointed about the contradictions contained in the paragraphs which he has cited to this committee. If there is this sort of finding, why should the commission not have clearly recommended one or two courses, either a full commission of enquiry or that the matter goes before the courts of law of Barbados? Neither of these courses has been recommended. 4.30p.m.

The next point is that the commission has been sweeping in some of the condemnation it has made. For instance, the commission disagrees with the whole rationale behind transferring functions to the National Assistance Board. I do not agree with the commission. It is not only critical of how matters took place at the National Assistance Board, it is critical of a whole policy that was set out in the Cabinet Paper of 1980.1 supported that policy and I do not back down from it.

Why did the commission not ask those of us who made that policy to come before it? I certainly never got any invitation to sit. I do not think they asked any Cabinet Minister, including the Minister who was responsible for the policy, the honourable Member for St. Michael East (Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman), to come before it. But it places a criticism on that very policy because the commission feels that you could leave it with the civil servants and all will be all right.

One just cannot come in and accept the commission's report on the face of it without a little greater study of the report. You would realise that, once again, the commission has really done what I do not know any court of law or any properly constituted commission has ever done. It is a basic principle of justice that you do not make condemnatory statements about persons unless they are given an opportunity, and you must subpoena them to come before you, to answer those and to cross-examine and ask questions. Why has this not been done? I can tell you that the then honourable Member for St. Michael East was not invited, as far as I am aware, yet you can interp; ;t part of this report as critical of him. The former Minister of Housing and Welfare was not invited, as far as I am aware.

Sir, it is not a case of putting letters in the Press. If it were a commission to which the Administration of Justice Act is subjected, you would ask for a writ of certiori to deal with the report. Those are fundamental blemishes in this type of report, and therefore we must be very careful, if we are law makers who want to chastise law breakers, that we are in the process not appearing as though we do not also have respect for those practices that we would want.

We do have great privileges in this House of Assembly, and therefore we would want to be sure that when we use those privileges, we are not using them in such a way that we want, for political opportunistic reasons, to slaughter persons without giving them the full protection of the law. It is against that background that I want to talk, myself conscious of the limitations of such a report, about the overall allegations and findings of this report

I heard the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) say that there was discrimination and political bias in the award of welfare during the relevant period. Paragraph 90 of the report tells me that they found little evidence, even given the manner in which they went • about taking the evidence, that the operation of the National Assistance Board was systematically motivated by bias in the sense that persons of a particular political persuasion or class received the majority of benefits to the exclusion of others. That is their finding.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I should like the honourable Member to quote the page.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: This is paragraph 90 at page 20.

So when I hear the allegation of mass discrimination for political reasons, whether you are a B or a D, I must take the statements of honourable Members with great reserve.

Let me put my principle, which I always like to make quite clear here. I do not believe that in a small society such as Barbados there is room for discrimination of persons on the basis of political allegiance on any aspect of the running of this country's affairs. Hansard is replete with my statements on this from the front bench as a Minister. When a particular statement was made by another of my then colleagues, I promptly got up and put not only my position clear, but the position of the Barbados Labour Party as I understood it. I was not then either political leader or chairman of the party. I am today both, and as far as I am concerned, the party under me will stick to that principle. That is the first thing I want to make clear.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am telling you* my position. I said it was absolutely clear from the statement I made in here, and the honourable Member will recall it, at the time when a statement was made from the front bench of the party, in which a particular Minister had his view. I got up, followed by the then Minister, the honourable Member for St. Andrew, and said it did not represent the position of either ourselves individually or the Labour Party. We had never heard any such policy enunciated. I said I was not then either the political leader or chairman of the party. I am today, and that is the policy the Labour Party will follow under me 100 per cent.

When I speak, I am not coming in here to score political points. I am speaking from a position of 17 years in active public life. In a small society, the type of invective, the type of political witchery that has gone on, and will go on if we are not careful *ad infinitum*, must stop. Certainly it will stop under me if it is continuing now.

The second point I want to make quite clearly is that I am sure that in the administration of welfare in this country, whether it was at the Local Government level or at the level of the Central Government, when it became centralised, and before even the National Assistance Board had the powers, that were conferred on it after the change of policy in 1980, there has always been political intervention. I do not know how all of the Members over there, like the young Joans of Arc, like the honourable Member for St. John, riding on this lofty scene, or like some Don Quixote tilting on windmills, can be pretending, or burying their heads in the sand, that they do not know as politicians that each one of them looks to this type of area and even seek Minister's intervention to get some welfare assistance.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St. Lucy (Hon. E. E. Greaves) has been in here too long, he is a seasoned politician. The Honourable Minister for Tourism will know, because they made some stupid allegations against me when he was the Minister, and they do not have to go too far.

I write letters and I write to the Director of Welfare, to the chairman of the board, or I write direct to the Minister, and if the Minister does not move fast enough, I see him here and talk to him about the matter in the corridors. So what are Members going to tell me?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I will come back in the debate. 4.40 p.m.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this debate seems to be a debate primarily between the legal profession, but I seek leave to enter into debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have my leave.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I want to pick up on a few of the logical and illogical statements coming from the honourable Member from St. Thomas and try to put them in what I consider to be a non-legal perspective, so that those of us who are not very legally oriented, would be able to follow, because I find it difficult at times to follow.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas went back to the Hanschell Report, which named one of his constituents, I think, a Mr. DaCosta Edwards, and it documented, as far as he was concerned, how corrupt this former Minister was. Having done that, and it happened to have occurred before 1976, I find it very, very difficult then to understand how this very corrupt person, proven so by an authentic report, becomes one of the campaign managers in St. Thomas, for the same honourable Member!

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) were ordered by Mr. Chairman to be expunged from the Records).

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the Barbados Labour Party, having established that Mr. Edwards was so corrupt and having documented it and made it public knowledge, during the years 1976-1986, awarded several contracts, millions of dollars in contracts, to the same DaCosta Edwards, and then he was a member of the Child Care Board. I find it very, very difficult, because I am no legal person, to understand how you can say to the country that you have documented evidence that the man is corrupt and then turn around and award millions of dollars in contracts to the same individual, and then put him on a board that is supposed to direct the virtues of, especially the children in this country!

The honourable Member for St. Michael North (Hon. P. M. Greaves), the Deputy Prime Minister, made a statement that the honourable Member for St. Thomas went before the same commission and made a sweeping statement about a disappearing house. There was another disappearing house, one at Sturges in St. Thomas, in which a supporter of the Barbados Labour Party lived for years and never paid rent After the Democratic Labour Party won the Government - I am not going to call the man's name - he sent in a cheque for $13 000, for a house which they said a former Prime Minister had won in a gambling game, or he had won the house for the Prime Minister in a gambling game. If we are talking about disappearing houses, and we go before commissions to discuss these sorts of issues, I do not have to look into any books. My memory is very good and I do not have to refer to any documents, so whenever you all are ready to stand up and challenge these things, I have the facts in my head.

Mr. Chairman, I will be back again. *Mr.*

D. A. C. SIMMONS rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Sport and Tourism. Do I have it right? Or is it Tourism and Sport?

Hon. W. W. HALL: (St. Michael West Central): Today, Sir, I will be the ex-Minister of Labour responsible for bringing the supplementary to Parliament some time in August 1986.

Sir, after all the regurgitations, most of which I found it very hard to swallow, I have heard everything in here

today from clients' business to friends' business. But I was brought up by my grandmother, who taught me early in life that I do not have to devalue another man to value myself, and I feel that, as the Minister who called this commission, I should say a few words.

Now, look, my hands are as pure as the driven snow and they will always so remain. There is nobody in here who has any secrets for me.

Asides.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, some of these Honourable Ministers will recall days, perhaps, in London, when we were boys, and earlier than that I do not mean that type of business, I mean the real stuff.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Ministers or Members, which one?

Hon. W. W. HALL: Members.

I need to put the records straight and to say a few words today as to why I thought it necessary, in the first place, to have this commission.

A few days after I had assumed the office of Minister of Labour, with responsibility for Welfare, among other things, I thought it prudent to have a meeting with the Director of the National Assistance Board, to get an up-to-date financial picture of what was going on there. To be honest with you, Sir, I was told that everything was all right, they were solvent, and I took it at face value, until after a few weeks when the Chairman of the Board reported to me that the cheques were bouncing. I instructed the director to let me have a list of all the creditors, and the projected expenditure for the rest of the financial year.

I came to this Honourable House on two occasions, first for a supplementary vote of $1.7 million, that was on October 7, 1986, and warned this Honourable House that I would be returning later, and I so did on December 2,1986, for a supplementary vote of $900 000. The former was for Current Expenditure and the latter was for Capital Expenditure.

At the times, I was at pains to point out the reasons why I thought it necessary to come for the supplementaries. I did not seek to gain any political points. I just told the story as it was, as indeed, I always do, and I will do today. I felt that there was something drastically wrong with the running of the board, and as a consequence, I told the Honourable House that I would have a commission of enquiry. At that point, the honourable Member for St. Thomas complimented me on having kept my word, because I had said it before and I had done exactly what I said I would do. 4.50 p.m.

Sir, the situation was simply this. The Director could give me no satisfactory explanation as to why there was such a state of affairs in the board, neither.could the Accountant. And what is more, while this was happening in, say June, July and August, while I did the investigation, the bills were still coming in. I believe it is true to say that today, in 1988, some of the bills for paint are still coming in from that period.

This was the financial situation. It is common knowledge in Barbados, since words have been spoken so often in this Honourable Chamber, and perhaps on the streets, that the vote of $2 099 000 for the financial year 1986-1987 was spent in a mere few months. Everyone knows that. There were many reasons. There were letters in the papers alluding to the fact that they were trying to build houses in June during the rainy season. When one looks at our weather patterns, you will know that in October of the previous year we had great rain, it rained throughout, and June and July are not the only months of the year that rain falls. So I was not really interested in that, I was interested to find out what was the truth, and that is why I decided that we would have the enquiry.

To recap a bit on the financial situation, in April 1986 they drew down $345 000. Six weeks later, they drew down another $345 000. That is $690 000. A few weeks before, the then Minister of Health had minuted to his PS that he wanted an increase in the Housing Welfare vote for April to June to the tune of $950 000. Therefore, in that period he wanted to spend $1.6 million. But there were some commitments to the tune of $185 000, and ,that meant that by the time I had eased in that office as the Minister, it seemed to me that out of that vote, there was $1.8 million gone. And there was a further $225 000 still owed for materials.

So I had nothing, and I immediately called a halt As a matter of fact, they overspent by $197 000. It meant that during the months of June, July, August and September the poor people of this country were not able to have any houses done. Indeed, we were able to do only emergency cases. I think everyone knows that.

As if that were not all, that first supplementary vote of $200 000, which was the vote for the In-Kind purposes, was spent by May. As a consequence, I had to come to Parliament for $900 000 under the Capital vote.

There were serious misgivings, Sir, I could not really believe it at the time. We had a staff, some of whom were rather incompetent, untrained, and untrainable too. I had

done 20 years in personnel management, and I therefore could not understand how you could promote a man who was a handyman and getting $115 a week just like that to the sum of $1 700 a month as a Senior Storekeeper.

But, mind you, Sir, during the time that we were more or less only doing emergencies - from memory, I remember spending a mere $2 000 in that month - it was then that the people were so unscrupulous, that the nonsense was still going on. We had to call in the police, to deal with the case that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition alluded to. When this man was caught red-handed, shall I say, stealing, do you know what he said? He said that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had sent him. That is what bad people do. They would call any name, not only in here, Sir, but on the streets, when there is stealing going on.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I called the honourable Member, he knows it, and "said, would you believe that this man has called your name? He said, what did you do? I said I fired him on the spot That is what I did. I only told the Member so that he would know what people could do. The honourable Member knows this to be true, Sir.

It was very painful, Sir, excruciatingly so, because there were no lines of authority, Mr. Chairman. Everyone was a boss. Everybody stood up there in Verona and hardly did any work. There was staff there that the.director had no knowledge of. The director did not even know that some men were working. There were about 25 of them. I remember it to the day, because it happened on my birthday, September 12,1986.

Laughter.

Hon. W. W. HALL: And what is more, Sir, these men were paid not out of the Current vote - no, Sir - these men were paid out of the Capital vote. Totally inept, these people! How is that word?

Laughter.

Hon. W. W. HALL: They paid them out of the Capital vote, and when I told the director that he would have to give them a week in lieu because we had no money to pay them, the Director went back in his office and summarily dismissed the men. I am diametrically opposed to anyone summarily dismissing men like that, even though they were more or less brought on rather illegally, and I then said that I had no confidence whatsoever in that type of management, Sir.

Laughter.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, there was no system at all in allocating benefits. I am sure there is still a man down in St. Peter living in a house, Sir, and no one knows to this day how he got in the house. There were cases of the disappearance of lumber, poor work. There were many complaints. People were flooding the office daily complaining about work that was incomplete. People were saying that they were forced to put their fridges and all of their electrical equipment outside, and that they were being ruined. No inventory was done of stock. One of the worst things that I can think of, Sir, is that they were issuing work contracts to artisans out of favour. There were repairs done to rented houses for landlords. These were the things that boggled my mind. And what was worst was that young people were becoming beggars, because every one of them who saw that someone in the street had got a freeness decided that he too, would queue up to get the freeness, and it meant that young people were being set a very bad example. Given all of this information, I had no other alternative than to try to seek the truth. There were myriad problems. 5.00p.m.

Everyone in Barbados knew about the National Assistance Board. They used to queue up, lines ten deep sometimes, wanting to give information. But as I said, Sir, I grew up with my grandmother, and she also told me that any dog that brings a bone will carry one, and all of those people out there who were bringing bones would carry back, and I did not want to hear anything from them, because they were not prepared to say anything under oath. That is why - I think it is paragraph 28 - they say the evidence will not stand up in Court, because all of the people who know everything about the National Assistance Board were not prepared to go to court or to give evidence under oath. That was the .problem.

There is no point talking to me as Minister if you are not prepared to go in court and let it stand as evidence. They were going to sneak behind people's back, give evidence, and opt out, and I said no can do. I was not prepared to do that at all. Because as I say in politics, despite what you may hear in here, God knows this to be true, I am quite convinced that not only should your hands be as pure as the driven snow, but I do not think you can allow your left hand to know what your right hand is doing, because ten years from now they will come in here and strew it all out. I am not too impressed with the behaviour at all. That might be unparliamentary, but I have said it.

We were trying to have a system of investigation for each applicant. We also tried to see if we could have an organisation chart so that people will know exactly what their duties were and to whom they were responsible. I think, Sir, that one of the most important things is to have new staff, recruitment of people with qualifications.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just one more minute.

Hon. W. W. HALL: All I am trying to say, Sir, is that we were trying not to have it as a matter of mere largesse. With all the talk of "Mottleyism" and Welfarism and that sort of thing, we were only trying to see that people will get any benefit based on need. That is the important thing. At least when I was Minister it staggered me when I saw all of these things that were going on, and I thought it best to go to Cabinet and inform them of my desire to have this Commission.

Since I only have a few seconds, Sir, I will rest there. But in case I need to be called into the attack again, I will be quite prepared, Sir.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN (St. Michael East): Mr. Chairman, the report basically is shallow and superficial -1 am referring to the Jackman Report - and does not address the substantive issues or the real causes which led to the sorry state of affairs at the National Assistance Board. The real genesis of the problem is the failure of the Barbados Labour Party Government to understand what social development policy is. The fact of th& matter is that the then Prime Minister, Mr. Adams, was never sympathetic towards the programme which was implemented, which I shall describe shortly, why it was structured as it was structured. And not only was he unsympathetic to it, he did not understand anything about social theory or social development, and consequently could not, as he characteristically did, write out instructions to Mr. Bradshaw and Mr. Trotman, who were the Ministers, to follow, and since they had no written instructions to follow, they did not know what to do, and the programme degenerated to a sorry state, as described in certain parts of the report. It was a failure to comprehend the policy by the Ministers concerned, and it was a failure to comprehend policy by the Prime Minister of the day.

The policy with respect to using the National Assistance Board as an administrative instrument derives merely from the fact that in 1978, when I became Minister, there were 26 000 elderly persons in Barbados and it became imperative to formulate a coherent policy in dealing with the idiosyncratic problems of this aged population. One programme in place was the Housing Welfare Programme, which at, that time was administered by the Welfare Department. The Housing Welfare Programme, among other things, involved the repairing of houses, and there was nothing in the training or the experience of persons within the Welfare Department which would give them any particular expertise in evaluating houses that were in need of repair.

In some parts of the report, one reads that the Welfare Department is best suited for this activity because of their highly trained professional staff. Highly trained professional staff they may be, but not with respect to the repair of houses. Indeed, that segment of the Housing Welfare Programme that was in existence under the Welfare Department functioned like an excrescence on the department and was virtually left alone. It was administered by a woman who had no experience whatsoever, or background, in welfare work. I was told that" she was a former Police-woman who then became a Truant Officer in the Ministry of Education. She was assisted by a lady who was a nurse, and then there was a rag-tag collection of individuals who, I understand had training in building and other related occupation. So the Welfare Department obviously was not the place to locate a housing repair programme, although there was a dimension of what is called a welfare work to it. I discussed this - and I see the former Chief Welfare Officer there, and I see the Deputy Chief Welfare Officer there - .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, you cannot see them.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I discussed at length.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like you to make a correction just for the sake of the record.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: There is presently in the Gallery, Mr. Chairman, and they are within the sound of my voice .....

(Aside: You cannot say that.)

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: There are certain strangers within this area who have an intimate knowledge of what I am about to say. ' »

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Excellent! Well within the Rules of the House!

Laughter.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I discussed at length the formulation of a policy for the aging which consisted, one, of having a place for them to stay that was wind and water tight. Somewhere in the report it is stated by the authors of the report - I personally am of the view that the report was ghosted, but that is neither here nor there - that there was no rationale for what went on. It is as clear in a four page document, authored by me in 1979, which became as an article of faith with the Senior Housing Officer of the Housing Welfare Programme, which was

followed with respect to what should be done within the Housing Welfare Programme.
5.10p.m.

The corner-stone, then, of a policy for the aged was that, to the extent that it was possible, they should be kept within their own communities. The knee-jerk response to problems of the aged and infirm within the Welfare Department was, as soon as persons became weakened, to look for a place for them in the almshouse. I brought that outdated, anachronistic policy to a screeching halt, and in its place substituted a community-oriented programme in which, to the extent that it was possible, housing was found for the elderly persons who were not sick. I believe that you call that place in Beckles Road a district hospital.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Not yet, not yet)

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: A hospital, by definition, is a place for sick people, not indigent people. To the extent that it accommodates people because of their poverty, it is nothing more than an almshouse, and I agree with the Minister of Health, I will continue to call it an almshouse for so long as people are lodged there for no other reason than that they are poor.

So this community-based programme had as the first part proper housing for the elderly within their own community. The second part to it was the institution of a home help programme. Again, there was nothing in the history of the Welfare Department which provided them with any expertise about setting up a home help programme. Indeed, when I approached the Chief Welfare Officer - he is among the strangers over there - and sought his advice with respect to the establishment of a home help programme, he told me he did not know anything about it and that it would require two years before it could be implemented, because somebody would have to be trained abroad before the expertise could be garnered to set up such a programme.

I could not wait while the old people in this country were experiencing hardship, so I had to conceive and conceptualise the programme myself, because there was no expertise available among all the professionals in the Welfare Department to advise me what to do. I could not leave the problem alone, so I did it myself, because that was my public responsibility. The structure is sound if it is operated by people who understand the policy.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Tell us how they corrupted it)

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I am getting to that.

When the Home Help Programme was proposed at the Estimate Committee - it was proposed to establish it as a pilot project in the first instance - it was proposed that $200 000 should be allocated. The then Minister of Finance, Tom Adams, reduced it to $50 000 and said that it was too much money to spend on old people. I waited until he was out of the country and Mr. St. John was Acting Finance Minister and got him to increase it to $100 000, and that is how it started, as a pilot project.

I must explain this very, very carefully. Without any experience or any guidance in this uncharted area, we then had to decide where to start, and since I was the person doing all the work, conceptualising the policy and implementing it, I started with the problem of the elderly with which I was most familiar.

Laughter.

(Aside: Was that the Ivy? Charity begins at home. There is nothing wrong with that.)

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: It was in a particular geographical area. It is wrong to say that it was in a particular constituency, because the people in what is now the constituency of St. Michael South East - the Pine, Mount Friendship, Cutting Road, Haggatt Hall, Roberts Tenantry - had a service that was equally as good as the people in what is now St. Michael East. With $100 000 and a pilot project, one had necessarily to limit it in the first instance.

There was another facet of this that the Committee, in its ignorance, could not understand, because there was nobody else to explain it like me. I set up the programme, it was my brainchild, I dealt with all the administrative policies, because I had no help. The Welfare Officers pleaded ignorant of any such programme. This is the programme of which they pleaded ignorance, that Jackman wants returned to them. It is advice that I believe could be totally disregarded.

What is more, we discovered that in talking to the elderly, the elderly population in Barbados preferred to have home helpers whom they knew. It is a very serious business to have somebody coming into your house and cooking for you, washing your clothes and cleaning your house. In those early days there were several cases where money disappeared from the homes of the elderly clients of the Home Help Programme, and precisely why home helpers were recruited from a particular area was because the elderly clients demanded that the people who cleaned

their homes, cooked their food and washed their clothes be people who were known to them, there is no mystery in it, and they still make those demands to this present day. Anybody who has a nodding acquaintance with the programme recognises this as an incontestible fact 5.20 p.m.

I had the responsibility for starting the programme in the teeth of bitter political opposition in the Cabinet of Barbados. Fortunately, the Leader of the Opposition does not fall into this disreputable group of individuals. He always gave the programme the fullest support, even although he did not quite know what he was supporting. He just had confidence in me.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I agree with the honourable Member. I just wanted some of the people too, Sir.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: The third dimension to the programme -1 am sorry I do not have time to expound upon this as I would like - was to provide a recreational service for the aged. Once their domestic needs had been taken care of, it became necessary as an instrument of re-integrating them within the society, of ending their social marginalisation, to give them the opportunity to interact with their own peer in terms of age and other generations within the society.

Mr. Chairman, I tried in vain to secure finances from the then Minister of Finance for the execution of this project, and I took it upon myself, as a member of the Church Council of St. Barnabas Church, and having a receptive congregation there, together with the church to build a recreational centre for senior citizens. It was the first of its kind in Barbados and in the English-speaking Caribbean. It is only physically located in St. Michael East, but 70 per cent of the congregation of St. Barnabas Church come from St. Michael South East, and five per cent come from Christ Church West. A lot of people do not understand that Some come from St. George South, Dash Valley. Only about 10 per cent comes from St. Michael East

This project was, starved of funds because the then Minister of Finance believed that the people who would benefit would be exclusively people from St. Michael East That caused Mr. Bradshaw his seat That failure to understand that from a constituency standpoint Mr. Bradshaw, would be more helped than me, caused Mr. Bradshaw his seat in the House of Assembly.

I took $20 000 from the Community Development vote and contributed to the $250 000 which the poor people who were parishioners in that constituency raised by themselves. They raised $230 000 by themselves under my guidance - I do not care who calls me an egotist - to establish that recreational centre, and I could never forget the cruelty and ignorance of that Government when later on they refused to assist the people of that church to establish this centre when they denied them $50 000 which would have enabled the project to be launched six months earlier.

Mr.- CHAIRMAN: That is time now.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I will continue with this.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 5.15 p.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 5.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 5.30 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the sitting was suspended, the House was in Committee. To that it must revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House reverted to Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Again, we are in Committee of Supply.

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (AS AMENDED) - $29 993 611
(CONT'D)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, after hearing the Minister of Transport and Works, no one can have any

doubt that it was he who was the prime mover of the conceptualisation and philosophical basis for the Welfare Programme, and for it to be expanded, and for its social development programme to be started, developed, expanded and integrated during his tenure.

On page 5 of the Jackman Report, paragraph 23, it says:

> "The rationale for these changes as set out in the Cabinet submission may be summarised as follows:
>
> (a) Embarkation by the Ministry of Community Services "upon a course which represents a fundamental departure from the philosophy of "welfarism" to the concept of social development...."

I accuse the Minister of Transport of writing those words himself in the Cabinet submission for the Cabinet Paper. They are saying, in summarising the Cabinet submission, that in the Cabinet submission those words appeared, and what I am saying is that if you did not write it, you had a direct input with the P.S.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member who just spoke was a Cabinet Minister and must be aware that a Minister takes responsibility for whatever Cabinet Paper goes out from his Ministry. It is his paper. Yes, it is my paper and those represent my views!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister did not understand me, Sir. I was saying that I recognised from all that he has said today, the language, the conceptualisation, the penmanship of the Minister in the Cabinet Paper. For example:

> (b) The need for a "coherent social development programme for the elderly in order to ensure that they are restored to an integral position within the society."

And this, one, Sir, I love this one, paragraph 25:

> "The Cabinet also excepted the view that "the Welfare Department is a hidebound and ponderous bureaucracy wedded to anachronistic practices of Poor Law administration."

That is he, Sir!

> "The reorientation of this Department will be a long process involving a considerable amount of training for staff.... Ultimately it is envisaged that the present functions of the Welfare Department will be included within the same administrative organism as the activities outlined above along with, perhaps, the Community Development Division in a department of Social Development."

Nothing is wrong with the concept, Sir, but Jackman takes exception in another part of this report and criticises it. Even though the programme in operation may have fallen prey to loose procedures, there is no doubt that the programme as envisaged had a number of community benefits integrated within the context of a Ministry of Social Development as its course, and we on this side take exception to the strictures of the Jackman Committee in criticising the conceptualisation of the programme.

We also agree with the Minister of Transport that it is a shallow and empty document - I spoke on it earlier. If only because it proves that when I characterised the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) yesterday as empty, I had no doubt when he was flinging around in here yesterday morning, that this document.....

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Did I write it?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He did not write it, but he paraded it all over the House yesterday and today as though this was a *summum bonum.*

Sir, how could it be anything other than empty and shallow when it refers in its terms to the present Minister of Transport. In terms of conceptualisation, it even attempts to attack the present Minister of Transport at paragraph 83, because it says: "The Committee was informed that...." - listen to this! - ".... 78 of the first 80 Home Helpers recruited by the Board came from a single district in the then Minister's constituency".

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know what I am doing. I do not know if it is true or not.

Where I am critical of this report, as anyone trained in law, or anyone who has a concept of justice and fairness, ought to be critical of, for example, the Scott Drug Report in Trinidad, is that this purports to make judgement about the work of previous Ministers, the present Minister of Transport, Truss, Bradshaw and, perhaps, Trotman -1 think he had responsibility for it at one stage - without having those people in the enquiry to hear what were their views. But they can write here - I am not interested with whether this is true or not - that the committee was informed"....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Where?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The same paragraph 83, Sir. "They wrote that the Committee was informed that the Minister of Transport took 78 out of 80 home helpers from a single district in his constituency. They did not call him to check the veracity of that. Anybody could run before Jackman and tell Jackman anything and he would write it down as a conclusion.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has risen on a point of order.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: On a point of order: I was not a member of the House at the time that the first 80 or so home helpers were appointed, so they could not have come from any constituency which I represented. That is the first thing.

The second is that these home helpers were appointed by the Statutory Boards Services Commission on the recommendation of the National Assistance Board. At that time the Statutory Boards Services Commission was in operation, and that is what appointed the home helpers.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am deeply grateful to the Minister that strengthens my point. Before this conclusion was reached, printed and circulated to the public, the Minister should have been called to explain what happened, or they should have looked back and found that the Statutory Boards Services Commission appointed the people and not seek to blame him.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh. Who started it then?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The are pointing a finger without giving anybody a chance to defend himself. So it is shallow and empty and biased and offensive to basic principles of fairness. That is what I say about it

They talk about how - paragraphs 50 and 51 - materials were ordered, Sir:

"Mr. Walker informed the Committee that when".

Mr.CHAIRMAN: This is no reference to the present Minister of Education, is it?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not even like Sparrow: "Good morning, Mr. Walker, I come to see your daughter."

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am quoting from the report, Sir. I am not referring to the Minister of Education. This is, I believe, Mr. Ralph Walker, whose name has been mentioned:

> "Mr. Walker informed the Committee that when Dr. Don Blackman was the Minister procurement of materials by the Central Purchasing Unit was discontinued, and the Board was instructed to make its purchases from the Barbados Lumber Company and from Manning Wilkinson & Challenor."

Walker went and told them that I do not know if the Minister had a chance to deal with that It may be true. All I am saying is that these things should have been tested.

But let us assume it is true, what is wrong with it? Because the rationale comes in paragraph 51:

> "When Mr. Aaron Truss became Minister of State the Board was instructed to purchase its materials from Marshall Trading Company."

(Aside: Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: What was his rationale? I do not see anything about that.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Wait, wait. Read over on the next page. Young, shallow, empty.....

(Aside: Raw and caustic!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: .....raw and caustic young person!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, no! I think you should withdraw those remarks. You cannot refer to a Member in such language.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Fifty-one:

> According to Mr. Walker, Dr. Blackman was of the view that there was too long a waiting period when the Central Purchasing Unit did the ordering."

Do you not believe that Truss could have had the same reason, too?

(Aside: No!) *(Aside:*

Read on.) *(Aside:* Set

them up.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

"The ostensible advantage of Marshall Trading as a source was that it offered free delivery of materials;"

(Aside: Read on.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Okay.

"Mr. Walker told the Committee, however, that the Senior Housing Officer had advised him that the material from Marshall was of inferior quality, thus presumably negating any savings on transport costs."

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is an area for ministerial decision.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is an area properly within the purview of the Minister. As I understand it, there are 2 competing advantages. The Senior Housing Officer says Marshall will deliver free and, on the other hand, his material might not be as good as Lumber Company's. The Minister has to come down on one side, and he comes down on one side.

(Aside: Do not stop.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to read the whole thing:

"Mr. Walker also expressed other reservations about Marshall Trading, mentioning that Mr. Marshall, the proprietor, was alleged to have been seen at Verona canvassing for contracts, and was reputed to be "passing money."

These are serious allegations. It is all in the context of what I was saying earlier. Walker goes and says these things to a committee. The Honourable Minister of Health, as an expert in Administrative law, would be forced to concede that where allegations are made about a person of such a serious character, the person should be called to explain his side of it That is only fairness. If you deny that, I would deny that you are a well qualified lav. yer.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Wait, wait.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I think that what the honourable Member is doing....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what are you rising?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: He is misleading the House.

The honourable Member is doing a very skilful job of mixing two principles, and I think he is quite right when he discusses who is an expert and in Administrative Law.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You like that, Henry?

But he really should not confuse a commission of enquiry with a tribunal, because they were not taking evidence.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Just a moment. The commissioner said that he was certain that he was taking evidence. And if you read the rest of his report - I think in fairness do not misrepresent the Commissioner - the commissioner says no more than what they have found. It is a commission of fact, and they say that these are the words of Mr. Walker, these are the words of so and so if it is so and so, then so and so. Do not condemn them.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: For many years, even when he was on the Opposition benches studying at Cave Hill, he used to make a lot of sound legal submissions in this House. I believe that when he goes home and thinks about what he has just said, he will acknowledge that he - do not wink, do not wink -

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: - has bent the logical processes of his mind.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Once he concedes that, that is good, Sir, because he must know that it is an enquiry which has public information and public interest, and they have a duty, even if they are not taking evidence on oath, to be fair to all the parties involved, and who could be scathed, to do justice by them. I do not think that in this they have been fair. They accepted what people said and never tested it You cannot find a fact unless you test it. You come in court and you give evidence in chief, but the judge is not going to make a finding of fact until he hears how you stand up under cross examination, and what I, the accused, has to say. After that he comes up and says he believes this one or that. In my case, he will always believe me.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am making a serious point, Sir, that I think the report has been unfair to past Ministers in that it has not given them an opportunity to defend themselves.

On the ordering of materials and supplies:

"As at 14th October, 1985 the bills ...."

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will make it a document of the House, Sir:

"....outstanding for the Housing Welfare Programme of the National Assistance Board as at the 11th...."

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, I have it. I will give it.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Outstanding as of October, 11,1985 the bills were as follows:

Barbados Lumber Company Limited $206 018.73.

Marshall Trading Company $147 576.50. *Aside.*

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What are you suggesting now, that this is not a real document?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am dealing with a document I have in my hand. If you have something else, bring it.

I continue:

	$
Manning Wilkinson & Challenor	57 970.60
Harris Paints	14 470.00
Downes Building Material	3 360.00
Water Authority	608.97
McEnearney	346.00

A total outstanding liability foraccounts payable of $430 351.09.

On 15th October, 1985, there is a minute: "discussed with Chairman Walker ....." - (and this is how they decided to pay them,) - ".....and decided that part payment be made on large bills and small ones be paid while the project be subjected to utmost economy." And there is a signature of somebody from the department.

Asides.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh dear, dear. Now hear this. They must not be so shallow and empty, Sir. Buggs Marshall went to school with me at Lodge School, and lived in St. Philip in East Point, where I got all the votes, in St. Philip North.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When I was representing St. Philip I believe he had one truck.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know about that. I do not go up there too often.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: By the time you left, how many did he have?)

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Senator Amory Phillips was spoken of very disparagingly - find the paragraph there for me Henry - do not walk me down a trap, I will score runs - in the Hanschell Report. He is a big wheel in the Barbados Lumber Company. Do not let us get into that.

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

t

Asides.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has risen on a point of order. Will you take your seat.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I know, Sir, that when the honourable Member is in full flight he does not always remember, and I am only helping by drawing to Your Honour's attention that the honourable Member he has mentioned is from another place.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Right. He cannot do it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When we are quoting, unless we are going to be specific or you are quoting from the document, I am sure you do not wish to go where you went.
6.15p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I accept the point. I do not think it is proper that you should refer to a member from the Other House in this debate in this way.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But, Sir, we were only referring to him in terms of his shareholding and directorship. As Mr. Marshall is a shareholder and director of Marshall Trading Company Limited, so is Senator Phillips at Barbados Lumber Company.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The reference is being made in context of him being a Member of the Other Place. None of the others that you refer to is a member of the Other Place. I think it is improper. I could read the relevant section of May's to you, if you want me to.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will bow to Your Lordship.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, I am not that yet

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not that yet. Maybe in time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is the clothes that I have on, Sir. I am thinking that I am still in court.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I can understand that.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He is demeaning your position.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, he refers to me as "Lordship".

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: This is the highest court of the land - not "Your Lordship."

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I was referring to Mr. Phillips as of 1985, October 14, when he was pure "Mr. Phillips." He is a dear friend, Sir, and I am not going to refer to him in any pejorative sense. I will only quote from the Hanschell Report, at page 45. They found that he was a preferred contractor. He was preferred by the Minister of Housing in relation to the deli very of houses.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Look at page 45. Interpret it!

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You must not force me. I am trying to ease up the man and you force me.

Paragraph 2:

> "The repairs or repairing of the selected houses were exclusively carried out by two main contractors who were selected by Mr. Deighton Griffith. Messrs. Josephus Dyall, 259 houses, - at a cost of $362 385; and Amory Phillips, 118 houses for $208 630."

If I said "the Minister," Sir, I withdraw. I meant the chairman, Mr. Deighton Griffith, who was a well-known Dem and was Chairman of the Housing Authority. But do not let us get into personalities.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I only wanted to get into personalities in answer to the honourable Member for St. Michael South East. I had hoped that none of these other persons would have been mentioned.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order: The honourable Member said that the Commission spoke disparagingly of one Mr. Amory Phillips.

(Aside: Read on.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I will read on then.

Paragraph 85:

> "We are indebted to Mr. Amory Phillips for the volunteered appearance before the Commission and the evidence which he gave in connection with the . actual operation of the repair programme, because he better explained the circumstances outlined in Items 4 and 7 aforesaid than Inspector McClean."

Laughter

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All that means, Sir, is that the person came to court and said, I think I killed him but I am going to tell you how it happened.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The same thing.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the honourable member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) did make some allegations, not grounded in fact, about my relationship with Mr. Joy Edwards and how you want to hear that now he came to be on the Child Care Board or some board.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They should let us tell the whole story and make some suitable comparisons.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will give you a minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We became close, close friends, Sir, in 1975....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute to go.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not talking about other people. No, I am not going to let it rest in Hansard without my replying. Tom Adams taught me one thing. If you give a lie a head start, you will never catch it

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You will never catch it!

In 1975, City Bank sued him through a number of his companies that had been indebted to City Bank for $1 1/2 million.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh, Lord! I will come back and give all.

Mr. D. J. H THOMPSON: The impression should not be given by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) that the purpose for raising any points relating to this enquiry was in any way to go outside the bounds of the facts as found by the enquiry. Some of his points are dubious with respect to Administrative Law, and I will take shelter under the tutelage of the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt), as an administrative lawyer myself, who subsequently went to Cave Hill and taught it The point is that it is true that the principles of natural justice are not just restricted to tribunals and other authorities acting under enactments or legislation, but that it can apply to any kind of enquiry. But that is something that the court must find, in my view.

What I am saying with respect to this is that the methods of work, and the terms of reference of this enquiry, were set out here, and the commissioners precisely said in their Press Release that "they were inviting members of the public who are in a position to assist the committee with its work to communicate with the secretary of the committee as soon as possible". Unless I am to put a construction on the motives for Messrs. Truss, Bradshaw and Trotman not giving evidence in a negative way, I would say, that, obviously, they have read the terms of reference of the commissioners and decided that they could be of no assistance in proving that they themselves were corrupt

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If the Commissioner said they did not want to invite former ministers, well so be it The point is that they invited and took evidence from former or present employees of the National Assistance Board, the Chairman of the Board appointed by the Barbados' Labour Party, Deputy Chairman appointed by the Barbados Labour Party, *bonafide* members of the Barbados Labour Party, including former Deputy Directors and others. All of them gave evidence at the enquiry, and the commissioners obviously based their report on the information that was given to them.

There is an objective fact that nothing can displace, and that is when the commissioners say in very clear terms on page 20, paragraph 91 of this report, that "the period during which the greatest number of "infelicities" occurred was roughly between November, 1985 and May 28, 1986, i.e. the period of the run-up to the elections." All of the evidence relating to the finances of the National Assistance Board bear out that fact The fact that the budget was burst, as the Minister who convened the enquiry indicated to us, squares very clearly with this objective fact. 6.25 p.m.

There are other objective facts. Anything that is said is either true or not true, but there are other circumstantial things that go to the point, and the evidence is there. It is no point us taking this position or trying skilfully to make it appear that these allegations and whatever evidence the committee gave for the allegations are completely invalid.

I do not necessarily agree that the findings in respect of the early part of the report, particulariy the Housing Welfare Programme, are shallow, but that is my view. What I think is shallow about the report is that the commissioners did not seek in any in-depth way to suggest to us how best the National Assistance Board could be run in future.

Aside

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Hold on, I have read that part, too. All they did was to suggest that certain parts of the programme should be sent back to the Welfare Department.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is really a Civil Service view.)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Right.

They said one of the homes should be run by the Ministry of Health, that the Auditor General should check

the accounts, and that the National Assistance Board should perform an advisory and consultative role. That is where the shallowness lies, that the commissioners, after collecting this information and reporting on it, should then perhaps have gone on to suggest to us how best a National Assistance Board or a programme like this could be executed. They could very well have regard to what evidence was before them in respect of the Cabinet Papers or any other kind of evidence, and they could then pronounce specifically on that

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What were their terms of reference?)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: In the terms of reference it says that they were to advise the Minister to make such recommendations as may be necessary or expedient, and in my view that covers those areas.

We know that some of these practices exist in statutory corporations. We spoke yesterday about CBC, we have heard it about statutory corporations time and time again, and either we are going to say let us adopt, as the Leader of the Opposition would say, a bipartisan approach, whatever that may mean, to these matters and try to look at them perhaps more dispassionately, or we will just continue forever in the same mould.

The floods took place in St. Peter - a clear example of this, I do not have to go any further than that - and funds were mobilised to assist the people in the constituency of St. Peter. An entire road was washed away in St. John, in Welch Village - I have to drive over it and face people every day of my life who have seen that road in that condition for some considerable time, not a year or two but years - and yet the National Assistance Board, the Government, nobody.....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Are you vex that the people in St. Peter got help then?)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, I am not vex about that. Perhaps the honourable Member for St. Peter would not be in here today and I would not have the benefit of his wisdom from time to time, so I cannot really be vex.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Fair enough. If that is your boast, I cannot be vex with that.

These programmes administered either by the Welfare Department or other departments, in my view, have to be administered in as equitable a manner as is possible. For example, 90 per cent if not 100 per cent of the persons in St. John whose plight is brought to the attention of the National Assistance Board, is brought to the attention of the National Assistance Board by me, and that probably goes for every other sitting Member in this House of Assembly. The National Assistance Board obviously does not have the capability to go out into the constituencies, without some kind of information coming from some outside source, to investigate the plight of many old people.

During the St. John by-election campaign, and subsequently, I have been carrying out • my own investigation. Were it not for that I am certain that the National Assistance Board's attention would not have been drawn to the plight of several old and indigent and other persons in the St. John constituency who need assistance, and that is one tremendous failing. If it means that we have to go out and do that kind of work, we could as well administer the funds ourselves. That is one of the main problems.

Then there was the obvious concern expressed by how the Commissioners wrote about the manner in which people were selected to perform tasks relating to the National Assistance Board, and that is a valid concern. It does not only run in the National Assistance Board, it runs in many other statutory corporations, where people are sent for jobs, where Ministers, as the report says, create posts and appointments were made and salaries were arbitrarily assigned. That is one of the problems in many of the statutory corporations, it is a problem that the trade unionists have to wrestle with, because other workers in a statutory corporation very often see people come in and get more money than they for doing tasks of a lesser quality or substance than those that they are doing.

. But even moreso, there must be some, in my view, concern for the individuals involved. If a person feels that he is beholden to you in that way, it means that some time, if you degrade him in that manner and emasculate him and take away his soul and independence, at some time he will either turn on you or on the society. He will turn on the people he will have to meet on a daily basis. I do not think that such people could conscientiously carry out their work if they did not feel that they had some self respect and that they did not have to depend on the whim of an individual for their own existence, and that is one of the problems that the Barbados Labour Party continued, if you want to use a negative term, and in many cases began in several of the statutory corporations. Large numbers of employees had no status whatsoever and I do not think that people can perform their work consciously under those conditions.

This information is now available, and as far as I am concerned, if it is necessary for the Minister, or whoever, to convene commissions of enquiry or provide information to the police, it should be done, and those persons who the police feel they have enough evidence on should be brought

before the law courts. This is perfectly in consonance with what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, and I agree. I feel that if I took a cursory glance at this report, there is information relating to a number of persons which should be submitted to the police for investigation and let us save all the problems.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I did not say all, I said "a number of persons."

I am not suggesting that, on the basis of this, people should be locked up tomorrow. I am saying that this gives us a fair indication of the manner in which some statutory corporations are being run in this country, and an end must come to that at some point. If the Honourable Minister came and found these conditions existing, he was perfectly right to convene this particular departmental enquiry, and if on the evidence that came before him he felt he should have convened a commission of enquiry or submit information to the police, he should do so and the persons involved should be dealt with accordingly. 6.35 p.m.

That is the way I believe it should be approached, and I believe that is the manner in which all of us believe it should be approached. So there is no point us trading charges. Obviously there was not sufficient evidence in any of the reports that had been bandied around in here, neither the Duffus Report nor the Hanschell Report, but perhaps this is one occasion when there is sufficient evidence. I do not know; that is something for the police.

I am concerned, too, that notwithstanding the practices that may be outlined in this particular report, at the end of the day, if the persons who have been accused of these practices stand accused, they are the people who have not even benefited. Most of those persons are persons who have either lost their seats or have been relegated to history. So it really does not make much sense us continuing with this attitude of believing that by disbursing money through the National Assistance Board, we will win elections. It is foolishness to believe it, because the people who used it to their advantage did not benefit from it. Maybe others benefited, but I am not going into that, I made that point already, and I do not mean it as a slur on anybody. We can stop this foolishness.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, we have been spending considerable time on this particular matter. I believe that the principal purpose of the debate on the Estimates is to relate what we see in the Estimates to the kinds of goods and services that the people of this country will benefit from during the particular year, and I believe that during the remainder of this debate these are the areas that we must concentrate on.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: the Honourable Prime Minister is making an implied criticism of the Chair. He is saying that you are allowing this debate to be steered off in directions not deliberately related to goods and services and the money we are voting for them. That is my submission.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That may be your submission. I am talking about something that has not yet happened. I am saying what I would expect to see for the remainder of the debate. I have not cast any reflection on what has gone on before.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did not accept it as any implied reference to me either. It is not a question of anticipating what I would say. I am here as an umpire between two sides, and certain rules of the House are to be observed. I do not care if you are from the one side or the other. I am here to deal fairly and squarely with what is said, and I am here to make sure that it is said within a particular context, that context being the Orders of the House. That is my responsibility. If you want to carry on from 1900 to 1987-88, that is a matter for you. I have a job to do and I will do it as I perceive it.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Sir.

What was really happening is that there was a device being used, and perhaps it has something to do with the mode of dress of the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) today, to deflect the attention and consideration of this Committee from the serious charges

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir; I did not begin this debate. The honourable Member for St. John began this debate with the National Assistance Report. Getting into this debate is only part of my thing. I have won 24 out of 25 murder cases in this country and have the 26th one to win coming up soon.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I never said the honourable Member for St. Thomas began the debate. He has certainly participated in it, and all I am saying is that he is using certain devices, legal approaches and so on, to deflect the kinds of concerns and considerations that are being brought to bear on the report that is being considered, and which the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) tended to concentrate on at the start of this particular debate.

Our concern here is not really the Burton Report or the Hanschell Report. We are dealing particularly with the

National Assistance Board and a report of that particular board. I believe that is what we must focus our attention on and not be deflected back to historical considerations, because nothing has really come of those reports.

We heard from the Leader of the Opposition - he claims that everybody is his friend - and it is the same thing that he said in 1980. The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) was Attorney-General at the time, and he came out and said quite openly that he was going to send the Hanschell Report to the Director of Public Prosecutions because he believed that some criminal acts had been perpetrated, or might have been perpetrated.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order: the Honourable Prime Minister knows that one of the persons, Victor Callender, who was criticised and held liable, scouted the island and is now living overseas in a safe haven outside the jurisdiction of Barbados. He ran, in other words!

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The point I am making, Sir, is that that particular report was laid in the House of Assembly for the debate of the Estimates of 1980-81, and it was purely, or substantially, an attempt to lay the groundwork and the framework for a denigration of the Democratic Labour Party at that time in preparation for the 1981 General Election. That is absolutely what was happening at that particular time. In this instance, there are no elections in the offing. You are padded up, but there are no elections to fight at this time.

What we are concerned about is that in this country, where we are trying to bring about social and economic development, funds which should go towards the social upliftment of the disadvantaged have been diverted, misspent, or certainly not spent in the way that they should have been spent to bring benefits to the poor in this country. That is an inefficiency in our system which we are seeking to correct.

The report investigated the matters which were considered to be infelicities of that particular board. It tried to focus on the shortcomings of the board and to make some recommendations to correct the maladministration and those errors. This is what we are really concentrating on, that under the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party Government, and the responsibility of the, Ministers for that particular board, they allowed the kind of malpractice and maladministration to continue, whether with or without their knowledge. We do not wish to see that kind of state of affairs continue. We wish to see steps and measures put in place to prevent it from happening again as far as is humanly possible. 6.45 p.m.

We are living in an imperfect world, and it is a world that is managed by human beings. From time to time, with the best will in the world, there are going to be breaches, breakdowns in administration and wrong-doings. It has happened before, and, I daresay it is going to happen again. But what we have to be certain about is that we have the kind of system that, when you have a breach or a breakdown, you have systems in place that can identify and pinpoint what has gone wrong, and who has been responsible for what has gone wrong, and then take action in these particular areas. I think that is what we wish to highlight in this particular case.

What, therefore, I believe, we wish to say here is that under that particular system, in which resources were used in a way not intended, or certainly in a way not in the best interest of the management of transfer payments in this country, we wish to ensure in the future that when funds flow from the Central Government through statutory boards, or through quangos, or however they may be styled, they really end up serving the people on a broad base and not on any narrow political base. We wish to see that Government and its agencies get as much value for the money that we are providing as possible, and we wish to ensure that the greatest possible integrity is exercised at all levels, from the formulation of policies to the administration of the policies and the delivery of the goods and the services, to the extent that we are all capable of.

This particular area, there is no doubt that there was a massive breakdown at the policy making and implementation levels, and at the level of delivery of goods and services, under the Administration of the Barbados Labour Party. Therefore, we are saying that they must carry the blame for that, and that we must take the lessons and take the recommendations of the report and seek to ensure that there is a strengthening of the implications of that report for the benefit of improvement in the delivery of services for the disadvantaged and the needy in this country.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Prime Minister not to be a bureaucrat in the office of Prime Minister. It is an office which requires a certain flexibility, including the flexibility of intellectual process. Because these people, Jackman and others, have made recommendations, it does not lead inescapably to a conclusion that the Government must necessarily accept them easily. When he says, "take the recommendations", what do you expect me to understand other than he is saying accept the recommendations and try and put better procedures in place? because he has himself in this difficulty.

He is saying, take the recommendations, by which, I conclude, he means accept. The honourable Member for St.

John is saying that the recommendations are imperfect. The Honourable Minister of Transport - these are not his words, but these are my words of his interpretation - says that it is putrid. How are we going to take them?

The Prime Minister would wish us to discuss this report and I shall come back to it. One of the points that I was concerned to emphasise earlier was that the methodology adopted by the committee and the conclusions referred to in this report were unfair to previous policymakers. I cannot understand this, and I would welcome the Honourable Minister of Health's intervention on it at an appropriate time, as one who is very concerned about Administrative Law, who is a student of it in the best possible sense of student, that he is a continual reader of it. Listen to this, paragraph 5 of the report:

> In practice, although no guidelines were given to the Committee on this specific point, the Committee decided that it would not invite former Ministers of Government to participate in its proceedings, as it was of the view that this would be contrary to the conventions and spirit informing the "Westminster Model" of Cabinet Government."

So do you know what they decided to do? To judge the previous Ministers in their absence! I say that is unfair, and I want somebody to get up, the Attorney General or anybody else, and tell me that it is not unfair to deliberately exclude them from consideration, but make statements that so and so told me that the Minister did this and the Minister informed about that, and write it down and put it out for public consumption and do not get the Ministers' views.

(Asides)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The committee, at paragraph 5.

But that is not all. Let us look now as to why we should not take the recommendations seriously. Paragraph 92 - a straight contradiction! When I began, I drew the attention of the House to the contradiction that appeared at the end of the report. Now listen to paragraph 92:

> "Strictly speaking, the only *complaints* received by the Committee suggesting "welfare preference" concerned alleged discrimination in favour of certain young people - usually young women - with no particular emphasis placed on their political or other affiliations."

What they are saying is that a lot of women may have been hired, but not because they were Bees or Dees. And then they go into a lot of foolishness.

> "On the balance of the evidence presented to the Committee, such preference may very plausibly have been less the product of Machiavellian partisan policy than it was the result of the general administrative anarchy which reigned in the National Assistance Board for the greater part of the period under review...."

Having said that there was no distribution of patronage on the basis of party affiliation in paragraph 95, listen to what they say - a straight contradiction! 6.55 p.m.

> "The Committee is satisfied that, in the election "run-up" period and during the electoral campaign itself, some sitting Members of Parliament as well as other candidates of the ruling Barbados Labour Party had no hesitation in employing the facilities of the National Assistance Board to repair and rehabilitate houses of persons in various constituencies, frequently in complete violation of any norms of fairness or of equitable distribution of benefits, with little if any attention being paid to concepts of proper procedure."

I am going to dismiss these once and for all as a bunch of dummies, numskulls! The Honourable Minister of Transport in his heyday, because he has mellowed a lot now, would call them nincompoops.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How can you say in paragraph 92 that there was no patronage on the basis of party affiliation, and then come in paragraph 95 and say that you are satisfied that in the election run-up Labour Party candidates had the benefit of the patronage? Foolishness! ' '

Aside

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Foolishness!

(Aside: Do not tear it up.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: (Tearing up report). We are not dealing with truth. We are dealing with what has been conceived as a report by one of high esteem. An excellent writer of English prose. But the thought processes have gone haywire in this report. And we dismiss it and condemn it to the dustbin of documentary relics!

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I wanted to put in the Records, and I must, my side concerning Joy Edwards.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to deal with this in a broad way.

Sir, we became friends in 1975, when certain members of the Democratic Labour Party, of which he was still a Member, caused an article to appear on the back page of the *Nation* newspaper saying: "Joy Edwards sued for $1 % million by City Bank".

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. I will tell you privately.

The gentleman was very embarrassed, because it involved a number of his companies, of which he had been guarantor. In those days, the Registry used to open on Saturday mornings and we had the Special Court on Monday, and he came to me the Friday afternoon with a number of writs, about six or seven, relating to a variety of companies. We had to do Affidavits of Defence, in those days, to hold the judgement off so that judgement would not go against him. I remember working in my office from 8.15 and calling my secretary down to the office at 7.00 o'clock the next morning to type out a number of affidavits so that City Bank did not get judgement against him for $1 % million. He was in tears because he had been to two lawyers of the DLP who had charged him five-figure fees which he did not have to pay, could not pay.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, Not anybody in this House.

I paid the $282, I think it was, for the filing of the documents out of my pocket. He and his brother, Happy Bryan, were in my office.

I think those writs were filed by Jack Dear, and I put in a number of defences, including equitable ones, and asked for the necessary particulars, and Jack Dear could never get a judgement. The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) came and he refiled the cases and I did the same thing with him. We had to sit down one morning and talk as men and settle for total indebtedness. Out of a debt of about $r> million, we settled for about $300 000 for all the companies. The client felt grateful and we have remained friends.

I am not going to exempt him from any of the strictures of Hanschell. But I believe that, with time, he has seen the error of his ways, as has the now Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, no, no! Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member cannot speak for me. There are no errors of any ways that I might see.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is wrong to cast imputations on the character of another Member. That ought to be withdrawn, and the honourable Member knows that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister is a keen follower of cricket, Sir, but he never played it. So he would not understand when you are bowling back-of-the-arm.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you ....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I withdraw.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A regular recipient of 6-0, and the Prime Minister confirms that.

Asides.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There are two parties in Barbados, Sir, and there has been a lot of hopping across from party to party, not necessarily at this parliamentary level, but at a lower level.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not going to talk about Howard Roberts or Nigel Barrow. I am not going to talk about anybody so.

Laughter.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You know! I would not even talk about the late Prime Minister, Mr. Barrow, or Mr. F. G. Smith or Sir James, who were with us and are now with you. There has been that, and there is nothing wrong with Mr. Edwards having felt very contrite about what he did, and after a period of expiation, as one Member over there said, embracing the sensible arms of the Barbados Labour Party.

Laughter.

(Aside: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: And the compassionate arms!)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was a tower of strength to me in St. Thomas. But he is not a constituent, he lived in St. James.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, that was 1976. He was still a Dem in the Chair. I think he was Deputy Speaker.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He did?

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not remember that one, Sir, genuinely do not remember it.

I am a little concerned about a couple of things, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You only have two minutes to express that concern.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I can do it in two minutes.

The National Assistance Board is going to get a number of writs from me next week.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are going to get a lot from me next week, about six. They dismissed about six people, whom I am working for, around August 29 last year, without any compensation whatsoever.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have a year to sue.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have not filed the cases yet. I can talk about them. It is my intention to sue them. I know better than that.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to win all, including the one with Aboab. It is interesting to see how this report refers to Mr. Aboab, as Acting Director, appointed by a Minister, at a circus. He started in the Central Government, but the statutory board took the responsibility to dismiss him, and not for him to revert in the Service to his substantive position.

But we will battle those legal niceties in court. I only send the message, and I do it deliberately, Sir, because the National Assistance Board, for all the efficiency you are talking about, has been less than fair in these matters. I wrote them early on. I received a letter from their lawyer asking me for a little time. That time expired since October, and they have not come back to me. I do not expect them to deal with that. This is workers' money. Not even holiday with pay did they get. If they are going to settle next week, call me and let us have a meeting.

Laughter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN (St. Philip South): Mr. Chairman, no one will dispute that the honourable Member who just sat down is a very good lawyer. He has attempted throughout this debate to use his legal knowledge to discredit the report which we were debating. He has also tried, Mr. Chairman, to make some remarks about the honourable Prime Minister. You have to understand how the honourable Member is operating. He believes that by discrediting the legal short comings of the document we are discussing, he will discredit the entire document. He believes that if he can get the people in Barbados to believe that the document is worthless, any of the strictures in the document about members of that side, people will just throw out through the window. 7.05 p.m.

What are the facts? Fact No. 1 - we in this party from 1984 - 1986 said throughout this country that a lot of things were going on in the National Assistance Board that should not have been going on. Immediately after the election - this is Fact No. 2 - we discovered that.all the things we were saying throughout 1984, 1985 and in -the first part of 1986 were true. Fact No. 3 - $2.5 million, which was allotted to be spent in the entire year of 1986, was spent between April 1 and May 28, 1986, the election year.

Was there corruption? Were there wrong things going on or not? All we are saying here is that things that took place in 1984, 1985 and the beginning of 1986 should not be allowed to continue again. So the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has to understand that he is not going to divert us from what we came in here to do.

Let me give you an example of what we were complaining. This is a letter, Mr. Chairman, and it says:

"Dear Mr. Bourne .....

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am going to tell you who wrote the letter after I finish reading it.

"Dear Mr. Bourne:

> Mr. Everton Greene has indicated that you may be in a position to provide him with some assistance. I should be grateful if this assistance would be provided to Mr. Greene."

You and I know what that assistance was. And it was signed by Owen Arthur!

This is another letter, to the Manager of the National Housing Corporation:

> "With respect to the allocation of emergency housing units at Church Street Garden, St. Peter which were constructed by the National Assistance Board, I am pleased to inform you that the allocation of 7 units are as follows."

This is a directive sent to the Manager of the National Housing Corporation, and I will tell you who sent it afterwards. These are the names of the persons:

> "1. Walter Lopey, 2. Fitzroy Pickering, 3. Daniel Best, 4-1 will get to this a bit later - Sylvia Collymore, 5. Lenora Edwards, 6. Everton Green, 7. Elsie Squires."

You have to understand that Nos. 4, 6, 7 did not have any flooding at all, or any house. You have to understand that No. 4 should have been Mrs. Muriel Springer and No. 7 should have been Marguerita Edwards, who had been flooded out They were removed and the names substituted for those people who were flooded out were Sylvia Collymore and Elsie Squires. And those two persons were evicted for not paying rent. Do you know who sent this letter? Well, I see here "George S. Griffith." I do not know who George Griffith is.

(Aside: Look at him there!)

Laughter.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He is in here?

So we are asking, did something .c vrong in the National Assistance Board or not? If things went wrong, we are saying that they should not go wrong again. That is all we are saying and we will not be diverted by any honourable Member over there who is using his legal knowledge to twist us left, right, and centre. Either there was corruption and wrongdoing or there was no corruption nor wrongdoing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I give way.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, this has been, in many respects, a very unfortunate document, from which a lot of conclusions are drawn on the basis of supposition, even though people were not put in a position to have given evidence before the committee. We are now going into some of the more sordid parts of politics.

I am not, Mr. Chairman, going to apologise for having written a letter in respect of Mr. Everton Greene as no Member in this House of Assembly is going to apologise for having written letters on behalf of their constituents.

Mr. Greene's name was raised in relation to mine. It might be interesting, if we are going to reach this level, Sir, to discuss the kinds of assistance that were provided to Mr. Greene in one instance as compared to assistance that was provided to Mr. Greene in another instance. It would have behoved the Minister of Housing and Lands to tell the House what kind of assistance was given to Mr. Greene in the first by-election in St. Peter, if it is not true that Mr. Greene's campaign as an independent candidate in St. Peter was financed by the Democratic Labour Party, if all of his equipment, was not provided by the Democratic Labour Party, if it is not true, Sir, that the amount of funds put up by Mr. Greene....

Hon. B. M. TAI.TT: On a point of order: The honourable Member is misleading the House. He is the one who has talked about sordid politics. I believe that I was President of the Democratic Labour Party. I give you, Mr. Chairman, the absolute assurance that Mr. Greene was not at that time a member of the Democratic Labour Party and that we did not give him any money and or other assistance for any campaign.

In any event, the Democratic Labour Party's funds were not public funds and we do not have to account for them in here. This is the taxpayers' money and, therefore, the honourable Member cannot get up and give that kind of information in lieu of the sordid material we have had coming from the honourable Member. If he wants to discuss sordid politics, we are going all the way.

There is nothing corrupt about the Democratic Labour Party putting a candidate in the field or five candidates for the same by-election. But we only put one.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

I have allowed a little latitude in debate left and right, as the case may be.

Aside

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member listen to me so that when he gets up to speak again he will be very certain how he must speak?

We are not talking about a General Election here. There is no vote before me about anything dealing with Electoral and Boundaries Commission, or elections for that matter. We are talking about the National Assistance Board. Let us conduct the debate in the context of National Assistance Board, or for that matter the wider Head, which is Employment, Labour Relations and whatever. 7.15p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, there were promises of more funds to come.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Members for St. Peter (Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR) and St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. TATTT) were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the Record.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be now suspended until 8.15 this evening.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 8.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 7.22p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the sitting was suspended, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it must revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

When the break was taken, the honourable Member for St. Peter was halfway through his allotted time. Permission is given for him to resume.

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (AS AMENDED) - $22 993 611

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I had not spoken in this debate because the Shadow Minister for this Ministry had been doing a very fair and fantastic job in putting the case on behalf of the Opposition in these matters, and were it not for the rambustious intervention by the honourable Member for St. Philip South (Hon. H. A. Blackman), the truth is that I might not even have wished to become involved in this debate except, Sir, to dwell on the future directions for the National Assistance Board. Indeed, Sir, early in this present Session of Parliament I spoke from a position of conscience and said that I did not agree - it is a matter of record I did not agree - that funds voted for a full financial year for the National Assistance Board should have been expended in the course of two months. And I am not prepared to condone any infelicities whether perpetuated by the Barbados Labour Party or the Democratic Labour Party.

In this particular matter which I am presently addressing - and I shall have a lot more to say under Head 39 - the particular point I am making is that a letter was written by a parliamentary representative, and I wish that the letters of which the Minister spoke should be made properly documents of the House, because if you were to make them documents of the House, they would indicate that I was writing to the National Assistance Board long after the time at which Mr. Green had been allocated a house. And if a Member of Parliament cannot properly write on behalf of a constituent to indicate that a constituent is in need, and that need, if possible, should be rendered on his behalf, then I want to suggest to the House that the entire sense of Government by which we have abided in this country ought to be dispensed.

The whole substance of the letter that I wrote, to which the Minister referred, Mr. Chairman, was simply to write to a functionary of the relevant Ministry indicating that a constituent, in my estimation, was in a situation of need, and I couched my language very carefully, "if it is at all possible that any assistance could be rendered, I would be obliged if the assistance can be rendered." I did not seek,

Mr. Chairman, to direct any Minister as to how the Minister should perform his constitutional responsibility. I did not insist, Sir, that assistance should be rendered merely because I happened to be the Member of Parliament for St. Peter and that I feel that assistance must be rendered because I say it must be rendered. I said, "if at all assistance can be rendered, I would be obliged if the assistance could be rendered."

The manner in which the Minister spoke, Sir, was a manner that sought to link me to things with which I had absolutely no acquaintance, because the implication of this letter was that I was directly involved in formalising an arrangement under which the person to whom I referred in the letter should enter an arrangement with the National Assistance Board as regards the possession of a house, and that was not at all the purpose of my intervention. The person to whom I referred in that letter was a person who, in my estimation, was in a situation of need. It is a situation that confronts us as Members of Parliament in all of our respective constituencies on a day-to-day basis. I challenge anybody in this House of Assembly to say whether they have not written similar letters on behalf of persons in similar dire straits, and I tell the Honourable Minister of Housing, who has threatened me that he is coming back for me, that I am not afraid of his rambustious style. If we have to take it down to the gutter, Mr. Chairman, we shall take it down to the gutter tonight, or tomorrow.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Not in here. There will be nothing gutterish in here, not at all.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: And if I have to take it to the platform, Sir, I shall take it to the platform as well.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You might do that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have, in the course of my parliamentary responsibilities, as the honourable Member for St. Philip South, written a vast number of letters on behalf of constituents within the boundaries of the regulations regarding the operation of the National Assistance Board, and we are creating a monstrous precedent if a Minister of the Crown can come to the House .nd read out letters written by Members of Parliament on Behalf of individual constituents to embarrass not only parliamentarians but also to embarrass the constituents. That, perhaps, is the point of issue that is involved here. I have never before in the course of my being a Member of this Parliament seen a Minister play so lighiiy with the needs of a person. Although the Members on the other side might have by their actions not treated Mr. Green as a person, and although he has since 1966 done many things on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party, I want to tell them, particularly the honourable Member for St. Philip South, that despite the fact that Mr. Green opposed me in an election, I regard him as a person, and I saw it as my responsibility, as the Member of Parliament for St. Peter, to seek assistance on his behalf, which could not have been rendered by the Democratic Labour Party during that period when the same person was performing a number of functions on behalf of that party. That, Sir, might explain why I made the comments that I made, that when it comes to the provision of assistance, you can respond either to the real needs of the person or you can respond and give people assistance in the manner in which the Democratic Labour Party extended assistance to Mr. Greene.

Before I close, Sir, because I said this debate is going to continue, there have been a number ....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am finding it extremely strange that there have been two reports prepared under the auspices of this Ministry, one of which is the Task Force Report on Employment, which was only laid in the House after pressure from my colleague from St. Thomas, and on which ....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You are not the Chairman of Committees. You cannot tell me what to do. The Chairman has allowed it to pass.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: the honourable Member, as a member of this Committee, knows that to say that a report was only laid after whatever follows after that would be improper, because when the matter is laid in the House, it follows that the Minister that laid the document did so in good faith. It has to be accepted, he knows that. 8.25 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have often said throughout this debate that imputations on the characters of honourable Members should not be made. I have said it many times this evening as well.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Mr.

CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, during this debate reference was specifically made.....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir! Mr.

CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The point of order is that the Honourable Minister of Health has purported to mislead this House and the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In relation to what?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In relation to the Task Force Report. The Task Force Report was out since February 1987.1 read it to a large gathering at Baxters Road, but the Government would not lay it until I asked a question in October 1987.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Everything you said might be perfectly correct. What I am telling you is that any time you make an allegation which impinges on the reputation of honourable Members of the House it is totally out of order. That is all I am saying.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was not imputing anything. I was giving the facts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. You said that the honourable Member for St. Michael West was misleading the House. The submission that he made simply was that if you are trying to, or making, any imputation on the then Minister of Employment, that is totally out of order, and I agreed with him.

The factual situation does not concern me in relation to that ruling. I said that anything you said might be perfectly true. I have no way of knowing. I am only here to look at breaches of the orders of the House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I was not imputing any motives at all, least of all to the bald head Minister of Sport and Tourism. That is true, Sir, look at the top of his head. I was saying, as a matter of fact, that the report was in my possession and I read it at Baxters Road, and that only after I asked a question did the report come in here for laying.

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of elucidation, Sir: I cannot really object to the fact that I am bald-headec., but I wish to let him know that God made a few perfect heads and the rest he put hair on them.

As far as I recollect, before I left the Ministry of Labour in June I laid the Task Force Report in this Honourable Chamber. I think that what the honourable Member for St. Thomas is alluding to is that he read the Task Force Report before I did, because Herbie Yearwood gave it to him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Leader of the Opposition continue.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I intervene again to make a few points which I think must be made. Before dealing with some of the allegations that have been made, I wish to reply specifically to a comment made by the Prime Minister concerning the manner in which the Hanschell Report was treated in this House.

The position, quite clearly, is that the" Hanschell Report was laid in the House. There was no specific debate on it except when the Estimates came up and some Members made reference to it. And in keeping with the constitutional practices in Barbados, which, I believe, are still strong and proper practices, I informed the Committee of the House of my position, and I want to quote from the debate, it is in Hansard for March, 1980 at page 3542:

> "I said in this debate, and I will repeat, I don't have to tear down people in order to build up myself, because it is always a dangerous precedent. I have never practised it and I don't intend to practise it, but the point remains that none of us in here should be happy of a report such as this. Despite the fact that it is a report against the Democratic Labour Party Ministers, if it was a report against the Barbados Labour Party Ministers we should all be unhappy about it, because it is not the sort of standard that we will want to import into political life. If we believe the country wants that, then let the country accept it and we will play the game according to that, but we have a duty to tell the country that is wrong conduct and there is no way that we ought to come in here to whitewash the conduct. Now, I know that might be Sunday School politics, some people want power and you don't play politics that way. That's all right, if that's our concept of how we want Barbados to be governed, but it is not the right concept, and I am concerned and bothered about this report." ' »

Sir, this is the point I want to emphasise:

> "Now, I want to state one thing. I have a duty and I don't have to consult the Cabinet on this. I intend to refer the report, as I must do under the Constitution, to the Director of Public Prosecutions."

The report was referred - The Prime Minister made reference to it - to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who saw fit to lay charges, as far as I recollect, against three people. One left the jurisdiction. In the case of one person, the charges were dismissed, and I am not sure what happened to the other person, whether or not the charges against him were laid before this report. I think he was never served, but I believe charges were laid.

The decision which was taken there was taken even without consultation of the Cabinet, because, as I said, it

was a report under the Commissions of Enquiry Act. Therefore, it seemed to me but proper, and anyone can read what I said in that debate, that if the report was making allegations, you could not continue to make allegations unless you were prepared to substantiate those allegations in a court of law. That was absolutely clear.

Nothing that I have said has changed my mind about this present situation. The honourable Member for St. Thomas emphasised the point that there is a considerable difference between those two reports, the Hanschell Report and this report, and that is why, contrary to what the Prime Minister says, I consider that it was relevant to make some reference to the Hanschell Report.

In that enquiry both Ministers appeared before the commission.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am on a serious point of order Sir. I draw this to the honourable Member's attention for the completeness of the Record. As he correctly said, the Hanschell Report was established and set up under the Commissions of Enquiry Act and, therefore, there was a certain course of action. This report, which may be termed a preliminary report, was, in fact, a committee of enquiry, and the procedures which follow a committee of enquiry does not necessarily flow as they would if it was under a commission. I just remind the honourable Member.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He is just anticipating what I was going to say. 8.35 p.m.

I said there were differences in the way these reports were done. In this report the committee begins by saying, as the honourable Member for St. Thomas reminded us, that it was not inviting former Ministers of Government to participate in its proceedings. No witnesses were sworn, and I think it is a dastardly thing - I go so far - for commissioners, who should know better, to make the type of allegations they made without giving people an opportunity to defend themselves against persons. I am surprised, having regard to the constitution of the departmental committee, that an elementary principle of natural justice should have been ignored. It is for that reason that, as a lawyer, I began by saying that this report is not worth the paper on which it is written. That is the point I was making. If, however, you want to go further, if you want to do something with it, then your correct position on the matter must be either have a commission of enquiry or make whatever evidence is available available to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The report labelled Ministers, both past and present, in a way, in my view, in which it had no proper evidence to do so. It seems to me highly improper, therefore, that we should be at this stage castigating and making assumptions about the truth of allegations in the manner in which the departmental committee went about its report.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well said.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The most that can be said of the report is that they have made some assumptions. But I adopt the words of my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael East, and say that it is shallow and empty in many respects. And although it may be good political fodder, it is certainly very bad practice. And I shudder for the concept of administrative justice in respect of this sort of procedure. I cannot condone it.

Sir, I am a bit surprised the Prime Minister said that we should accept the recommendations and proceed. The recommendations are contained from pages 23 to 25. Nowhere in the recommendations have they recommended that anybody be prosecuted. Recommendation number one is that

> "..... the follow programmes currently administered by the National Assistance Board should be restored to public service control and be administered as part of the Welfare Department, namely:
>
> (a) The Housing Welfare Programme;
> (b) Assistance-in-Kind Programme;
> (c) The Black Rock Hostel; and
> (d) The Home Help Service.
>
> Is the Government accepting that?
>
> (ii) "That the administration of the Senior Citizens' Home .... should be entrusted to the Ministry of Health, which will decide, in the context of the operation of its District Hospitals, whether to retain that Home...."
>
> (iii)'That the National Assistance Act..... be repealed...."
>
> and that the National Assistance Board be advisory and consultative.
>
> (iv) "That the Auditor-General should be requested to expedite the audit of the financial operations of the National Assistance Board for the period 1st April, 1985 to 31st March, 1986, and to include in his report detailed comments on, in particular, the Housing Welfare and Assistance-in-Kind programmes, with a view to establishing, as far as possible, the extent to which particular employees of the National Assistance Board exceeded their authority to authorise and incur expenditures on behalf of the Board in the

context of the requirements of the Financial Rules."

That is about the only proper recommendation, in my opinion, that is made. If the Auditor General would get on with it and send it to us in the Public Accounts Committee, of which I am chairman, I promise to expedite that. We will report the findings to the House, and if it is necessary, it could go on further.

(v) "That a Restructuring Committee should be established forthwith, under the chairmanship of the Chief Welfare Officer, and comprising a senior official from the Ministry of the Public Service, the Almoner .... from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and a union representative, to review the functioning of the Home Help Service and, in particular, to examine the qualifications, aptitudes, and performance records ..... and make recommendations to the Minister, within sixty days, on the future structure, staffing, and organisation of the service."

We have heard from the Minister whose conceptual ideas set up the Home Help Service, and none of us in here can deny mat the Home Help Service has been efficiently run. It has benefitted all of us. Indeed, I want to pay a tribute to Mr. George Griffith, who was then the Deputy Director of the National Assistance Board, with direct responsibility for the Home Help Service, who has been criticized. The Home Help Service has been one of the best ideas that I have seen in looking at social development, and it has functioned well, and I hope it will be expanded and extended.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member and I may now be sitting on different sides of the political fence, but unlike the Minister of Health, I have never hesitated in this House to give him the praise to which he is due.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Until today.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You are joking!

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Whenever I have differed with the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works, I have differed outwardly. There is nothing I would say behind his back that I would not tell him in front of his face.

(Aside: Well praise him now. You are giving George Griffith his praise.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I have said Home Help was very well conceived. It was one of the best programmes that we ever brought in, thanks to his ideas. I have said that

Sir, the Welfare Service:

"Under the direction of the Chief Welfare Officer, the functioning of the Housing Welfare should be reorganised along the following lines: and it sets them out,

(b) "Repairs to houses of qualifying applicants, and the construction of Welfare houses should be conducted at arm's length by the Welfare Department on a basis to be concluded in consultation with the Ministries..... "

Lastly, Transitional Measures:

"Pending the .....legislation .... the current National Assistance Board should be retained as..... advisory and consultative...."

(viii)"The Minister should direct that the Chief Welfare Officer scrutinise the qualifications and performance records of all persons..... "

"The post of Director of the National Assistance Board should be abolished.... "

I do not believe the Government will accept those recommendations.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They have fired Aboab already!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The post should be abolished, not fire him.

The Prime Minister says accept the recommendations. I would like to see the Government adopt the recommendations. I do not believe the Government will accept any of these recommendations.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do not mind you with that foolishness!)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want the Honourable Minister of Health to get up and say that the Government is accepting all of the recommendations, or any of them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have two more minutes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to talk about Mr. Griffith, Sir. Mr. Griffith appeared, as shown in the report, before this Commission. He was written a letter and invited

to appear before the Commission. He went before the commission with legal representation.

(Aside: Who?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Griffith. He answered every question. The report makes no strictures of Mr. Griffith at all. When he wrote a letter, he was merely performing a duty. As the honourable Member for St. Peter said, I really begin to shudder if we cannot write letters on behalf of constituents, and if civil servants, or quasi-public servants, in carrying out their duties, cannot follow through on decisions that are taken, and taken in accordance with what is the existing practice. I cannot understand it.

I want to make it quite clear. I can see nothing wrong that Mr. Griffith has done at all in this matter. He had a duty to do what he was doing, and he did it. As far as I am concerned, that is the end of that.

Sir, I go back to this idea of the castigations that have been made. I believe that this is really a serious error that this was made in the manner in which it was made, without giving people an opportunity. And rather than this being the political hot iron, ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Stop by the next full stop.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: .....that it is supposed to be, in my view, it is a total failure. I doubt whether the Government really believes in this report. I doubt whether they believe in anything in it, except for the limited reason for which it has been used here tonight.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Chairman, I am not even joining the debate in any substantive manner. I just wish to complete the record which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition did not complete.

Anyone who listened to the Leader of the Opposition in his last presentation would, without more, properly conclude that he has put a proper case, as my colleague said, in the vein of Hess. But, Sir, let us turn to page 26 on this same report, because he is now purporting to suggest that George Griffith and all these poor people appeared without any counsel, and you would think that the commission took them and beat them with a baseball bat and made them say these things. There is a list of the eminent persons who appeared to give evidence. It includes one David Simmons, Q.C., Attorney-at-law. 8.45 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I did not give any evidence. I appeared as counsel.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what did the honourable Member rise?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It has one Louis Tull, Q.C. He is not in brackets.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member is really misleading himself and the Committee. The honourable Member must read from paragraph 5 on page 2.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One will sit down eventually.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order: At paragraph 5 on page 2, the report makes it quite clear that two former Attorneys-General attended as counsel to persons who made statements to this committee. It is very obvious that they are the honourable Member for St. Thomas and Senator Louis Tull. Those are the two that appeared.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He reads and does not understand. I told you he is a dummy, Sir. He is a dummy!)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no! Not even in an aside can you say that!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I withdraw that, Sir. I stand on the point that he reads and does not understand, and I leave the conclusion and the characterisation to be drawn as to whether he is a dummy or not

. Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, do not take it from the Record. I beg you, Sir, do not remove it from the Record, because the same honourable Member earlier tonight was regaling the congregation and this Honourable House with how he used to sit there in absolute amazement, joy, felicitation and admiration at my interventions.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said I admired his interventions on Administrative Law. But on matters of simple English, I retain my position that he appears not to understand.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But you will recall that I started off by saying page 26. Notwithstanding all that the two eminent former Attorneys-General have said, page 26 has a list of persons who addressed the Committee of Enquiry. I invite the two honourable Members to come with me as we go down the page. I admit that David Simmons, Q.C. is in brackets, but not Mr. Louis Tull, Q.C. Where is he? Let me hear you!

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: And the brackets close around you. Now get up and apologize, as a man.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I bow, Sir. It is very well-known that in the printing profession there is a thing called the printer's devil. Whoever typed this report failed to put the brackets around Mr. Tull and myself to hug us up more as representatives of Mr. Aboab. That is all. It is a matter of omission rather than commission.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, it includes such other eminent counsel as Dr. Waldo Waldron Ramsay.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, it includes such distinguished and honoured diplomats as Mr. Harold Brewster.

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

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not going to list all the other people, Sir - it says the Cabinet Secretary also appeared - because it would not be fair.

The point I wanted to make is that the former Attorney-General knows very well that he had to put the case for Mr. George Griffith. I understand that No one on this side has ever said anything about Mr. George Griffith in relation to this report What we said is that he was an instrument, as he probably is now, of a certain policy, and he crossed out, or so it appears, two names and put in two other names, maybe on instructions. No one has accused Mr. George Griffith of any malfeasance or misfeasance in this report, and it is not fair, and I say this deliberately, for the Leader of the Opposition to give the impression that we on this side accused Mr. George Griffith, whoever he is, of any malfeasance or misfeasance in this report.

The Minister responsible for Housing gave his information apropos of nothing in regard to this. Fresh evidence should not be introduced unless the accused is given an opportunity to defend himself. Unfortunately, he tried to be in here, but he is not here.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I do not wish to add anymore on this score. I think my colleague behind me wishes to add something else.

I want to say something to the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur). I feel that the honourable Member for St. Peter has made his case in relation to his performance as a representative in relation to a certain name that was mentioned, and I think he should let the matter rest there. You wrote the letter in your capacity as representative, and despite the slurs you cast on the political party, the letter was couched in good language. Therefore, let us let it rest. We all have to write some letters for our constituents.

Asides.

Eon: B. M. TAITT: You are too rambunctious.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: You mean it got lost in the rubbish you were talking.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Your colleagues are about to get me to say something which I will never say.

I am trying to give the honourable Member some advice, as a senior Member of this Committee, Sir, that he must not let rambunctiousness be his watchword. He must understand that when information is put on the floor of this House, the information must be evaluated before it is responded to. No one said anything of him that was ill. It said, in fact, that he was doing his duty as a representative, and, therefore, we are saying to him that before he gets up and puts his considerably small feet into his considerably large mouth.....

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am absolutely sure that he is confusing ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are rising on what?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir. On a point of elucidation, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Wait a minute. Yoti are rising on two things.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of elucidation, Sir: The honourable Member is confusing me with the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) and the honourable Member (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) both on the Government benches.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He elucidates that I misunderstand who he is when I look at him. I accept that. If I look at you, and I cannot recognise you, I accept that. I am going to look at you from now on and say, "the honourable Member for St. Peter, whom I do not now see in his seat."

If the considerable amount of assistance which he gave to his constituent for life in St. Peter could have been brought to some of the constituents in St. George South, or

even St. Philip South, or St. Michael West, all of us would have been the happier.

Quite seriously, I just want the point that the Leader of the Opposition could really emphasize the difference between this report, which is in the same category as the Burton Report, and all of those other reports which may or may not be laid in Parliament. The fact that this one has been laid in Parliament is a tribute to the magnanimity of the Minister concerned, because there was no obligation to lay this Report. The information contained in this report could have been used for other purposes, but it was laid in Parliament, in keeping with the promises which we made to let the Opposition be fully informed. We thought that the preliminary information given by the Jackman Report would have helped to inform the Opposition, as it has helped to inform us. What we have sought to do here this evening is really to give them a little more information to thresh out those areas which may be absent in the report. 8.55 p.m.

Surely, Sir, the question of a formal commission of enquiry must not be gainsaid. On page 22 it says:

The Committee is required, as one of its terms of reference, to advise the Minister "whether a formal Commission or hearing should take place..."" That is on page 22, and then the committee goes on to advise in the Report. We are explaining, because the honourable Member called for a commission of enquiry or sending information to the Director of Public Prosecutions. It says in paragraph 103:

> "It is the view of the Committee that no useful purpose would be served by the setting up of a formal Commission of Enquiry. The Committee is well aware that its own investigation, by reason both of its mandate and its structure, has been able to do little more than skim the surface of the problems which the National Assistance Board has experienced during the period under review. A further and more detailed enquiry would be likely ...."

and this is the key

> "to pinpoint a number of instances of malfeasance and misfeasance, and might conceivably obtain, on oath, hard evidence that might merit police investigation and possibly lead to prosecutions." ,
>
> Having said that, they went on to say:
>
> "Nevertheless, in the considered judgment of the Committee, a formal Commission of Enquiry armed with the full panoply of statutory weaponry would be inappropriate to the scale and nature of the mischief which has been identified. That mischief can conveniently be characterised ...."

and they go on to characterise it.

It is perhaps as a result of the information which was gained from such commissions of enquiry as the Duffus Commission, with the attendant cost of that commission, and the resultant inability of anyone to find any malfeasance or misfeasance which may have informed this committee, that a formal Commission of Enquiry was undesirable. My reading of this is that the committee, made up as it was of eminent former civil servants, recognised that there would be a tremendous burden on the Treasury of the country to bring to bear all of what they call the panoply of legal apparatus, and I suspect that what they are saying is, we are going to rap these people on the knuckles, we provide you with a certain amount of information on which you can make intelligent speculation, but we do not wish you to spend any additional money to set up a commission of enquiry.

But I want to ma^e this point. We are not in a court of law, and we are not required to have a burden of proof that would satisfy a court of law. We are in a court of public opinion and speculation, that is what the House of Assembly is, and therefore it is proper for the honourable Members on this side to speculate and speak about their former political colleagues, whose responsibility extended to the point where we can accuse them, if a court of law or even the general public cannot, because they are being judged by the standards which have been established as part of the parameters in which we operate.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: I may have stopped him a little too early in his general principled, philosophical conclusion, but will he concede that our speculation, based on the finding of primary facts by an improper procedure, would be unfair to those people against whom we may be inclined to inveigh? That is all I ask.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Minister would concede that, but he would also at the same time suggest that it is only a thin line that determines whether it is proper to speculate in the context of our political life. The question which is raised over here is not whether the two former Ministers should be imprisoned, the question is whether the two former Ministers were competent in the context of what they said they were. It is a question of whether you, for example, should consider them again for public office. We can speculate on it. That is what this is about. The Minister who set up this commission of enquiry said that faced as he was with a certain conglomeration of facts, the details of which seem to be escaping his officials, to wit, one Mr. Aboab, he decided to call in an impartial group of people from the administrative class to answer some questions for

him, and the answers have been administratively given. They are not sufficient to send anybody to prison.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order What he is saying is that the Minister is admitting that he was misinformed by Wiggins and - what is the other fellow's name that used to paint with all the paint, from Tweedside Road?-Haddock.

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of elucidation then, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Minister has been very clear to point out that when he came to the Ministry he found that the Barbados Labour Party Government had spent a substantial amount of money in a short time.

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order, Sir: I have never seen Mr. Wiggins alive or dead. I do not know him.

As far as Mr. Haddock is concerned, Sir, I do not know how many ....

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They fired him!)

Hon. W. W. HALL: He was not fired. At age 60 he was allowed to go home.

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

Hon. W. W. HALL: No, Haddock. Haddock at the age of 60 was allowed to go home.

I have never seen Wiggins, I do not know him. Unlike you, I have never talked to him.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, one of the things about this democratic process we have is that, as the honourable Member for St. Thomas reveals more and more, he helps us to understand the *modus operandi* of the Barbados Labour Party. We, contrary to popular belief, do not deny our friends. If Wiggins or Haddock had been friends of the Democratic Labour Party, we would admit it. We would not leave them in the lurch, like how you are about to.

My point, to come back to the more serious issue, is this. Finally the question has to be asked by both sides of the House, in a given situation are we to enquire after the facts? And when we enquire after the facts, are we to pursue them to the bitter end? Or are we to go to a point when we can both be elucidated and on which we can both speculate for and against without necessarily driving those involved up to the wire? I submit, Sir, that this is a more humane methodology than the one which is being relentlessly suggested by our colleagues on the other side. If the Minister concerned had been called to account, as were the Ministers under the Duffus Commission, this suggests that the Ministers might not have been as fortunate or as clean as those who had been before the Duffus Commission. We will never know. 9.05 p.m.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, it does not matter how often the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) gets up. The point this Administration and I are making is that the style, pattern and the level of political patronage in 1984, 1985 and early 1986 was wrong, it was downright bad for any country, and whether it was practised by the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party, it was wrong. There is no sense getting up and trying all the time to discredit the document. The point we are getting at is that what was done was wrong.

I have to address one point raised by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) and I will get off it fairly quickly. He was speaking about representatives writing to Ministers or Ministries about complaints from their constituents. We have no argument about that. If there are genuine cases where people need help and they fall within the parameters laid down for help, we stand by that.

Let me read what are the parameters laid down for the Housing Welfare Programme: "The programme caters to the housing needs of the elderly and indigent persons throughout the island. Assistance is given with repairs, resitals and the loan of welfare houses either as replacement for houses beyond repair or to persons who are homeless."

If then we see persons getting houses and help and falling within the Housing Welfare Programme, then we are saying that something was wrong. If you fall within the parameters, okay with us. I went to other Ministers with complaints from my constituents, genuine complaints like lights, roads, water. But we are saying that in this instance, especially between April 1, 1986 and May 28, when $2.5 million was spent in six weeks, that was wrong, and you said it was wrong and that you did not agree with it.

Let me tell this Honourable House why the way in which this patronage was dispensed was wrong a million times. Before I stated that a letter was written by a certain gentleman, I called the name already, so I can call it again, Mr. George Griffith, and I heard the honourable Member for Christ Church West mentioning a Mr. George Griffith. I do not know if it is the same one. He was lavishing praise on this George Griffith. The letter I have here in front of me is the one with the seven names of people who were

flooded out, and then two of the names were changed for persons who were evicted from their homes because they would not pay. I will read what is in here on the two persons who were refused the houses. I am not going to call any names.

The first person, Mrs. X. This is one of the persons who was put out of a house for someone who never had a house:

> ""Mrs. X," aged 65, and her 60 year old husband lived at Gill Terrace, St. Peter along with their son and granddaughter. Investigations revealed that their house was thrown off its foundation and completely engulfed in water. As a consequence, all contents were waterlogged and the house extensively damaged.
>
> "This family was temporarily housed at Heywoods Resort and are presently accommodated at Battaleys. It is strongly recommended that this family be allocated one of the emergency housing units pending the replacement of their house."

They have not got one yet!

Let me read the facts on the next person who was put out in order to put in someone who never should have been in. I am not going to call the person's name.

> ""Mrs. Y" aged 38 of Around-the-Town, St. Peter, is the mother of six children, including three of school age and one retarded daughter. During the St. Peter flood her house was completely shifted from its original location by approximately 150 feet and was extensively damaged in the process. This family was temporarily housed at Heywoods Resort and is presently accommodated at Haynesville. This arrangement has exposed "Mrs. Y" to severe financial pressure since her children are attending school in St. Peter and the cost of bus fare is in excess of $30 per week."

This is a lady with six children and one retarded, and she was refused a house.

> "It is strongly recommended that this family be allocated house No. 7 until such time as their house is replaced."

All I am saying is that if you fall within the parameters, it is okay with us. But you put out people who fell within the parameters and put in people who did not fall within the parameters, and I am saying that as long as you practice politics like that, you will never get any respect in any country, whether you are B, D, or Z.

Thank you.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Honourable Minister of Housing's reference to "Mrs. X" and "Mrs. Y", thus making a complete fool of himself, and if he is going to talk about .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. Withdraw that, please! Mr.

O. S. ARTHUR: I withdraw the remark

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have repeatedly said that you should not use language like that to reflect on honourable Members of this House. You cannot call a Member a fool.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, if the honourable Member was familiar with the circumstances as regards the allocation of houses in that particular episode of the development of St. Peter, on which the people of St. Peter have voted after hearing the same views being put today by the Democratic Labour Party in the by-election and voted for me, and they voted in a General Election and voted for me in even greater abundance, and will vote again in even greater abundance, he would not get up and say what he said in this House.

The person whom he referred to as "Mrs. X" should be put in a proper context. There were a number of houses at Battaleys, into which certain persons were assigned after the flood, not only Mrs. X, but Mrs. Z and Mrs. Whoever-else. Mrs. X, Mr. Chairman, on whose behalf he so callously rises now, was one of the very first persons assigned a house after the flood. The person has been living in Battaleys since immediately after the flood, has been living in Battaleys subsequent to that without a complaint, and is now living there. I say to the House that if the honourable Member for St. Philip South and the Minister of Housing rises on her behalf, he is merely rising to shed some crocodile tears on that lady's behalf. She is happily accommodated without a complaint, and she does not need the honourable Member for St. Philip South to speak on her behalf, because she is absolutely well represented by her Member for St. Peter. 9.15p.m.

She has no complaints as regards the accommodation with which she has been provided. She has not asked a question of the Minister of Housing, but she has come to her representative recently to ask him if it can be fair that she is now being required to get a loan under this Government to put back part ....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: She is happily accommodated, without a complaint in the world, in Battaleys, and she does

not need him to represent her. But her house is to be relocated at Golden Mile, and she is now being asked by the Ministry of Housing to enter a loan arrangement with the General Workers' Fund in order to get funds to replace her toilet facilities as part of the resiling of houses at Golden Mile.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member for St. Peter is again misleading the House, because the National Housing Corporation is building new houses for all the people whose house they dropped at Springhall. All will have new houses. A-L-L!

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, he is neither in control of this subject nor is he in control of his Ministry, so I am, therefore, not surprised by the tone and character of his intervention.

A large part of the problem as regards the resiling of the people at Golden Mile was that the National Housing Corporation told persons who were affected by the floods thai they would have to enter an arrangemeni wilh the National Housing Corporation to have water facilities. That is a fact. If it has now been cleared up, I am very grateful thai it has been cleared up, because it has been a policy of the Barbados Labour Party lhal when people are to be resiled, they are generally resiled in conditions thai are as good as, or better than, those than ihey were in ihe first instance.

I also want to make a point for the Record. I will not let him pontificate nor grandstand on the resiling of those persons. Had it not been for the facl, Mr. Chairman, lhal for over one year absolutely nothing had been done at Golden Mile on the pretence that an electricity survey had to be continued, all of the flood victims in St. Peter could have been resiled because when we left office, the roads had been put in, in 18 months we did Iwo surveys, pul in all ihe roads, and we left ihe Golden Mile Projecl al a siage where all thai was required was lhal electricity was to be pul in and ihe people moved. We even voted money to resile Ihem. You have taken two years just to pul in electticily in Golden Mile!

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. ARTHUR) were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to make the additional point, Sir, that a number of persons who were affected by the flood in St. Peter have been resiled in many differenl part of Barbados. It is very interesting that "Mrs. Y", to whom the Minister refers, is a person, among others, who was resiled in Haynesville. Il is instructive, and he had better get to understand SL Peter policies before he commits himself on ihis issue.

The point of the matter is thai ihere were some persons, immediately after ihe second by-election in St. Peter, who were ejected.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He has been trying to usurp my powers ihe whole afternoon. He is in a very judicious manner loday.

I have allowed ihe honourable Member a little latitude. I think you have gone too far, now. Come back around to the National Assistance Board. You are drifting a bit far.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am dealing with the National Assistance Board, but I have, as Ihe Member of Parliament for St. Peter, to refer to ihe very specific charges lhal have been levelled al me.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The lasl time was Ihe lasl term, too. But - an increased majority!

It is very interesting and, indeed, strange, thai Ihe person, "Mrs. Y", who is supposed to be living al Haynesville, is bul one of many olher persons who is living at Haynesville who were flood victims, ...

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a poinl of order, Sir: I think the honourable Member is misleading this House, because I know that there are people'from St. George»North who, due to the lack of housing by the Barbados Labour Party, are now living in Haynesville.

I thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS) were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, as I said, ihis debate is going to go in directions which many people are going to find unfortunate. My colleage from St. Thomas referred in a previous debate to a certain Mr. Tallon, and he has already spoken of what was done to people known to vole for ihe Barbados Labour Party by a Mr. Tallon immediately after Ihe second by-election in Si. Peter. People were put on Ihe road, and if you do nol wanl to gel a

cou-cou punch, you better investigate "Mrs. Y" very carefully.

To come back to this specific report, of which so much is being made of by the Democratic Labour Party, the Barbados Labour Party finds this report totally inadequate. It seems as if it was the product of a kangaroo court, where there was a specific motive to try, to the extent possible, to embarrass the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues have already drawn reference to many parts of this report where there are deliberate inconsistencies of things that cannot at all, by any stretch of the imagination, be regarded as factual statements, but on which suppositions and allegations designed to embarrass. I want to refer you to a number of those specific things that have not yet been raised. 9.25 p.m.

Take Clause 53, in relation to the Assistance-in-Kind programme:

> "The Committee received no specific complaints from the persons interviewed concerning the "Assistance-in-Kind" Programme."

At face value, none would imagine that if you had a Committee of enquiry which was interested in conducting its affairs in a dispassionate and an unbiassed manner, and it were in a position to receive no specific complaints from persons interviewed concerning the Assistance-in-Kind programme, it would be good enough to give the Assistance-in-Kind programme a clean bill of health.

But in Clause 54, listen to it very carefully, Sir:

> "Here, too, it has been impossible to substantiate rumours of favouritism"

So, in fact, the Committee itself, Mr. Chairman, starts at the back of its head that there might be rumours of favourtism. But it has not at all been able to come up with any substantiation to substantiate the rumours of favouritism.

I go on, Sir

"The Committee, however, feels itself constrained .... " and listen carefully, Sir:

> ".... to point out, first, that it is 'i...6,. *y* unlikely that this programme would have been able to escape unscathed,"

It has, Sir, no specific complaint at all about the programme. But yet it says that it is not able to substantiate the rumours. So it is operating, Sir, on rumours, and it comes to the conclusion that it feels constrained to point out that it is highly unlikely that the programmes could have been escaped unscathed. Could this, Sir, be a professional job done by professional people to serve a proper purpose, Sir? I am saying to the House that this document, Sir, was a document designed specifically for one purpose, to serve the purpose of this particular.....

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order, Sir: The Member for St. Peter has alluded to the fact that the Assistance-in-Kind programme should be given a clean bill of health. I stated in my contribution that the Assistance-in-Kind programme spent the entire $200 000 by May, and if the missing stoves could talk, they would have got evidence.

Laughter.

Hon. W. W. HALL: But they could not talk, so that is the reason. What clean bill of health could they have got, when the $200 000 were spent by May? It is April, then May, Sir. In eight weeks $200 000 in stuff disappeared!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister who had responsibility for setting up this talked about if stoves could talk, people would get locked up. The Honourable Minister must explain to the House how it is that, as recently as last weekend, the police are investigating complaints in relation to crookedness and thieving at the National Assistance Board.

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You cannot rise on a point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am going to finish.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At the next full stop, because you only have about half a minute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: As regards the Home Help Service, Sir, the programme says that there were no formal complaints that:

> "From all accounts, the service provides a badly-needed supplement to the general programme of public welfare."

Having said that there have been no general complaints, that the service has provided a badly needed thing and merits strengthening, it goes on, to make the most

caustic recommendations as to what should and should not be done with the programme.

I am at a semi-colon, Sir. I am saying, therefore, in consequence, that there is a tremendous variance between what is contained as evidenced in this report, what is contained as supposition, the conclusion drawn and the recommendations of this report. They are not at all worth the paper on which they are written.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Full stop.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting by now suspended until 10.00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

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

The question that this sitting be now suspended until 10 a.m. Friday, March 18,1988 was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 9.34 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it must now revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, and Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

HEAD 39 -MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (AS AMENDED) - $29 993 611 (CONT'D)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House has reverted to Committee of Supply.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Chairman, most of the debate under this Head has, so far, concentrated on only one subhead. But there are many other matters of interest that fall within the ambit of the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development, and they are all matters of some substantial importance, and I wish to take the opportunity to discuss a few others within this Committee, obviously within the time allotted to me from time to time. I want specifically to turn to the National Conservation Commission and to deal, particularly, with its work in so far as it affects my own constituency, but also to deal with it in a general'way.

This commission has among its functions and its duties the control, maintenance and development of public parks, gardens, beaches and the caves of Barbados. Three of the beaches coming within the purview of the commission are the Garrison, just behind the Drill Hall, Rockley Beach and the beach at the corner of Worthings, which is referred to as The Stream. These are three beaches within my constituency that are used by several people, not only persons from the area of Christ Church which I represent, but people from the whole island, and, particularly, visitors to our island.

Recently this House gave approval to a Resolution to withdraw the compulsory acquisition of a bit of land at Rockley. That event was reported in the Press and it led to an editorial in the daily *Advocate News.* I was reported as having said in the House that I welcomed the Resolution for the abandonment of the acquisition. I normally ignore people who mis-represent my positions. But at no time did I make that statement in the House.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: In the editorial of the *Advocate News.*

What I said specifically is that I was sure that some of my constituents who own the land which was being acquired, at least one or two of them, would welcome the abandonment of the acquisition. But, Sir, the editorial proceeded to take me to task -other honourable Members usually complain - on the particular point, so, just for the sake of clarification, I want to make absolutely clear my position on the Rockley Beach.

The Rockley Beach is used not only by people in Christ Church West, but, as I said earlier, by Barbadians and visitors to our island. It is perhaps, the most significant beach, the Eldorado, I think, of the island, and, therefore, successive Governments have ensured that there has been an improvement along that coastline. As I have said previously in this Committee, we have a serious problem of beach erosion around our south and west coasts particularly, and it is extremely pronounced at Rockley. Because of this situation, certainly under the Barbados Labour Party Government, steps had been taken to start a scheme to ensure that beach protective measures would

prevent further erosion of the coastline, particularly at Rockley. It was also envisaged that we would provide changing rooms and proper cubicles for persons using that beach, and it was intended to ensure that the beach would remain as far as possible an open window to the sea.

Those aims and objects have never been departed from by the Barbados Labour Party, nor have I ceased, as the representative for the area, to completely advocate that measures should be taken to achieve those objects. I do not know why it should be assumed that I did not in the Committee in the House press those very objectives. If the persons writing the editorial had taken the opportunity to read what I said in the debate, they would have seen that I asked the Minister to give an assurance that the Government will continue with a programme of building the cubicles, for ensuring that the people who ply their ware along that coast would have adequate shops to resort to.

The answer which I got from the Government, and which I accepted, was that it is intended to have a south coast Sewerage Project soon. We know that, Sir, the negotiations for that project commenced under the Barbados Labour Party and Inter-American Development Bank assistance is being obtained. The technical studies are still being done and, obviously, I was satisfied in my mind that when the Minister says that that project is being pursued, it was being pursued, and I recognised that until the full environmental implications of the whole of the south coast have been looked at, it would not be possible, at this stage, to choose exact locations to deal with the problems on the south coast That is absolutely clear in my mind, so I have no difficulty with that, and I wish to clarify the position. As far as my responsibility for Christ Church West, I am looking forward to the upgrading of the facilities at Rockley within the framework of the improvement of environmental health and beach conditions along the whole of the south coast.

There were also proposals for the Garrison beach, or the beach behind the Drill Hall, and I believe these Estimates under the Capital Head contain some money for improving the beach there. That, too, is a beach that is used widely, more by our citizens than by visitors, but increasingly by visitors. Already some work has started in that area, but there is room for more work, particularly as a large number of young people use the facilities there, although it is close to the Barracks, I do not sc ; any security problems that can be posed. In fact, I am aware that the soldiers themselves have, from time to time, been advocating certain measures to protect their security, at the same time leaving access to the beach to the public.

This is a place that I have known all my life, Sir. From the time I was adopted, I lived very near that beach, and, as Gabby would say, "my navel string bury there." I did all sorts of little things along that coastline.

10.10a.m.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I pitched marbles there, threw pebbles in the sea. I climbed over the Garrison wall, played cricket, Sir, when I could play cricket I did all sorts of things. It is an important beach, and I am pleased to see that the Capital Estimates will contain some provision for that.

I do not believe that there is any disagreement in the House on either side about the need to protect our beaches and ensure public access to them. These three beaches, on which I am concentrating, are ones to which public access has been maintained consistently.

I would not have spoken at length on this part of this Head only in relation to my own constituency were it not for the comments that occurred in that article, which were not based on what I had actually said in the House. I am misrepresented very frequently in newspapers, whether it be the columnists or the editors, but I do not really bother about these things. I have had that in pubb'c life for a long time. But because this affects that particular part of my constituency, I wish to make reference to it in particular.

Now that there are no buildings going to be permitted along the coastline, I will hope that the Government will still take into consideration that there are two or three land owners, who do not have properties on the other side, and that some accommodation should be made with them. The Minister should bear this in mind when the compulsory acquisition for the sewage is taking place. Those who are willing, not the other two who wish to retain the land for their protection, should be given compensation, because they would never be able to use the land and the public will still have continuing access to it. I am asking that that be borne firmly in mind so that nobody would be disadvantaged, neither those who want to retain part of sea coast for the use of their hotel properties to enhance them, nor those who have no use for the land and cannot build on it and will wish the land to still remain for public use. I think that will solve the complete problem of the Rockley Beach.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another two minutes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I have to ask the Minister about another area in my constituency. There is a division of authority between the Community Development Division, the NCC and other Ministries for certain spots that should be beautified. At the corner of St. Matthias Road and Dayrells Road, there is what is the former bath area. A bath is no longer there. The NCC had started to

clear the area but it is again overgrown with bush. It is an ideal spot which could become a mini park, with seats put there for the old people and others from the two adjoining constituencies, the Prime Minister's constituency is just across the road from mine.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The corner of Dayrells Road.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: An open area.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Prime Minister says we can have our open debate at that open area. I would welcome that, Sir. Perhaps there are other people to gain from that.

Attention should be given to that particular corner. Government should not just leave the land. The land is owned by Government We know that the Government does not know of all the property it owns. I have never been able to get from the Ministry of Housing and inventory of Government property at any stage. I am urging that rather than the land lie fallow and people be allowed to throw garbage and debris on it - it would not take a lot of money - some steps be taken to beautify that particular area.

My time has expired, Sir, I will have to come back on this matter.

Hon. C. V. WALKER (St. George North): Mr. Chairman: I do not plan to be too long in this intervention. Unlike the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I do not have any beaches to protect in St. George. However, I should like to touch briefly on three subheads. The first one may be a little rehash of something we had in the last two days but one has to bring home the point that when we are dealing with the funds of the people of Barbados, we have to be rather careful, we have to be prudent and, indeed, we have to be proper managers.

One listened to the various comments made in the last two days about the misuse of funds. I would only like to add one comment to this Committee about one particular instance, which I consider to be outright ridiculous. This, Mr. Chairman, had to do with one lady of 79; she will be so in a few days. Paint was sent about five weeks before the election to paint her house. What is significant is that her daughter, who lives in North America, had just repaired the house. The paint was sent and delivered to the next door neighbour. Someone came to paint that house. First of all, the person started to paint from the bottom of the house. Now anybody who knows anything about painting would know that you do not start to paint from the bottom of the house. However, he proceeded, and in two days he painted this house. Mr. Chairman, would you believe that two days later another individual came and repainted the same house in a different colour. But he started from the top. There is a standing joke, and I think you, Mr. Chairman, have some knowledge about this, about the house that-was painted twice from top and bottom. This, I submit, is how the funds that this NAB spent went during the time just prior to the General Election.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: How did she vote?)

Hon. C. V. WALKER: She went in one car, but she said she was going to get in my car and come back with me. Anyhow, you do not know how people vote.

Laughter.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The second subhead, Mr. Chairman, has to do with Subhead 3, which is the Labour Department. I would only give the Committee some information here, since it would appear as though we will get down to my Head. The Committee should be aware that the Ministry under Head 39, the Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development, will receive some funds from the Education World Bank Project for the Manpower Research and Statistics Unit, to the tune of $41 510 in fellowships and $151 540 for consultancies, to assist in the various surveys which will be done, and indeed have started, under the Labour Department in the interest of Barbados.

My last comment has to do with Subhead 15, on the NCC. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition said that he saw them coming to Christ Church West, but I am now thankful that they have reached St. George North. The Ministry, in conjunction with other Ministries and the National Trust, has started a project which we hope will finally bring something to St. George. I know that you, Mr. Chairman, cannot speak for yourself from your present position. But I think I can say on behalf of us both that we do appreciate the effort that they have started. 10.20 a.m.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can proceed and, hopefully, get down to some later Heads, specifically the head with which I would like to deal.

Thank you.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Chairman, under this Head 39 one of the subheads is that of Employment. I have said on many occasions, in this August Chamber and out of it, that the problems that have created

the high level of unemployment in Barbados are not problems that can be solved by any waving of a wand. They are not problems that can be solved by a group of people who form the Government alone. There has to be serious commitment by several sectors of this community if we are going to really tackle the problems with any speed.

One of those sectors must be the Press. I have never had occasion to be very critical of the Press in Barbados or to attack them, although on many occasions they have been unfair to me, they have attacked me and have criticised me. I accept all of that, because that is what a free Press is supposed to be about. They are right to attack me or criticise me if they see the need to. But what they must not do, if they are going to play their part in it, is to misrepresent, and it looks to me wilfully, what a person says. You can have your interpretation of what they say, but do not misrepresent them. I will not dwell on this point too long, but it has a lot to do with employment

When I made my speech in here yesterday regarding the whole affair pertaining to fast foods and franchise-type operations, the only confused person in here, to my knowledge, was the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), and he succeeded in confusing the reporter for the Nation. If you read the articles they published today, what one Mr. Vanterpool wrote and the one the other reporter wrote, you would find that one contradicts the other. I never said that it looks like MacDonald's is trying to get in through the back door.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is a very tenuous connection between what was said in the newspaper and employment I am giving latitude, but do not range far and wide, please.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: Sir, what I am trying to show here is that the point I made was that the pros and cons would have to be weighed. We need activities that would create employment, as I said, but we do not need that employment to be created at any cost. I hold no brief for MacDonald's, nor the Workers Union, but I said carefully that the pros and cons would have to be weighed, because what we are looking at is what is in the best interest of the wider community, and I am speaking in terms of employment and not of any special interest group or any individuals.

I wanted to get that clear, because that has a lot to do with employment, and there will be other ancillary service to those types of operations that would probably create more employment In the final analysis, when we are finished on the street or wherever kicking around employment or the lack of it, and using it as any proverbial football, we have to get back to the reality of the facts that there is still a lot of poor black people out there with unemployment staring them in the face. And we have to get down, then, to dealing with the problems and not continue to believe that we can use it from time to time to get political mileage only.

I commend the present Honourable Minister of Tourism, who was then the Minister of Employment, for the attempt he made in trying to bring together various sectors, known as the Task Force on Unemployment. I am not going to deal with the report, I am talking about what his objective was. There are errors. There are things about the report that I may not like, but I am not going to condemn the effort or the report because of that, because the attempt was to try to bring about a kind of environment whereby you could reduce the unemployment and the only way that I see that you can be seriously dealing with that is if you bring together the various sectors which are involved in providing employment for people.

Mr. Chairman, in this regard, we are here dealing primarily with how we spend the people's money. I think it is important that we ensure that we do this in a manner that the people will get the best return for their money. We cannot start determining what is employment and what is not considered so important as far as employment is concerned.

I am one of those people who has repeatedly said self-employment in Barbados is an extremely important area, and I believe that no effort should be spared to encourage and to assist it wherever possible, financially or otherwise. And I was very, very disappointed to hear a high-ranking member of the Barbados Labour Party say that those self-employed people on Swan Street want throwing off, and put somewhere else because they are making a mess of things. I do not believe the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is part of that He was not there when that was said. The point is that that person who said that is not alone - misinformed but not alone - and I fear that there may even be some Members on this side who might listen to that kind of talk.

As far as I am concerned, the matter is not only whether those people remain on Swan Street or not. It has to do with whether we are going to provide an environment for them to be able to earn a living honestly as self-employed small business people. We can call them what we like, whenever it comes back to me I am going to call them small business people because that is what they are, and they have some marketing skills that a lot of us can learn from.

I speak of the small business people in Swan Street particularly, because there are other vendors elsewhere. And though I was told by the same member of the Labour Party that I am the Minister of Vendors and that is not true, as a businessman, and a small one, too, maybe not as small as them, I understand some of the pressures they undergo

with certain departments they have to deal with. Before we condemn them and before we sit in our drawing rooms and discuss whether they leave the street dirty or not, let us recognise some facts. 10.30 a.m.

I am sure we all agree that we are happy that they are trying to make an honest living. So what are the things against them? I heard talk that they are not paying their taxes whereas the other people out there, the merchants, have to pay taxes. That is a matter that is to be dealt with, that is not a reason for getting them off the street. As far as they leaving any mess is concerned, I am quite willing to take any honourable Member around the City at certain times and show them larger amounts of garbage from other business places than you see there. So what I am saying, Sir, is that before we start judging.....

Aside.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER: At certain times. The vendors have their garbage there at certain times, too, every evening, and all we need to do is make sure that the Minister of Health gets transportation to move it every evening and we would have no problem with the garbage. If you pass at 4.00 and you see the garbage, pass back at 8.00 or 9.00 and tell me if it is still there. If it is still there, we will call the Minister of Health.

I am cautioning that we do not quickly start judging without all the facts. I am happy that on this side the matter is being addressed seriously, because there is in fact a committee dealing with that issue. I do not think that any of us can try to prejudge or determine what the committee will come up with. As long as at the end of the day these small business people are allowed to do their business in the same way that any of the other ones, medium like me or big like some others, are allowed to do their business, and as long as they are within the framework of the law, I will firmly be on their side.

Thank you.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE (St. Michael North East): Mr. Chairman, the period under review by the Jackman Committee is of immense interest to me, if only because over this period there is a large number of persons whom I personally assisted in completing application forms for repairs to their homes, primarily so because they were incapable on their own means to effect the improvement that was necessary, and further, because they are in the category of old aged persons and senior citizens. Unfortunately, Sir, there seems to be little care or concern by the persons who have been processing the applications for assistance, because to date, the number of persons who need this kind of assistance is still a very large one. It is true that within recent weeks there has been some improvement in this regard, but since the report of this Commission deals with areas of persons who have been given assistance, who were not in the category of persons for whom this assistance was intended, I think I would like to make the point which I am making at this moment.

Persons who are charged with the responsibility for dispensing monies out of the public purse for the good of people in our community, for whom this kind of assistance is intended, ought to understand that it is not just a matter of dispensing the funds the way they want to dispense them, but that it is necessary to look at the priorities. If they did look at the priorities, I am sure, even though all the persons in my constituency who need this assistance may not have been attended to, that a far larger number would have been given some assistance. Some of the money that was spent on people who did not have the same need, and who did not fall into the category of senior citizens or indigent persons, could have been spent on those with urgent needs.

Conditions which can only be considered as unbearable, including toilet facilities and badly needed repairs to their homes, are the conditions which many of our senior folk have to live with on a day by day basis, and even though the reports have gone into the National Assistance Board, and even though in at least two cases persons have gone to investigate the problems, nothing was done. My call in this regard, Sir, is to once again ask those people who have the responsibility of meeting the needs of persons, for whom money is placed at their disposal, should do so with the utmost care and consideration, bearing in mind that apart from their pensions, there are no other means that the aged have to assist them in bringing to reality the kind of living conditions that they would prefer.

While I am on this Head, Sir, in relation to the beautification programme, there is an area at the corner of Bush Hall Yard Gap which, as I understand it, is Government property and where if you clean it and it is left unmaintained, the bush very quickly gets back in very bad condition. As I understand it, it has been designated as an area for a recreation centre for some of the young people in the area, though as far as I can see it does not fit those needs as much as it should. It is also designed for a day care centre, but while all this is going on, and it has been going on for a very long time, to have all this thing effected, that area has been left unattended in terms of maintenance. It would be very nice to have it beautified so that the people of the area could find scope for their own health atmosphere, and those persons who pass there from time to time can also see some of the work that the Ministry is doing in this regard. 10.40 a.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be speaking in this debate on the Jackman Report. I enter into this debate to deal with Subhead 15 - National Conservation Commission. I think that the intervention by the Prime Minister yesterday to remind the Committee that the Committee is in fact approving expenditure, and that its proper focus should be to examine contents of expenditure, was an intervention which was quite genuine. It will serve as my line of departure in this particular matter.

The Committee is being called on, Sir, to approve $10 million for the support of the programmes undertaken by the National Conservation Commission. I have already gone on record during the course of this current financial year as having abstained from a supplementary expenditure which would have brought the total subvention to the National Conservation Commission to $16 million in the course of the year. Of course, Mr. Chairman, the Government would be glad of the opportunity to say that I do not want to see work created for poor black people, and if that is their wish, they can say that

The point, Mr. Chairman, is that enough was said during the course of that debate by persons on the Government side that one had to also examine the programme content of the overall beautification programme, as they would call it, crash programme as I would call it, to see if we were getting the best value for money. I recall that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) had made the point that it had been envisioned that there would have been a number of capital related projects stemming out of this particular programme that would have been designed not only to beautify, but to stimulate activity in a direct productive way, and in the spirit of the call by the Prime Minister for the Committee to focus on the expenditure that we are going to be approving, I really must ask the Minister to let us know exactly what will be the programme content that will exercise the expenditure of $10 million. I want also in that vein, to ask whether some of the capital related activity, not having to do with the cutting down of bush, of which the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central spoke, will be included in this year's programme.

In particular, Sir, I want to know if the National Conservation Commission and the Ministry, in general, have any plans, either immediately or in the medium term future, to give effect to a report which was prepared to create a national park in that area running from Cove Bay through Pico Teneriffe into Foster's Funland. It is, Mr. Chairman, on of the most pleasant parts of Barbados for people who know it.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am asking for the Government's position. We were presented with a report some time in 1985 which the Government of the day was then studying as an area that could have been looked at as an attractive addition not only to our tourist product, but also for the benefit of the people of Barbados. The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) of course is drawing reference to some of the pros and cons of the project, and that is why I am asking whether the Government is going to proceed with it or not.

It is a very rustic area, Sir, one of the few remaining untouched and unspoilt areas of Barbados, and those who, like myself, have had the benefit of visiting Pico Teneriffe would recognise and understand that it is an experience which one does not get from other parts of Barbados. I would therefore, Mr. Chairman, like a clarification. I know a report was prepared, nothing had been done to give effect to the recommendations, and I feel I have a constituency responsibility to enquire whether any work will proceed as regards developing that area as a national park.

Mr. Chairman, I also ask the Minister, has the extent of the employment in this programme, in his judgment, affected the willingness of rural people to work this year in the sugar industry. I have asked that question very carefully, Sir. I do feel that Barbados this year, and in the next three years, should be growing more sugar. We should be producing more sugar for this year certainly, and for the next few years. When we are in a position to realise $1 000 and more per tonne for sugar, and also when the free market price for sugar goes beyond US9 cents per pound, it becomes reasonable and possible for us to grow more sugar. It is also true, Sir, that sugar is the only commodity that Barbados can sell without any difficulty whatsoever.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do not drift too far. Try and tie it in, because right now I am going to question you about relevancy. I will allow you a little latitude.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: To commit oneself to a long-term sugar target based on short-term movements in the free market of the price of sugar obviously would be a mistake. We therefore need a system by which, when world conditions allow, we can move labour temporarily for a period of time without necessarily committing all the land and putting a lot of infrastructure behind it. We are now in Barbados, Sir, spending, and will have to spend, $10 million a year for people effectively to be involved in either the planting or cutting down of plant material, and I am saying that given the shadow price that one should attach to earning of foreign exchange, and given the advantageous position that exists now in relation.....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I draw Your Honour's attention to the rule about relevance. I submit that

this Head, which deals with a number of matters, is not the appropriate Head for the honourable Member to be discussing any esoteric theories about sugar cane production. He started with Pico Teneriffe, and surely he cannot intend that we should be growing sugar cane on Pico Teneriffe; so there can't be any relevance, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will know that I did question about the relevance of it, but I said I would give him some latitude. He should tie it in very very soon, if not I will ask him about it

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, the point I am making is that there used to be a situation, which we obviously are going to go back to, where during the crop season casual labour from the Ministry of Transport and Works used to be released to go and help reap the sugar cane. We say we are serious about unemployment. We have in Barbados a situation where there are a few hundred jobs going abegging now, Sir, and the question that can arise is whether during the course of the sugar crop we should not be releasing some of the persons involved in this programme in order to help reap the crop.

I am raising the point as well, Sir, that when international circumstances merit us to go into sugar cane production and we have a programme like this where we are spending money for people to plant and cut down vegetable matter, it should suit this country to take advantage of that capacity for the earning of foreign exchange. I am therefore saying, Sir, that this programme, if it is to be of any use to Barbados, must have a wider economic value beyond just the beautification of the country. In your constituency and mine, where a number of persons have the expectation of wanting to go into a programme of beautification, there is going to be a greater disinclination for them to work in agriculture. Those of us who represent rural constituencies know of the problems that I am talking about, and I am saying that where circumstances warrant it, we should not refrain from linking this programme managed by the National Conservation Commission to the development of agriculture in the same way that everybody else sees the benefit of linking it to tourism development. Why are we to believe that this programme should be linked to tourism development but it is impossible to link it to agricultural development? 10.50 a.m.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: But that is where I was leading the debate to. If you would listen, you would hear me develop the point

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: No one suggested that there cannot be a link between this programme and agriculture. What we said is that it ought not be debated here. Surely the honourable Member understands that. The honourable Member has been able to link almost anything he could think of to himself and to St. Peter, but there is no need to discuss it here. Stop trying to confuse the debate.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, at the end of the day we are going to have to approve this vote, and all I am really trying to say is that in order for us to approve this kind of vote in confidence, we have to be satisfied that we are getting the best value for our money. Those areas are my broad initial comments on this particular subhead. I would really like the Minister to elaborate on the programme content. I want to know what aspects are going to be linked, as was suggested to the tourism development just beyond the narrow beautification aspects. I need to find out from him, Sir, if there is any evidence to suggest that the scale and the scope of the programme is acting as a break for persons living in rural communities to work in agriculture and to reap the sugar crop.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I know that yesterday I allowed a wide-ranging debate on the National Assistance Board, but Members ought to be guided by Order 66, Rule 7 when we are looking at matters in Committee. It says:

> "The debate shall be confined to the policy of the service for which the money is to be provided and not deal with the details of expenditure, but may refer to the details of revenue or funds for which that service is responsible."

In future I am going to stick to this. Maybe on both sides of the House you might not be able to score the political points, but you can do that at the second reading if you are dealing with a Bill. Certainly, in Committee I would want to confine the debate to the policy of the service and not allow for such wide-ranging debates, as was allowed yesterday. Bear that in mind.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I think it is opportune for me to respond to some of the matters which were raised, in particular, yesterday - and I am not winding up - which related principally to the National Assistance Board. I am grateful to the former Minister of Employment for explaining precisely why the Committee of Enquiry was set up, and for emphasising that when we took over, the sum of $2.099 million, which had been voted for this particular programme, had been spent by June of 1986 - as a matter of fact, it had been overspent by nearly $200 000 - and we were forced to go back for a supplementary to the tune of nearly $1.8 million.

I believe that the Member for St. Thomas made reference to Marshall Trading Company in 1985 having

been granted awards in the sum of $120 000. But our • istigations reveal that when we came into office in 1986, u ; sum owing to Marshall Trading was $750 000, three-quarters of a million dollars. Of course, it is for his convenience and benefit, I guess, that he refused to mention that I guess if he had the information for 1985 he would have had it for 1986, on what that $750 000 was spent, but, I guess, it is difficult to ascertain that. Although we have come for a supplementary on October 7, for $1.8 million, bills were still coming in, so that on December 2, we had to come back for nearly $1 million to cover what was spent in the two months leading up to the elections.

I am also grateful to the Minister of Transport and Works for explaining precisely why the National Assistance Board was moved from being an advisory board to a statutory corporation.

At the moment we are training all of our Home Help people, because we realise that this is a very essential service and, indeed, if we are to reduce the cost of health care, as the Minister of Health would appreciate, then we would have to get the old people out of the District Hospitals. We are also at present canying out a survey in the Ministry to see exactly how many old people can be removed from the District Hospitals. It is not only a survey to find out how many are able-bodied, but where they can go when they come out, if they have families who can look after them, if we have to put in home helpers to help them and, as it were, provide a continuing care for the old people. So a comprehensive study is being undertaken to ascertain whether or not we can improve the facilities for the old people and get them back in their homes.

We have a programme now in which, and we are only experimenting with it, we are finding that there are some old people at home who are in need of care and attention and we are moving them to a centre. We are, as it were building them up, and we are going to put them back in their homes and thereafter we will look after them. There are some who are on the streets that we are doing that with now, too. But I do not want to dwell on that too much, because then it would have other repercussions.

I feel that despite the criticism of the report, in many respects it has helped us, and I was somewhat surprised that the Opposition did not see it in the light in which it should have been seen. I know there was a previous report on some other housing welfare operation or housing operation, but the fact of the matter is that all Barbadians would have to admit that all was not well in the Housing Welfare Department of the National Assistance Board, and if all was not well, then there should be some investigation into the operation of that board. Whether or not it was a commission of enquiry or otherwise, the fact of the matter was that some investigation had to be carried out and those investigations revealed, in part, what we were saying, that there was maladministration in the sense that a number of persons who were recruited to work in the National Assistance Board were not competent, were not capable, and what was more, were untrainable and, therefore, could not carry out the functions which were expected of them. 11.00a.m.

Without going into too much detail as far as that is concerned, from November of last year we have recruited more than competent, capable and experienced people. I was surprised to see the amount of persons who responded to the advertisement for people to work in the National Assistance Board. We had persons with Masters degrees who have had a wealth of experience, people, who have worked for many years in these fields. In the technical area we have got people with OCDs not given an opportunity to work in this particular field. So the standard of the NAB has gone up considerably.

On my own initiative I have sent all the MPs whether B or D, a list of all the houses that we are in the process of repairing or repaired, and I have asked them to send back to me and say whether or not they are satisfied with what we have done so far. We are doing a backlog.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: How many MPs have replied? Only one MP from your side has replied, and you know who that person is as well.

Laughter.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: You cannot blame us now. We are now putting it in the hands of the MPs to see if they think the work is being carried out properly. It is a safeguard. If people know that they are being supervised they will do proper work. We only have three technicians. It is difficult for three technicians to supervise the whole country, and if we are true representatives, I think it is our duty as well to make sure that we know what is going on. Of course, it also helps me, because if you write me a letter, you will want to know that we are responding to your letter and what we are doing. And sometimes when you write a letter, we do not know what priority there is.

I have also taken the opportunity to visit each house to make sure that I understand what is going on. So far, I have visited three constituencies, and next week I will be visiting another two, because I want to see at first hand what is happening with the old people. I must admit that I am not at present entirely happy with what I have seen. Yesterday or day before I had a meeting with all the artisans to express my concern about the work which they are producing. Over a period of time, I am quite sure that the work will improve

and that the old people will be satisfied with what they are getting.

I do not want to harp too much on some of the comments made by the Member for St. Peter regarding the Greene issue. It is an unfortunate situation. If we had qualified personnel in NAB at that time, I am quite sure that the persons who had merited.....

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: You can write on behalf of your constituents. We all do that. I am not blaming you. I agree with you that if a constituent comes to you and explains a given situation, and you are satisfied in your mind that he needs help.....

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: But that is not my point My point is that if the persons who had given him that house had carried out the type of enquiry which was necessary, this unfortunate situation would not have arisen. I still have people living in the constituency of *St.* James South who have not been able to get their houses, and we will have to build new houses for those whose houses were placed at Springhalt after the floods.

The floods took place 18 months before election, so it is incorrect to give people the impression that we have spent two years not replacing people's houses. When we went the houses were finished, worm-eaten, the termites had taken control of them. So although $800 000 were spent in those floods, we have still got to come back now and vote money to build houses. That is the situation. We did not have the money there at hand that we could take it up. I think a house costs between $30 000 to $40 000, so if you are going to build 20, that will be $800 000. We have to get a supplementary to build those houses.

Mr. Chairman, I think that we have covered all the things to be covered at NAB. I will sit and listen on the other areas, and then I will come back and respond to any queries that might be raised under those Heads.

I thank you.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE (St. James North): Mr. Chairman, the first area I would like to touch on is the Immigration Employment Scheme. Every year successive Governments have been allowing persons to go abroad to Canada and United States to assist those countries in the harvesting of many of their seasonal crops. We find that we have a situation here where many persons who go abroad to cut canes and to pick fruits do not cut canes in Barbados or get involved in any kind of agricultural work. Perhaps we should take a closer look at the selection method to see if we can give some encouragement to persons who work here to get that opportunity. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that those persons who work in agriculture should be praised and should be recognised for the effort they make in assisting here in this island.

The Minister should take a look at the persons whom he selects for this particular purpose. Under the last Administration, the Minister would select persons from his own constituency, without any basis of their ability to contribute to the programme. Many persons who went abroad to assist in these programmes would spend sometimes two or three months, and return before the particular programme was completed. Many of them were not suitable, by virtue of their ability, to match up to the kind of work that was demanded. This is something which I think needs some attention and perhaps the Minister will have a look at it and see how we can resolve that particular area.

We also have been able to find that many carpenters and artisans leave their jobs here to go abroad under that particular programme. If we can take a look at that selection method, we may find that we would be able to encourage persons in Barbados to assist in cutting canes and getting involved in picking cotton and various other forms of work which will help bring foreign exchange to this island. 11.10a.m.

We all talk about persons who work in the field. I know how hard that work is, because from a boy I had to assist my father in that particular area. Cutting canes is nothing new to me.

Asides. ' *

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir: I am sure that the honourable Member who is currently speaking suffered a lot. I recall that on the unfortunate death of his father, the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) reminded the House how his late father told him how much he had to lick him as a boy. His head was hard!

Laughter.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE: You can see that those licks were not in vain.

Laughter.

Mr. J. J. PAYNE: The point I want to make is that we have to look at ways and means of encouraging persons to assist at home in these particular areas of employment, my

suggestion is that if you can reconsider the selection procedure this would assist to a very large extent.

I want to touch very briefly, Mr. Chairman, on the Youth and Community Development Programme. We find that at present there are some five community development aides who are serving the entire island. With a population of some 250 000 persons and 27 constituencies and many districts and communities scattered around the island, it is my view that five persons are inadequate to properly carry out the function of servicing these communities and assisting the communities with the work that is necessary to make them more compatible in this modern day. I believe that a new look should be taken of this programme. Perhaps we should seek to train additional community development aides and increase the number. We may not be able to create one for every constituency or district, but I believe that we have to move closer and closer towards a situation where every community in this island is properly serviced. I am not saying that it is the responsibility of the Government to keep an eye on every single piece of activity that occurs in a community, but I believe that every community needs some assistance in their particular programmes and if the Government can by its programmes assist in this particular area we spend a lot of money every year on community development - I believe that every single cent spent in this particular area is well spent Any money spent in improving the social atmosphere in any community in this island is money well spent.

We have many community centres around the island which, in my view, are under-utilised. Some of them are vandalised, and much of this occurs because we do not have persons who can sit with the groups in the various areas and make plans for properly utilising those facilities. I believe that after Government spends such large sums of money in constructing community centres, there should be some follow-up action to ensure that these institutions are properly used for the benefit of the people, in particular the young people, of this island.

This is very important, Mr. Chairman, because it is particularly the young people who use these community centres. We used to have a situation in Barbados where almost everybody in a district would know who his or her neighbour is. But we are moving away from that situation gradually, because people who live in communities are not getting together as often as they used to in the past, and I believe that those areas which have community centres can take advantage of that by having persons meet and discuss problems which are common to people in those areas. This I believe, is an area which calls for a much closer look.

We also find, Mr. Chairman, that many of these centres are used for purposes which are not always in the interest of their lasting use. Many of them are used, for example, for dances. I am not suggesting that we should not use our centres for dances, but we should not construct community centres to be used exclusively as dance halls and that sort of thing. I think the purpose of community centres in the area is really for persons to meet and enjoy all social activities possible - debates, sports, and games. We find that many of the centres now are used for domino competitions, and people play card games. I believe that by expanding the use of these centres - many of them are used now for various craft courses - stitching, smocking, and various kinds of things like those - we should be able to get more out of the use of our community centres.

Mr. Chairman, I give my support to this particular Head in this debate.

Thank you very much.

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT (St. Andrew): Mr. Chairman, I want to make a brief intervention under "Environmental Services". I am of the opinion, and I believe many of you will agree with me, that a cleaner environment will improve the health of the nation, and obviously it would reduce the cost of our health delivery services. I am particularly concerned, as I traverse the country from day to day, to see - I have to choose my words here carefully - that we are not taking enough care of our environment. There is indiscriminate dumping. There is infestation of shrubs and vines covering most of our drainage areas in this country. Any of you could take a ride from Bridgetown driving northwards, or in a northeasterly direction, through St. Thomas and you would see what I am referring to. Most of our gullies are clogged.

One particular spectacle that really has me feeling rather sad was the son of things that Barbadians are likely to do. Mr. Chairman, there is an official dump at Mangrove Pond, and yet, just a mile and a half away at Jack-in-the-Box Gully, you would find some garbage being dumped over the bridge, garbage obviously driven from Bridgetown. You see some crates, carton, et cetera. I find this a bit glaring to think that we are saying in one breath what we want for our society.

We look around us and notice that we are having to do a full scale defogging exercise to deal with the spread of the Aedes Egypti mosquito. If we look at landscaping our areas reasonably well, there would not be much of a hiding place for such a pest that will come to create problems for the health of the nation. I am sure that if you move from, say, Carrington Village and go into St. Thomas, we can develop some of the best picnic spots inland that you can ever get. Obviously it will cost a bit more than is currently the case with the NCC programme, but would it be too high a price to pay for a cleaner and a prettier society? 11.20a.m.

We can trace all of those drainage areas right back into SL Thomas, St. Joseph and parts of St. George, have easy access to them, and by so doing encourage some of our school children and even the adults to have a look at these gullies. When we refer to these areas as gullies, people tend to keep away from them, but they contain some of the most beautiful areas you can find anywhere in Barbados. This would also offer some activities for our tourists other than sea and sun bathing. By so doing, you could be attracting some naturalists to these fine areas of Barbados, and you will probably broaden the kind of tourist product we could offer many of our visitors. But first we must look after it for ourselves and then encourage them to participate.

We have done some spot areas, like the Welchman Hall Gully. We have developed Harrison's Cave.

(Aside)

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT: I am not being political, I am being nationalistic.

We have areas like the Flower Forest. I believe I can quote that without drawing any .comment from the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons). But there is much more we can do. These are in spots, but I am thinking of an integrated development where you can move from the low land, and as you climb towards the hilly areas, you would be developing these areas, as I commented, for the improvement of health, and at the same time you would be developing good sceneries which we all can appreciate.

I must also make the point, because of the way in which we keep drainage areas, that the debris either from agriculture, trash, fallen trees, may create blockages and after heavy rain you get the water building up, and by the time the pressure is great enough to release that water, you get some serious erosion because of the velocity with which the water moves from the higher area. We can achieve a lot by doing our best to look at these areas and make them pleasant in many respects.

I have been plugging for the honourable Member for St. Thomas, because so far I have been quoting areas in and around SL Thomas, but I am going to move now from St. Thomas to my bailiwick.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: I am deeply grateful for the assistance. I hope that the assistance will be more than mere words or verbosity and will be translated into action soon.

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT: I thought the honourable Member would have been reminding me that he had started the process and he hoped that we would complete it.

Looking from the St. Thomas area, you have a full view of the north east of the country. It is all part of the Scotland District. We have a drainage problem, we have a soil erosion problem, but we also have a beautiful countryside.

Currently, efforts are being made to re-establish some road connections in the St. Andrew area. I-think the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) will be happy about that He has been complaining that he has had to make some roundabout turns to achieve his objectives from time to time, and I do hope in a short while we will be able to help him. Shortly I hope we will be having the re-establishment of our road link at Spring Vale. I hope this will help him, but there is also a wider area that I would like to address.

Over the years, we have practically seen the demise of sugar cane cultivation in the area. We have had quite a few of our fanners actually abandon the land, because it was very costly in terms of transport to get their products going. I know the Ministry of Agriculture is working towards getting some sort of rehabilitation of agriculture in the area. We have quite a bit of water draining from the high points in the area where we could establish some flora and fauna along embankments. All this will help add to the general beautification of Barbados.

There are areas along these embankments obviously affected by the soil erosion problem, and I am looking forward to the day when we are going to have co-operation from the various Ministries dealing with the environment so that we can have an integrated programme for the improved development of our communities in the area.

It is a pity that yesterday we went a strange route when we were discussing the National Assistance Board. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that at this juncture I could relate a problem that is very much current in my area, where we have some rather poor housing conditions existing among our former agricultural workers. You would know from the topography of the area, and also because of the land tenure system, that quite a few timber houses have been built over the years. They were kept pretty well by these workers while they were busy working on the estates, but by the time they reached retirement, they were no longer in a position to maintain them in good order, which means that there would be some more pressure being put on the Welfare services. I know the Minister is taking this into consideration, and I hope this year, along with what we have done last year, we will be pointing towards a new approach to keeping the community, especially the elderly, in a state of what we would regard as fit for Barbadians. 11.30a.m.

There are areas under this Head involving community development such as clubs. My colleague from St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne) referred to them, and I want to draw to the House's attention that we in Belleplaine have had a community centre established way back in the 1950s and it is in rather poor state. I would also like to draw to the House's attention that when this community centre was built, it catered for about one half of those people who now look forward to it for recreation. Today we should be thinking seriously of expanding the facilities that exist there, and again I am looking forward to seeing this emerging from our Development Plan.

Mr. Chairman, I think I will close at this point. I will be intervening at a later stage in the debate.

Thank you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to address the problem of pollution, both in-land pollution and pollution at sea, and I am particularly concerned about the problem - it is a very serious problem - posed to the water supplies as a result of the indiscriminate dumping of garbage.

The honourable Member for St. Andrew (Mr. C. A. Neblett) made some reference to the dumping of garbage. I have to emphasise, as a person now living in rural Barbados, that one of the worst things that is happening is that people are in breach of the existing legislation, dumping not only household garbage but other forms of garbage, including disused chemicals, residue of chemicals, fully into what is referred to as the gullies, and in many cases near our Zone 1 water supplies, and it has got to the stage that it is posing a serious hazard to the water supply and to the livelihood of Barbadians.

Certainly in the area in which I live in St. John, very near to Zone 1 there is a very serious problem. If you look at areas like Ben Springs, you will see that the water supply is near being threatened by this type of wanton conduct, which none of us should condone, and about which we should speak out in this House very seriously wherever we can. In fact, our people who go on the scenic walks with the National Trust complain and have got stories of what has happened, and for those of us who still try to see some of the scenic beauty of our country side, it is not only the aesthetic damage that is being done, but for me the more serious damage to the water supplies of Barbados.

There seems to be no control over the disposal of the residue of these chemicals, and it is not only chemicals coming from the use of chemicals in agriculture, it is chemicals which are industrial waste. I think that we ought to use every leverage to prevent this from occurring if we are not to have a problem one day of waking up and finding that those of us who depend on pure water supply in these areas can be seriously damaged. I do not want to be any more alarmist than this, but I think the Government ought to be aware of the tremendous problem, and that the policing arm of the various agencies with responsibility for this should really be beefed up as soon as possible to deal with this type of problem.

Obviously, we depend on the beach for recreation, and we also depend on it now for economic activity, as indeed we depend on the sea. But we are still having ships passing our shoreline and dumping indiscriminately out of their tanks and holes all sorts of residue and chemicals, and this is being brought to our shoreline. I think we will have to enter into the international oil pollution conventions and probably even further amend legislation which we have.

We have discussed already in Committee, and I do not want to traverse the ground, the role of our Coast Guard in this respect, and the supplies being granted to the Coast Guard to assist in this task. But I also believe that in the International Maritime Organisation, and in the other bodies to which we subscribe, we should make our voices very strongly felt.

Barbados will one day have to bring in one of those tankers and confiscate it when they are breaching our territorial waters jurisdiction as well as our exclusive zone jurisdiction. This pollution is a very serious thing, in my view, for a small island state such as ours which depends on the sea for a good deal of its livelihood and its recreational activity. We are spending money in preserving marine life around the coast and in beautifying our parks, at Folkestone and elsewhere, and if this is going to be ruined by the tankers and liners that have no regard for small states, then some means must be found to prevent this from occurring.

The third point to which I want to advert, Sir, is the beautification of other natural areas of vegetation. The honourable Member for St. Andrew spoke of areas in his own constituency and in the constituency of the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons). I am sure that the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) will speak about the scenic and natural beauty of perhaps the most beautiful parish in Barbados, St. John, my adopted parish. But the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Hon. M. A. King) and myself are not without some beauty, which we share, on the south coast, in addition to the coastal .....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Prime Minister wants to know where I am running for, Sir. I am not sure he is inviting me to run against the honourable Member for St. John.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and myself share responsibility for the area of Graeme Hall, including the St. Lawrence coastland, and the Graeme Hall park traverses both of our constituencies. The honourable Member and myself have made our views felt to the planners of the sewerage project that they must do everything in their power not to pollute the Graeme Hall Park, that there was a study done in the time of the Barbados Labour Party Government by the Caribbean Conservation Commission on alternative management and options open which should be available for beautifying the park and using it as a natural park.

There is so much in Graeme Hall that is really, in a way, unique. About 26.5 acres is available there, and there has been a proposal to acquire this land for the future use of Barbados, and you will find written into the Barbados Labour Party's manifesto - I supported that - a famous undertaking to go ahead and develop Graeme Hall as a natural park. I feel that a project, properly designed, will attract funding. I realise that we are in a scarcity of funds, but this project will attract funding from conservationists, if you are looking at the non-Governmental areas, and it will attract funding as well as part of an ancillary to the sewerage project. In fact, if the Ministry of Health, which deals with this aspect of the sewerage plant, is still intent on sending the effluent into Graeme Hall, and tells me that it smells very well - I doubt that myself - then one of the things that they ought to do is really to look at the position of trying to attract funding for developing Graeme Hall as a natural park. 11.40a.m.

I do not know how many honourable Members, or, in fact, how many Barbadians, ever take the opportunity to go and enjoy the beauty of this place. I think the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and the honourable Member for St. Philip South, (Hon. H. A. Blackman) Minister of Housing and Lands have seen it. Fishing opportunities are there in the swamp, and looking at the bird life, the plant life and the natural plant life, it is unbelievable, and it is an area that we should give very urgent attention to. I hope that the Minister now in charge of Conservation, the Honourable Minister of Employment and Community Development, will find the opportunity to visit with the Member from West Central and myself. We will take him on a guided tour of the parkland of Graeme Hall in its natural beauty.

Some of the birds - and this is the correct bird, Sir - the honourable Member looks a bit puzzled as to which bird I am referring to - some of the egrets have been migrating recently to what I always refer to as Yarico's Pond, near to Kendall in St. John. That pond, too, unfortunately, is still on private property, but because of the state of sugar it is not maintained. That whole area again presents a unique opportunity for us to create that sort of parkland which we are looking at I hope the creation of parkland would not only relate to the areas identified by each of us in our particular constituencies, but that we can have an overall plan on this for the overall development of these inland beauty spots in our country.

I want to talk now about a crematorium. This comes under the Minister as well, I think.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I advert to it in the context of sanitation and in the context of the NCC's responsibilities.

One of the things that really is hurtful to some of us who have grown up in the church is the way that the graveyards of Barbados have been allowed to fall into a state of total chaos and disrepair. If you look at Christ Church Parish Church, which I attended as a kid, and you go into the cemetery, you are really amazed that in this day and age we can have this, and I am asking, what has happened to our people?

I cannot say that all of these responsibilities have to be thrown on the Government What has happened to the service clubs? What is happening to the youth groups? What is happening to the initiatives of the Church Lads Brigade? You have to ask these questions, because there must be some self-reliance among our people to do things for ourselves, and there is no way that I am going to hold back my voice on speaking out to them on these issues like this. We must show initiative.

When an initiative is taken, such as was taken by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) in his constituency, the Errol Barrow Memorial Park, one is astounded at the vandalism* that results. I cannot, in any respect, condone that sort of thing when it occurs. It really upsets me tremendously to see that occurring. Why must we in this day and age, when we are now in charge of these hills and fields, continue to damage ourselves in this way, when we have it within our hands to use initiatives? I do not believe that the country can complain as a fact that the Governments have not tried to do development for them. We must now appeal to the people as well to go back to their self-reliant way and try to take steps to help themselves in this regard.

Sir, I was at a funeral at St. Luke's graveyard the other day, and was very upset at what I saw, the state of disrepair. The church people seemed to be happy about that. They cannot be happy about that St. George - a beautiful churchyard!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: St. Lukes? No. St. Luke's is the best.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: St. Luke's has improved, but it still has noL..,..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want to come in to your reason, but I want to defend it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am going to defend you, Sir, about the Mount Park - a tribute to the young people - a park just off Codrington at the bottom of Sargeant's Street and near Sealy Hall. It shows the initiative of two youth groups. Another part of St. John, at Claybury, you are seeing the three of these things being done. So I can put in for you, Sir. I have seen the initiative that has been taken there by young people.

Westbury, St Leonard's - despite the improvement that has been taking place, there seems to be a hesitancy to get the church-yard fully cleaned up. I think that recently work was being done there, but you can go through the whole of Barbados, and Barbados is a religious community, very Christian community, and see that. Why must everybody wait to see if the Government is going to do it

When I was a child growing up, and it is now some years ago, despite my youthful looks - you would think that the Minister of Health was my father - there was never a time, particularly during our holidays, that as children we would go to the beach, get some sand, get some marl, and in a community spirit be beautifying each other's homes and yards.

In my own constituency, it pains me to hear people living in particularly the Gardens and the Crescents, quarrelling that they have not got the side of the road weeded up, when before, on our own initiative, we used to weed the area in front of us. As much as I love my constituents, I frequently ask them, what has happened?

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am not talking about the old people, I am talking about the young people. They would sit in front of the television and listen to the soap box all day and all night, but to spend 15 minutes getting the natural exercise of helping themselves and keeping their own area beautified seems to be something foreign to some of our people, not all.

I think we should use the opportunity to appeal to our own citizens to see the work of the National Conservation Commission and the effort that is being put into this at a governmental level as part of a whole process of nation building. It is important that this should be done, Sir.

Mr. E. BOURNE (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) has spoken about the erosion of Rockley, Worthings, the south and west coasts, but beach erosion is a problem for all of us in this country. It is causing us great confusion. The Rockley as we know it today was not always that way. I knew Rockley when I was a boy. The area which we see now was half sea and not all beach. But the sea, as far as I can see, is very much like the Lord, it giveth and it taketh away. 11.50a.m.

Laughter.

Mr. E. BOURNE: I know Silver Sands. There is certain erosion at Silver Sands. It was a continuous beach, but over time I have noticed that the sea has cut Silver Sands in half; so we now have two beaches, a lower beach and an upper beach. But if you look carefully at the upper beach, those who are familiar with the area would observe that the sea has built up on the river mouth. Instead of our having erosion at that end, we have a built-up of sand, and erosion at the other.

At Bay Street, the Esplanade and Browne's Beach, I remember seeing the waves at high tide break at the side of the Esplanade. This happens no longer. We have a build up there. So you see that the build up of beaches and the erosion of beaches is something natural to our environment. It might sound strange, but this is true.

The Crane, for instance, is no longer a beautiful beach, all because of erosion.

Asides.

Mr. E. BOURNE: About four or five years ago, it was being argued in North America by scientists that the earth is warming up at the Poles, that the ice is melting and that the sea has risen an inch, much too rapidly. This could be one of the causes of our beach erosion.

We should look at it very, very carefully and prevent people from building on the beaches or too near the beaches. I think this has been a problem. At Silver Sands, there used to be a house, which was sold to the Government, and this was taken out by the sea. On the west coast, at Six Men's and those places, where people are crying out that the sea is taking their houses away, I think their problem was that years ago they built much too close to the sea, believing that this was the right thing to do. So I think that we should legislate against building on the beaches or too near the beaches.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West talked about the Worthing, Stream area. There used to be a flood gate which released water from the Graeme Hall Swamp into the sea and at high tide the sea itself came up

into that gate bringing with it fish. I was back here for four years now and I cannot ever remember seeing the sea going in that direction any more. This is a case where the sea has receded in that area and there would have to be a build up of sand on that side and an erosion on the other.

This morning on my way here I was giving a lady a ride to town. She happened to be a resident of Lisbon Bay, just next to me, but I could see that she was not familiar with the area, and she was admiring this little beach in Welches just past the Southern Plaza, and telling me we are getting a nice beach there. I told her it is not a nice beach. The sea giveth and the sea taketh away. It will be a good beach until June. High tide comes in July, and then we will have all rocks. The honourable Member for Christ Church West will bear me out on this point.

So beach erosion is something that we will have to monitor. I do not think that we will ever be able to solve the problem of beach erosion the way we all would like. But I am advising that we monitor it very, very carefully and try from the seashore as

I thank you.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I do not wish really to speak to the matters that relate to the environment. But I think that the Leader of the Opposition raised some valid points with respect to some of the attitudes that exist in our society, particularly when he pointed to some of the deficiencies that he saw among the young people. It is okay for us to be descriptive, and I think that is perfectly legitimate, but sometimes I think we have to look more towards the root of the substance of the problem.

Part of the election promise of the Democratic Labour Party was to improve the state of affairs that existed in relation to the youth in Barbados, particularly the establishment of a National Youth Advisory Council, the restoration of financial support to the Barbados Youth Council and other kinds of assistance to the young people of this country.

I think it is very clear to us now that many constituencies, particularly again, St. John, and others, have a lot of youth organizations. Whether they are voluntary organisations in the church or community organisations, there are a lot in existence in Barbados. There is a deficiency sometimes in respect of the quality of the youth leaders. There are also problems in terms of the conceptualisation of youth programmes in particular areas. And also there are problems with the actual running of youth groups, the setting of priorities by youth groups.

As I meet in my own constituency and outside of the parameters of my constituency with youth groups, one recognises easily that there is a lack of direction on the actual priorities that young people should be pursuing. Very often it is just a matter of a group in existence for the sake of an overseas trip at the end of the year, or a games night once every quarter. I do not think they are often given enough guidance or assistance in terms of formulating programmes that can be of greater benefit to the area in which they live or to Barbados as a whole.

So I would like something definitive from the Minister on the establishment of the Youth Affairs Ministry, department, division, or whatever it is to be called. What proposals are in the pipeline in respect of that? Are we going to have the establishment of the Youth Advisory Committee? In the absence of sufficient funds to establish a full-fledged Ministry of the Youth, or division - I am not really familiar with the Civil Service structure in that sense - can we consider having a voluntary advisory committee similar to the structure that was set up during International Kear of the Yotuh? I ana sot saying that that structure was perfect, or the person who administered it understood what he was doing, but the actual structure that existed with the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the Secretariat to the voluntary IYY Committee, was, in my view, as perfect a solution to a problem that related essentially to lack of money. The honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) would be concerned if we tended to spend more money in areas that did not necessarily point towards improvement of unemployment and those kinds of things, so I am thinking of voluntary work towards youth development in Barbados.

In Jamaica recently, the youth arms of the political parties got together in respect of a war on drugs. We had some discussion earlier on drugs as it related to another Head. I am speaking about drugs as it relates to youth. 12.00 noon

We have been told, and I have every reason to believe, that in terms of our statistics, drug abuse is, relatively speaking, not a major problem in Barbados. But, for me, it is a major problem, not from the point of view of the overall society, but because people in my age group probably see it happening more. I think that parents in Barbados and persons who have children who are going in primary and secondary schools, and even at the university, not being familiar sometimes with some of the effects that drugs have on young people do not necessarily recognise how devastating it is. It is really people in my age group, who have gone to school with people and seen them subsequently totally destroyed as a result of the use of drugs, who probably see more of the problem. So to that extent it becomes a major problem, because it is something personal that we feel.

I went to cricket the other day and a fellow was behaving badly on the field, and an older fellow next to me said, "Don't mind him. He is a mad man. He is on drugs." And he dismissed it. But, to me, it really meant something more, because perhaps I was a little more understanding of the exact problem that he may be having, having gone td school with people, seeing them ten years later and shocked at their physical appearance and the level to which they have degenerated. So I think we need a comprehensive and united effort with respect to the problem of drug use among young people. It is also critical in respect of unemployment and other problems which young people face, like teenage pregnancy.

A book put out recently by a prominent university professor or lecturer, Sir Graham Dan - I believe he is the editor, but other people carried out the study - has identified one of the major problems that exist in the Barbadian society in respect of people's respect for each other, whether men's respect for women or whatever. The concept of the itinerant father and those kinds of things are looked at, and at the bottom line it was pointed out, and I agree with his submission, family counselling as one of the things that we should be pursuing in respect of developing healthy attitudes among young people in our communities. It is only if you start in the family that you will find that it will spread out into the community and out into the wider society. I think emphasis on these problems is necessary. I look forward, therefore, to that collaboration with the youth arm of the political parties towards discussing these kinds of problems on a national basis.

The other thing that was significant about the Ministry of Employment last year was the establishment of the Task Force on Employment. I have made my comments on that particular subject known elsewhere. My particular criticism of it was that I felt that, to some extent, the Task Force lacked what one would call a conceptual framework, to the extent it did not identify what the "long term" or the "medium term" meant to it. We have some fairly useful proposals in respect to short-term employment generation throughout the report, even after the headings "Medium Term" and "Long Term", and it is my submission that the Task Force should have presented an interim report that would have addressed these very issues that it addressed, and then continue to meet and carry out research and discussions in our community and submit a report which would deal with the very critical issue - in fact the *raison d'etre* for the establishment of the Task Force Report - that is, to formulate proposals for structural change within the economy from which long-term policies can be developed for generating employment opportunities. That is a terrific task that cannot be done in a matter of four or five months. It is something that takes time. It takes a lot of research. It also means that the persons who are meeting to discuss proposals for structural change within the economy have to have at their disposal high quality research assistants and persons who can feed them with information.

I do not think that it is fair to say that the Task Force Report is a waste of time. It may be a very useful document in respect of the short term. Even when it describes things as medium term, as far as I am concerned, these are things that we like to be short term, or they are short term responses in the long term. But I think there is a need for the major sectors of the economy, the private sector and non-Governmental organisations, unions and the Government, to continue to meet on a regular basis with a view to looking seriously at unemployment in Barbados.

This is not a centrally planned economy, in the strict sense of the word, and, therefore, that level of planning and the resources which persons in centrally planned economies may have at their disposal to direct the economy in one direction or another are not at our disposal. Therefore, the private sector must understand that in an economy like ours, it is their duty to give some indication to the Government, and to other agencies, trade unions and others, of their intended areas of investment, where they are going to take risk and this kind of thing. How else can you plan either your legislation or your economic programme unless you have a reasonable idea from the private sector as to what direction they are going to be pursuing? And the reason you cannot get that information from the private sector is because they are not sure, and they have not spent the time, particularly the larger companies, looking inwardly and also carrying out the necessary research techniques to determine what areas of expansion or risk they should be taking.

The inadequacies of this report reside essentially in the.lack of information that has come from the private sector. We know that the private sector is not necessarily going to be boasting about its areas of investment. Because if they go out there and tell everybody where a good idea resides, they will find that someone will tell you do not bother with that, it is not a good idea - everybody in the world who has come up with a good idea for making money has been told by somebody else that it is not a good idea - and next week, the person who told them that has pursued it and is the person who will be benefitting from it. So you do not walk around and broadcast what you intend to do as a businessman. But you should give some indication, in my view, based on your concept of where the Barbadian economy could be going, where areas of short-term and long-term employment could be created, to a committee such as the Task Force.

In this Task Force Committee really lies the seeds of what I consider a very useful element of national planning. I understand that at one stage there was the National Economic Council. I do not think that it was particularly successful under the former Administration, and I believe

that it has come to an end under this; I do not know if it exist. But I think that there is a role for an organisation of that type, because when we come to questions like incomes policies, these are things that the trade unions, the private sector and Government can discuss outside of the arena of contention in organisations, or committees, or, if you want, a task force similar to the one that was established and similar to the National Economic Council that exists or existed. As soon as you say "wage restraint" in here, it is going to receive the kind of treatment, in my view, that it will receive normally at any political level. People are either going to deny or attack and that kind of thing. But if you can sit down in an institution like the National Economic Council or in some kind of economic committee and discuss these things more dispassionately, I believe that when politicians have the information at their disposal, and when they are sure where the interest of capital labour and Government lie, they will be able to speak with more conviction, certainly with more information, and certainly with more backing, if they were sure that it was not a particularly contentious issue. 12.10p.m.

In the Task Force Report lie the seeds of that kind of planning. A task force on employment cannot be a one-off thing. It must be, in my view, a continuing committee or organisation that must meet regularly. It must assess how quickly Government is implementing its short-term proposals, as did the National Commission on the Status of Women, which the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) established. They met to review the proposals and they published a document saying whether Government had implemented them or had not, and it is very likely that a task force report like this, if it is not analysed regularly, will catch dust on shelves. They need to get down to seeing how Government can implement some of these policies, how they have been implemented, and whether they are satisfied that the manner in which they have been implemented will meet what they consider to be the aims of our economic development That really is my concern, as expressed earlier, about the Task Force Report on Employment

Thank you.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, this small intervention has to do with a few comments made by my illustrious colleague, the Member for St James North (Mr. J. J. Payne). He made a few very salient point when he said, as regards Subhead 4, the Farm Labour Scheme, that he thought more canecutters should go to America to cut cane, and wondered why many people who cut cane in America would not cut cane in Barbados.

It is a truism, Sir, that people who cut cane in America will not cut cane in Barbados, but no more so than those who have gone to London in their student days and had been conductors, or perhaps those who would go to Canada and be maids, or sweeping the streets, or anything like that The problem is that you will find that people who will do these jobs overseas would hardly think of doing them at home.

I remember once going down the street in Sydney, Australia, and I seeing a white chap, a Barbadian, digging the road. He did not want to shout me, obviously, and when I shouted him, he seemed to be rather ashamed, I did not see anything to be ashamed of, because he looked like he was working hard, but he told me, "Whatever you do, get a lot of wickets, but when you go back home do not let the old man know that I was digging the road, because he feels I am working in the bank". He had indeed been working in the bank, but he found that he got more money by digging the road, but he did not want his old people at home to know that he was digging the road. People become very upset when such things are known.

When a man cuts cane in Barbados, he is paid by the tonne, so if he is paid X dollars per tonne, he knows what his income is likely to be. But when you go to the United States of America to cut cane, you do not get paid by the tonnage, you get paid by the row. If a row is a mile long, you will be paid by that. If you were paid a specific amount of money per row, that would be easy, one would know what the estimated salary would be. But you have a predetermined salary, worked out by people who just look at the row, the experts, Sir, look at the figures and say this is third crop, fourth crop, fifth crop or ninth crop cane, and look at the estimated yield. You are paid on that and that is the problem.

This has been so for many years, and one of the things I tried to do when I was Minister of Labout was to try to explain to the workers in the briefing sessions exactly what was expected of them and what happened with their pay. If you get a very hot climate, because I would say in Miami cutting cane in 80 or 85 degrees Farenheit is hard work, the men feel it very much and they are not able to produce.

Another thing, Sir, is that you are also on trial. One does not take up a bill and go out there and cut cane like that you are always on trial. You must meet a certain quota, and if you do not meet that quota, you are given a trial period to sort of learn from the others, and if you do not, through the eddoes you have gone, not even through the canes. That is another problem. We have to look at it in that way so that we can understand what really is happening. There is something else, Sir, that we have to look at People have this migrant instinct; they want to go away. Sometimes that is the criterion. There are also certain intangibles, like wanting to see New York, and having cut cane for a week, off they go. They run away sometimes,

Sir, so you see there are certain elements which I think we have to look at in looking at these farm workers.

It is not an easy case for a boy who likes liming at Eagle Hall comer to go up there and cut canes. The first thing you do when you get home is that you must go' straight and wash. I do not know how many Barbadian men are accustomed to going home from work and washing. You must wash, because the canes are all burnt.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Wash the clothes. I do not mean have a bath, but that, too, having come from the canefields, Sir, which are really expanses of land. There are no two by four cane fields in Florida, Sir. You see miles and miles, a never ending line, as it were. You have to look at all these situations to understand what is going to happen to these people.

As I said, all canes are burnt, except for a few acres that they would reap green in order for them to do some replanting. In Barbados, the converse is true. We are hoping in Barbados that none of the canes are burnt, and I think there is a premium if you reap your canes green.

I think it is really a phobia with some cane cutters as they go there and be confronted with the fact that they have to go there and cut them all burnt. When they return from the fields, as I said, if you go to any of the camps, you see a never ending line of washing. If you are given three sets of clothing, you always make sure that as soon as you get in, you go and wash those clothes. As soon as you have done that, perhaps there will be times to eat, and you have to go and eat in a dormitory fashion, and thereafter, since you are on a camp, you tend to retire.

Somehow people think it is a slave mentality and they do not really regard it in the same light as if a man cuts cane in Barbados where he returns to his friends and loved ones as soon as the day is over. In Canada, you find that it is not only back-breaking work, but after you have done that, there is little social interaction. It is important that we tell the prospective canecutters, and indeed those who go to Canada - Canada is a different story - exactly what they should expect, because it is no bed of roses. 12.20p.m.

There are 8 000 Jamaicans cutting cane in Florida. They almost have a monopoly on it. We have about 417 Barbadians going to cut canes, and, Sir, that is the back-breaking work. It is even worse when you go to Canada in terms of picking fruit. I found that one of the first things I had to do when I went to Canada -1 did not really think too much about meeting anybody to have any cocktail party or anything like that - was to make sure that we increased the number of Barbadians going to Canada, and so I tried to see as many Ministers as I could at the provincial level, so that they could put me on to those Ministers in Ottawa, those Federal Ministers, so that you could really get to grips with the situation in getting through to the people in the food and vegetable association, getting out to the farms and meeting those farmers who were taking Italian and Mexican Labour.

There was also the threat of the Immigration Bill and that sort of thing that was making it hard for West Indian labour to go into Florida, and I felt it was necessary to do these things. I am very glad to see that the present Minister has gone up to Florida, and indeed to Canada, and has followed that same trend whereby he would find that having experienced what it is on the farms, I think he would be able to at first glance tell the workers exactly what they should expect. I think, Sir, this is the most important thing.

I agree with the honourable Member for St. James North that even though we should try to get people who cut cane to go out there and cut cane, it is not just a matter of experience. Some farmers will say to you that they want experienced canecutters. But, Sir, if a man has been cutting canes for ten years and he has reached the age of 40 or 50 and does not want to go back, you will never be able really to send younger people because they obviously have not got the experience of cutting canes in Barbados, far less cutting canes in the United States of America.

It is a matter of the yield, it is a matter of the methodology used in determining one's wage, but by and large the attraction of America and Canada is to gain work, I suppose, but also to get better rewards for the type of work they are doing. Stigma and history also stop them sometimes from going out there, and I think what we will have to do is to try and educate those workers who wish to go that it is not merely a matter of being selected and you go on a trip. You have to understand what the work is all about. It is not merely a matter of coming from a particular constituency and going to America or going to Canada. It is a matter of spreading the net wide so that people from all areas would be able to go. I say this particularly because some farmers believe that they will not take farmers from the urban areas. Somehow they feel that in a small island like Barbados, if a man comes only a mile or two radius from Bridgetown, he knows nothing about farming, neither is he inclined to do the things that you need to do on a farm. It is amazing how these things happens, Sir, and I was amazed to hear this, but it is true that some farmers, feel that they would like someone from St. Joseph.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute.

Hon. W. W. HALL: One more minute? Already, Sir? I can come back, because I wanted to talk something further.

The debate on this Head has taken some ten hours, 9.5 of which were taken up with the NAB, but this is a social Ministry, a Ministry responsible for Women's Affairs, Youth Affairs, Occupational Health and Safety and the aged, and when one looks at the demographic profile of the elderly, we see that we are living older, thank God, maybe through better health standards, I do not know -1 think the Minister of Health would like me to say that This Ministry is also responsible for employment, this is a serious Ministry, and we have taken about 9.5 hours on the National Assistance Board and we have hardly touched on very important areas.

I commissioned the people for the task force. I will get back on that, because I think that there were a few things that were said, not on this side, aboul the task force that I would like to talk about

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, in the first place, I would like to make reference to the matter of writing letters. Some weeks ago, I wrote some letters to the National Conservation Commission, because I was of the view, and I am of the view, that at that level persons should want to leave those jobs to work temporarily in the reaping of sugar and cotton. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, the days used to be when workers in the Civil Service proper and at statutory boards, the Transport Board I remember specifically, were given time off by their employers, without a break in service, so that they would be able to go and assist in the reaping of the sugar cane, with benefits to them in the terms of increased wages, benefits to the country in terms of people being available to reap the sugar, and benefits to other people who might not be able to reap sugar, but who would be able to work as fill-in workers for them during the time that they were in the process of reaping the sugar for those 13 to 15 weeks or so.

Regrettably, in the late Seventies this practice was discontinued, and it is my view that it should be re-introduced as a matter of urgency, because I am sure that to all of us it is a matter of great concern that although we have such a high incidence of unemployment in Barbados, we still have the continued dissatisfying situation of there being the claim that there are not enough persons to reap either the cotton or the sugar crops. I would like to think that even now, if persons were aware that they could be given time off without a break in service, that the number of persons who would want to go and assist in those exercises might go up to the benefit of the country as a whole.

I want to look at matters relating to labour in a more general sense. We need to be able to have again a look at the organisation and the administration of labour within this country. We have, first of all, Sir, to recognise that the physical conditions of the Labour Department, are inadequate, where conciliation is conducted, and if the Government has a role through the Labour Department to be responsible for bringing employers and trade unions together to deal in matters that have to do with the benefits of the country in so far as industrial harmony is concerned then the facilities have to be available which will conduce to the proper running of such meetings and allow for an acceleration of the conciliation process.

In that regard, there is the urgent need for additional training at all levels for officers at the Labour Department, and there is an urgent need for an increase in the numbers of inspectors at the Labour Department, especially in view of the fact that we have a safety and health arm of the Labour Department to be dealt with these days. I would venture to say that if one were to check, one would find that the officers at the Labour Department might feel similarly, that the persons who were there would find it completely impossible to inspect all of the shops that there are in Barbados, to look at all the industries in Barbados where they have to look after safety and health conditions and circumstances, to look at all the manufacturing establishments, and to be able at the end of the day to meaningfully assist the country by providing improved health and safety measures under which we are able to operate in this country. I would therefore urge the relevant Ministry, and the Government, to move with alacrity and despatch to increase the number of persons in the establishment of the inspectorates at the Labour Department 12.30 p.m.

We are especially concerned that enough interest cannot be shown to safety and health measures at the workplace because of inadequacy of numbers. But we wish, at the same time, to be satisfied that, at the level of employers and Government there is an awareness sufficient to the task that is before us. One raises that matter because for some four years now Barbados has had the benefit of a very knowledgeable expert in the person of Dr. Allen Searles. The trade union movement has welcomed him with open arms, and has used him significantly and tremendously at the Labour College to train workers in an appreciation and an understanding of health and safety matters. I am not satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that although he was willing to assist, the employers of Barbados, or, indeed, the Government of Barbados, have availed themselves of the opportunity of the presence of such an expert to train public servants or managerial personnel in a matter of this sort. Perhaps, this springs from a misconception regarding the role of persons like him, or the role of health and safety at the workplace. It is quite possible that a number of people believe that the pursuit of health and safety measures might be a cost added factor rather than what it really is, a cost saving factor. It is better to put proper conditions in place and save oneself the need to have to

expend money later, than not to do so and have oneself saddled with all kinds of costs, including the cost of litigation when there are accidents.

In a related matter, Mr. Chairman, although it is not the Labour Department proper, all the areas where persons are responsible for meeting with representatives of workers to discuss either wages or salaries and/or conditions of service, that in Barbados at the moment there is a significant lack of numbers. In the Establishments Division of the Prime Minister's Office, we have a similar problem of lack of sufficient numbers to deal with all of the problems which are brought before that agency. When one considers that that Establishments Division has to deal with the Civil Service proper, that traditionally it has to deal with all of the statutory boards, giving guidance, advice and research for those agencies, and when one considers the number of unions which are involved, one would recognise that the task for that agency is not one which can easily be accomplished. It is necessary, therefore, that that Establishments Division be given additional persons who can meet with the trade unions and negotiate meaningfully to be able to have a more speedy resolution of those matters which are before statutory boards, or between statutory boards and trade unions.

It is a matter, to me, Sir, of very grave concern that in the case of the Barbados Workers Union, we have still to complain that there are matters which are as many as six years old which are at the level of the Establishments Division coming out of referrals of statutory boards and other departments of Government, for example, the Plant Quarantine Section, and that these matters have not yet been able to be addressed.

It has been a matter of concern to me as well to find that the National Union of Public Workers has had to find itself complaining that after more than two years it has not been able to resolve a simple matter of discussions with the National Petroleum Corporation. It would seem to me that there must be sufficiently large numbers of persons who are able to meet urgently, quickly and efficiently to deal with matters of this sort so that we do not have these long lapses in discussions. After all, we are talking about people, and the morale and conditions of work of people, and if people are not satisfied in their jobs, they cannot be as productive as the country would expect them to be.

Still dealing with being able to administer and to deal expeditiously and satisfactorily with problems, I am a little concerned that there seems to be in some management levels the problem, or the appearance of a problem, of labour management disquiet in matters which should be fairly straightforward. I will not go into details of the matter, because I do not doubt that the union involved would be able to deal with its own problem, but I have been concerned that there has been in the newspaper the suggestion that in a matter between the National Union of Public Workers and the Government Electrical Department, a simple matter like having the facilities extended by the management so that meetings can be held was something that would occasion some disquiet, and even occasion front page coverage of persons having to step over high fences. Certainly, it is not in the best interest of those people who have to administer industrial relations in the country if this is the level to which labour management relations have to fall. I urge that every effort be made, wherever possible, to be sure that the guidelines are very clearly understood by every one so that we do not need to have repetitions of such disquieting situations and circumstances.

Finally, Sir, I wish to remind the Government that in the matter of labour, there have been some important and significant commitments which have been made to the people of Barbados, commitments which by now I had expected to be looking at. I wish to remind that we have committed ourselves to having legislation against arbitrary and unfair dismissal, and I am concerned that after two years, we are not yet able to look at anything resembling a submission or a proposal that deals with this issue.

We are concerned that in Barbados, notwithstanding the sterling work that has been done by some attorneys and some members of the Bench in reviewing the approach that was taken previously to fair and unfair dismissal, and notwithstanding the fact that a number of people who, previously, were merely given four weeks notice, are now given the chance to claim damages, there are still far too many persons who are dismissed at the whims and fancies of employers. And that gets particularly worse whenever there is the suggestion of a belt tightening situation on the part of the employer.

Both parties have claimed that they are interested in looking at this matter, and the Democratic Labour Party, Mr. Chairman, has given a commitment towards bringing this legislation. It is my view that the time is now - in fact, has already passed - and that that legislation needs, as a matter of urgency, to be a bit of legislation which the people of Barbados would be able to see before us so that we are able - not to nip it in the bud, because the plant has already blossomed - to remove from this society a grave problem that we are faced with, that nowadays, after some 20 or 22 months, a number of people are being made to lose their jobs because of reasons best known to the employers, but, very often, with no suggestion of the dismissal being fair.

There is also the commitment by the Government that workers, or workers' representatives, would serve on all statutory boards, particularly on boards like CBC and the Transport Board. It seems to me that this is a matter which you would want to look at as a matter of urgency. It is our

view that especially in those boards where there are significant numbers of employees, or where the matter being dealt with is a matter that has tremendous public concern, a worker's voice, or a worker's representative voice, would be one of the voices which would be vital to be heard in such forums. It is good, and I recommend it, that we should have some representation from the employers' side as well, but we want to urge, and urge very strongly, that that commitment be a commitment which is honoured before too many more weeks have passed. 12.40p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think you can stop there. It is time.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Okay, Sir. But I am not finished yet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before you go on, from time to time when these things arise, I like to mention them in terms of the strictures that are placed on debates in Committee of Supply. Referring to May's Parliamentary Practice, the 18th Edition, at page 725 - something you said just now, I would allow it to pass, but it says:

> "the administrative action of a department is open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation can only be discussed in supply under substantive motion."

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: I am grateful, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member for St. Peter. I hope you would remember that stricture.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I have not even started to speak and you are warning me.

Laughter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I join this debate to first of all compliment the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. H. J. Thompson) for what I thought was a very constructive set of contributions, both as regards the tone as well as the substance of some of the views he has expressed in relation to the Task Force on Employment

The Member for St. John has been singular among Members of the Democratic Labour Party in his effort to make Government's Task Force Report on Employment a matter of public discussion. Indeed, Sir, he has also been singular among Members of the Democratic Labour Party in his willingness to exercise what he regards as his right to express an independent thought on a matter that has been commissioned by his party but which does not meet with his satisfaction. But I thought that his contribution was thoughtful, and that it really ought to allow us to start a debate on what I think ought to have been a debate long ago.

This matter of the Task Force Report on Employment has been with us for a very long time, but the House has never had the opportunity before to really go into the report as a report, and also to reflect on its recommendations to the extent that it could eventually form and inform national policy. I really think that this Estimates Debate will come to an appropriate conclusion if we could spend some time really beginning to look at the contents of the Task Force report on Employment

In some respects, Sir, I share some of the Member's strictures, except I think that he might have gone too far in being a bit too critical of the report itself. As far as I am concerned, the persons who drafted the Task Force Report were made prisoners of overly ambitious terms of reference. I start by making that point. The terms of reference required them not only to advise on the creation of new jobs in the short term - this is something that any group of persons can between December and January do - but also required them to formulate proposals for structural change within the economy from which long-term policies can be developed for generating employment opportunities. In a sense, therefore, Sir, the persons who were called on to do this report were not only called on to suggest an employment strategy, but, in effect, they were being called on to write a development plan, and to have that development plan written as if it were a plan for structural adjustment and change, and also to have it as a development plan for an extended period of time.

It is quite obvious to me that you simply, could not, and cannot have, for an economy like Barbados, draft a long-term development plan of any worth within the short confines that were allowed to the Task Force to prepare that plan. One would have to ask very fundamental questions about a number of issues that require very intimate research. If the Task Force had restricted itself, as the notion of a task force presupposes, to an examination of the means by which the employment generation could have been addressed in the short term and had prepared a report on that, then, perhaps, it would have been of more worth to the Government and the country. That is hindsight, Sir, and I am not here to advise the Government, but I do believe that the Task Force was given overly ambitious terms of reference which simply could not be properly addressed within the time frame that was set for it to operate within. And if the Member for St. John detects, as we all must detect, defects of strategy, I can only say that it relates to the fact that what this report would have to elaborate, first of all, on is a complete development programme, and then

locate the employment strategy within the context of that development plan.

But we are in a position, Sir, to have the benefit of the advice presented by the persons who willingly and voluntarily came forward to offer of their expertise. We are therefore in a position to begin to discuss some of the proposals, using the approach which says that the ideas which have been here presented stand, perhaps, in the same way that a pre-feasibility study stands in relation to an eventual overall project. I see these set of ideas here merely as a set of pre-feasibility studies which will await a development plan to give them body. What I have to say, therefore, has to be fit within the context, that these are basic preliminary ideas, particularly as they relate to the medium and long terms; they are merely of a pre-feasibility character and, obviously, need a lot of fleshing out.

It seems to me, though, Sir, that there are a lot of very important issues which the Task Force at no time at all was interested in, or seemed aware of, in its consideration as to what should constitute a structural adjustment plan for Barbados at this juncture.

When we speak in terms of unemployment being the major problem of Barbados, we are perhaps only identifying the micro aspect of a larger economic problem in this country. The Barbados economy has stayed with one development strategy for 25 years. It has served this country well over the period of the operation of that development strategy. But in the interval, as we would have to recognise, technology has changed, credit conditions have changed, international tax conditions have changed, international trade pacts and trade arrangements have changed, and we therefore have to begin by asking ourselves a fundamental question, might it not be the case that Barbados has now an endemically high level of unemployment because it has stayed too long with the same development strategy?

It seems to me as well, Mr. Chairman, that if we are going to begin to draft a development strategy for Barbados within which is a long-term employment strategy, then matters such as technology and the impact of technology on the Barbadian economy have to be addressed as very serious and frontal issues.

Like some societies, Mr. Chairman, I believe that Barbados is now faced with the situation where you can have growth without that growth being reflected in high levels of employment. That has not always been the case. Certainly, in the initial years of this country's experience with the present development strategy, the normal pattern has been that there was almost an automatic one on one relationship between growth and employment. But it has become the bane of societies such as ours, Sir, that it is no longer true that economic growth need give rise to corresponding and commensurate changes in employment generation. 12.50p.m.

I believe, therefore, if that Task Force is going to seriously begin to address structural change in long-term employment strategies, it is completely inadequate for it to present a report without, first of all, coming into contact at all with the technological dimension and exercising itself with the question as to how a small society like Barbados can begin to deal with the technological dynamics into which it might come in contact in the course of moving from one status of employment generation to the other. I think that this is the kind of concern the Member for St. John has when he makes what I think is the very vital point that this thing lacks a sense of strategy. It does not ask where is the society today as an economy, where do we want it to go between now and, let us say, ten years, and what are some of the constraints that will stand in the way of our being able to take it from point A to point B?

In addition, Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that you can really begin to address employment generation, whether for the medium term, long term, or short term, without also addressing an incomes policy. If I have to criticise this report, I would say that the report not only is inadequate in terms of its lack of a strategy, but it also lacks courage, because it shys away from dealing with issues which might be contentious or problematic, but which are vital to whether or not we are going to survive, and in the process of that, I would say, expand the capacity for employment generation.

I am speaking, Sir, not just in terms of a wages policy, I am speaking more broadly in terms of an incomes policy. What kinds of policies should we in this society use to so share the national product as between labour, capital, and whoever else, as to in the process create the conditions for this society to grow as a result of the way in which we share that product? It should also have begun to address the question as to by what set of income policy measures will we maintain the competitive position of Barbados within the context of the international society. That is a very fundamental point.

I therefore, Mr. Chairman, find the report lacking for its failure to really deal with serious and problematical issues that Barbados must begin to address. It is also too scatter-shot. I mean, there are some things that have been presented as recommendations for employment generations as if they were thrown up just because something had to be said. I think that it is offensive for a report, prepared by serious people, to say as part of a medium term employment generation strategy, at page 36:

"There should be regular meetings between the Minister responsible for Tourism, representatives of the Board of Tourism and the representatives of the Barbados Hotel Association in order to discuss problems affecting the industry."

When you get this kind of thing, in a serious report that is supposed to be dealing with structural change over the medium and long terms, and we have a group of experts telling us that as part of that structural change there must be regular meetings between the Minister, Board of Tourism, and the Hotel Association to discuss the problems with the industry, I feel we have a sinking feeling that they are shying away from dealing with serious matters, are only dealing with the mundane, and leaving us with no possible hope as to how this very serious matter of unemployment should be brought under control.

I look forward, Mr. Chairman, to the opportunity to get back into this debate.

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

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

LEADER OF THE HOUSE RE PRESS REPORTS RE VOICE OF AMERICA REPORTER

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, before I move the suspension for lunch, I want to raise a matter of privilege in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, last night during the dinner recess, it came to my attention that there was a problem with someone representing, or purporting to represent, an overseas Press agency, not quite an agency in the accepted sense, Sir, the Voice of America, in his attempts to report some of the proceedings of this Chamber. By that time, that Press representative was no longer in the Chamber. I had the matter investigated immediately. I was told that the representative, after having been spoken to by some of the officers of this Chamber, left the Chamber voluntarily.

Now, Sir, we have a report here, Sir, in today's Weekend Nation, Friday and Saturday, March 18 & 19, 1988, which states in the headline: "VGA Reporter Put From the House." It goes on to say:

"George Meek, head of the Voice of America Miami-Caribbean Bureau, was removed from the House of Assembly yesterday. In the opinion of a police officer, who later explained he was acting on instructions from the Clerk of the Chamber, Meek contravened a standing order of the House."

Sir, this would give me the impression that Mr. Meek was removed by the police on the instructions from the Clerk of Parliament. I am informed, Sir, by the Clerk of Parliament that is not the case.

It went on to say that Mr. Meek entered Parliament with a tape recorder, which he exposed, and, as he later explained, in ignorance turned it on to begin taping, and he was told by a local journalist that it was an offence to record the proceedings. I believe, Sir, as I am told, that those correspond to the facts. "The police constable then informed Meek of his offence and returned a few minutes later to whisper a message to Meek. Two minutes later, the American was escorted from the Chamber by a police Sergeant after producing identification and Press passes."

Then it goes on to say how the Chairman of Committees in the Lower Chamber, Richard Byer, considered it unfortunate that the journalist received the treatment he got. Again Sir, I understand that even though Mr. Byer did make some statement, he certainly did not like to say that it was unfortunate Meek received the treatment he got.

Mr. Speaker, this is at variance with another section of the Press which also reported the matter, and which stated Sir:

"Mr. Meek, who covers the Caribbean for the Voice of America, said he was told that he would have to get permission from the Speaker of the House to take notes and sit at the Press table."

Sir, that is Rule 78 of the Standing Orders of this Chamber. They ended by saying: • ,

"Mr. Meek, who did not want to remain in the Chamber after the incident, said that he was very impressed with the House." 1.00p.m.

On the other hand, we have another section of the Press which says that Mr. Meek was removed from the House of Assembly yesterday, and it goes on to say, or indicate, or imply, that he was removed on the instructions of the Clerk of Parliament.

I am seeking, Sir, to draw this to the attention of this Chamber, and I am moving that this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges for investigation. I will make this paper a document of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the House has raised this matter. Standing Order 76(4) says:

"There shall be no debate on a motion under paragraph 3 hereof, but if the Speaker decides that a *prima facie* case has been made out, he shall rule accordingly and refer the matter to the Committee of Privileges."

I concur with the motion, and I will have the matter sent to the Committee of Privileges. Since, as I have said, and agreed with the Leader of the House, that this matter arose out of Order 78,1 will read that:

"The Speaker may grant a general permission to the representative of any journal or broadcasting or television station to attend the sittings of the House under such rules as he may from time to time prescribe for that purpose. If the rules are contravened or if the journal of broadcasting or television station publishes a report of the proceedings of the House which is, in the opinion of the Speaker, unfair or inaccurate, permission may be revoked."

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.10 p.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2.10 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 1.05p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

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

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (AS AMENDED)- $22 993 611

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, there is a Head about which nothing has so far been said in the Committee, on which I would like to make a few remarks. This relates essentially to the Child Care Board, more specifically to the increased incidents of child abuse which have been occurring in our community.

The last report that we have available in this House is the report for the period April 1985 - March 1986. It shows that there were just over 680 cases of child abuse, including sexual abuse of children in our community. Since then I believe that the figures have skyrocketed, and I think last year the figure exceeded 1800 cases. There has been a phenomenal rise in this aspect of our maltreatment of the children in our community, and I believe that the voices in this House should be raised against this development. The nature of the problem has not yet been fully analysed, nor, indeed, the answers found to some of the problems that have been occurring.

Child abuse ranges from sexual abuse, which is perhaps the worst case of child abuse, to the neglect of children. We have had cases of children being burnt as a form of punishment, we have had cases of incest with children, there have been cases involving four year olds and men in their sixties and seventies, and these cases have, to a large extent, not led to prosecutions before the court. The principal reason for this is because of lack of evidence, but I think it says that something is wrong with our society where we can find an increase in this category of offences occurring in Barbados.

Another problem that concerns me is the increasing number of teenagers, females, who are not returning to their parents' homes for periods of time and are being reported missing to the police. Most of these are children in the age group 12 - 16. I believe that the society has to diagnose very carefully why these incidents are occurring and to come up with answers as to how to deal with the incidents of child neglect and child abuse.

Sociologists have advanced many reasons for this phenomenon, ranging from breakdown in the family to the fact that we have now become a much more liberal and open society, from the fact that now, more and more, both parents in the household are fully at work to allegations of breakdown in discipline in the home. Whatever the causes, I think one must be worried about these developments occurring in our society, and one must find a way of dealing with the cases effectively. 2.15p.m.

One of the problems that concerns me with the department, Sir, is that there has been no significant increase, or any at all, in the numbers of the officers available to deal with this very phenomenon. Only a week or so ago I saw a statement in the Press, maybe from one of the officers who was reporting or speaking at a conference

or seminar to other social workers on this problem, and it seemed to me that in addition to alerting the community to the problem, we have to follow up with making adequate staff available to deal with these cases as they occur.

I wonder what proposals the Government has for increasing staff in the Child Care Board and the Social Welfare Department as a whole. The social workers are hard pressed, they need much more support. The Establishments Division will have to be aware of this so that the problem can be nipped before it gets totally out of hand.

Looking at the accompanying volume to these Estimates, in my opinion, having read the department's reports as they are published and come on hand, there seems to me to be an understaffing of this department of Government

I am also, Sir, not a little concerned about what is referred to, I think, as the children's homes and the day care centres, because this is another area, it seems, in which we have not been planning adequately. I believe that the homes are now becoming a bit overcrowded. The homes that were formerly built to cater to about 10 to 12 children are catering to twice this number, and sometimes well over that number as well. Here, again I believe that we have not taken into account properly the problems in the society, and although it is not the type of subject that excites the politician immediately, it is one that must cause us great concern.

Sir, in some of the departments we find that the staff, and this is more a matter for the honourable Member for St Michael Central (Mr. C. L. Trotman) than it is for me, are concerned about the non-formalisation of their conditions of employment In fact, it is my information that they would prefer to remain on a permanent rather than a temporary basis. There are still too many temporary appointments, and the method of their remuneration is affected by the temporary nature of their employment I would urge again that these problems be ironed out as soon as possible with the union representing them, and that the Establishments Division attend to the problems in this department as soon as possible.

Another aspect of this department's work that is worthy of the consideration of our Committee is the foster care programme. I believe that this programme offers a good opportunity for people in the community to show their concern and continue with the concept of the extended family, for which Barbadians were well known. There does not seem to be enough persons in Barbados who are prepared to offer themselves as foster parents, and I regret this very much.

Having been a child not only of my natural parents but of adopters, I am particularly interested in this aspect of the matter. I feel that foster care, properly performed, can give security, not merely financial security, but psychological security to young persons, and to knit them into a community that would in their adult life stand them in good stead. I believe that as legislators we should add our voices to those of the social workers who are appealing for Barbadians to come forward and participate in this programme.

The programme also seems to me to be lacking in adequate resources, and not only adequate resources being provided by the Government. There seems also to be a hesitancy among our people to voluntarily make charitable donations to programmes such as these, and I regret that very much.

I would also like to see a consistent programme of improving the day care centres. This is another area in which I would like to appeal to the communities in which the day care centres are placed, that the various church groups, whether there be youth groups, or the Men's Fellowship or the Women's Fellowship, take a more active role in these centres.

I believe that the pioneers in the field of social welfare have left an outstanding example for both men and women in our community to follow. One can mention names such as John Beckles, Olga Symmonds, not to mention a lady to whom I owe so much that I could never live long enough to repay her, the late Madam Ifill-Barrow. These people dedicated themselves, without the hope of reward or honour, to contributing to the community. There are many more people better off now than they were back in the Thirties and Forties when these pioneers were working, and the more affluent among us must recognise that part of their duty is also to give to the community and to assist, and what a better place to start than among the children of the nation. I am seeing some, but I am not seeing enough of the people who can afford to give more of their time to this sort of community effort.

Sir, in the field of adoption, I believe that we have to look at the existing adoption legislation that we have. There is a double cost to parents who may adopt children from outside of Barbados when they return here to live with the children if they have not gone through the procedure, or if they adopt a child from beyond our shores in cases where there may not be a child available here. I think that we ought to become party to the convention, and amend our legislation appropriately to recognise overseas adoption.

We are at a stage in our community where Barbadians must be minded to adopt their own. There is a certain hesitancy among Barbadians sometimes to adopt Barbadian

children. If that had occurred in my case, Sir, no doubt I might not now be in this Parliament, so I have to use the occasion to make a plea on this front. I hope, Sir, that it will not fall on deaf ears.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with the recommendations of the Task Force Committee on Employment. What concerned me about this report when I first read it was the part of the report dealing with short-term remedies to generate employment, from page 23, and following, of the report. 2.25 p.m.

I am not, at this stage, going to deal with the long-term measures. But, as I understand it, Government established this committee with a view to finding solutions for the very serious problem of unemployment, which, on both sides, it is conceded, is, and has been for some time, at an unacceptably high level. I think, therefore, that the committee was well within its terms of reference to attempt an analysis of three fronts, short-term, medium term and long-term.

Given the deadline by which the committee had to report, a matter of three or four months, I do not believe, Sir, that we should be excessively hard on the committee in terms of recommendations to the long-term solution. It seems to me that when you are trying to devise strategies to deal with the problem of unemployment in the medium term and long term, this requires an examination and an analysis over a long period of time, the collection of information and data from which one could address the problem in a meaningful way in the long term. So I am not going to be critical of what they have come up with in terms of medium term and long term solutions, because I think one has to judge the recommendations in those two aspects with regard to the terms of reference and the time frame within which the committee was operating.

However, Sir, as to the short term measures to generate employment, there are certain significant features that are revealed. The first feature of significance to me is that the areas identified for the creation of employment opportunities are nothing new. There are really a restatement of policies carried out by the Barbados Labour Party during its ten years in office, and it is significant that the measures recommended to deal with unemployment in the short term are many of the measures for which the Barbados Labour Party Government received constant and relentless criticism from the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister is saying it is not true and I am going to show him how it is true. You know I like a challenge.

They recommend beautification programmes as measure No. 1. The DLP is now calling it by another name, but it is like a rose by another name. We had clean-up programmes, call them debushing, whatever. They were aimed at the same basic concept, to keep Barbados clean, tidy and attractive, even beautiful, and to provide employment for those unemployed who were largely unskilled, but who, nevertheless, by reason of their social and economic conditions, welcomed the opportunity to work.

I am not going to criticise, at the moment, the present attempt at beautification, limited as it has been. It is not islandwide. It tends to be repetitive on the St. Barnabas Highway going to the roundabout by the Wonder Bakery. They are always there, a lot of people on top of each other every two or three weeks.

I do not know where they came from, but a gang of workers appeared down the cart road that leads down to my house. It is a long one. Those Members who know where I live and have been down there know the condition of that road. Some time in November a gang appeared down there. They started cleaning the sides of the road and they left large heaps of rubbish on the side of the road, narrowing the passage for traffic. Those heaps are still there now in March. They have the road to us blocked up. They never came back and cleared it.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If it is MTW, it is still an agency of Government.

The committee recommended that these beautification programmes or debushing should continue. That was done by the Labour Party. Road Maintenance is a second recommendation - I am not saying that these are done in order of priority -1 said, "a second recommendation" - and this is what appears at paragraph 60 at page 24:

> "The roads in the island were not designed and constructed to take the current high volume of traffic and the large vehicles which are rapidly being introduced. Until a massive programme of road reconstruction is undertaken, there will be a need to have an on-going programme of road maintenance, such as filling potholes, widening of roads, constructing pavements etc."

When the Barbados Labour Party spoke of the need to modernise the road framework in Barbados, again the Democratic Labour Party subjected those policies to the most severe criticism. A bunch of Democratic Labour Party people, who form the majority of the membership of the Task Force Committee,.....

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order: Mr. Chairman the Member for St. Thomas said that the composition of the Task Force was such that it included primarily Democratic Labour Party supporters. Sir, just for the record, Let me tell you the composition. I appointed Mr. Eric Armstrong, Dr. Charles .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not know. It is going to be too long. I do not want you to make a speech. What you say on a point of order is that you do not agree with him, or whatever.

Hon. W. W. HALL: He is misleading the House, Sir. If one looks at page 84 of the same report, you would see that we had representatives from the Barbados Workers Union, the Barbados Union of Public Workers, the Employers Confederation, the Barbados Chamber of Commerce, the Barbados Agricultural Society, the Barbados Manufacturers Association, the Small Business Association, the Hotel Association, the Youth Council and the National Organisation of Women. If all of these are DLPs well, God help the BLP. That is all I can say. It is misleading to suggest that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I maintain, Sir, that a majority of the Committee were strong supporters of the Democratic Labour Party.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not going into that, Sir. There are far more important matters to discuss.

This Committee recommended that there should be a programme of road reconstruction to take account of the high volume of traffic and the large vehicles which currently operate. Government is obliged to follow this recommendation. And in the fullness of time, the members of the public will see and recognise the sense in carrying out large scale programmes of road construction with a view to the modernisation of Barbados.

A third recommendation is for house maintenance and they say:

> "As an on-going programme the Government should intensify the maintenance of houses owned by old people and pensioners who are financially unable to undertake such repairs."

It says "the Government should intensify". The use of the word "intensify" again is in recognition of the fact that the house maintenance programme has for many, many years preceding our time 1976-1986, been in operation. Many pensioners and poor people have got benefit from that at the social level, and the artisans who work in the programme have been able to undertake gainful employment in this house maintenance programme. That is nothing new.

Parks and playing fields are a fourth recommendation as an area for the generation of employment opportunities. They began very deceptively, Sir:

> "We are of the opinion that leisure is an integral and important part of the life of any community and that Government, and probably a few public-spirited individuals, must be involved in this aspect of our existence. We recommend that in every community, the size to be determined by Government, there should be a playing field. In addition, we believe that in every large community there should be at least one park. We suggest that Government should approach the owners of plantations in respect to the granting of lands for such purposes. The construction of the parks and playing fields should be undertaken by Government."

And then they ask for an involvement in the business community and in the private sector.

What is new?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Did you quote the page? I cannot recall.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was pages 25 and 26 1 was quoting from.

The Barbados Labour Party had a programme for the steady and systematic development of playing fields, and playing facilities, generally, in Barbados. I believe that in our time - I did have a report, I cannot find it - certainly there were 53 playing fields created between 1976 - 1986, and some 30 other playing facilities, pavilions and changing facilities, as we tended to call them.

But the interesting thing, Sir, is that during the s St. Peter by-election of 1984 - I was not here for the first one, I was here for the second one - I attended meetings and heard tapes.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS) were ordered to be expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In respect of the playing field and pavilion programme, honourable Members on that side who participated in the St. Peter by-election forced Mrs. Leacock to say that it was a waste of money building

playing fields. Who wants playing fields? Plant yams! So the saying went then.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was the DLP policy, criticise anything for any reason! Say anything! And now, Sir, we have seen that these.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another minute and a half.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: .....learned people who constituted the committee have recommended that there should be an extension and intensification of the parks and playing field programme.

I am not going to deal with afforestation. They wanted to plant fruit trees and mahogany trees and so on. I am not getting into that. I do not know how much employment would be generated there.

The point I want to make, Sir, is that the short-term measures recommended in this report seem to suggest that, within the* context of the Barbadian economy, there is little scope for* doing a lot that is new. But it also suggests something else, that having called on page 28 for Government to get involved in the creation of employment, this recommendation is bound to put a strain on Government's finances, when the present Government is committed to a policy - certainly it was in 1986 and when the Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) was Minister of Finance - to hold down Government expenditure as far as possible so that there would not be an imbalance and disequilibrium in Government's finances, because this report is calling on Government to get involved and spend money on parks and playing fields, house maintenance, road maintenance and road construction, beautification programme. There is a balance.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will have to come back, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): I think it is about time that the public sector's further contribution to employment generation be examined against the realities of life in Barbados in the 1980s. We in this country have been fortunate that, roughly between 1958 and 1980, the economy of Barbados, except for short periods, showed a significant annual expansion growth, generating enough savings and producing a level of investment which was able to secure jobs for the future and to create revenue levels out of genuine economic growth, which permitted Administrations in Barbados over that 22 year period to expand the public sector without any significant harm to the economy as a whole.

Between 1981 and 1986, in fact, to broaden the debate, between 1981 and today, our economy has expanded approximately 6 per cent whilst expenditure has grown, in real terms, several times more than 6 per cent in the public sector. At the same time, levels of investment and savings in the economy have progressively declined.

It ought to be clear to one and all that should there be a continuation of a policy which does not accord to the facts of the economy in the present era, we are going to generate problems of the kind with which we are familiar throughout the Caribbean and throughout the Third World countries. It is therefore essential, in my view, as I have said again and again on the floor of this House, that we must proceed with a cautious expansion in response to humanitarian needs, in terms of employment within the public sector, and at the same time, make every effort to create realistic permanent jobs, through the only process in any society that generates jobs which, in the long run, will maintain themselves and create further jobs, that is, through the investment process. There is no other way in which it can be done successfully. This is what happened, whatever language we assigned to it, between 1958 and 1980. The fact that the public sector was able to expand at all levels was because it could be supported by commensurate levels of economic expansion within the society. 2.45 p.m.

Therefore, one can understand the political pressures, and the political pressures are severe, on a Government, and it is very tempting for an Opposition to apply those political pressures even further by demanding that Government should continue to expand its expenditure by generating short term jobs. This is understood. But let it be clearly understood that when you are going down that line, you are in the long run going to inhibit the very forces within the society which would be gearing towards investment and productive job generation.

As I understand the Task Force Report, it is a conceptualisation of those areas in which, with some element of immediacy, the Government can make a cautious intervention in terms of relieving the problems of unemployment. But it certainly cannot be regarded as a permanent solution to the unemployment problems of Barbados. And that is why it is so important that whenever Government at this point in our economic history seeks to address employment, it must ask the additional question, how do we generate employment through further expansion and growth in the economy?

Always remember that, whatever social and political pressures are on you, unless you respond to those pressures in a manner commensurate with the economic expansion in the economy, you are going to create problems within the entire structure of the economy. There is no alternative to that There is no economic structure that one can think of about which that is not almost a fundamental law of economic and social development.

So one of the problems that we have is the problem of disengaging from a situation which we were all wedded to, and which worked effectively up until 1980. The facts is that we have not been able in Barbados to generate the economic growth, for a variety of reasons. I am not going to touch blame anywhere. I am looking at this now from a micro level and from a realistic level. Whatever the cause has been - domestic, political, management, external, - this is the reality with which any Administration of Barbados today must be confronting, and what is important is how you respond to this, through the political will and with a group of policies which take into consideration the dangers inherent in a significant expansion of public sector spending, whilst at the same time trying to harmonise that with the need for growth and expansion in the economy.

Some of the programmes which have been advocated in this report of course, have socio-economic considerations, and they are all worthwhile programmes. Therefore, I believe that one should proceed with caution in dealing with them, and that is why I had no difficulty when I read this report to entertain the imposition of an Employment Levy in the last Budget in order to help finance the programmes as suggested in this report. That was one of the considerations that informed that At the same time, honourable Members on both sides of this House will recall that at all times I have said that you should proceed in modulated terms. I said it last September, when I was under severe pressure from the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons). His major contribution to political life of Barbados since 1986 has been an expansion of the Parks and Beaches Commission.

Laughter.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He demanded it on the floor of the House. He fulminated in the Press. He fulminated at constituency meetings.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I am not quite following the honourable Member, but I hope he is saying that it was I who called for all these debushers to be employed in late 1986, Sir, these beautifiers. If he is saying that, Sir, I am glad that I have gone down in history as providing work for over 1000 people, and I am grateful I am being acknowledged, even on the Government side, Sir. They were saying other things when I asked the question, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have said what I said, and I think that it is a true record of the facts of the situation.

I think we now have to look at in what way we can deploy a substantial number of people, already employed in the Public Service, in the productive efforts in the economy. I think, for example, as I have said before, that the Parks and Beaches Commission can add a new dimension to its operations if part of its activities could be in the preparation and development of significant tourist infrastructure, such as a golf course. The same skills are there, and I think that the labour content of the Parks and Beaches Programme can go towards creating a permanent capital asset which would lead to the capacity of the tourism sector to earn more foreign exchange and continually support the jobs which are in the Parks and Beaches Commission. This is just one idea. I give it as an example to show how you can link a social and employment generating programme with an economic component.

I believe that there are lots of workers in the Ministry of Transport and Works who are involved in activities that are not immediately of a "productive nature." I am not saying they do not do work. What I am saying is that you can shift the emphasis of their work. For example, an important aspect of tourism is the need for a convention centre in Barbados, and I wonder whether Government can find the resources to shift some of the labour and human resources within the public sector into more and more productive areas of the economy. This simply underlines the original point that I am making, that if we can agree that we can look at the facts of the economy as we see it today - and it is not difficult to see that - you can, no longer support levels of expenditure which do not bear some relationship to economic output and growth. The money must come from somewhere. If this Parliament -1 have to repeat this - does not recognise that fact, and does not factor it into its debates and its decision-making process, the time will come sooner or later, when the economy bypasses the Parliament. Understand carefully what I said - the time comes sooner or later when the economy bypasses the Parliament - and what you see, talk about and do in here will have no relevance whatsoever to the economic activity in Barbados. I identify this area of expenditure, or a failure to relate expenditures to productivity and economic growth, as one of the major problems facing us in this Parliament 2.55 p.m.

Let it be understood that I am not unsympathetic to social concepts, which should inform any Government, in that it must maintain programmes such as the repair of old people's homes, welfare programmes for housing, and so on, and keep those programmes at a rate consistent with the

needs in the community and with the resources available to the Government. But there must always be the underlying philosophy that whatever expenditures you are involved in, whatever fiscal measures you undertake, whatever economic programmes you embark on at this time in our history, they must go towards economic development, enhancing the levels of savings, and enhancing the levels of investment for the future.

This report has already been overtaken by the thousands of jobs created in the private sector in housing, largely because of the fiscal measures, and the reason why it has gone to housing is not because of any magic wand waved by the Democratic Labour Party or I - it is a simple reality of the capital markets of Barbados. If you make disposable incomes available to people, they either put them in the bank as savings, spend them, or if they are going to make capital developments, what is available to them in Barbados is basically housing, and a tremendous opportunity exists there.

Another major opportunity exists, and I am going to address the Leader of the Opposition through you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another two minutes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am going to address you, Sir, and I hope the Leader of the Opposition will hear me. The reason why I will speak to him, Sir, is that, as one of the insurance barons in Barbados, he knows perfectly well that, for the first time in Barbados, there are millions in private sector capital certain for long-term investment. The insurance companies are not interested in the short return, except on a small percentage of their portfolio, they are interested in the long haul. The deposits in the commercial bank are concerned primarily with a short-term return and a smaller percentage in the long haul. So the conditions, precedents, have been created for a tremendous expansion in the area of housing.

There are insurance companies in Barbados today which are interested in one-equity financing of housing, not only mortgage development, which could be made to be interested in a secondary mortgage market and in many other areas. I know that there are insurance companies which are looking for equity investment, along with other Barbadians, in productive areas of the economy, and I would urge that in view of the very beneficial situation created by the imaginative fiscal policies introduced in 1986, some opportunity be taken to ensure that some of those private sector funds now available for the first time, looking for a long-term home - they were available before, but not looking for a long-term home - be channelled into the other productive areas of the economy.

Mr. Chairman, I can think of so many things, but maybe I will speak again.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, the Head relating to day care centres forces me to make a further contribution to this debate.

I represent a constituency that one can probably say is unfortunate enough to have had Barbados Labour Party representation between the years 1976 and 1986, and as it stretches from Exchange in St. Thomas right through Jackson, into Cave Hill, going back to St George. We have the unfortunate situation that there is one day care centre where children of the St. Michael North East constituency may have some accommodation, and that is in Grazettes, which in itself is outside of the St. Michael North East constituency.

Mr. Chairman, this constituency which I represent has as its borders the St. George North constituency, St. Thomas, St. Michael East, St. Michael Central, St. Michael West Central and St. Michael North, and if every time I rise to speak here I have to address myself to problems that have been within this constituency from the inception of single member constituencies, I believe that they need to be mentioned, because it is the crying need of the people in this constituency.

The Barbados Labour Party in its manifesto for the 1981 General Election, in promoting its then candidate for that election, said that he had managed to get them to agree to purchase an area of land in Bush Hall for the provision of a day care centre and other things. The period between 1981 and 1986 has elapsed and we still are without a day care centre in the area.

The sprawling nature of the constituency demands that there is some accommodation so that mothers, who have to go to work all over the island, can have their children properly attended to while they are away from home. The St. Michael North East constituency has been unfortunate, and we need to make sure that this misfortune does not continue for too long. At least two day care centres in the constituency would be very helpful to the mothers of this constituency.

Thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I think it is important for us from time to time to debate not only bread and butter, pork barrel, constituency matters, but also to look intellectually -1 am not saying that I am competent to do that - to carry the debate into the realm of the philosophical. So I want to pick up on where the Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) left off

and relate it to where I had been when I finished my last 15 minute presentation. 3.05 p.m.

What I was trying to say was that we should not bother about whether the short-term measures are of the DLP or BLP. There is a limited range of activity. We were doing the programmes and you were carrying them on. You are asked to intensify them, but they are going to require public sector stimulation and public expenditure, and I find that entirely relevant and directly germane to the Estimates of Expenditure which we are currently debating. The Minister of Finance and Prime Minister told us on Monday that expenditure has now gone beyond $800 million and at the same time as he would wish to control and hold down expenditure, there is an area of fixed costs - staff costs, debt, statutory boards' expenditure - that has his hands tied and he has no room for manoeuvrability. That is the state of Government finances. So to what extent, given those restrictive conditions, can Government look itself to create a reasonable number of jobs in the short term?

The situation looks bleak if the deficit is to be brought within manageable limits, and the reasons for the present situation are historical. I am not going to start at 1981; it was 1980 when there was a large wage settlement and some commentators would like to put a lot of responsibility on that wage settlement of 1980. I do not believe that is so at all. It may have been a contributory factor, but it was not the predominant factor.

I think that if we look at the matter historically and look at what happened in the Caribbean in the last 50 years, we will perhaps get an answer, or the way might be pointed, to some of the problems which we currently face. When in the late Thirties the backs of the capitalist classes in the Caribbean, and the entrenched property owning and land owning classes, were broken by a series of politicians who were steeped in the principle of socialism, and we evolved a social structure in the Caribbean where there was a demand for the majority classes of black people to show upward social mobility by entering into the professions and so on, there was an even stronger pull for that group of persons to find what was then considered respectable employment in the civil services of the region. They moved into the commercial sector a lot later, but the teaching services and the civil services generally started to absorb a number of blacks who had the qualifications to get into these services and make contributions.

In my submission, Sir, what happened was that, gradually, between the Forties and the Fifties, there was infiltration of the intelligent blacks into the Civil Service and the teaching profession, two services paid for by the state, and as we got Ministerial Government and we became responsible for our own affairs, that situation gradually expanded. In fact, "gradually" is not the word. There was certainly a spurt between the Fifties and the late Sixties of blacks moving into the Civil Service and the Teaching Service. We can think of persons who were at school with us who may not have gone to the University and studied for an independent profession.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Man, I am going to be 48 next month. I have not been to you recently; knock wood!

Sir, I think that the Governments of those days were finding outlets within those services for the creation of employment for the upliftment of our people. We can look around us in this room and see the beneficiaries of those policies. Those were also days before the two serious recessions of 1973-75 and 1981-83, and a new phenomenon has come about, Sir, that the principles of democratic socialism, which inform the Manleys, the Adamses, the Barrows and so on over the years, were put to severe tests, stress and strain as a result of the convolutions of the world economic situation in the '70s and the '80s, to the extent that the relevance of democratic socialism as a philosophy for Governments in this contemporary situations is being questioned. Other philosophies and strategies are being worked out and tried in the developed world, and we are also making attempts in the developing world to embrace some of these strategies, without bearing in mind that the social and economic organisation of our society is different from that of developed societies, and we are seeking, groping, hoping to impose on our types of society philosophies that may have more relevance to foreign countries with far larger resources, outlets, options and alternatives than ourselves.

Sir, the next ten years are going to be fascinating in terms of the political direction that our economies take. We have this problem of unemployment and we have the demands of society to do something to relieve it, but at the same time we have tremendous expenditures and limited resources, and we are unable to satisfy the demands with the speed with which the general members of the society wish that satisfaction to be achieved. There will have to be radical rethinking if the Government is going to withdraw, or reduce, the impetus that it had previously given to the stimulation of employment within the public sector.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has suggested that there must still be some public sector creation of employment, but he warns that there must be cautious intervention. Therefore, one cannot look to the public sector to make any meaningful impact on the reduction of unemployment if it has to proceed or intervene cautiously. 3.15p.m.

I am not sure, still remain unconvinced, as I have said time and time again in here, and expressed privately to Members on the other side, that the private sector to whom Government is looking as a provider for solutions to unemployment has the capacity, indeed, the will, to make any meaningful impact on unemployment.

Are we reading the signs correctly? What is happening? Let us take DaCostas. What is happening to DaCostas?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have three more minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir. I will be able to finish.

DaCostas was a store which employed a large number of persons in the distributive sector. DaCostas has changed - sent home the people, 130, or whatever, of them! They say privately that people in that sector, I am not saying DaCostas alone, are saying that they are afraid of the provisions of severance pay. But what are they replacing the building there at Prince William Henry Street with? They are moving from being the employers of a large number of persons in the distributive sector to being property owners. They are building the property and they are going to lease out shops and offices. That company is moving into property ownership where they do not have the problem. The people who lease the space would then have the problem to create the jobs. So DaCostas has withdrawn from being a provider of jobs to being a provider of property, a safe investment. I may be wrong in my analysis, but that is one view I have of what they have done, and I throw it out to the Government as a trend that will need to be watched. The Opposition shares with the Government a concern about the high level of unemployment, but we are glad that the DLP, now that it is a Government, has been chastened by the reality of the situation. If, in future, we can bring to bear in public life a sense of responsibility in the promulgation of public policy, instead of trying, for the sake of political capital, to give people the impression that we could provide a panacea for the problem of unemployment, we will have served our country well; if, in future, we can be more responsible as politicians.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I would like to respond to some of the comments that were made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes). He spoke in moderate tones and terms, and tried, reasonably successfully, to bring a framework to bear for the discussion of that part of the Task Force Report which might be regarded as the long-term/medium-term scenario.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was basically correct in saying that in Barbados we have now to be looking to creating permanent jobs, and that, to that extent, one cannot look indiscriminately to the public sector capital programme for that particular type of employment generation, since, in many respects, the public sector capital programme has very often to be cut and chopped, depending on the deficit with which it might be associated and the capacity for financing it without creating balance of payments problems in the society. One therefore, is very mindful of the validity of the point that he is making, and can agree with the point of view that there is a need for strategic investments by the public sector, through its capital programme, in areas that can have a beneficial long-term impact on the economy, but that, surely, we cannot look to the capital programme indefinitely as a permanent source of jobs.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order, Sir: I have refrained all day from interfering with the honourable Member's speeches, but, constantly, he is getting up and making second reading speeches. He is theorising, and that is contrary to the rules in Committee.

The Chairman will tell you it is not correct. Your leader can tell you it is not correct You keep doing it All day you have been doing the same thing. It is a waste of the people's time and money.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Very early this morning I pointed to the Order 66, Rule 7, which says that debates in Committee: "shall be confined to the policy of the service for which the money is to be provided and not deal with the details of expenditure, but may refer to the details of revenue or funds for which that service is responsible."

I was trying to give a little latitude, but let us get on with it.

(Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. ARTHUR) were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is very obvious that the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) is quite capable of contributing to serious debates on employment generation, but he prefers to keep his views to himself.

The honourable Member for St Michael South Central stressed the need for high levels of investment by the private sector as the basis of employment generation in Barbados in the future, and I want to make a number of comments on that

In the first place, Sir, it is not true to believe that a mere supply of funds for investment in the private sector is, as a matter of course, going to lead to high levels of generation of employment We, first of all, have to look at the composition of the investment that will take place. It is my feeling of the situation in Barbados now, Sir, that the type of investment that is being generated as a result of more funds being created for private sector activity may, indeed, not necessarily be in the best interest of Barbados.

We are having a lot of private sector investment in retail business. Indeed, it may well be true that Barbados is reaching the stage where there is even over-investment in retail. If all of the plans that have been announced for the creadon of new malls, in places like Hastings, Paynes Bay and even Bridgetown, were to be fully carried through, aU you would have is a shuffling of the pack, as far as I am concerned, the same relative market has to be shared up among the same people, and, as you know, Sir, when the pack is shuffled, some will win and others will lose. So in speaking of the needs for high levels of investment by the private sector, we have to temper that by looking more closely at the composition. 3.25 p.m.

The critical question that the Task Force should have addressed is, how does one really get the Barbadian mercantile community to make a transition from being a mercantile community to one making investments in manufacture, particularly in export manufacturing? Because there is no question, Mr. Chairman, that the vast proportion of the funds that are locked up in the private sector, and are available for investment, are funds that, then as of now, are controlled by the distributive trades.

That point has not been addressed at all and I would think, Sir, that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central might need to review his optimism as to the extent to which the creation of investment opportunities, purely for increased investment funds, would necessarily give rise to the type of employment objective that he would hope to achieve.

I also, Mr. Chairman, disagree with his basic approach, which says that the only factor that limits the growth of employment in Barbados at this time is the availability of long-term funds for investment.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if the honourable Member would give way. I did not say so. What I did say is that.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are rising on a.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Point of elucidation or explanation.

I did not say it was the only source. What I did say is that for the first time we have available in the private finance sector a large pool of funds, with people actively seeking the long-term investments rather than short-term investments. That is the point that will address the particular problem that you are raising, that is, the conversion of private sector, with more funds, into export generating investment.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, my colleague would react to the question as to whether it was for the first time or otherwise.

I want to make a very simple proposition, Sir. Job creation in the private sector is something that many people tend to mystify. But, in fact, employment generation in the private sector comes from two basic sources, the expansion of existing enterprises and the creation of new ones, and if we are going to understand how you can get the private sector to expand job creation, we have to look at all of the various factors that can affect the expansion of existing enterprises as well as the creation of new ones.

I really want, in that context, Sir, to say that the availability of markets at this time is a more important constraint on employment generation in the private sector than the availability of funds. Although total investment in the Barbados economy, as a percentage of GDP, has fallen, it has fallen at a time when there has been no shortage of potentially investable funds in this society. And the reason why those potentially investable funds could not have been translated into new job activities is in large part, as we all know, because the:? were not enough markets available, particularly external markets, to make investments feasible and viable over any particular period of time.

I made the point earlier today that we have to look very carefully at the direction of technological change in Barbados if we are going to understand where we have to go with the economy. There is no question, Sir, when you look over the course of the last five years, that the large enterprises in this society have built up retained earnings even at a time when the economy was supposed to be in a recession.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am talking about the Task Force Report.

(Aside: Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Task Force failed to take these things into account.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: What has been happening in Barbados is that the private sector has been modernising, but it has been modernising by making investments in new

technology which minimises the use of labour during the course of its expansion.

My colleague, the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons), earlier made reference to the fact that the net profits of a major corporation in Barbados had increased by over $7 million, perhaps over 100 per cent, but in the process, Sir, only two new jobs were created. We have a situation in Barbados where you can speak in terms of technological attrition, that the processes that were formerly carried out by people are now being carried out by high technological processes. It is true not only in manufacturing, but in banking, construction, and, in fact, in all of the services. We need perhaps in Barbados to reach a situation where we have a form of social contact as regards the introduction of new technology and the relative weight that we are going to assign to employment creation in the introduction of new technology.

There is, for example, a company which will be re-investing part of the increased retained earnings made possible by the cut in the Corporation Tax. But it will not be re-investing it, as you know, in a new line to expand production and exports, or even go into exports - it will be replacing an existing line.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am not calling any names.

Through the economy, in general, Barbados has been caught up in a situation where, to the extent that there has been investment, the investment has not led to the level of employment that one would think necessary, because of the way in which technology has been applied.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Wrap up.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to make one final point, Sir.

In addition to the creation of new enterprises and the expansion of new ones, there is a third important consideration that affects employment generation in the private sector.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I hope you would not be too long, because it is about time now. Continue.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: One has to match the supply of skills for the private sector expansion with the demand for skills as they evolve. In that respect, it might well be true that the private sector itself and certainly the private sector institutions, such as the Barbados Manufacturers Association, have become less concerned with finding industrial solutions to industrial problems, have become too little concerned with doing the things that are necessary at the level of internal training, to generate skills necessary for industrial expansion, and have, to too large an extent, seen themselves as a lobby group which does not have to be concerned with the industrial solutions that one is speaking of.

I am obliged to you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, it is a pity that the debate on the Task Force has come not on its own as a thing to be considered by this Committee, because I am absolutely certain that there are several theoretical and practical matters which ought to be addressed by the Committee.

To the extent that the report has tried to find short-term, practical ways of creating instant employment, it has, as the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) has said, charted no new path. And I was not surprised that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes), who was then the Minister of Finance, was hesitant to disgorge funds in a programme before he was satisfied about its long-term effect on addressing the structural and endemic problem of high unemployment in Barbados.

I only found one of his premises very limiting. I do not think that anyone will argue against the general statement that the expansion of the public sector at this time, without regard to its effect on the funds available for investment, would be a mistake. I do not think anyone needs to quarrel with that. Where, however, I think that his statement is only half of the story is that there is a vast difference between the expansion of the public sector for expansion sake and the expansion of investment in the public sector in areas of the economy in which we ought now to have expansion. To the extent that the Task Force has failed to address that question, it has been a disappointment for me, because after having seen the performance of the Barbados economy from the time when the political directorate had assumed the task of running this country, rouglily from the '50s until now, I am satisfied that impetus for structural adjustment must come from the public sector. I am not in any way denying the private sector a role. But although the private sector may perform in creating jobs, particularly on the distributive side, it has nev~r shown the initiative that it is necessary to give a lead. 3.3i p.m.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: They say whatever field it is, you will find that this statement is true.

I said before in this House, on many occasions, and I do not like repeating myself, we really ought to congratulate the political directorate of Barbados for the contribution that it has made to Barbados' development ever since power started to shift from the plantocracy and oligarchy to the masses of the people. The development and creation of employment opportunities have been swifter than at anytime in the 350 years of our history, and we must not short-sell ourselves on that point And although I am a self-employed person, and, to that extent, private sector, I have strongly believed in the leading role which the public sector must play.

Sir, the Task Force, to some extent, has not observed the structural changes that are going on within our community. It is a fact that more funds have become available for internal investment But one of the reasons for this, in my opinion, was not a principal reason cited by my friend, the honourable Member for St Michael South Central - the fiscal incentives which were given. A lot of the programmes that are coming to the fore now were in the planning stage for a long tune, including a lot of the insurance participation in housing, an area which he has cited, and it is not only the Mutual. I am speaking from a position of knowledge, as someone who advises insurance companies, someone who looks at the limited Stock Exchange opportunities in Barbados, like my friend, the honourable Member for South Central, for a Barbadian who is interested in investment and development to create employment opportunity.

Unless we are able to do this, the society will crumble. I agree with him on this, although he put it a different way, by saying that the issues addressed by the Task Force will bypass us in the House. We have to be conscious of this factor, Sir, because one problem which stares at us all, on whatever side of the wall of the House we are, is how fast to create employment opportunities so that the people out there who are unemployed could feel that they are part of this society. And the second problem, which is equally important for the community of Barbados for the future, is how fast are we going to make sure that there is a more equitable distribution of wealth. I believe that that second task is one that we must never lose sight of, Sir, and to the extent that we do not have the right mix, and I make bold to say that that is where the measures were short, we may well be falling down on the answers to this problem.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think, Sir, that the term would be considerably skewed in the wrong direction because of the tremendous wealth of one individual, the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am not going to delay the Committee too long on this point, because I understood from the honourable Member for St Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) that there may be another opportunity for us to have a full debate on the Task Force. But the contributions that have been made within the confines of this Committee have been very important with advice being given to Government, and I hope the private sector should really pay attention to them.

The honourable Member said I am an insurance baron. It is not that, Sir. It is that wherever.....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member for St Michael West says that I am just barren.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: No, Sir. I said he is a baron, not barren. He knows he is not barren, Sir. He is a baron.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I assure the honourable Member that I am neither a baron or am I barren. I am an extremely productive person, Sir. I want to underscore the point The Task Force has to recognise, or ought to recognise, that with the restrictions which, because of balance of payments problems, have necessarily had to be placed on the investment overseas of pension funds, there would have been a pool of funds available for investment. And one of the areas that it must look at is how to channel those funds. I will however put this rider, Sir. It, and we as legislators reading its report, must not lose sight of the fact that investment in foreign currency areas is another form of creating an atmosphere for investment in Barbados. It almost is contradictory, Sir, but to the extent that Barbados has the capacity, whether it is through .insurance or other ways, of earning hard currency outside and/bringing it back into Barbados for investment we stand to benefit

I say no more, Sir, on the issue, because I think we are getting very late in this Committee. There are other Heads we would want to at least pay some attention to. But I think that this debate is very instructive. I am sure that the Minister who has responsibility for the Task Force Report would have heard constructive ideas from the Opposition, as he always does, and I am much indebted to the honourable Member for South Central, and the honourable Member for St. John, for at least bringing the matter, however fleetingly to the attention of the Committee.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition having spoken, I think that we can wind up this debate. I have already dealt with the points under the National Assistance Board and I will briefly look at the contribution made on the Report of the Committee of the Task Force on Employment.

I am very grateful for the contributions that have been made. From what has been said, I can conclude that there needs to be an ongoing process as far as this is concerned, that it should not be a one-shot thing. Am I correct in saying that? 3.45 p.m.

We must take into consideration a number of things. First of all, I believe that the Task Force Committee Report should be read against the oncoming Development Plan. I believe that the Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur) might have lost sight of that fact. At least he did not mention it. He seemed to have said that the report was indeed a Development Plan, that is the impression I got, or should have been a Development Plan, but I believe it should be read against the background of the oncoming Development Plan.

Secondly, I think that he must understand that one of the problems facing the Task Force Committee was the fact that we have now, for the first time, had a manpower survey. It is only a pilot project, so they are not sure, as we are not sure, as nobody in Barbados is sure, as to the skilled labour available, or the types of labour available. Indeed, we do not even know what type of labour we will want in the next ten or fifteen years. We are now trying to look at it. I think it was unfair to the Task Force Committee to ask them, in these conditions, to come up with a report, knowing full well that they did not have all the facts at their finger tips. It is not their fault.

I am not boasting to anybody, but as I understand it, the Labour Commissioners Act of 1943 had recommended at that time that some survey be carried out to arrive at the manpower that is required for this country. It is now 1988, some 45 years later, that we are doing it. But you are asking the Task Force Committee, without having this knowledge, to come out and say what jobs should be created. You cannot do it in a vacuum.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: My earlier contributions to the debate was to say that a task force on employment would have served a better purpose if it was to function within two months, as it was supposed to function, and was required only to do a short-term employment programme, but that within two months no task force can do a proper long-term strategy nor programme for employment. To that extent, it was, as I said, Sir, from the very start, a prirmer of over ambitious terms of reference. That is the point 1 made.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: At least the terms of reference were wide enough to give them the opportunity to cover a wide scope. If the terms of reference were narrow, then you would be saying it had gone outside its terms of reference. Either way the Task Force could not have won.

The point I am trying to make is that whether or not it should have looked at short-term measures to help the unemployment situation, the fact is that they did not have the result of a manpower survey, which would give them some indication of what they were looking at. In other words, one of our problems, as I understand it, in Barbados now, even with the sugar cane harvesting, is that some people believe that people are so well trained that they no longer want to go into the sugar cane fields. The other view is that people need to change their values and attitudes towards work. So I think it was slightly unfair to the Task Force Committee to make that point.

Of course, as you said, the report was done in a very short period of time. I believe it should be an ongoing process, because if things are changing so rapidly, it is important that we have a survey on a continuous basis. I think what most firms are doing now is that they are not even buying equipment, they are renting or leasing it, because it gets outmoded so quickly, and when they have problems they turn it back to the manufacturer and get new equipment. So it would be a good idea if the Task Force Committee were to continue.

The fourth point I want to make is that whatever the Task Force recommends, it would depend on the political directorate to make sure that those recommendations are implemented, if they can be at all.

Let me go to the points raised under the National Conservation Commission. I believe the Leader of the Opposition raised some points about coastal erosion mainly. I think that when we discussed this point some time last week the point was made that there are a number of factors creating problems as far as beach erosion is concerned; pesticides, insecticides and herbicides emitted into the waters, the sewage from hotels and business houses, dynamiting. I think since the introduction of tourism into Barbados we have noticed that a number of hotels, in order to create their own beaches, were erecting groynes out in the sea, and this has also created severe problems. In many cases the Coastal Conservation Project has had to ask them to remove these groynes so that the currents will have their fair play.

Another problem we find with hotels is that in order to create what they consider safe bathing areas, they are taking up parts of the reef to make it safe for their own clients to bath in particular areas. Again this is a serious problem, because the reefs are the natural breakwaters and they, themselves, create beaches. So we have reached a stage now that the chemicals are killing the reefs and man is destroying them by bulldozing them.

We have embarked on a study to create artificial breakwaters as one of the solutions. As I mentioned in an

earlier debate, that is going to cost the Government some Bds. $22 million, and it is only in the feasibility stage now. It is planned to have this done from the south coast to the west coast. But this is a very new field of engineering, and the expertise is not as good as one would expect, and it might be a trial and error situation in this respect.

As far as the four areas mentioned were concerned, Rockley presents a special problem in that we cannot build on that beach. I would accept the suggestion that when the new road comes through, we look at putting facilities on the other side of the road.

The Drill Hall is in our programme for a beach facility. I do not think it would create any problems for the Defence Force as far as security is concerned.

The beautification programme. I can assure you that we will be visiting St. Matthias and Dayrell's Road corner relatively soon to do something for you. But we have limited resources, both financial and human, and we cannot work in too many places at one time.

Contrary to what the Member, I believe, for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) said, we are trying to maintain areas. My own observation is that in the past places were debushed and within two or three weeks of the rains, the bushes were taller than when they were cut down three weeks previously. In a tropical setting, in particular, it is most essential that maintenance be an ongoing programme, and therefore when you see people on these highways, it is because they are trying to maintain the highways.

As far as the highways are concerned, you will notice that our beautification is a rather simple exercise. We try to go ten feet back and go through the whole highway and keep maintaining it. Eventually we will go further and further and hope to carry that through.

I can assure the Member for St. Michael North East (Mr. L. L. Brathwaite) that we have an appointment for Monday morning to visit, I think, Piedmont Park, Bush Hall and a few areas there, so we have looked at your area already. 3.55 p.m.

We have got to be careful how we deploy our human resources, because we do not want to spread then too thin. As we beautify, we will leave a skeleton staff to maintain and go to another area. Eventually, we, hopefully, will get most of the island in the programme.

I want to respond to the comments made by the honourable Member for St. Peter (Mr. O. S. Arthur), who asked about the content of the programme and if it is best value for money. It is certainly the best value for money ever, and we are now looking at this programme in three categories: (1) educational and historical, (2) recreational, and (3), general environmental, in the sense that, for example, we are working in the housing areas now. We will soon get to Bonnetts. Bonnetts is a small one, and it is relatively clean, but we are looking at areas which are not so clean to bring them up to standard, and then we will get to the smaller areas. We are working, I believe, in Wotton, Silver Hill, Gall Hill, Haynesville, the Pine, the Farm, Grazettes, and I believe we will be going to Ellerton in a couple of weeks' time and to Eden Lodge. These are Government low income housing areas.

On the educational and historical aspect, I think you will notice that we are developing Silver Sands. Some time ago, we had archeologists up there. I believe that is the type of capital project which the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) spoke about. Likewise, at Bathsheba we are trying to rebuild the train station as it was in the early days, again from an educational, geographical and historical perspective, so that when our youngsters go on sight visits from their schools, they can relate to what they are reading in the books.

From a recreational point of view, we are trying to develop inland parks and community parks of two kinds. In relation to inland parks, we have just started at Three Houses. I believe, we are working at Gun Hill. With regard to recreational parks, we have just completed the Errol Barrow Park, we have renovated Queen's Park, and we are having mini parks in the housing areas. It is my view that one way of disciplining children is to have them in a park setting, where you have some control by having a properly trained warden who can control them from swearing, where they can react properly.

As far as the national park is concerned, we cannot do it in one phase. You will notice that we are about to begin some work on Archers Bay. We are looking at Joes River as far as I can remember. We have just reopened Barclays Park. I believe that in a couple of weeks we will be closing Bath, because that is in bad shape, and do some renovations there. We are going around the country really, but it takes time.

I am glad you reminded me about Graeme Hall. We have been looking at Graeme Hall, but, first, there is the matter of finance. Secondly, on my trips overseas we have been having discussions with various park authorities, because we need to get somebody in the area of wet lands to develop the Graeme Hall swamp. Hopefully, in a few months' time, we will be able to put our heads together to see what can happen. We are in contact with Parks Canada to put up a proposal to them as well.

One of our problems is a lack of expertise here. It is pointless bringing in an expert to develop a plan when we have not got the skilled craftsmen here to implement that plan. If the honourable Member for St. Thomas has seen or continues to see, a large number of people in some of these projects, it is because it is training as well. It is a skilled operation. A lot of people believe that landscaping is getting up one morning and doing something. You have to read plans, too. It is like building a house. Unless a carpenter can read his plans, he might drive the nails in the wrong places. This is a proper project and I would like to say that at present we have all of our supervisors undergoing training at BIMAP, from a managerial point of view, and in NCC from the horticultural point of view. I think the course will end sometime in June or July, and we hope that, by the end of that first course, they will have some idea of what the job is really about.

We have discussed dumping garbage before. This is a sad situation, and, unfortunately, at all levels of Barbados' society we are to blame. People are driving in their cars and dumping garbage in the housing areas like the Farm. If you drive on any highway - it is not people who are walking, it has to be people in cars - you will see it. Unfortunately, people will report to you that they have seen a car or a truck, and when you ask for the name or the number, they do not want to go to court. They do not want to do anything about it, Sir, so we have a real problem. I believe that one solution to the problem is to start educating our young people.

As the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Mr. C. A. Neblett) mentioned, the gullies are a total disgrace. Although we want to experiment on the development of some gullies, it is a bit above us at the present as far as the expertise is concerned. We want to make sure that when we go in a gully, we can draw a proper map of the gully and know exactly what we want to do.

I am not quite sure what is the answer to dumping. You can legislate, but can you police the legislation? That is another problem. We have to depend on the goodwill of Barbadians to understand how dangerous what they are doing is. It might not affect us, but it will affect our children and grandchildren in years to come.

I mentioned pesticides and insecticides as far as the destruction of the reefs is concerned, but whr * concerns us most, and I believe concerns the Labour P { rtment, is the effect these will have on workers. So occupational safety and health is uppermost in the minds of the Department of Labour, and we have got certain proposals before the Establishments Department, and, hopefully in another month or so, we will be able to set up the Occupational Health and Safety Department. This is a serious area, and until I had been in the Ministry of Labour I did not really appreciate how serious it was, in the sense that I did not realise that we had quarries of such size in Barbados, and when I visited the areas, then I realised, for the first time, what is the real problem. That is in the area of my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael North East, in Green Hill. It is a serious problem and we have to address it.

We have to have trained people in these areas so that we can not only visit, but we can advise, because we have to understand that Barbados is a very small country and there are certain operations which, of necessity, must go on, and unless we co-operate with the owners and operators of these businesses, there is going to be constant complaining. We cannot close them down, because we must have our cement plant, we must have our quarries for quarrying of marl fill for building houses. We are therefore trying to see if we can meet the owners and operators of these businesses to see if we can come up with some amicable solution to the problem. That is ongoing as well. 4.05 p.m.

I think that the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) mentioned graveyards. I cannot be in more agreement with him. It seems to me that what is happening in Barbados today is that everybody is calling on Government to do everything, and I am becoming a bit critical of some of our schools in that very often they are raising funds to go to Disney World, to Timbucktu, but they would not raise funds to buy a lawn mower, or a pair of shears for the youngsters to cut the hedges.

I can remember that when I went to school the first thing I had to do was to sweep around the school and get it clean, then you washed your hands and entered the school. Nowadays, unless you send a gardener, the school lawns are not cut. Schools with 300 or 400 children and nobody picks up the plastic cups that fall on the lawns. They are there because the cleaner or general worker must pick them up. The time has come when the teachers must send the children outside again and say, "Look, you dirty it, clean it." We have to train them from early. Some of them do not even see that the school grounds are dirty, and if you cannot see that it is dirty, you are not going to clean it. I think we have to understand that.

I am glad to see that at my old school, Combermere, the children have put up their own fences, and are painting them. They are also planting their own shrubs. That is a thing that all the schools should try to follow, because I am quite sure that in two or three years the Combermere students will make sure that nobody dirties their school grounds.

I want to move to Community Development. The honourable Member for St. James North (Mr. J. J. Payne)

said that the community centres should not only be used for dance halls. I agree with that as well. Something is happening at dance halls now. We are finding that youngsters are no longer going through the doors. You hold a dance and they break the windows and go through the windows, because Government has to repair them. We are having a lot of problems with vandalism at our Community Centres. How we are going to get over that, I do not know. One would have thought that the communities would have welcomed the centres. Every vandalised centre means that other areas will have a lesser opportunity of getting a centre, because if we have to take the money and repair centres, we cannot use it to build new ones. I would just ask that the communities take better care of the centres which they have, because other places are crying out for centres and we cannot afford to give them because we are spending the money in repairs.

We would like to think that communities will not depend on Government to send expertise to have other classes at the centres. The centres are built for the communities. One of our problems in Barbados is that a lot of us are getting things out of the country, but few are putting back. When you go to the community centres, you will see, by and large, the community aide and a few youngsters. Where are the older people to come and give the youngsters a hand? I would ask that we have more volunteers to work in the centres. There are a number of people in Barbados who know crochet, who know many things, but they are not prepared to assist the youngsters, and I would have to guess that one of the problems facing our youngsters today is the fact that not enough p Tsons, of the age group of the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. W. W. Hall), not my age group, are putting back into this community what we took out of it. Unless we do that, our youngsters will not have the type of role models to follow, and although we blame the youngsters for taking the crack and the marijuana and whatever they take, we are directly responsible, because we are not giving them the guidance or the helping hand which they really need.

I think that the honourable Member for St. James North also made the point that more agricultural workers should be employed in the overseas farm programmes. I agree wholeheartedly with him, but the reason why artisans must also be employed in the programme is that there are a number of exercises on the farm which require artisans. A lot of carpenters do carpentry on the farms. The mechanics look after the various vehicles on the farm. So although they go up as farm workers, and it is true they work on the farms, artisans are important to the programme as well.

I touched the Task Force and unemployment. Government alone cannot solve the unemployment problem. But what concerns me most, and I think we have to address this problem, is that my own investigations reveal that there are a number of persons who are.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another three minutes.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: ..... employed and still drawing unemployment benefits. It means that we must streamline our operations, so the National Insurance Office and the Labour Department must collaborate to the fullest to reduce the number of persons who are doing that.

On the other hand, there are some persons who are drawing unemployment benefits who refuse to look for work until their period runs out. I do not agree that we cannot do anything about it. We can do something about it, because where a job is available and you do not go for the job, you should not draw unemployment benefits. We have to devise some scheme whereby we categorise people we send to work, but do not go.

I am not saying you should send any and everybody for a job. If a fellow is a carpenter, I do not think we should send him to cut canes. But I think that if people are labourers and there are jobs in that area, a fellow should not be able to sit down home and say he has three more weeks to go to draw unemployment benefit, and only after three weeks he is going to look for work.

I think we should devise a scheme in Barbados as exists in Australia, you send people to work, and if they do not go, they do not get unemployment benefits. We cannot afford to pay. I think we are paying out now some $12 or $13 million a year in unemployment benefits. That is non-productive - it goes to people sitting down home.

As far as the youth problem is concerned, over the past four or five months' I have been helding meetings regularly on Sunday afternoons with about 30 or 40 people looking at the problems facing young people and solutions to those problems. We have just come to the end of those deliberations. I have a report to study, and as soon as I have studied the report, and probably passed it to my colleagues, I will be looking at the National Advisory Council, because it is on the basis of that report that we would expect the National Advisory Council to operate. I think that the honourable Member for St. John (Mr. D. J. H. Thompson) would like to hear that. 4.15 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You do not have much time, only about a minute or so or half a minute.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, child abuse is one which is plaguing this society, but as the Member for Christ Church West said, one of the problems facing the country is that we cannot get evidence to prosecute people.

Very often people feel that to expose children to the cross-examination of the various attorneys-at-law does more harm than good. Some people believe that if we have the trials in closed court, that would be a way forward. What the answers are, I do not know, but that seems a very practical situation. Some of the ladies who are most affected by this feel that if they go before the court, they would not get support for their children after, and the child might not be the man's own anyhow. It is a very complex and complicated situation. It is something which we have to look at, and I hope that somewhere along the line we can develop some systems.

I believe that counselling is possibly one of the better ways to go, that we should try to advise people of what to do in these situations, or how to prevent the situation from arising. Sometimes people in their own ignorance expose their children to this situation, and once they have been exposed, they do not know how to get out of it. So that this is a problem.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that I have covered, as adequately as time would permit, all of the areas that have cropped up.

The question that Head 39 - Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development (as amended) stand part was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 81 - CAPITAL- MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - (AS AMENDED) $4 464 400

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I beg to move, Sir, that Head 81, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 81, as amended, stand part was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH (AS AMENDED) - $71 751 242

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 36, Ministry of Health, as amended, stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Sir, I thought that my friend, the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Hon. B. M. Taitt) had a field runner who had to bat his hand in this House.

Sir, I have been very concerned in the last few days over the issue of the Psychiatric Hospital, and I believe that the Minister owes the House a statement on this matter. Merely to introduce the Head and ask that it stand part cannot, given the context of what we have heard in the last few days, be a satisfactory way of dealing with this Parliament, which has responsibility for these matters. It is because of that that I think the Minister ought to be given the opportunity in the House to respond to this issue.

I believe, Sir, that there is, and has been, cause for concern at the Psychiatric Hospital for some time. First, there is obviously no morale among the staff. The Honourable Minister will know that. There obviously has been concern about the whole atmosphere. I recognise that a study was being done -1 am not sure how far it has gone - to look at a new Psychiatric Hospital. But I am not sure merely constructing a new building is going to be the answer there. I want to hear from the Minister what are the proposals, if any, still in train for maintaining the Psychiatric Hospital as it is now. I also feel that the Minister must tell the Committee how much validity there was, or is, in the complaints which we have seen in the last weeks.

You will note, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that I have introduced this subject very carefully, because I think the Committee is entitled to hear the facts.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The facts, yes. The facts are what I am asking for, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We have a very limited time under this before the guillotine comes down. I think the Committee probably has less than 35 minutes now for open debate. I believe at 5.00 o'clock, Sir, we take the break, and then we come back and the guillotine is down.

(Aside: After six.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: After six.

I want to mention some of my areas of concern. I am not satisfied that the overseas medical treatment scheme is working as it was intended, certainly as we set out to have it work.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Barbados Labour Party had received operative reports.

There are now certain conditions for qualification to get overseas for medical assistance, it is not merely a recommendation by a hospital doctor. There seems to be a means test being applied in circumstances where cases may simply deserve it. I want to know why this is so and what are the conditions which are applicable.

In my constituency, I have had a case in which we have had to make representation about the fund for a very serious case of a constituent who had to go overseas. The conditions under which the scheme operated at the time were not properly promulgated, and the constituent went abroad without the knowledge of the scheme, although he was being attended to and his recommendation for going abroad was made by a doctor in Barbados.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am serious. When I come in here about my constituents, the honourable Member must know I am very serious.

I am deeply disappointed to be told that there is just a blanket refusal of reconsideration of making some grant. I do not believe that a scheme of this nature, which is humanitarian in content, and in intent, can be operated in the way that the rules come down and one is penalised, regardless, for what has occurred, and overseas medical aid is obviously a very expensive exercise.

I agree that people are now becoming mindful of the fact to carry their own health insurance to cover eventualities of sickness which may force them to seek medical aid outside of Barbados. But it seems to me that in administering the scheme, even where the person to benefit may have made an error, there must be a proper examination to see whether or not the case is a deserving one, whether the error which has occurred is a genuine error, and what assistance should be given under the scheme. Because it has always been my understanding that the scheme is partly being funded from the Health Levy, and many of us have been contributing, and in this case, I am absolutely sure that this family contributed to that Health Levy which now funds the scheme. There is a great disappointment among people about this rigid manner in which that scheme is being operated. 4.25 p.m.

I am not speaking through my hat. I do not like to make allegations unless I can document and prove them. I am also concerned about the long wait people have had to experience for operations at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I have within my constituency again, and that is why I like to document these things, three cases. In the case of one lady, she was told to report on three different occasions at the Queen Elizabeth for an operation. On each occasion she went prepared. She had to sit it out there for hours. All of the preliminary things were done, and all the various preliminary tests were carried out, and on each occasion, late in the afternoon, she was told, "sorry we cannot take you in. Something is wrong with the theatre."

Sir whilst I recognise that the expansion of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is going on, with additional construction taking place, and that at least one, if not two, of the operating theatres have been out of operation for some time, it seems to me that the administrative procedures must be wrong to put a person through the agony of having to face three attempts at an operation, which was serious in her case, before she could get the scheduled operation, having waited several months before. This is what is worrying me. Something must be wrong with the administrative structure if one cannot get those sort of things sorted out. If it was an isolated case, I would merely have dealt with the matter probably by speaking to the Director.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Director paid by public funds, not the Director of the Minister of Health. But if it reached the full stage that I needed the Minister, I would raise the matter with the Minister. And if it reached the stage that the Minister does not react, I would raise the matter here, Sir. And if it reached the stage that Parliament does not react, I would raise in the Minister's constituency, Sir, as the Minister very well knows.

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Seriously, Sir, on this point, I am concerned that in an instance where there is a shortage of operating theatres at the QEH, as there will continue to be for a time, until the new construction taking place there is completed, the administrative procedures are not such as to save people the agony of going to the QEH to get an operation only to have to go home and go back. When it has happened three times, I do not believe that can be fair to anyone. I want the Minister to let us know whether procedures are now in place to deal with this matter.

I am also a bit concerned, Sir, about the use being made of the polyclinic services. Whatever may be said about the proposal for a National Health Service, it must be admitted that the construction and the concept of the polyclinics is a right and proper one, and that it offers scope for expanding right within the community, removing some of the pressures from the main institutions which we have for treatment of acute cases, and at the same time for

involving the community in community health as far as possible. I am told that complete use is not being made of the polyclinics. I would like to see the polyck'nics opened and manned for longer periods than they are at the moment.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The former Minister of Health says that you have to make an appointment. I believe that there should also be possibilities of walking in there for emergency treatment, I share with the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) a polyclinic in an area in Wildey, near to Clapham Road. Therefore, several of the people in my constituency and surrounding area can make use of this service. I think it is a necessary adjunct to the Health Service, and I believe that every step should be taken to see that it functions properly.

We had established health committees, or was in the process of establishing health committees, to bring a link between the persons being served by the Health Service and the service of the institution as a whole. I understand that these health committees were either abolished or were not functioning. Does the Minister see any need for this type of liaison - call it under whatever name you want? The concept seems to me a proper one. If he does, what steps will be taken in the future to ensure that there is some such body functioning to contribute to the improvement of the health care system that we have?

I understand, Sir, that there is a shortage of occupational therapists at the Psychiatric Hospital - I am going through quickly, because we are limited in the debate - and that there are probably only two trainees. If there is a place that you really do need occupational therapists, it would be at the Psychiatric Hospital. There was a time when I thought, we had more than enough of these persons in training overseas, but there is a whole host of young people coming through our Community College and our 6th Forms who should be offered the opportunity to pursue this form of training. I believe that there are courses available in Jamaica at the University of the West Indies, and elsewhere, and I am sure that with proper planning, we can have enough of these available and in the system.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think you should stop there. It is about time in another half minute.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: (St. Michael Soiuh East): Mr. Chairman, I would just like to comment on some of the statements made by the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde). One has to be very careful, as a layman, when one comes to conclusions based sometimes on evidence that is not necessarily accurate. He said that there was a serious case in his constituency and that this person was advised to go overseas by a doctor, and then he questioned the fact that whether or not a committee should be in place to make a decision as to whether people who are "seriously" ill should be sent overseas or not.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, Sir, the honourable Member has not been following. If he wants to know, I can tell him of the specific case and show him the correspondence.

I have not questioned whether there is a committee in place. I said that there is a committee. I said at the time when the person was recommended to go overseas, the conditions under which the overseas aid scheme was being operated were not properly promulgated and known to the public at large. That is a different matter. The honourable Member is obviously mistaken.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: My understanding was that the honourable Member went on to say that an appeal was made to the committee even after the person went overseas.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No. Again, the honourable Member is mistaken. What I am saying is that the person returned to Barbados and then an application was made to the Ministry on the matter, which referred it and said that the person should first have been recommended by the doctor before going overseas.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: But, Mr. Chairman, that is precisely the point I am trying to get at, that under the proper functioning system no one doctor nor individual should be able to determine that somebody is seriously ill and should go overseas for treatment. You are operating in a system where there are limited funds, first of all. Number two, there must be criteria set up by the medical authorities to establish clearly the kinds of cases that should be sent overseas for treatment.

I know for a fact that there are people who have children, let us say, with curvature of the spine, which for them is a serious problem. But the medical authorities here in the appropriate specialty may decide otherwise. You mentioned a case in a general sense, you did not mention any specific illness, so we are speaking in general terms.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. The honourable Member, as a leading member of the profession, and having taken the necessary oath, would know that one of the things I possibly could not do is to call the name of the person. I would call it to the Minister.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that I know as a fact that there are people who have children with a curvature of the spine and they feel, once you send the person to the United States, that that is the end of the

problem, that the situation can be corrected, and for them it is a serious problem. You cannot get away from that.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I am establishing the fact that this is why we must have committees in place to screen the necessary cases, because not every person who goes overseas for medical treatment is going to come back cured, and as a matter of fact, sometimes we find that a doctor may take a decision that somebody needs overseas treatment to find out that the treatment can be done here in Barbados. We have a very excellent level of medical practice here in Barbados, and that must be recognised.

If you watch the infiltration from television, you get that inferiority complex that every time you get sick, you must run overseas. And there is another aspect to it. Very often people leave Barbados or the Caribbean going overseas for treatment, they do not know which doctor they are going to, they have no proper recommendation, and how do you know that you are going to end up in the hands of somebody who is equal to, or better than, the level of medical care that you receive in the Caribbean? That is one of the reasons why a system must be in place, that when patients leave Barbados to go overseas, we in Barbados know that we are referring those sick people to somebody who can provide superior medical care. You just cannot pick up people, and because I know a doctor in New York or Canada, just refer them over there and assume that they are going to have proper medical care.

The honourable Member for Christ C! ;rch West raised the whole matter of people on a wait ig list for surgery. If somebody has, let us say, a hernia waich is not causing very much problem and the particular surgeon decides that Miss X can come in on June 12, and he schedules her for surgery on June 12, on the raorning of June 12 there may be five emergency operations at the hospital. If there are three ruptured appendices and two people who have been involved in automobile accidents and are bleeding, the doctor cannot predict that on June 12 there will be five emergency operations, therefore Miss X will have to be put back on a list for another day. At that time when she is rescheduled for surgery, again the doctor, or the people in the operating theatre, cannot predict ....

Asides.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: I am not saying that this is always the case. I am saying that there may be factors that the person on the outside do not necessarily consider. There may be other factors. The operating theatre, for some reason or the other, may not be working. It may not have to do with patient load at all, but the layman outside, or for the individual who is seeing Miss X having been turned back for elective surgery on three occasions, may not consider the other factors.

We understand that this can put the patient and the family, and the representative, through a lot of psychological trauma. But one also has to understand the other side of the story, and very often it is important for the representative of the family at times just to have a word with the surgeon or the people associated to see the other side of the story.

This is not a defence of a Government, I am putting to you what are the practical day-to-day situations as exist within the framework of a hospital. That sort of situation does not obtain only at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, it obtains at hospitals throughout the world, the best of them, and, of course, the worst of them, so we must not get the impression that because Miss X has to be postponed for elective surgery, it follows that the functioning of the hospital is bad.

The honourable Member for Christ Church West said that we share a polyclinic together. The honourable Member knows that I have complained in this Honourable Chamber that people from Wildey and the Pine, especially old people, used to be told, up to a couple years ago, that they could not be registered at that clinic because the list was full. So I am glad to hear him say now that there should be a mechanism, after the appointment system, for walk-in patients. But you must understand that if you work an appointment system and you superimpose an emergency walk-in clinic, you are going to run into problems, because when a mother has a baby that is crying, for that mother it is an emergency.

The question is, who decides what an emergency is? An emergency for a mother is not necessarily a medical emergency, so when we use the word "emergency", we have to be careful what we are talking about. A man may have the most excruciating pain in his leg or back, if he is suffering with sciatica, and that will be for him an emergency, and another man may have a minimal chest pain, but examination may reveal that the minimal chest pain is life threatening, whereas the excruciating pain in the leg is not. Therefore from a medical point of view the mild chest pain is the medical emergency and the excruciating paid not, so we have to be careful how we throw around the word "emergency" loosely.

I understand that this level of discussion is outside of your realm, but I just wanted to make those few points, because sometimes we get carried away with emotion. We have to look at it from a factual point of view. 4.45 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, because this debate is coming to the time it is, I am proposing to respond to the specific points as they come up, and then we will see how far we get. I also wish to give the honourable Members

the assurance that there will be, at the first opportunity a full scale debate on the Ministry of Health, because we are spending the second largest amount of money in these Estimates, and I think that the Opposition and the other honourable members on this side, and the country, is to have an explicit explanation of all of the money which we spend. I wish to assure the honourable Member that the debate will not be at month end.

Sir, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition started off by asking about the Psychiatric Hospital. He correctly said that the country has been inundated with a lot of information, alleged and otherwise, about the Psychiatric Hospital, so I will respond to that.

In the first instance, I will give him the facts. The meals at the Psychiatric Hospital are planned, and they have a weekly menu. The food at the hospital is sent from the kitchen by trolley to various wards, either in bulk or in individual servings. Some 80 patients eat in the dining hall. Of the 15 wards, some eight receive the food in bulk. I am advised that all diabetic and special diets are sent individually.

On Tuesday, the 15th of this month, a check was made on the [wards by the Medical Superintendent. The Psychiatric Hospital is the only place that has a Medical Superintendent, and the Medical Superintendent's qualifications, as far as I know, have never been questioned.

It is my information that there are approximately 88 diabetic patients on wards, and there are no known cases of diabetics fainting from hunger or any other reason. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, diabetics do not faint, as everybody who has even a passing acquaintance with medicine knows, diabetics go into a coma from a failure to have the requisite level of sugar in their system. They do not faint from hunger.

In any event, the Medical Superintendent made a check on March 15 and there was no report, and there is no report, in the Psychiatric Hospital at any time of anyone ever having fainted, diabetic or otherwise, from hunger or any other known cause.

I would be very pleased - not happy, but pleased - to find out information to the contrary so that we can deal with it. But the Medical Superintendent has so rep rted. Indeed, the normal coma is a very rare occurrence in a hospital.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I am stressing the Medical Superintendent rather than the Hospital Director, because the Hospital Director is the administrative head, but the Medical Superintendent is a doctor first. She is a qualified medical practitioner and then she is a qualified psychiatrist.

Daily reports on each patient are sent to the Medical Superintendent, who is able to monitor their health status. There are no cases of malnutrition, and, in general, I have been advised that the patients' health is excellent.

Soon after I became the Minister responsible for Health, I visited every single ward and saw every single patient and has necessarily had a report on each single patient. Furthermore, since then I have visited the hospital unannounced, and on occasions I have made rounds in the Psychiatric Hospital simply by turning in to the hospital and saying, "I am here, I would like to see". At no time have I had any difficulty with the staff in taking me on rounds. But as I said when I visited, there are some aspects of the Psychiatric Hospital's administration, and what is normal in that hospital's upkeep, which I find of some concern.

The death rate in the Psychiatric Hospital is, incidentally, very low. It averages less than three per month, in case anyone is interested in that. A substantial number of the patients at the Psychiatric Hospital are, in fact, geriatric cases. Indeed, there a substantial number of the patient load is of persons who had been abandoned in the hospital by family and friends, and whose only place of abode and comfort is the Psychiatric Hospital.

In the current financial year, two heated trolleys are on order similar to the ones presently used on the "A" Wards. Heated trolleys are trolleys which take the food around.

The Barbados Labour Party had responsibility for the Psychiatric Hospital for ten years at least. I had it for nine months, but I accept responsibility for the whole Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do you want us to discuss it in those terms or at this level?

They had it for ten years, and during that time there is no evidence on record of their having moved to the modern system which we are attempting to implement, to have heated trolleys which would keep the food warm. The area which the people who distribute the food have to travel is the same as it has always been, and the food leaves the kitchen and goes to the respective places. That, notwithstanding, there are two additional trolleys on order.

Similar trolleys are used at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and one of the problems that occurred at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is that when the trolleys were ordered, the ones which came proved to be the wrong ones

- they came during the Labour Party's time - and they are incapable of use because they are too large and cumbersome. New trolleys, therefore, had to be ordered. But I will not say that that has happened at the Psychiatric Hospital. They did not order any trolleys at all.

(Asides: Which Minister ordered them?)

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I do not want to curse Trotman. No trolleys were ordered at all.

Sir, so far as the *Nation's* stories were concerned, the *Nation* newspaper telephoned me on Friday at about half past five in the afternoon and told me that they were bringing a story on the Sunday about the Psychiatric Hospital in which the facts which they alleged were going to be revealed. My question to them was, have you had any discussion with the Director of the Hospital, because if you are bringing that kind of story, you ought to have a discussion with the Director. The person who spoke to me said, "No, we did not speak to the Director, because if they had spoken to him he would have said, "No comment." " Whereupon I said that that is not the kind of journalism which I would expect you to practise, and if you feel that he would say "No comment", you at least owe it to him to allow him to say "No comment". I am told that he subsequently called the Director that Friday afternoon, and I am told that he promised the Director that they would sit down and discuss the matter. But that is immaterial. 4.55 p.m.

The point is that I never denied the story. I went to my branch meeting on Sunday and told the branch meeting what I thought I drew attention to the fact that during the previous week the *Nation* had published a story entitled, "Dig at Mental Care", and that they had, perhaps, inadvertently, misrepresented the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners because they had left out a substantial pan of the editorial, which editorial had as its point that the people of Barbados, generally, had a wrong attitude to mental health care. Indeed, the BAMP editorial had castigated the Press - castigated is too strong a word - had taken the Press to task - for having published a naked man in the centrefold with a hose on him and using the word "lunatic", and I pointed out to the constituents, which I believe I have a right and a duty to do, that this part of the editorial ought to have been carried to give the story the correct balance, and that it left the impression that there was a row between the doctors and the Minister, but that pan was not true.

In so far as the charge of under-feeding the patients, I never denied the story, and if the *Advocate* newspaper is to be believed, you will see that neither the *Advocate* nor, indeed, the *Nation* in the body of its story showed at any point that there was any denial.

What one said was that I found it passing strange that the system had been in place for 30 years and that within nine months of my becoming Minister, somehow it seemed as though I was supposed to solve all of the problems during that nine months but that the only thing I was capable of doing, or I used to be capable of doing during nine months is we had evidence for in the gestation period the children which had been delivered.

I then took note subsequently that the *Nation* newspaper, after having determined that I had denied the story, wrote a story saying that denying the story was bad.

They also took out of context, but I do not mind, the fact that I said, which is a truism which any psychiatrist would confirm, that persons who work for a long time with psychiatric patients and in a psychiatric hospital sometimes themselves require psychiatric care. That is a statement of psychological and medical fact which the honourable Member for St. Michael South East (Dr. E. A. Simmons) would confirm, and the Medical Superintendent would be the first to confirm, without calling any names, that from time to time we have to give people mental health care.

Part of the problem in Barbados is that people associate mental health care with madness. It is all right to have a heart attack - you are ill. It is all right to have sciatica - you are ill. It is all right to have AIDS - you are ill.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: You are, at least, classified as ill. But if you have mental stress which is brought on by the pressures of your job, you are not considered to be ill. If you go for psychiatric care, you are considered to be mad! Indeed the story which has been carried by the newspaper confirms the point which BAMP was making, that our attitudes in the society need to be restored. We need restorative treatment Indeed, from a purely euphemistic way, it might be said that there is need for psychiatric help in the journalistic fields.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You see what I mean? What I am saying, Sir, is that sometimes when a newspaper gets a little ill, you have to restore it and what you really need is a journalistic psychiatrist to come in and give it a little therapy.

Quite seriously, they then went on to make stories on their own stories. They had put up the straw man and they shot him down. I had no difficulty with that, because I understand the methodology that is used, and I, therefore, do not intend, nor will I continue, to discuss that matter.

After all, the honourable Member asked for information and facts.

The Psychiatric Hospital spends a substantial amount of money on food, and will spend a substantial amount of money on food again this year. Therefore, it would be a little dangerous if we did not put the facts on the record.

The details of the comparative expenditure on food supplies for the past three fiscal years would show that an average of $150 000 is spent on a monthly basis at the Psychiatric Hospital. It is true that the quality of food at the Psychiatric Hospital, if taken on average, does not measure up to the quality of food at the acute care hospital in terms of cost, and the reason is simple. In an acute care hospital, like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, where they have 500 people, they have 500 individual diets that have to be catered to, because there are various people with various forms of acute illness, whereas the Psychiatric and the Geriatric Hospitals are essentially custodial in nature. But looking at the comparative expenditure on food supply at the Psychiatric Hospital, in 1985-86 we spent $1.8 million, in 1986-87 we spent $1.6 million, in 1987-88, up to January, $1.5 million, with an average of $150 000 in 1985, $141 000 in 1986, and $157 862 in 1987, per month, a total of $1 807 832 in 1985-86, $1 694 622 in 1986-87, $1 578 629 in 1987/88.

Mr. Chairman, I want to ask a question in relation to the story, a question that raises the question about the credibility of all of us. How is it possible that someone could write a story on a Saturday that says that the people are not getting any food, and by Sunday morning, as soon as the people hear that the story is coming out, they got all of this wonderful food, and it is written up the Monday, in the very next edition? That stretches the credibility.

The logical conclusions are that the food was in the hospital and it was not being given to the people. If that is so, it means that since the food was not kept at Stanmore Crescent, Black Rock, or Jemmott's Lane, Bridgetown, it would have to be in the Psychiatric Hospital. If that is so, accusing the Ministry or the Government of not supplying the food would have to be false. If the food was at the hospital and was not being given to the patients, the people who complain to the Press would have to be part of the conspiracy of not giving the food to the patients, because the director, the superintendent, the senior officers, the nurses and the kitchen staff would have to be in a conspiracy to underfeed the patients. I do not believe that. If that is not so, it would mean that the person or the newspaper lied. I cannot say .....
5.05 p.m.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you believe that?)

Hon. B. M. TATTT:.....that I believe that or that I do not believe it.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I cannot say that. I leave it to the public of Barbados to believe it

I have been told by reliable sources that the newspaper believes that the people at the mental hospital are stealing the food. And if the newspaper feels so it should come out and say so. Instead of writing an editorial saying that I say the people are mad, they should write an editorial raising questions as to whether the people are thieves. That is what you are saying.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am addressing him. It is just a kind of .....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The editorial says that I have a tendency to be dramatic.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: So if I look this way and then this way, it is only because I am a little dramatic, Sir.

Laughter.

. *Asides.*

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We make a little fun because it is late and the debate has been fairly boring up until now.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We have some of the best psychiatrists in the business in Barbados.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Your problem is not the ego, but the super ego.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Is that the problem?

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Your problem!)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If you tell me so, I accept it, because, as one to the other, we know.

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Seriously, Mr. Chairman, the articles seeks to do something. If it is saying that the hospital administration is spiriting away the food, I do not believe that, because, and this is the point, Sir, as Minister responsible for the department, I cannot condone any story which suggests that my staff is stealing. I have a duty, and the honourable Member would agree with me, to defend any of the departments under my jurisdiction, and I will so defend until I find facts to the contrary.

(Aside: Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is proper.)

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not going to agree to meet with anybody and go into any conspiratorial situation. This is a fundamental difficulty which we have to deal with, because if you are working inside a department, you should have complained to at least somebody before. Let the record show that there are no complaints that anybody can find of any of the things that were given to the Press. And if a person is working in a Government department, and the persons does that, let us ignore the fact that it is illegal, let us say that when your moral duty requires you to do something illegal in cohorts, you do it. So I am going to ignore that

I have told the Permanent Secretary, and I am saying now, I do not wish any legal examination of what the person has done. I am saying that they have a moral responsibility to their superiors to have said to them, something is going on in here that is not right. They had a moral responsibility to say so to the Permanent Secretary. Finally, they had a moral responsibility to say she same thing to the Minister. The *Nation* newspaper said in the editorial that they said that to me via the newspaper. Mr. Chairman, when we reach the point where publ^ officers can believe that the way to speak in the Administration is via newspapers, we are beginning a new system of degradation. I will never be party to that.

I am going to come back and respond to the other questions after the break.

Thank you.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move, Mr. Speaker, that this sitting be now suspended until 5.45 this evening.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 5.45 p.m. was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 5.10p.m.

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it now reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House reverted to Committee of Supply, Mr. R. P. BYER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

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

HEAD 36 -MINISTRY OF HEALTH (AS AMENDED) - $71751242(CONT'D)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman, I want to make two general points, because we only have half an hour before the guillotine, about the Ministry of Health.

It is the view of the Opposition, Sir, that, notwithstanding what is happening now, perhaps the functions of the Ministry of Health and the departments responsible for environmental matters need to be brought under one umbrella and co-ordinated in terms of policy formulation, planning and implementation. We see them as correlated and interrelated, Sir.

In this fifteen minutes, I am going to be asking some specific questions of the Minister rather than making any broad-based speech. I would like to know from the Minister to what extent his Government sees it as an important aspect of the democratic process to involve the general public in the direction of health care.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir, that has been answered already.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I did not hear the speech of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to

be repetitive or autologous in respect of anything that was said by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am glad that honourable Members recognise that I usually take my ball from a different end, whether it is the northern end or the southern end, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In respect of AIDS, it is my understanding that BAMP had a Committee on AIDS and that this Minister set up his own Committee on AIDS.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: AIDS, the disease. I wish to know from the Minister to what extent there is any co-ordination between the two committees, the BAMP committee and his own Committee, or indeed whether there is any friction caused by reason of the dichotomy that we now have.

In relation to drugs, Sir, the third question, the Drug Service, I believe, was mandated by the Minister to reduce its expenditure by $1 million. But at the same time, the cost of drugs has gone up by 20 per cent.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Members must not bother about where I get my information. I never worried when we were the Government about where you all got the information from, whether or not some people got the Central Bank Report before it was officially laid. That is part of the game. The Honourable Prime Minister believes that I have a report dealing with wage restraint.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He does not know where I got it from, other than it dropped off the back of a bus, and I was right behind and picked it up.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: So do not worry about the source of our information.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I thought it was a truck.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I thought it was a truck.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A truck, a truck. I said a bus, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, you did.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: An old-time bus.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am asking questions, Sir. In relation to the purchase of drugs, Sir, the Minister has said in a broadcast on VOB that if the Health Service is not dead, it is dying.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The National Health Service. As conceptualised and partially implemented by the Barbados Labour Party, that is dead, or dying. I want a specific, clear and concise statement from the Minister as to whether those aspects of the Health Service which were put in place by the Barbados Labour Party in respect of the Drug Scheme, the provision of free drugs for children, for the aged and indigent and for those who suffer from chronic diseases, are still in place. Because if they are still in place, the Minister's characterisation of the Health Service as dead, or dying, is indeed a misnomer, and the impression must not be given to the general public, in attempt to wipe out the historical record of the Barbados Labour Party in that area, that everything has gone and this Government is introducing something new. We have a duty to be honest, open and frank with the general public. So I want the Minister to let us know clearly whether those aspects of the National Health Service that were set up by the Barbados Labour Party in regard to the provision of free drugs for special categories of persons are still in place. 5.50 p.m.

The Minister, of course, has a brief, which he read beautifully and acted out the scene. He is best when he is with the files. Away from the files, it is a different matter. He had a brief which he read about the problems at the Psychiatric Hospital. Indeed, he would say that there are no problems. I wonder if he can tell us what is the position with the occupational therapist at the Psychiatric Hospital. We have been so well briefed, quite prepared and practiced that there will be a lot of mental telepathy passing between us. Is that the word? The honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) has dealt with that.

Sir, there are many matters that we have looked at.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Remember that he would only have about 15 minutes in which to answer.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How many minutes, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If you are to finish at 6 o'clock, he would only have 15 minutes in which to respond.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister will have that, Sir.

Sir, not having heard the Leader of the Opposition, because the Prime Minister and myself were out of the House at the time on a joint enterprise, I am a little rusty as to what he actually spoke of. This one is going to be very delicate, Sir, coming back to AIDS, and in no way am I trying to be an alarmist, and I trust that my comments do not get taken out of proportion by the Press. It is sensitive, and I hope that those who are covering this will respect the delicacy of the matter.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The man with the booming voice and nothing north of the shoulders but sawdust - you can hear him, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, as I said, this is delicate. It is our understanding, Sir, that there are a few cases of children in schools with, or suspected of having, AIDS. There was one case where a child remained in school for six months and then died. The delicacy of the matter is this, Sir. That if there is a situation where a child is in school with the disease and that is known to the Ministry of Health, the teachers responsible for that child feel that they have a right to be told in the most confidential way. They have to be careful, however it is put over, but the teachers are saying that they have a right to know.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir, I accept the advice from the Honourable Minister of Trade. Having raised it, I will not expand on it. I do not want it to get into public consumption, because it may become alarmist. But perhaps the Minister can speak with us privately. Being understandable, they know where we are coming from.

I did not hear the Minister speak. He was very much concerned with defending himself as a result of the recent newspaper lambastings that he got.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You say I am playing for time. Count them! He has seven questions that he has got to answer for me in 15 minutes.

There was a study on psychiatric and geriatric care carried out by PAHO. The study has been completed, but since then the present Government has commissioned an additional three studies. Could the Minister explain to us what the first study of PAHO revealed, why was it necessary to commission additional studies and what are the recommendations of these additional studies?

As I said, Mr. Chairman, I did not intend to make any speech. I wanted to ask some questions of the Minister, and I will be obliged for such answers as the Minister is able to give.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member was not here when I said that we are going to ensure that there is a full debate on the Ministry of Health in due course. I assure the honourable Member of that. But let me answer now, Sir, continuing with the answers to the Leader of the Opposition first

The Medical Aid Scheme has been also featured in recent times on *Gutterperk,* I believe in an orchestrated attempt to suggest that the Medical Aid Scheme has somehow been desiccated by the Democratic Labour Party. In fact, in 1986-1987 we spent $1 108 233.26, and in 1987-1988 the amount that will be spent is $1 871 622. There are 52 cases in 1987-1988 that have benefitted from the Medical Aid Scheme, as follows: 19 - neurosurgery, 17 - heart disease, 8 - optomology, 1 - renal failure, 1 - serious dental concern, 1 - dermatology, 3 - prothesis, that is artificial limbs, 2 - serious accidents - to children. One is in Toronto and one went to Boston. The young man is now back here receiving his therapy. In addition, there are about ten persons who received laser treatment for ophthalmological diseases outside of the hospital, but here in Barbados. 6.00p.m.

The scheme is run on the basis of recommendations from a Consultant. Any private consultant may recommend to the Medical Aid Scheme Committee, which emerges out of the hospital, which includes two consultants, another doctor and the Hospital Director. The two consultants must be consultants other than the one who is recommending the patient for the scheme, and one of the consultants must be from the specialty for which the treatment will be sought, and one of them would be the chairman of the Medical Staff Committee.

The specific case which the honourable Member referred to, and for which he wrote to the Ministry originally, was a case in which a private consultant, without having made any contact with the hospital in Barbados or the Ministry, advised a private patient to go off to get treatment in North America, and the treatment having been completed, the honourable Member wrote on behalf of the

person seeking to get assistance from the scheme. The Minister of the day, after consideration and after advice from his experts, determined that the case did not fall to be treated in the particular way. When I became Minister, the honourable Member wrote again. I reviewed the case and gave it the most careful consideration, I examined it in all of its ramifications, and I concluded that I could find no fault with the decision that had been made before, and as a matter of administrative probity, I did not interfere with the decision.

I wish to assure the honourable Member and you, Sir, Mr. Chairman, and all of Barbados, that the scheme that spends nearly $2 million is not a scheme to be taken lightly, and that all Barbadians qualify. I see in the newspapers that somebody has gone off to New Jersey for treatment. A regime has been established, which I think is a fair regime, and from which persons of all walks of life in Barbados have benefited, and will benefit, and I think it is only fair that everyone should follow the routine set out in that regime.

On the question which the honourable Member raised about a means test, it is only fair that where, for example, persons have medical insurance, the Government seeks to ensure that any costs which are incurred through use of this scheme that can be recovered from medical insurance would form part of the cost of the actual operation. The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) is aware of the methodology in more detail. The vast majority of the persons who have been treated, in particular the young children who have received open heart surgery, have received grants rather than loans.

The usual practice is for one of the social workers in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to examine the case in detail and make recommendations. Where the case is of such a nature that the urgency demands action, the decision is made to send the patient on, and all the examinations of means are done *ex post facto.*

The Minister presides over and makes the decision for each single case. In all of the cases which I have seen so far, if any decisions varied, the recommendations of the social worker have been in favour of the patient. That has been the position, and I hope we will continue in that vein.

Having acquired the services of a neurosurgeon, and because of the use of the CAT/scan, there has been some considerable saving in the Medical Aid Scheme, because the diagnoses are now made at an earlier stage and more definitively. The gamma camera connected with this kind of examination was donated from an anonymous source, a large sum of money, some $400 000, on condition that the source be not made known to the public.

On the operating theatre and its availability, the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, from his professional vantage point, dealt with this matter in an articulate and illuminating way, and so I do not wish to add more to it.

At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, at the moment we are embarking on a $14 million development programme which has caused some disruption in the normal regime which operates within the hospital, and the surgery that is elected and performed at the hospital is done on a priority basis. This does result in some inconvenience, and I agree that a person who has to go through the psychological trauma of preparation for a serious operation, as perceived especially by the person, must feel some difficulty if that person has to return three times, and I should like to apologise for the hospital that that actually happened. But I wish to assure the country that these are matters which all of us have to put up with as part of our collective quest for a higher quality of health care, and that is what we are seeking to give at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

At the polyclinics, the system of walk in is still available for emergencies. What we have sought to do, on the initiative of the honourable Member for St. James South (Hon. N. K. Simmons) when he was the Minister, is to have a more rational use of the time of both the experts and the patients by having an appointment system. It has had varied success. In some polyclinics it has worked extremely well, in others it is a little more ragged, but that is a manifestation of the quality of management in the respective polyclinics, and the variation in management capability ranges as far as the eight polyclinics we have. We are working on that, and hopefully we will have all of these matters put together in a standardise way, so that, eventually, we have a minimum high quality of management at the various polyclinics. But, by and large, the system is working well.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas raised matters on AIDS. The committee that was established is a national advisory committee on AIDS, and the persons were appointed in their own right for precisely the reason that one wanted it to be an advisory committee. There used to be two committees, one within the Ministry itself and a task force by BAMP. Those two committees agreed to divide the work between them, BAMP looking after the educational aspects of the AIDS work and the committee looking after the research and other aspects. After I became the Minister, and after consultation with the chairman of the task force and the chairman of the other committee, we agreed that they had carried the work as far as they could at that point and what was required was for the Government to take the responsibility for what is going to be a major aspect of our health care problem over the next few years as far as the eye can see. 6.10p.m.

That committee has been working assiduously. It has produced some six definitive papers, including a paper that deals specifically with the question relating to the schooling of children with AIDS. Time does not permit any examination, but suffice it to say that these six papers have been sent to the interested parties, including the teachers' and other organisations, in relation to the one dealing with school and children.

There were two children in schools who had AIDS. I do not know who they are. There are only two persons in Barbados who know completely all the information there is to know about all the AIDS people. Neither the Minister, nor the Permanent Secretary nor any official at the administrative level, has full information about any of the AIDS patients, because we believe, on advice from the professionals, that it is in the interest of the patients and the country to have the strictest anonymity in this very delicate area. I promise the honourable Member that we are going to discuss this in great detail, and I will give him the assurance that, subject to the approval of the Cabinet, after these matters have come back from the Committee and from the various places, and the committee has discussed them, we will formulate a policy and make that policy fully known and fully available to all honourable Members of this House.

I think there was one other point raised, about PAHO. There were three studies done; the other study was a study from Randal Phillips to determine the level of psychiatric need in the primary health care services. Indeed, arising out of the Randal Phillips' study, which was a purely local study, we appointed a community psychiatric consultant, who is now available to the polyclinic services.

The studies done by PAHO on behalf of the Government and the IADB are still in the processing stage. The final report is waiting for an IADB reaction. There are some aspects of this study which were not acceptable to the Government and, the final report is now being written. Again I give the honourable Member the assurance and this House that as soon as these documents are cleared by the Cabinet, the policies arising therefrom will be made available.

I think the time has run out right on the nose, Sir. I think I have answered all the questions that I can in the circumstances. The Ministry of Health has completed its development plan - it is a very thick document, I have the only copy that is final - and the Economic Affairs Ministry is preparing the full Development Plan for the country. The Health Development Plan will become its own document after the Development Plan has been worked out, as has been done in the past, so the development policy will form part of the wider discussion which we will have in that debate when we come to it.

I thank you for your patience, Mr. Chairman, and your indulgence.

The question that the sum of $71 751 242 under Head 36 - Capital -Ministry of Health, as amended, stand part of the Schedule, was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order No. 66(9), the time has come for all debate on the various Heads to end, and for the Heads remaining now to be voted for, to be put.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Without debate.

HEAD 14 - MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND IMMIGRATION (AS AMENDED) - $9 344 060

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $9 344 060 under Head 14 - Ministry of International Transport, Telecommunications and Immigration - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 14 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 70 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND IMMIGRATION - $4 603 500

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $4 603 500 under Head 70 - Capital - Ministry of International Transport, Telecommunications and Immigration - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 70 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 16 - MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE (AS AMENDED) - $8 645 611

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $8 645 611 under Head 16 - Ministry of the Civil Service - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 16, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 72 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE - (AS AMENDED) - $489 837

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $489 837 under Head 72 -Capital - Ministry of the Civil Service - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 72 - as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES - (AS AMENDED)- $13 273 191

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $13 273 191 under Head 25 - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries -as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 25 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 27 - METEOROLOGY - $1 062 891

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $1 062 891 under Head 27 - Meteorology - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 27 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 74 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF AGRI-CULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES (AS AMENDED) - $19 663 157

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $19 663 157 under Head 74 - Capital - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 74 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS -$2 350 376

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $2 350 376 under Head 28 - Ministry of Legal Affairs - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 28 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 29 - PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS -$59687

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $59 687 under Head 29 - Public Prosecutions - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 29 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 30 - POLICE - $9 358 504

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $9 358 504 under Head 30 - Police - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 30 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 31 - PRISONS - (AS AMENDED) - $1713420

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $1 713 420 under Head 31 - Prisons - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 31 -as amended stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 6.20 p.m.

HEAD 32 - FIRE SERVICE - $881 775

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $881 775 for Head 32 - Fire Service - stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. B. M. TAITT:'! beg to second that.

The question that Head 32 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 33 - PROBATION DEPARTMENT - $113007

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $113 007 for Head 33 - Probation Department - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 33 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 75 - CAPITAL- MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS - $3 644 000

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $3 644 000 for Head 75 - Capital - Ministry of Legal Affairs - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 75, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 34 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE-$86 416 711

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $86 416 711 under Head 34 - Ministry of Education and Culture - stand part.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

The question that the sum of $86 416711 under Head 34 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 76 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE (AS AMENDED) - $18867587

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $18 867 587, under Head 76 - Capital - Ministry of Education and Culture - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 76 -as amended -stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 35 - FOREIGN AFFAIRS - (AS AMENDED) - $10450287

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that Head 35 - as amended - in the sum of $10 450 287 stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 35 - as amended stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 77 - CAPITAL - FOREIGN AFFAIRS - $849560

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move, Mr. Chairman, that Head 77 - Foreign Affairs - in the sum of $849 560 stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 77 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 78 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF HEALTH -(AS AMENDED) - $23 042 385

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $23 042 385 under Head 78 -Capital - Ministry of Health - as amended stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 78 - as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - (AS AMENDED) - $7 696 935

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $7 696 935 under Head 37 - Ministry of Housing and Lands - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 37 — as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 79 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - $22 800 000

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $22 800 000 under Head 79 - Capital - Ministry of Housing and Lands - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 79 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 40 - MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE - (AS AMENDED) - $8 063 349

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $8 063 349 under Head 40 - Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 40 - as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 82 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE -$4000001

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $4 000 001 under Head 82 - Capital - Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that Head 82 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 42 - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS (AS AMENDED) - $45 897 737

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $45 897 737 under Head 42 - Ministry of Transport and Works - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 42 as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 84 - CAPITAL - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS -$38162602

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $38 162 602 under Head 84 - Capital - Ministry of Transport and Works - stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that

The question that Head 84, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 43 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND SPORTS - (AS AMENDED) - $21 678 720

Hon. W. W. HALL : Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $21 678 720 under Head 43 - Ministry of Tourism and Sports - as amended - stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that

The question that Head 43 - as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 85 - CAPITAL- MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND SPORTS - (AS AMENDED) - $11054680

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $11 054 680 under Head 85 - Capital - Ministry of Tourism and Sports - as amended stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 85 - as amended - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 50 - POST OFFICE - $4 711 645

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $4 711 645 under Head 50 - Post Office - stand part of the Schedule.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 50 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

6.30 p.m.

Clauses 1,2,3 and 4 were called and passed. The

Schedule, as amended, was called and passed.

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

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

BARBADOS TELEPHONE COMPANY (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1988

Order No. 3 was called - To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Barbados Telephone Company Act.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to provide for the apportionment of revenues collected either by internal carrier, that is, Barbados Telephone Company, or the external carrier, which happens in this case to be Barbados External Telecommunications Limited, between themselves.

Sir, Barbados External Telecommunications has been historically the collector of revenues in respect of calls made overseas. That was before the development of the telephone services in Barbados. It is still the collector for some calls, particularly calls received in Barbados. The collector of calls now originating in Barbados is the Barbados Telephone Company Limited.

There was an Act called the Cable and Wireless West Indies Act which provided for an apportionment, by Order, of those revenues collected for those calls. But the Cable and Wireless Act is no longer on the Statute Books, so it has become necessary to make a provision for the apportionment by some legislation. We believe this is the appropriate place to make it, because the Barbados Telephone Company is now a substantial collector of such revenues. This Bill now makes provision for an apportionment between the two companies in respect of such transmissions.

In Committee, I am going to move a small amendment to include not only telephone calls, because the apportionment is not only in respect of telephone calls, but also in respect of telex messages.

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

Hon. M. A. KING: I second that, Mr. Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Speaker, the Opposition does not have any quarrel with the principle of this Bill. I believe it reflects policy from our time in Government.

What I am concerned about, Sir, is the provision for fines at.subsection 6, on page 3 of the Bill:

> "Where the Barbados Telephone Company Limited or any approved external telecommunications carrier contravenes this section, it is guilty of an offence and liable.....to a fine of $5000, and in the case of a continuing offence.....$1000 a day..... "

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This is on page 3. It is the new Section 8A, subsection (6), on page 3 dealing with the penalty.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I believe that we are dealing with substantial revenues here. As the Bill is presently structured, it is more persuasive than compulsive. In 8A (1) there is a duty imposed on the companies insofar as the words, "shall be apportioned" apply, so there is a duty on the companies to apportion the revenue. If they do not so apportion the revenue, subsection (4) gives the Commissioner of Inland Revenue a discretionary power. He may require that that subsection 8A (1) be complied with, that is, he may require them to apportion the revenues and specify the type of books which they must keep and how they should keep the records.

What then follows is the penalty for breach of duty in subsection (6). If they contravene the section, the fine is only up to a maximum of $5 000.1 do not know if a naught is left off. We are dealing with companies handling substantial revenues which may have the opportunity, if they wanted to test the Government, or the Commissioner, to give a little trouble on this.

(Aside: Hon. P. M. GREAVES: $1 million?)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, I am not saying that the fine should be $1 million.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. I think you left off a naught The fine should be up to $50 000. One can only speculate when one is dealing with legislation, but if you

are a financial controller of one of these companies who wanted to give Government trouble, or wanted to hassle or hold revenues to assist the company's cash flow position at a particular time, you could filibuster and only be liable to $5 000. It may well be worth his while not to co-operate, because the maximum would be $5 000. 6.30p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know, Sir. I think if we were to put a fine at all, it should bear some proportionality to the type of offence, the type of revenues, and so on. I am not reflecting on the present operating procedure.

Mr. SPEAKER: I need to hear the honourable Member clearly. A lot of Members must keep silent

Mr. D. A. 'C. SIMMONS: You asked me to keep silent, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, no, I mean honourable Members. I want to hear you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh, you mean them, Sir, who will not keep quiet in their places when I have the floor, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Precisely.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am much obliged to you, Sir. They need to be taught how to behave, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am just saying, Sir, that we are into the area where there is potential for economic crime, but not reflecting on thp present operators. I am just looking down the road. I am saying that if you are going to put a fine, it should be meaningful.

Hon. M. A. KING: (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, whenever fines and penalties come to be considered, they are usually matters of discretion. You know what is a reasonable figure for a fine or penalty, or what is not a reasonable figure. The question is, how does one arrive at a figure which may be regarded in the circumstances as being reasonable?

The honourable Member for St. Thomas (Mr. D. A. C. Simmons) says that perhaps we have left off a naught and that the amount should be $50 000 rather than $5 000. What is the appropriate figure? I do not know.

You are talking in terms of $1 000 a day for a continuing offence, and the major part of the offence which this section seems to deal with, relates to that of a continuing nature. Let us forget that in subsection 2, any amount which is owed by companies is recoverable as a civil 'debt, so in addition to recovering what is justly due from the company, there is the extra penalty on top of it It is not a question of the company electing to be difficult and to pay the fine rather than to pay what is due, because what is due, in any case, whether the penalty is paid or not, is still recoverable as a debt and the penalty is on top of that

It seems to me that $5 000 is not an unreasonable figure, nor $1 000 for a continuing offence. But I give the honourable Member the assurance that if the matter needs to be reviewed in the light of any situations that may occur, there would be no problem in reviewing the question of penalty.

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

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. 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 and 2 were called and passed. . Clause 3

was called.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I am moving that the words "and other than transmissions" be inserted after the words "telephone calls" in line 4, sub-paragraph 8A(1), Sir, of that paragraph.

(Aside: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Explain what it is.)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, let me explain that the reason for this is that at this moment the apportionment is not only on telephone calls, but also on telex transmissions. Right now the two companies share the revenue derived from the transmission of messages by those means. As telecommunications is a very dynamic field, we do not presume that those will be the only form of transmission for which revenues can be apportioned. We should like to be sure that we cover the whole field by inserting the words "and other transmissions" so that it reads "overseas telephone calls and other transmissions."

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

The question that Clause 3, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 6.50 p.m.

On the separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Bill, as amended, was read a third time and passed and cited as the Barbados Telephone Company (Amendment) Act, 1988.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Government would like to give notice of a motion, and in order to do this, it will be necessary for the order of business to be recommitted. I seek leave, Sir, for the order to be recommitted.

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give -notice of the following Resolution, the purpose of which, of course, will be to give further opportunity to this Honourable Chamber to debate certain matters which they may not have been able to debate during these current Estimates. The Resolution reads as follows:

> "WHEREAS this Honourable House has, by its vote approved an Appropriation Bill containing, under appropriate Heads for the several services required, the estimated aggregate sums which are proposed to be expended, other than by statutory expenditure, during the 1988-89 financial year;
>
> AND WHEREAS it is expedient that this House have the opportunity of further consideration of those Heads of Expenditure which were passed without debate, pursuant to Standing Order 66(9);
>
> BE IT RESOLVED, subject to the observance of Standing Order 28(11) in relation to the Heads of Expenditure which have already been debated, that this Honourable House take note of the policies, programmes and projects detailed by the Estimates of Expenditure."

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Speaker, this has been a long day. This day began on Monday and ends on Friday, according to the Standing Orders. It has been very long, it has been tedious, it has been tiresome, it has been punctuated with a little acrimony at times.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that did not happen while I was in the Chair.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, Sir, you never called for order, you never had to, because everyone was very well-behaved. .

We have worked for a long time, and I was going to say that the debate was punctuated by those things as well as some flashes of levity, and there were some good debates interspersed.

I would like, before I move the adjournment of this meeting, to thank particularly the staff. By the staff I mean the Clerks, the Marshal, the Deputy Marshal, and certainly the reporters who worked all week for a very long time, including the technicians as well. In other words, Sir, I want to thank on behalf of the Government, in fact on behalf of the whole House, all those who have had to work to bring this long day to an end, and for this we are indeed grateful.

To some extent, Sir, and in a more limited way, I would like to thank the other side for the contributions which they made. My one regret is that we did not make any greater progress in terms of the debating of Heads than we have made. But that is the way things go.

Sir, I do not think there is very much more for me to say, except that I think we deserve a little rest.

I move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, April 5,1988 at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Sir, in seconding the motion for the adjournment of the House, I wish to join the honourable Member in thanking the staff. This has become a very strenuous exercise for Members of the House as well as for the staff. Obviously about 35 to 36 hours of continuous debate over a period of time is a very stressful exercise. The preparation that goes into it is obviously equally stressful.

From the position of the Opposition, I am very satisfied with the performance of my colleagues and myself in the House on these measures. I think we have notched up about 17.43 hours of debate. I believe the Government notched up 16.04 hours of debate.

Sir, even the honourable Member will concede that the Opposition, in many instances had to start the debate on issues. When a Head is introduced one has to start the ball rolling, and it usually starts on the side of the Opposition,

and I am very pleased with the issues that have come up in this debate arid the way in which we have performed. Some of them are of great fundamental importance, Mr. Speaker, and although you were not here in the Chamber, I could see from the occasions on which you came in how much you obviously enjoyed listening to the debate, whether it be on the Task Force on unemployment, state enterprises or the National Assistance Board.

I say for the Chairman of Committees that it is usually a tough task to sit for a continuous period in which his participation in the debate is limited only to moments of lightening the tension and the odd comment which he could make. I have always marvelled at how the Chairman of Committees manages to get over this task. However, Sir, I look forward to continuing this matter. 7.00 p.m.

The question that the House adjourn until Tuesday, April 5, 1988 at 12 o'clock noon, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 7.02 p.m.

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