

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986-91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 25, 1988.

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

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, J.P., (Speaker)

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

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

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

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

Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., 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)

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

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

• L. L. BRATHWAITE, Esq., J.P.

E. BOURNE, Esq.

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

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

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

R. L. MORRIS, Esq., B.A., Cert. Ed.

P. J. M. MILLER, Esq.

R. P. BYER, Esq., LL.B., L.E.C.

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

" Prayers were led by Fr. Ivan Harewood. Mr.

SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, October 18, 1988.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes of Proceedings of this Honourable Chamber for the meeting that took place on 18th October, 1988 be taken as read and be confirmed.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I beg to second that.

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Accountant General for the financial year 1987-1988.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1988.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Fire Service for the year 1987.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of a Bill to provide for the custody and preservation of public archives, public records and other documents.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member for St. Thomas, difficulty and inconvenience for residents of Dunscombe, Porey Spring, Spring Farm and Content in obtaining travel by buses between 6.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. on weekdays.

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

1. Is the Minister aware that the residents of Dunscombe, Porey Spring, Spring Farm and Content in the parish of St. Thomas are experiencing grave difficulty and inconvenience in obtaining travel by buses of the Transport Board between the hours of 6.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. on weekdays?
2. Is the Minister aware that the problems are caused by a shortage of buses on the route and the fact that the buses originating in St. Andrew are full by the time they reach the aforesaid districts?
3. If the answers to the foregoing are in the affirmative, will the Minister -
 - (a) state what are his plans for the alleviation of the difficulties, and
 - (b) give favourable consideration to having buses originate at Dunscombe on the half hour between the hours of 6.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m.?

Mr. SPEAKER: By the same honourable member, searches and arrests made for possession of narcotic drugs or trafficking.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs:

Will the Minister please state:

- (a) The number of persons stopped and searched by Officers of the Royal Barbados Police Force on suspicion of possession of narcotic drugs or trafficking therein between January 1, 1988 and September 30, 1988;

- (b) the districts in which searches were carried out;
- (c) the number of prosecutions which followed such activities by the Royal Barbados Police Force;
- (d) the number of arrests for possession of cannabis in the said period;
- (e) the number of arrests for possession of cocaine in the said period;
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- (f) the number of prosecutions for cannabis in the said period;
- (g) the number of prosecutions for possession of cocaine in the said period?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable member, discomfort and inconvenience experienced by staff and pupils of Welches Primary School. **

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Minister of Education and Culture:

1. Is the Minister aware that, at the Welches Primary School in St. Thomas the staff and pupils are experiencing severe discomfort and inconvenience by reason of the following defects in the school building:-
 - (a) leaking roofs;
 - (b) a ceiling on the point of collapse; »
 - (c) windows about to fall off;
 - (d) faulty and insanitary toilets;
 - (e) an office door about to fall off;
 - (f) a lack of oscillating fans in a hot building; »>.
 - (g) an unfenced playing area;
 - (h) a rotten floor immediately above the Head Teacher's Office?
2. Is the Minister also aware that the said school is designated as a hurricane shelter and, in its present physical condition, is thoroughly unfit for such use?
3. If the Minister is aware of the aforesaid defects, will the Minister state what are Government's proposals for remedial work and how soon it is

proposed to commence work?

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Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable member, preparation of Development Plan.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Prime Minister:

Will the Prime Minister please state:

- (a) Whether the Government is preparing a Development Plan;
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, what is the period to be covered in and by the said Plan;
- (c) What is the likely date of publication of the said plan, if any?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable member, condition of Hilton Hotel.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Minister of Housing and Lands:

- (a) Is the Minister aware that the Hilton Hotel is in a state of disrepair and that the same leaks very badly to the discomfort and inconvenience of guests, most recently between October 4 and October 14, 1988?
- (b) If the Minister is aware, will the Minister state what are Government's plans, if any, for remedial work?

12.25 p.m.

QUESTION RE EMPLOYMENT OF FIRMS AND COMPANIES

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Minister responsible for Community Development:

Will the Minister please state:-

1. What is government's, policy with respect to the employment of firms or companies for the purpose of carrying out building and/or construction works for Statutory Boards under his Ministry?
2. Whether the Child Care Board employs any particular firm or company to carry out building and/or construction works on its behalf?
3. If the answer to 2 above is in the affirmative, will the Minister please state the name of the said firm or company?

QUESTION RE CARIBBEAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Prime Minister:

Will the Prime Minister please state whether it is a fact that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has incurred losses in its current financial year at a rate of ' \$300,000.00 per month during the first four months of the current financial year?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Prime Minister explain the reason for or cause of the said losses?

If the answer is in the negative, will the Prime Minister state what, if any, were the monthly losses of the said Corporation?

QUESTION RE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs:

1. Will the Minister please state:

- (a) whether the Commission of Inquiry into the death of Michael Agard at Glendairy Prison has reported to the appropriate and competent authority and, if so, on what date;
- (b) whether the Government has been made aware of the contents of the Report if the Commission has in fact reported;
- (c) whether the Government intends to lay the report in Parliament or otherwise make it public?

If the answer to the paragraph (c) hereof is in the affirmative, will the Minister state when it is proposed to make the said report public?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the end of notice of Questions. I want to inform the honourable Member that I have not ruled out his other question, but I needed a bit more time to give it more detailed study, and I would hope that you will be able to have it in by next Tuesday.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, a Bill to provide for the custody and preservation of public archives, public records and other documents, was read a first time.

OBITUARY SPEECHES RE
THE LATE W. C. B. HINDS

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the House has already noted through you, Sir, the passing of the former Speaker of this House, the late W. C. B. Hinds. He was laid to rest last Friday and his funeral was attended by several members of this House as well as by several former parliamentarians and by many members of the public.

I had the honour to pay tribute to his passing and to him in the eulogy which I delivered at his funeral service; and therefore on this occasion, Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to be as long as I was then in recounting his career.

Honourable Members know that Mr. Hinds was born in Boscobelle some 70 years ago. He attended the Boscobelle Boys' School and later the Parry School after winning a Vestry Exhibition.

He had a very varied career. He was a teacher for a period of time. He subsequently joined the Royal Barbados Police Force and graduated as the best recruit of the year obtaining the Baton of Honour. He remained in the Police Force for a while, but was obviously dissatisfied with the failure of the force at that time to recognise merit. He subsequently operated his own businesses, first an advertising business and thereafter the business of a newspaper.

The newspapers, Sir, which he operated are well known in Barbados. They were well known for their candour, for the exposure of ills in the community whether it was inefficiency in Government or in the private sector. His sources of information were varied and more often than not the information which he obtained was very accurate.

I said, Sir, in the eulogy to him that he performed a service then, a service of ventilating public concern about the abuses of Government, the use of power, etcetera, and I think that history will agree with that inference about this part of his career.

He first entered active politics as an independent, but I do recall when I first heard of him, whether he was a member or no* I do not know, that he certainly gave pretty strong support in those days to the late the RL Honourable Errol Barrow who I believe for some period of time was also his legal adviser. He subsequently joined the Barbados Labour Party and contested elections on behalf of the party and caused perhaps the greatest upset in the electoral history of Barbados. I believe that there were not many people who when his name was announced as contesting the seat against the present President of the Senate would have given him a ghost of a chance of winning, but he did win and he went on from there to win the elections in 1966, 1971, 1976 and 1981, and he became the 72nd Speaker of

this House over which he presided until his illness, and finally he resigned from the House in 1984 on account of his illness.

I should like, Sir, having recounted historically chronologically the highlights of his career, to concentrate on Burton Hinds, the parliamentarian in this House, because I first came face to face with him when I entered Parliament in 1971. I knew of him before as I do-recall there was a time when he lived on Church Hill just near to the Foundation School where he and his then first wife, I believe, rented a home, and I would see this gentleman immaculately dressed and I was told that he was Mr. W. C. B. Hinds. I later got to know a bit more about him because he was a friend of the late Reverend Grant Barrow, who as you know, Sir, was married to my adopted mother, the late Madam Elise Ifill Barrow. 12.35p.m.

I would meet Mr. Hinds from time to time or see him in the company of the Rev. Grant Barrow as well as in the company of my late adopted mother but I never got close to him personally except when I came in touch with him as the parliamentarian.

No matter how enthusiastic we are about politics, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are still mostly neophytes when we first come to the House and I do not think that there is a member who has passed through these portals or, indeed, any House in the Commonwealth who does not in retrospect reflect on the degree of trepidation that you have in your first years in the House of Assembly if not, certainly, in the first days and into the first months, most likely in the first years, and you do look around you to see who there is will teach you about some of the happenings of the House, Sir, some of the finer points.

I recall on the first day in the House, on either the first or the second occasion, I rose to make a point and to intervene in a debate contrary to the Standing Orders of the House, and I was promptly pounced upon by the then Honourable Member for St. John, I do not think he was the Right Honourable Member then, for not recognizing that there were Standing Orders and I must confess, Sir, I held my head between my legs, so to speak, in a bit of shame and, probably, I believe, my enthusiasm fell quite a few pegs.

I recall there were three members who came to my assistance on that occasion after the House adjourned. One was the Honourable Burton Hinds, and the other two were Sir Edwy Talma, the then Honourable Member for Christ Church East and the late Capt. George Fergusson, the then Honourable Member for St. Michael West; and they counselled me that one of the things that you need to be armed about is if you want to get into the cross battle early,

you have to be very well prepared on the Rules of Parliament otherwise you could make a fool of yourself completely.

At that stage I remember Mr. Hinds counselling me it was necessary to have a thorough understanding of the Rules of the House and to read particularly May's Parliamentary Practice about which he thought I should have no difficulty being a lawyer, and his view was that with that behind you you could feel secure sometimes to confront your opponents and, even without the detailed knowledge that Ministers may have from files and what's not, you are in a position to make a tremendous contribution to the debate.

He was a person who knew the Rules of Parliament and I must say that he used them sometimes almost ruthlessly in debate.

I have been in this House to witness the late Burton Hinds on his feet talking on several occasions in Committee of the House, and sometimes for several hours and, particularly, on subjects such as education and health and it was a mistake for any Minister possessed of the file to believe that Mr. Hinds had not acquired almost as detailed, if not sometimes, a more detailed knowledge of the subjects under discussion than the Minister may have acquired. Sometimes he had information which was not even available to the Minister at that time.

Sir, I would meet with him in the caucus before we came to Parliament and, once again, you would believe that there was nothing in a particular subject to be debated in Parliament that day until his fertile mind started working and the wealth of his research became available to you. He was always well prepared with information. He was always well prepared with questions.

In fact, he had the habit of asking several questions, particularly on those subjects on which he spoke so frequently in the House, education and health.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas reminds me that on one occasion Mr. Hinds asked 102 questions and were placed on the Order Paper so that he was very concerned, very meticulous in his preparation, very concerned about Parliament.

I am told, Sir, in fact I know from my research, it appears that Mr. Hinds was never ever late for a sitting of the House except he was ill or there had to be something extraordinary. He was punctual in attending sessions of Parliament and there are very few sessions of Parliament that he ever missed during the time that he was a Member of Parliament. He was very concerned about it, Sir.

I saw him as a good parliamentarian, a skillful debater and a very formidable opponent to be up against in this House, or, indeed elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, he sat on the Opposition benches for ten years and in 1976 he became the Speaker of this House. Once again I was present at the time that he moved to sit in the Chair which Your Honour now sits in and his election to that high office was quite controversial. Once again one must record and it is already recorded in history, that the Upper House, the Senate, was kept waiting for some time whilst various points of view concerning his suitability for the office were put before the House.

I do not, in moving this motion at all, want to re-open those battles. What I want to say, however, is that whilst he sat in the House, his rulings were never to the liking of each one of us, on either side. I have seen him ruled strongly and, probably, severely against honourable members on the then Government side. I have seen him do the same with honourable members on the other side, the then Opposition side.

There are one or two members, I believe, Sir, either for whom he took a special interest or who took a special interest in him, or dislike, as the honourable Member for St. Lucy says, but I can recall an honourable member on our side of the House who used to tremble if he had to get up to make a point, and I can recall the clashes between another honourable member now on the front bench on the other side and the late Speaker, Sir, but he ruled the House with a firm hand.

I think all of us will have to agree that he ruled the House with a firm hand. There are times the House will be unruly, Sir. There are times that in the House there will be a great deal of give and take between both sides to be disturbing. 12.45 p.m.

As we get nearer and nearer to elections, the House even becomes more difficult to control. And obviously, Sir, we are a House of persons who are in the political sense adversaries, and there is a certain degree of partisanship that one witnesses. We have not reached the stage in Barbados where, as in England, once you have become Mr. Speaker that your seat is no longer contested and therefore Mr. Speaker on one day.....

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not know if the Prime Minister is thinking of becoming Mr. Speaker, Sir. Watch him'.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE:..... but Mr. Speaker on one day, Sir, comes into the arena the next day and therefore there is always a certain reservation in the minds of the public and among some parliamentarians as to how objective a Speaker can really become on all issues.

But I think I can say that Mr. Hinds ruled the House very firmly and most of his Rulings, even those of which some of us disagreed were in accordance with the Standing Orders of the House. Perhaps, he was like the person who followed the letter of the law to the "t" without necessarily following the spirit sometimes. We may not all agree but I believe we all agree that he was a good parliamentarian and that he conducted this House with a great degree of decorum and dignity.

Mr. Speaker, it is always for me a sad occasion in this House, either to move, to second or to speak on any Resolution which records the passing to the Great Beyond of any of our Members or any person associated with this House in any way, and whilst I recognize that death must come inevitably to all of us, yet I believe, and in the case of Mr. Hinds in particular there is a period of preparation sometimes for us to expect death to come, yet I think when it does come it is always a sad occasion no matter whether you knew the person as a political opponent, political ally, political colleague or political friend. I must confess that when his widow phoned me and told me of his passing that I felt the passing of such a person in a very special way.

As I said, when I first came to the House, I learnt some things from him, some of which I treasure, others of which of course, I had to bring my own judgement to bear on. But I believe that at the end of the day when I look back on that period, I learnt from him how to prepare for debate, the skill of debate, the necessity to be conversant with the Rules of this House, the necessity to conform with the Rulings from this House. I have never known myself, there may be, but I cannot recall any occasion when I was in the House that Mr. Hinds was ever sent out of the House, or indeed refused a Ruling which was given to him to obey a Ruling which was given to him. He might sometimes with a look ask Mr. Speaker of the day or Mr. Chairman of Committees to give him much more latitude, but I cannot recall any such occasion that he had not conformed with the Rules of the House.

I believe that we have lost therefore, Sir, a person who has made a contribution to the civic life of this country, a significant contribution and to the Parliament of this country.

We regret his passing and as is customary, I would ask that the Resolution which is before this House be, once it is accepted, drawn to the attention of his widow and his sons.

I therefore, with a certain reluctance, but as a sense of duty move this rather sad Resolution, Sir, before this House.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself and the Government with the tributes paid to the late Burton Hinds by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

I did not know Mr. Hinds well before the General Elections of 1981. What I knew of him then, I knew it only through his newspaper called *The Truth* and from my », colleagues who served within the years 1966-1971. The paper began at a time when I resided outside of Barbados and when I returned to Barbados in 1963, the paper was then still flourishing. I believe that some persons opened his newspaper with trepidation, but my understanding is that those persons were always given some prior warning of what to expect in its pages.

Laughter.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: In 1964, Sir, he through this very newspaper, waged a relentless battle against the funding of the sugar cane windfall monies that were being funded, Sir, for the workers' benefit. And I believe, Sir, that that is when he first came to my knowledge. *

I then got to know him better when I became a Member of this Chamber, Sir, in 1971. And judging from what I have heard of him, my own concept of him, from what my colleagues had told me of him, I could not help but study the man Burton Hinds. He shadowed, Sir, the Ministries of Education and Health, but yet he was always prepared for any debate on any subject except perhaps, Sir, Finance. I do not think, Sir, that at any time, I have found any one who was as prepared as he was on matters that came before the House. He seemed to find holes in some of the most innocuous measures.

I do not believe, Sir, that he would want to be remembered and spoken of exactly otherwise than as he was, a man of controversy. He was no doubt, Sir, endowed with a very powerful mind that paid great attention to the most minute of details. I get the impression, Sir, that there was always a suspicion lurking in his mind that in some seemingly insignificant matter, there lay some trap he was determined to find. He was a prolific asker, Sir, of parliamentary questions. I am not so sure that the 102 Questions was correct, except that perhaps it might be spread over the whole Parliamentary Session, I believe.

But, Sir, I do remember what I call his A to Z Questionnaire that he posed to the then Minister of Education.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The honourable Prime Minister now who was then Minister of Education is proud to say he answered every single question asked by the then Member.

His attitude, Sir, towards Parliament did not always find favour with his political Leader. Those of us who served on the Committee for producing a new set of Standing Orders will remember that the Leader of the Opposition, the then Tom Adams, will remember his insistence; on imposing limitations on speeches in Parliament which no doubt came about as a result of Mr. Hinds' proclivity for very lengthy speeches. The feeling towards the Leader, Sir, was reciprocated by Mr. Hinds. I will not forget the venom on one occasion when he spat out some words to the discomfiture of his then Leader. He said "No one leads me in here." And he repeated it, "No one leads me in here." These were said right on the Floor of this Chamber, Sir. 12.55 p.m.

Sir, his name was associated with controversy and confusion. Some people saw him as a mischief maker, but there was another side of Mr. Hinds. One of our sittings, I recall, was characterised by controversy, confusion, maybe even bedlam. It was usually an atmosphere in which I believe one would think that the late Mr. Hinds would thrive, but I sat there and I watched him and I could see that he was not enjoying what was going on. So he rose from his seat and he appealed to the reason of honourable members, and when he took his seat again normalcy had returned to this Chamber. That has stood out in my mind, Sir, for a long time.

Sir, I was not a member of this House when he first served as Speaker, but I returned to this Chamber before illness forced him out of office. As a Speaker he knew the rules of the House and of debate. At times he would apply them leniently, at times rigidly and at times he would bend the rules, and not always elegantly. He was a fighter and he fought with the very first weapon that came to his hand. He never looked for the rapier when the bludgeon would do. He never made pretensions to being an angel. That would be too dull a role for him.

My mind goes back to an instance in 1976 which I do not think it is appropriate to recall on this occasion.

At the personal level he and I had a reasonably good relationship. I recall an occasion when I rose to speak following one of the Ministers of his own party. The then Speaker turned to me and he said: "Teach them! Teach them!" Before he became Speaker, on the few occasions that he would leave his seat, because he very seldom left his

seat in Parliament, we would meet outside in the corridors and we would discuss a wide range of matters, but particularly he liked to speak to me about persons in the north with whom he had been to school at the Parry School, and later when he had left these Chambers he would send me messages from his sick bed by a mutual friend about matters pertaining to my constituency of which he became aware.

He loved Parliament, he loved sitting in this Chamber. He may not have always applied the normal rules to Parliament, but it is my opinion that he made a significant contribution to Parliament, and it is for this reason that I join the Leader of the Opposition in supporting the Resolution.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I should just wish to say a few words about the late Burton Hinds. The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition have said almost all.

I met Mr. Hinds in 1971 and over the years grew closer to him in 1975 and 1976 in the period leading up to the St. Philip North bye-election, and then after I came in this House as the representative for St. Philip North when there were six of us - five of us at first in the Opposition and then six when the now Senator Miller came in May of 1976 - and all that the Leader of the Opposition has said about Mr. Hinds' resourcefulness and his capacity to be critical and to dig beyond the surface like a beaver to try and to get to the heart of matters before Parliament, or indeed to give himself the leeway to oppose or to let the Government be aware of the vast knowledge that he possessed of a particular Department, all of those qualities I saw at first hand.

On the platform Burton Hinds had a special style and brand of platform address. It was fashioned around histrionics, it was fashioned around repetition for emphasis and the use of the rhetorical. "You hear me? You understand? You understand me?" Those were some of his pet phrases and some of the armory that he used to be an effective platform speaker.

In full flight he would seldom speak without kicking. His legs used to tremble. I have seen him do it in the House of Assembly on one occasion in 1976 and he gave the impression of a person fully involved in what he was putting over and believing it; a man possessed. I am obliged to the honourable member for St. Lucy for that neat way of expressing it.

Of course on the platform he trespassed, almost on every occasion that I heard him, on the law of slander and yet was never the recipient of a writ from those against whom he was inveighing with this great vigour. I do not

believe that at all times he was able to plead fair comment or justification, and I wonder what it was that prevented those he was attacking from seeking refuge in the law court, • because he could not be dismissed either as a man of straw or as a nuisance, but such was the awe that Burton Hinds had built up around himself over the years, starting with the newspaper business when I believe that many thought twice about the wisdom of pursuing legal action, even though he had sailed close to the wind, or in fact had gone into the waters of slander.

I knew his newspaper very well, Sir, and in London as a student it was always a treat to receive copies of the Truth. He was a master of the headline, many of which I cannot repeat in this Chamber today, but essentially they captured the sense of the moment.

He loved innuendo. I think the Honourable Leader of the House has said that many lived in fear of the issue of the Truth on the days of publication, and that I believe to be so, Sir. Certainly there was a famous motor car whose number appeared weekly. "Car M So-and-So, where are you?" And a personal battle was waged through that newspaper and drove fear into the heart of the owner of that motor car. Similarly, there were two famous employees of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who were often the recipients of the blows from the stinging pen of Burton Hinds, the journalist, and Olga Dubois. 1.05 p.m.

But for all of his apparent rumbustious style on the platform and indeed on occasion in Parliament, perhaps in Parliament, it would be more appropriate to say his forceful and incisive style, for all of that I think at heart Burton Hinds philosophically was a conservative. Burton Hinds believed in all of the virtues of conservatism and capitalism. He made no secret of it, that he liked to live well, to eat well. He was not a good drinker, he would have a little sherry or wine from time to time, but he loved dressing in style even though he used to be teased by us in the party about the size of his pants legs; but he liked to be dressed in the third piece as often as possible; to walk erect with his hand in his pocket and to drive Chevrolets. He once said in a court case, I love Chevrolets, and that told you something of the man.

He was grievously hurt when he became Speaker about the controversy that surrounded his accession to the Chair, and "he obviously was not a man who forgave and forgot. He kept it in the back of his mind and on one occasion we know that one who had been most vehement in his criticism of him and his accession, on the departure of that Member from the House Mr. Hinds found occasion to speak in terms of an auctioneer about the departure of that honourable Member, which was a clear indication that he was still smarting, even after two years, from the attack. I

think he felt, Sir, that the House could have risen above those matters which other Members felt impelled them to object, and that was because he had a view of Parliament as being not only supreme, but of having its own majesty, and he recognised that whatever political differences there may have been before the election, so long as we were in here we ought to have conducted ourselves in full recognition of the supremacy and majesty and dignity of Parliament, and he felt that Parliament had been scandalised. He used similar language to explain it to a few of us some time after and indeed on one occasion since his illness when I visited him, I was teasing him about it and he said, "but they were offending the Governor-General and the Senate."

But be that as it may, one has to be fair on these occasions because to some extent we are speaking for history. Burton Hinds knew the rules of the House better than anyone I have ever come across. In his application of the rules, however, I think if we are to be objective, there were times when an inflexibility of character prevented him perhaps from giving the latitude that the circumstances and the debate merited, but he could not be faulted on his knowledge of the rules and of his understanding of the Rules. As I say, it has been said of some judges that some judges have been harsh judges but good judges; Lord Coward was one; and in similar vein I think of Burton Hinds as a Speaker, harsh but strict and unbending.

I believe he had had an experience as a teacher at one time and perhaps that was the schoolmaster effect coming out

In the days when the Opposition benches were sparsely populated prior to 1976 it was Burton Hinds with a few others, four, then five, who fought a political battle on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party and its supporters, never shirking from the responsibilities attendant on parliamentarians, and indeed in all of the six or seven months prior to the election in 1976 when I was able to observe him at close range, I can only say that he was a stalwart on our side and committed to performing his role as a parliamentarian with all the gusto he owned and within the rules of the House.

I remember him, Sir, being especially adept on the motions for the adjournment. Many were the times, Sir, when the other side, the Government had to ask him to stop, because on the motion for the adjournment he would, as it were, catch a second wind and carry on, and that was a testimony to, of course, his physical stamina but also his zeal as a parliamentarian, and he has left behind certain qualities which it behoves many of us to emulate. His commitment to the business of Parliament, his zeal in pursuing the people's business in Parliament, were two qualities that could not be taken away from Burton Hinds and are two qualities that I think are worthy of emulation.

I think fondly of him, Sir, and I regret his passing and associate myself with the tender of condolences to his family.

I am obliged to you Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to begin by saying that I knew the late Burton Hinds as a neighbour rather than a politician, and out of that neighbourliness grew a kind of friendship that had a lot to do with my political involvement. As a young man in those days without proper transportation but eager to be on time, the late Burton Hinds had to pass my way to get to his office. The transport system was never at its best, but he never failed to ask me if I needed his assistance, and I believe more so because we were going almost to the same spot. At that time I was working as a pharmacist with the City Council and he had then moved his business into, I think Lakes Folly. 1.15p.m.

It is during those periods of transportation that I got to learn something more of him, I believe, than others may have for he saw me as a youngster trying to make my way in life; and he would, from time to time, raise topics and, invariably those topics ventured on the political system at the time.

At that time, he never indicated to me that he was for one party or another and it was an ideal situation for me to be in because one wanted to hear from others who had taken that deep interest in the political life and structure of this country.

Of course, his comments were not always complimentary on one side or another but he was very quick to point out some of the inefficiencies and he would venture to give what he considered some of the solutions to those problems and I became very much impressed with my limited knowledge as he was able to inform me as to some of these problems and how they arose.

It is, therefore, not surprising to me then that when I came into this House of Assembly I had not the fear or feeling of discomfort as may have been expressed by others, simply because during that period we were able to develop a relationship that made me feel that just at the beginning of our relationship that he would be willing to encourage me along and I am sure that he would not hide it because when I became a candidate for the election, he was one of the people who gave me encouragement and he saw me as a person, not as a political person, but, again, I believe, out of our deliberations from time to time, as a person who wanted to be a part of a system for contribution and, I believe, that it is because of that kind of interest that his willingness to give encouragement to me at that time was not based on any political affiliation but a genuineness to see someone who wanted to make a contribution.

So, in this Parliament, for the short time that I was here, I enjoyed his presence because it was not the type that bothered me because I understood him but I felt for some of the others who did not understand how to deal with such an individual and it is because of that he may not have endeared himself in the way he should have, or could have, had we been able to see him differently from the angle which he appeared to be.

Nonetheless, I was very sad at his passing, particularly when he became ill and I am sure that there is some good in all of us and just as I can recall that help in need at a time, certainly, there must be others who could testify for a similar kind of assistance and it is in that vein that I associate myself with those remarks that would do justice to what I consider a man who was misunderstood at times, and at other times, difficult to kind of interpret his actions.

I am sure that his presence here, as all of you have said, must have done some good to Parliament and I am sure if there is one thing we have in common are the remarks which the honourable Member for St. Thomas just made that I believe that Parliament must be seen in that majestic fashion.

It must carry with it that dignity and respect and as long as he had believed that it should be so, even if it did not appear that he had done so, I share the view that Parliament must remain in that supreme position.

And so, I want to join you on this occasion of grief in passing your Resolution and I will instruct the Clerk to do so as this Resolution is being passed as I ask you to stand for two minutes in silence as a mark of passing in that respect.

Members stood in silence for two minutes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I want to move the suspension of the Standing Orders at this stage and I so move that Standing Orders Nos. 6,16,18,20,42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 1

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

On motion of Hon. 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.

• *Order No. 1(a) was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$2 628 259 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1988/89, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1988-89, No. 1, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.*

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, in moving the passing of this Resolution for the sum of \$2 628 259 in respect of Head 15, Cabinet Office, the sum of \$6 700 is required to supplement the provision already approved by this Honourable Chamber. 1.25p.m.

The provision in the current Estimates at Subhead 1, General Administration, Object No. 12, Operating Expenses is \$25 162. That sum will be inadequate to meet the expenditures anticipated for the remainder of the Financial Year, the current Financial Year, and it is therefore estimated that supplementary provision in the sum of \$6 700 would be required. The Operating Expenses Vote which is one that is common to most Ministries and departments meets normally what I term the housekeeping operation of the department. In this case, it would relate to the Cabinet Office. And there is a sum that was not included in the original estimate and that related to provisions for the celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the establishment of Parliament in this country which will take place during the year 1989. And before the end of this Financial Year, certain expenditures in that connection would be required. For this and other reasons, a supplement is being asked for this particular Object No. 12, that is Operating Expenses \$6 700.

Under Object No. 30 of Subhead 1, General Administration, the Contingencies item. Again, most Ministries have a Contingencies Vote and it is to meet certain expenditures which may not be anticipated in respect of the details, but it is known that from time to time certain events may occur which may require the payment of funds from Government sources. The general source from which this is

met is the Cabinet Office, but in other cases, it is sometimes met from the specific department.

We have already expended during the year some \$64 916.75 on Contingencies and these have covered a variety of circumstances, injury to the person, damage to motor cars, certain reimbursements and so on, but largely in the area of injury to persons or sometimes injury or damage to property.

In This particular instance, the sum of \$662 000 is being requested to supplement the amount approved in the Estimates and of this amount, a sum amounting to \$548 919 is in respect of a claim, there is a claim, an outstanding claim for compensation relating to the seizure by the Comptroller of Customs of a motor vessel called the, "Ray Crest".

Now this particular vessel was seized by the Customs Department in 1985. So this is a matter that dates back for a few years. It was seized in 1985 and it was seized under suspicion that there was importation of unauthorized cargo. The matter went before the Magistrate's Court, District A Magistrate's Court, and there was a ruling in favour of the Comptroller of Customs and the "Ray Crest" was condemned as forfeited. So the boat was seized, the matter was taken to court and the Magistrate ruled in favour of the Comptroller of Customs.

The owner then appealed against that decision in the Magistrate's Court, the decision of the Magistrate's Court, and the matter then went to the Divisional Court on the 10th of July, 1987. The Divisional Court upheld the appeal. So that the Order condemning the "Ray Crest" was set aside and the owner was awarded costs.

What we are seeking to do here by this Resolution therefore is to arrive at a settlement arising out of that particular case, because in the meantime, the boat became a complete wreck, is derelict and certain claims in respect of that boat were therefore made by the owner - these may be identified as the loss of the vessel, the loss of the fishing equipment on the vessel including navigational equipment as well, the loss of boat, tool and equipment and other kinds of equipment which are found on those boats, as well as loss of earnings.

There has been quite an amount of discussion between the legal representatives on this particular matter, and after considerable examination, this particular settlement has been arrived at and we are now seeking the funding in order to settle that outstanding claim. As I said, it is not normal to have an amount to deal with these matters provided in the Estimates from the start. We seek it by way of supplementary and we normally have to wait for the proceedings of the court to take their due course in

accordance with the Rule of Law. And that is mainly the need to supplement the Contingencies item by the sum of \$662 000 substantially for the settlement in respect of the "Ray Crest".

In respect of Subhead 3, Conferences and Delegations, a sum of \$1 388 000 has been provided in the current Estimates for the year 1988-89. 1.35p.m.

We anticipate that that amount of money will be inadequate to meet the Government's requirements for the servicing of conferences and delegations and so we are requesting supplementary provision from this Committee of \$400 000 which would bring the vote, when this supplementary is taken into account, if approved by this Committee, to some \$1.7 million for expenditure on this Item.

If we reflect on the amount of money that has been expended over the past three or so years for Conferences and Delegations, we will see that last year the sum of \$1.8 million was spent and I believe in the preceding two years the sums must be in excess of \$2 million each. In 1986-87 the sum actually expended was \$2.1 million and for 1985-86 the sum of \$2 million approximately was expended. So even with this supplementary we are still below the amount of money expended for Conferences and Delegations, and I do not expect that the usual kinds of arguments we hear about travelling and so on will be raised on this occasion, because let us understand it, Barbados has membership in a number of regional and international bodies and organisations and it is necessary in order to fulfil the conditions of membership, and in order fully to benefit from the membership of those bodies and organisations, and to maintain therefore our bilateral and multilateral contacts at a level befitting our country, travel is involved.

Most of us either on the front bench or the back bench - that is the Government side - and on the Opposition side - the Opposition members themselves as successful attorneys-at-law know that they have to travel, and they travel in fulfilment of their business and private commitments - and travel is essential. So it is for the Government which has myriad and expensive commitments in that particular regard, and therefore I would not expect that there would be any cavilling by the Committee in the provision of this amount of money.

The other Item under Subhead 9 - National Insurance Department, Other Personal Emoluments, Object No. 2, a sum of \$42 956 is being requested, under Object No. 3 for National Insurance Contributions, a sum of \$35 897, and under Object No. 5 a sum of \$1 238.

These are sums consequential upon the provision of certain established posts in the National Insurance Department and the Department is required, when there are established posts, to meet certain payroll contributions, payments of National Insurance, of any levy or any other impost for permanent posts. The money is recoverable from the National Insurance Fund, and I believe within recent times a number of additional posts was provided for the National Insurance Department in order to increase the efficiency of that Department and to enable it to meet its commitments to the public, and therefore we are now seeking the sums to pay for the imposts which have to be met in respect of staff.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sums indicated for this Head, Head 15, stand part.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this is not going to be contentious. We recognise Government's commitments to overseas conferences and delegations in the largest interest of Barbados as a nation and so we have no quarrel with the supplementary provision. It does seem that in this regard the Prime Minister is trying to be careful with the level of expenditure, but I hope that the Government is keeping before itself the fact that hotel costs overseas are becoming astronomical.

I am sure that all members on the Government side who have travelled from time to time can only but wonder at the rates charged by hotels overseas, and I really want to see the Tourist Board at some stage, and the Minister of Tourism, analyse this and put it down in writing and disseminate it. It is foolishness for us to continue labouring under the label that we are an expensive destination.

I don't want to stray too far, Sir, and get into tourism, I am only trying to compare

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am keeping my eyes and ears open.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I just want to make the point that it is about time that we stand up and defend ourselves on the basis of a scientific analysis, because the Deputy Prime Minister will tell you he and I and the member for Christ Church East Central recently travelled, with the Clerk, to the CPA Conference in Australia. Some of us went via Singapore, London and the Pacific and so on, but we could not help but be amazed at the rates being charged, and more and more they are going to be a drain on the resources of Barbados as we have necessarily to send Ministers and Chairmen of Boards and so on overseas to do negotiations and attend conferences. But the rates that were charged overseas, even in the holiday countries like Hawaii,

and in Singapore which is a tourist destination, were far and beyond what we charge in Barbados and it is time that we sit down and write about it and disseminate it. It is a label on Barbados and we have to deal with it.

I don't want to get too far, Sir, that is the only point I wish to throw out. 1.45p.m.

In regard to the Ray Crest I did speak in here previously and ask that this matter be cleared up, because I am a little unhappy that this vessel apparently became a wreck while in the custody of the Government. This is a lot of money, \$1/2 million dollars, and I wonder if in his reply the Prime Minister could tell the House how it is that this vessel which was arrested or whatever it was in 1985 was, I believe, seaworthy at the time, could in the passage of time be rendered unseaworthy and reduced to the state of a wreck. It is three years, but the Government as a bailee of that vessel had a duty to ensure that it was properly detained and it was necessary to paint the hull from time to time. It could have cost you a fortune, but there is clear negligence on the part of some organisation or department that has caused this gentleman's vessel to be a total loss, and now it has caused the taxpayers to find this amount of money to compensate him. He deserves to be compensated if it was the Crown's negligence, but I would like to know where the Crown erred and what steps are being taken. This is not the first time that a vessel under the control and suzerainty of the Crown has ended up as a total loss.

There was one many years ago, probably in the late Seventies, I have forgotten the name of the vessel - there were two which had the same name, one owned by a man called Ghandi, and owing to the negligence of the Crown again that vessel ran aground when it was being towed in the inner carenage. There was a court case out of it because the wrong vessel had been seized, and I don't recall what was the decision in the court case; but that was a clear case of negligence. If it is that there is inefficiency in our marine operations where you may be able to seize a vessel but then you do not have the facilities for keeping it in proper custody, then that is an area in which, with the greatest respect and humility, I think the Defence Force, through the Coast Guard, should have an expert input to Government and suggest what is necessary as a facility in the event that we have to seize a vessel and keep it until the determination of a court case which will take more than a year. I should think that the Prime Minister should look at that carefully.

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Perhaps the Prime Minister will also give us a break down as to how much was paid for the loss of the vessel, loss of the equipment, loss of earnings and whether there was any interest paid to the gentleman. He should have been paid interest, Sir, but I look forward to that in his reply.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Chairman, I should like to say a few words after listening to the last speaker about the wreck of the vessel. He is asking a question of the Prime Minister about what caused the wreck. I can remember passing one day by the wharfside and I saw this boat going under and I got the impression from my experience that it was taking on water somewhere, and if the Coast Guard or whoever was responsible for the boat were not negligent, I think it would have been their duty to pump the water out every day or ever so often since it was in their custody.

I remember going to Aruba a couple of years ago to survey a lost fishing boat, and this boat was not really in the custody of the Harbour Master of Aruba, but they saw it as their duty to pump it out every morning, and this boat was taking on water so fast that in 24 hours it was about a quarter full; so I think it was gross negligence on the part of the authorities responsible for the custody that we are having today to pay for the loss.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, before the Attorney General speaks because I know he has to get into this debate since some of the matters really are legal matters, the case of the Ray Crest is an interesting legal case, and in a way from my limited knowledge of the facts, I believe that the Crown might have had a pretty substantial case on substance, but the procedure in the court was such that the owners of the Ray Crest succeeded on a very technical point relating to the burden of proof, if I remember.

It was a question of who had the right to begin in the case. I believe that one side called no evidence, and the Comptroller relying on the wording of the Act appeared to have called no evidence either on the assumption that once the Comptroller had taken possession of the boat, then in those circumstances they have a *prima facie* case, and it struck me when I heard about the legal procedure that it was a novel point in many ways, but it struck me that what is wrong is that the Customs Act needs simplifying and amending in a very substantial way, particularly where we are going to declare particular items that have been seized, are forfeited or in the nature of deodand, and I would really suggest to the Government that this is a subject that people do not like to spend time dealing with. There are very few of us who have any real knowledge of it. I cannot say that I have done many of these cases. I have done a few, but it is a very technical subject, but it is worthwhile investing a little time in having probably one or two Government officers including the Customs people go to some of the courses that are run particularly in the United States on Customs laws and regulations - I think the British do the same - and also to look at redrafting the Customs Act, because, were it not for that technicality, it seems to me as though the original seizure would have been justified from the information that I have heard around the law courts, so that the case obviously fell on a technicality.

I agree with the comments made by the two honourable Members who have spoken since the Prime Minister on the question of the responsibility attaching to Government departments for keeping safe articles that are in dispute within the law courts. It is not only in this case the Customs Department and the Coast Guard as their agent where we find these problems, but we find it as well with exhibits in the court and it continues to happen. People do not seem to believe that they have a responsibility to Government for property and for these types of things and the result can be that the public will have to pay, and really there must be a system of surcharging people in circumstances such as these. It concerns me because I see it daily around the court where they can't find an exhibit, whether it be a few pounds of marijuana or whether it is somebody's animal or motor car, a cow or whatever. Now how can a cow or a calf really disappear? Something must be wrong that we cannot in this age deal with these types of problems and that is really what is happening here. 1.55p.m.

Eventually the Government has to come down, and we understand the position and nobody can seek to make partisan profit or anything out of this because I understand the position clearly that here you get a situation that an exhibit, something that is still in dispute is not being looked after and it is possible for the Comptroller of Customs, even if the seizure had been originally wrong, as bailee probably, too, had recovered the cost of keeping the exhibit at the same time, so I am very concerned myself about that and trust that the Government will amend the appropriate legislation in order to simplify the legislation.

I want, - Sir, just to say that as the honourable Member for St. Thomas has said, we are not going to contest or even try to highlight an increase of \$400 000 in the vote for compensation. It is about 1.7. Last year it was about 1.8.

The arguments which the honourable member advanced - I am so glad to hear him advance them. I have heard them from this side when we were on that side quite clearly and I think sometimes when we come in here we pick on points like this.

I cannot see how, if you are an independent country in these days, you can fail to make adequate provision for representation at very crucial conferences. I said I do not consider this as an item that I want to see on the political agenda for controversy now or in the future because it is a reasonable cost of Government. From my knowledge of it, I have seen people go on delegations and pay out of their own pockets. I have seen the shortfall that has occurred between the funds given from the Government, the Cabinet Office and what they have had to expend and I know that there is an accounting procedure so it would not be in our place to try to raise something like that.

I think that the Prime Minister was over optimistic as Minister of Finance when in his cutting of the estimates to come within a certain ceiling at the beginning of the year he hoped that he could have contained this by \$400 000. I think it is about this same amount approximately that he reduced it and he has now come back up on it. I know in Estimates Committee that is the first thing they look to chop in order to get within the ceiling and sometimes you have to watch the Permanent Secretaries too. You tell them to come within a ceiling and they will cut Conferences and Delegations knowing full well that you will have to supplement it a little later in any event and that is really not a true saving.

What I want, however, to ask the Prime Minister, Sir, is for some information concerning National Insurance. I have been very concerned about the statements, and this is my only source of information, in the paper, concerning a report made by an expert on reduction in certain benefits under legislation which is administered by this department, whether it is severance pay or unemployment benefit.

I believe that the national social security is a very important part today of the savings and expectations of people in Barbados and I believe social security must be very high on the agenda of this House for a considered debate about it.

I think we owe it to ourselves to make sure that what ultimate decisions are made will safeguard those funds. I am not making any allegations that anybody is taking social insurance funds money because I do not know of any such allegation but we have to make sure that the policies that we follow in relation to funds are correct so that people who reach their ripe old age and some of us are getting near - I am a little nearer than the Prime Minister by a few years - but we made sure that when you reach that age that the expectation of what you are contributing to and saving is there; and the Opposition would like to engage in a considered debate, not a partisan debate to make mileage - there are other issues that we can get our mileage on, if necessary. I consider this one a very important question. It is a technical question, Sir.

There are not many people who have adverted to the problems posed by fitting the private pension fund systems today into the state system of pensions and social security and, I believe, that as soon as possible, in fact, I will ask the Government not only to feel that there must be consultation between the several unions, including the employers who have had access to the report, but there are a large number of contributors to the social insurance fund who are not unionised and who are not necessarily, in the position of

being - when I say unionised, I am not only meaning workers' organizations - unionised through the employers organization.

Now, those of us who are in this House, therefore, have a primary responsibility for putting their case and we can only look at the matter as it affects them if we have the relevant information and I do not consider that these reports should be buried within the bosoms of departments, or Governments, or restricted persons. They are of sufficient importance to merit consideration by the public at large so that we can come up with a system with the ultimate aim of ensuring that the maximum benefits that people are entitled to are obtained.

If there is something wrong with our investment policy we must look at it and look at it sensibly. We must look at the contributions. We must look at what we pay out at the time and see whether or not the system of social security can be secured in a way that will make those who contribute happy and, at the same time, I realize that the system is carrying the non-contributory part of pensions and every time that the non-contributory pensions increase there is an additional cost. We must look to see whether the state does not still retain a responsibility to make that extra payment into the fund somewhere or the other.

I do not know how much the payment is but we are now funding it out of the contributions in the way in which we are doing it from those who contribute and as I would again also emphasize, it is extremely necessary that we examine carefully the relationship between private pension funds and the NIS funds.

Now Sir, there is one matter that I adverted to when I was on the back bench in the period 1981 to 1986 and I want to emphasise it again.

The NIS fund is losing a lot of money because the department is not enforcing a section of the law. If I am injured by the negligence of X and X is insured, I recover either by settlement or litigation from X through X's insurance and the reinsured whether they are Lloyds or what's not, damages for the loss that I have suffered, which includes sometimes a repayment, in fact, in almost all cases, of the money that I am drawing from the national insurance fund.

I will challenge the Government to look and see whenever the National Insurance Board has sought to get back that money. I believe the section of the Act is Section 45 of the Act or something and I am not talking now of a couple of thousand dollars. 2.05 p.m.

Those of us in the court who deal with these problems see it day after day. I have spoken about it in this House on numerous occasions both when I was on the back-bench and I think I might have drawn it to the attention of the department - I would not swear on this, there may be a note on file drawing it to the attention of the department when I was Attorney-General. I would not swear on it. But I do recall at least discussing it from that perspective.

But we could say, the fund itself could probably find through those sources, because they are covered by insurance, the private people who are having to repay are covered by insurance, enough to take up what we are giving in state pension and by way of non-contributory pension.

I would urge the Government, it may mean that you have to hire an additional officer with some, probably, para legal qualification, but the insurance companies must be put on notice that when they are assessing claims, that that which is due to the National Insurance Fund should be paid to the National Insurance Fund rather than to the third party. And that if this is done, I think that the fund would be even more viable than it is at present.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

The question that- Mr. CHAIRMAN report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move that the sitting be now suspended until 3.00 p.m. today, Sir.

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

The question was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly at 2.10 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 is returned.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Mr. J. J. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make a few brief remarks on the Resolution which is before the House on the Subhead 3, Conferences and Delegations.

The Prime Minister who spoke first on the Resolution indicated quite clearly that the \$400 000 which is being asked for today, when added to the original vote still does not bring us to the amount which was spent during the previous two years, the years from 1985-86 and 1986-87. So that this, to my mind, shows that the Government and particularly the Ministry of Finance is trying as far as possible to streamline the expenditure on this particular item of overseas Conferences and Delegations. But I believe that this particular expenditure is a very important part of Government's programme, in that it is very important every now and again for persons to go abroad either for some important delegation of some important meeting, and it is by this method that we here in Barbados are kept abreast of what is happening in many of these countries around the world.

What is very important though is the fact that all Members and all persons will not be able to get the opportunity to travel on these kinds of occasions and it occurs to me that perhaps if we had in place a proper system of reporting whereby those Members and those persons who were able to benefit from some of these tours could be kept abreast of what happened on these tours and what happened abroad on these kinds of occasions, I think it would go a long way in alleviating a lot of the talk that we get in political circles that people go on a jolly ride.

I think that to a very large extent this is a matter which I have no doubt that the Ministry is looking at, but as far as possible we have got to be able to show people that those persons who go away on Government business and those persons who travel at the expense of Government are doing so for legitimate purposes. And I believe that if the opportunity is given for people to share the knowledge that these persons gain from these tours and to give them some information on what is happening when people go on these tours, people will come to realize that the money which is voted for these particular occasions is money which is well spent and it would ease a lot of the talk which we get on these occasions regarding this kind of vote.

I have no doubt in my mind, for example, that Ministers will have no doubt to report to Cabinet on their return and different civil servants will have no doubt to report to their Heads of Department. But it is still my view that a lot of this knowledge can be shared with the wider community because I believe that one of the things that improves our system of understanding the world is the question of travel. I have done some travelling myself and I have come to recognize that by travelling people get the opportunity to broaden their knowledge, they see how

things happen abroad, and I think the information which we pick up on these kinds of occasions is very important and is important information which, as far as possible should be shared with as many people in the country as is possible in the circumstances.

And I should like to say that perhaps if a system of having those persons report on their tours, on their visits and on their trips abroad, it would go a long way in lessening the talk about people going abroad on jolly rides and that sort of thing. 3.05 p.m.

I should like to support the vote on that particular Subhead because I think it is very important to Government's programme for the current year.

As regards the Item regarding the Ray Crest, I also feel, Mr. Chairman, that this is a matter which Government no doubt will have to look at and learn from past experience. This kind of occasion always makes us think of ways of avoiding incidents of this kind as for the future, and I believe that to a very large extent we need to have persons who are involved at an expertise level, who can give the kind of advice to Government when they are going to proceed in these kinds of matters, particularly where large sums of money are involved.

In this particular instance, Mr. Chairman, we are talking about money in the sum of just over a half a million dollars and I think that perhaps on some of these occasions we can have experts who are more familiar with the legal procedures in these kinds of matters. Very often we see in the Magistrates' Courts persons handling these matters who have not themselves had an opportunity to do a detailed study of the law. Many of them are not qualified as lawyers.

I cannot speak with any authority on this particular case, because I do not know much of the history of it, but I know that for example the Chief Marshal's Department and certain other Departments of Government are represented in court on many occasions and they do not have a lawyer to represent the Department, and I think that this is something which Government should take a closer look at, because more and more people are beginning to feel that they can make claims on Government because Government will have the money to pay.

In fact, perhaps Government may need to look at the whole question of insurance. I do not know if it is possible for Government to insure against this kind of contingency, but we have been seeing many claims coming before this Parliament for votes from the Consolidated Fund in respect of claims made against one Government Department or the other due to some act of neglect or omission on the part of one Department of Government or the other. I believe it

may be time that Government can look at the whole question of insuring itself against these kinds of contingencies. Perhaps if it is possible for Government to take out insurance to cover these kinds of incidents over a financial year, it may go to a large extent in reducing the claim on the Consolidated Fund.

So, Mr. Chairman, with those brief remarks I want to give my support to the Resolution which is now before the House.

Thank you.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this Resolution. Particularly under Subhead 3 which relates to Conferences and Delegations, I should like certainly to endorse the views expressed by those who have spoken already.

I believe that some of the funds that we are seeking to give approval to today should relate to the effort which was made in order to establish Dame Nita Barrow in the office of President of the United Nations. I believe that possibly that might have been part of the area that we are covering today in terms of funds, and I should like to take this opportunity to indicate that it is my opinion that a sovereign country like Barbados should try at every opportunity to support the citizens, if they are persons of quality and stature, and seek to achieve high office, we should give them all the support that is necessary!

Of course I believe very strongly that one's importance as a nation is not related to things like size or the Gross National Product of the country, but I believe that the quality of individuals is separate and distinct from the geographical entities to which they might be attached by birth, and I believe therefore that the effort we took in trying to establish Dame Nita as the President of the United Nations was a worthy one, and I think that the battle was well fought. I use the word "battle" of course with specific inverted commas around it, but I believe that in fact the effort is a notable one and that in spite of certain criticisms one might hear after the event and so on, the battle was carried not only for Barbados but for the Caribbean and I believe we can stand proud.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Without wanting to interrupt you, I would not want you to go any further on that point. I think we are going a bit off. I have given you a little latitude, you have tried to make the connection between what we are debating here and what happened at the U.N., but in terms of the rules of the House I would like you to stick to the policy of the expenditure and not so much

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I was just suggesting that in terms of.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But I think the point you made is well made and you ought to move on from there.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: supporting funds for delegations and conferences I believe is important, because whether we are talking about delegations where you are trying to achieve particular office, or conferences where you might in fact be representing your country in a number of ways, it might be that you are trying to achieve particular measures in terms of negotiations, it might be that you are just putting a point of view and establishing that they are views coming from countries like ours. I believe that these funds are well spent.

I just wanted to make that note, Sir, that funds that are expended on matters of this nature, and I just used the particular as an example of the kinds of things that could be done, I believe that we have as a nation to understand why these funds have to be spent.

In terms of the National Insurance Department, again I believe that any attempt to provide specialist staff for Departments such as this, for an institution of that import in Barbados, is very important, and therefore again I would want to support this particular Resolution because I believe that the funds are being expended on that purpose.

I believe that we are now seeing 20 years of the National Insurance Department. That 20th anniversary has been celebrated widely in our country. I think we can be very proud of the way how that Department has developed to this point in time and therefore we need always to ensure that staffing levels and staffing quality are at the highest level so that we can maintain the integrity of that system.

I just want to make those short comments, Sir.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution, but without making any effort to be repetitive in any way I would wish to subject my comments to just two areas, and this is as they concern me.

The first is related to Subhead 1, Object 30. The point was made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas that the amount of \$548 990 is a large sum and I think we can all agree that it is a very large sum. 3.15p.m.

My own concern, Sir, relates to the reason for which this sum has become a point of concern or consideration. If we accept, Sir, the point that has been made that it relates to a measure of negligence of some agency of Government while this particular vessel was in their care, one has to accept further that the end result of this is not the fact that

the taxpayers are expected to look for a sum of this nature, but rather what is the likely outcome of this settlement in so far as the owner of the vessel is concerned.

I think many of us understand that if you are in business today, the cost of financing the business does not rest solely with one's ability to find this money of their own accord, and if financing can be an aspect of the business structure that persons become involved with, one can easily understand the possibility of the present situation where in fact the owner of this vessel might be indebted to a financial institution, and in that regard what he faces as a situation for the rest of his working life, having made the investment to go forward, may now be a situation that none of us wish to find ourselves in. I am speaking, Sir, of the future of the owner of this vessel - to become involved in a venture that he has been in for all his life again; having possibly to meet the expenditure of repaying those people to whom he may have been indebted and starting life all over again.

If I assess that in terms of the negligence or the supposed negligence of a Government Department or a Government agency, I want to say, Sir, that this is something that we should avoid at all costs. Whatever may have been the reasons for the seizure of this vessel, the matter that interests me is the final result, that if the owner of the vessel is in a position where he can now claim from the Government of Barbados a sum of this magnitude, I want to know what is his position from here on in relation to his future. I think that we have to be very careful in our actions and understand that when these actions are taken that we have to take the people's subsequent future into consideration.

I wish therefore to support the Resolution on the basis of the fact that Government has been in a position to make whatever settlement this relates to, but whether or not this settlement is conducive to the future of the owner of the vessel, I am not very clear on, I should just like to caution that when we are taking such strong action we have to look very seriously at what are the repercussions down the road.

In relation to subhead 9, I would like to support that aspect of the Resolution based on the position that the Government has taken in relation to the appointments in this very significant department of our national affairs, and to say that I hope that the situation will continue to develop where we can see more meaningful appointments in terms of departments of Government, and in that regard to see some improvement in the quality of service that is rendered to the people of this country.

With those very brief remarks, I should like to register my support for this Resolution.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, Members of the Opposition have raised a couple of questions in relation to the issue of the Ray Crest. The honourable Member for St. Thomas wanted to have some indication as to whether interest was taken into account in calculating the payments for the loss, and I believe he also enquired about a break down in relation to the payments. Some general comments have been made in relation to this whole issue, in relation to the need for care to be taken by departments of Government in relation to things which have been seized or in any way held by the Government Bailee, maybe by the police in actions which are criminal actions which are pending where items may be held for evidence and that kind of thing. This is not an easy matter to deal with, Mr. Chairman, and over the years we have seen situations where, let us take the instance of a car and other vehicles which have been seized or which have been held by the police as evidence in criminal cases, whether it relates to the larceny of the vehicle or damage to the vehicle or something of that kind, we have seen instances of vehicles lying around in the court yard for years in fact resulting in the final analysis to the total loss of the vehicle.

When I was in Trinidad recently on business of the Council of Legal Education, we were discussing this issue in relation to stolen cars, for instance, and the view of the people in Trinidad is that if you have a car stolen, a new car, you don't bother to proceed with a criminal case if you can get the car back immediately, because they say if the police are to proceed with a criminal case they are not likely to get the car back for some five years, and by then the thing is a total loss, and you are worse off by proceeding against the criminal than if you try and get your car back immediately. So this is an issue which is fraught with legal difficulties.

In relation to things like vessels which are seized, the added complication is there whether within the Government itself the facilities are there for adequately taking care of vessels which are seized. Obviously in relation to vessels, you are going to need the availability of docking facilities, and especially if they are large vessels you really are going to have problems with them.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas spoke of certain vessels which had been seized which ran aground after seizure and after they had been taken in tow by departments. A whole lot of expertise is required in dealing with issues of this kind, and I am not sure that these issues have been addressed or addressed effectively with a view to finding adequate solutions to the problems which they raise. Now it must be remembered that this vessel had been seized in 1985 and this is now three years down the road since the seizure. The Honourable Member for St. James North did seem to raise some question as to the effectiveness of the

Customs representation in the courts. I expressed an opinion that the Customs was represented by one of the very competent lawyers in the Attorney General's Chambers who did the case in the magistrates court as well as in the divisional court.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition has made the point that the case was decided in the divisional court on very technical grounds, technical grounds in relation to burden of proof. The honourable Member for St. James North would understand. The honourable - Member for Christ Church West has also acknowledged that this area of the Customs Act is not one of the easiest of areas to deal with, and he has pleaded for amendment and simplification of this aspect of the law. But suffice it for this purpose to say that I am satisfied that the representation was adequate and that the issue was decided on extremely technical grounds, with the result that the Crown finds itself faced with this responsibility. The boat was surveyed by competent surveyors, a number of them in fact, Crawford and Massiah Associates. 3.25 p.m.

In fact, Crawford and Associates had done a survey of the vessel and had put a pre-loss value on it of some \$175 000. The equipment was valued at some \$40 000 and change and then the other items taken into account in arriving at a settlement included an amount for the loss of earnings and in this regard the consultants, the Ministry of Agriculture, who from a survey of the earnings of similar vessels over the years came up with a figure for, I think, the period in which they had done the calculation. At the time when the lawyers for the boat owners wrote, there was some period of 11 months loss of earnings and this amount includes a figure for those loss of earnings, I think we calculated at some \$247 000.

On the question of interest, interest was taken into account on the value of the vessel, the amount representing interest on the vessel, and the interest on that was calculated from the date of seizure to the date of settlement and in relation to the loss of earnings, interest on that was calculated not from the date of seizure because you would recall, as I said to you, that the loss of earnings was fixed for a period of 11 months so that the interest on the figure arrived at for the loss of earnings was calculated from the expiration of that period until payment so that the total figure then represents the loss of value of the vessel, the loss of equipment, the loss of earnings, interest and costs which have been fixed in accordance with the scale of costs approved for settlement on matters of this kind.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to respond briefly to one suggestion. I believe, made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas that when vessels are under the care of the Customs Department or

other Government departments under circumstances such as the one we are discussing that greater care and attention should be paid to the maintenance of the piece of property which may be the subject of the matter before the courts.

I would agree that if the departmental or inter-departmental matters can be sorted out, there is a role that the Coast Guard Services can play and other Government departments which may be involved in this matter and I would certainly seek to ensure that, in future, wherever possible that this could be brought into effect.

The question that Head 15 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 23 - LOANS AND ADVANCES

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I move that Head 23 stand part.

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

The question that Head 23 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, supplementary provision is sought under this Head to meet part of a statement of outstanding claims arising out of an arbitration between the Government and Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons Limited in relation to the construction of the new General Post Office - it is not so new now, but the General Post Office at Cheapside.

The amount in respect to which supplementary provision is sought does not represent the total supplement of the claim of Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Limited in respect of this arbitration but it represents items of certain specific costs which had been agreed on by the parties so, at this stage, then, what has, in fact happened is that certain elements of the matter in dispute have been agreed and the figure which is being sought at this time represents the element of the area agreed so that there are still other substantial outstanding areas of difference between the parties which still have to be resolved and which will be resolved either by further negotiation or if negotiation fails, then by arbitration ultimately so that the provision sought now is to meet an interim payment to Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons Limited in relation to the outstanding dispute in relation to the construction of the new General Post Office.

I move, Mr. Chairman, that Head 28 stand part.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have to declare an interest.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I thought that would have resulted or would have arisen.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This money has nothing to do with my pocket.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would not think so.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is Sir Robert McAlpine's. Not yet, still to come.

I am not going to take part in the debate, Sir, if there is one but I am not going to argue the rights nor wrongs. I cannot, but I am confused by the last sentence. I do not believe that this accurately reflects the current position.

I do not know of any agreement or understanding. The matter is being arbitrated now and the Crown, I think, has to put in their points of defence but if they are going to negotiate as is implied, well, I just have to say that that would be very acceptable also and there would be substantial savings in costs to the effect.

(Laughter.)

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable member knows that in relation to any matter which is pending and which is the subject of either arbitration or litigation that....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is this your final speech or a point of order?

Hon. M. A. KING: A point of order. I was making the point Mr. Chairman, that the honourable member knows that once a matter is still pending, the opportunities for negotiation persists up to the time that an award is actually made so even although the parties may be at each other's throats right through the hearing, up to the time before any final decision is made, room for negotiation remains so I think the Resolution accommodates that possibility.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 28 stand part, those members in favour, please say "aye" and those against please say "No". I think the "Ayes" have it.

HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this amount for \$35 022 is a special grant to the Barbados Boy Scouts Association.

The Scouts held a Jamboree here last year and they estimated that it would cost, I think, close to \$3 000 000 and they would raise \$215 000 and they would ask the Government for \$45 000 3.35p.m.

We had advanced \$10 000 to them which left the balance of \$35 022 and now we are coming asking that the House approves this grant to them.

I beg that this Head stands part.

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

The question that Head 39 stand part was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$12 000 000 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT, TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 1988-89, PART II - CAPITAL, AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1988-89 No. 2

Order l(b) was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$12 000 000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government, to supplement the Estimates 1988-89, Part II - Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1988-89, No. 2, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

HEAD 76 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the Resolution seeks approval of this Honourable House of \$12 000 000 to be granted from the Consolidated Fund to supplement the Estimates 1988-89, Part II which were originally listed in the Estimates for the construction of what is referred to in the Estimates as a Cultural Centre. However under that, a provision was made for \$1.4 million for Structures under Items 23 and 26 under Professional Services.

I would first like to say that we are really referring to the unit as an Examination Centre and Cultural Centre, and I will have a little more to say about that. The requirement is based on the programme of works to be executed during this Financial Year and the estimates are that we will need to supplement that provision by the \$12 000 000, Item 23 - \$11 000 000 for Structures and Item 26 - \$1 000 000 for Professional Services. The estimate of a total of \$12.2 million which is rounded to \$12 000 000 for construction cost is based on the external works, the substructure and the superstructure and steel works and four months construction cost at an average of \$1.775 million,

SI 775 000 in other words, commencing during the month of December, 1988, and as pointed out, an additional sum of \$1.3 million is required for consultancy fees based upon the anticipated 65% of the cost of the consultancy fees which is estimated, as I said earlier at \$12 000 000.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, the complex as we see it will be a Conference Centre seating 400 delegates, and I should like to note here that it is not intended to be a location for Crop Over, neither is it intended to be a location for a tourist convention centre.* There is a requirement also for an Examination Hall to seat 1 000 candidates, and the reason for this Mr. Chairman, is that as we find during the year on an ongoing basis, there are numerous exams which are set by various agencies, CXC, London, GCE, even the accounting organizations and several other organizations which require the movement of chairs and desks from school to school on an ongoing basis during the year which creates an additional cost in terms of manpower, transportation, et cetera. And of course, if one thinks about it, this in itself creates a disruption of the normal services within the school system. And we are all aware that we cannot therefore continue to have students taking a particular exam and find that they are scattered around in three or four schools. Thus the requirement for the Examination Hall to seat the 1 000 candidates. There is also a provision for the Auditorium to sort of round out the Conference Centre and the Examination Hall and that will ' seat 2 000 patrons.

Now the intention of this Auditorium, as I said earlier, is not to be utilized as a tourist convention centre, not to be utilized as a stadium for any Crop Over events, as we have been hearing. But indeed, we would like to think that if we would look back at the Estimates of last year, we will note that a sum was placed in there for the development of an orchestra, and we are indeed looking forward to the development of a national orchestra and we see this Auditorium as the place whereby we can develop the ' cultural aspects that are yet lacking within the society. And I will state again, it is not a Crop Over site or a tourist centre.

The work is progressing and we are looking forward, Mr. Chairman, that we would be able to host next year at that location, the celebrations for the 350th Anniversary of this Parliament and indeed in 1990, we will hope that we will be able to host the Commonwealth Education Ministers' Conference.

With those brief comments, Sir, I move that this Resolution do now stand part.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, I should just like to say a few words on this Resolution. I was jolted by the remarks of the Minister that the facility was not for tourists. And indeed, that what he may have meant by that, assuming that Members of the CPA are not Barbadians and- the persons who will be attending the Education Ministers' Conference, I believe that what he meant by that is that it is not a monument or somewhere where tourists would visit on a daily basis.

But really this particular building and this particular development, although much maligned in the press I should say, as being a waste of money because it is only a cultural centre and even if it is a cultural centre it is inadequate for the present needs of this country in relation to large events, for example, Crop Over and other events.

Notwithstanding that criticism, the other feature of the centre has not been perhaps as widely discussed and promoted. In fact one article that I read in the newspaper criticized it and said that it was an investment that was a waste of money and that it would be better for the Government to invest money in proper conference facilities for a large conference or develop a conference centre. 3.45p.m.

From all that the Minister has said, and from all that I have been made to understand, in respect of this project, this particular building also provides adequate conference facilities for over 2 000 persons. So that not only does it provide those facilities that would relate to examinations and those other events, but it also provides translation facilities and all kinds of other facilities that are so important to the hosting of major conferences in this country.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Minister didn't say so, but I am saying that we as a Government should stress, to counter the criticism that we have been receiving, that it is also going to be an income earning project and that particularly when people talk about the need in this country for conference facilities and the need for convention facilities to attract large numbers of tourists for those facilities, that this particular structure provides all of the accoutrements or whatever is necessary in terms of the facilities and the ancillary services that have to be provided at a conference. It provides all of those facilities and the infrastructure is adequate for what I suppose in international terms could be a large conference or even a medium sized conference.

This is something that we have to stress, because people seem to take very strong objection and criticise the Government sharply either by saying they have no capital

projects, or if they have any capital projects, none of them is income bearing or productive, and we as a Government were very critical of the Barbados Labour Party for having developed projects that were unproductive, did not pay for themselves, and so on, and therefore we should also stress that this particular structure will also be meaningful in terms of the attraction of persons to Barbados for conferences, and also in terms of our own development, can pay for itself if we have large conferences and if the persons in the Tourist Board and the other tourist related agencies are telling us what is true when they say that Barbados needs these conference facilities.

I only really rose to make that point, because I said I think it is an important point. I should perhaps go on to just say a few brief words about the question of a national auditorium. It is true, I think, that we in Barbados need a large structure which is going to provide for large audiences at Crop-Over and this kind of thing. I think it is also true that those promoters and other persons in the entertainment world, small as it is in Barbados, who have made comments have said that this facility is inadequate, and I think it is time that Government give consideration not necessarily to the establishment of any large or massive indoor auditorium. I do not know if that is feasible, I do not know if it is wise, I do not know if it makes sense in terms of expenditure, but perhaps would consider expanding whatever facilities or modifying the facilities at the stadium or some other large existing site so that it can accommodate these kinds of events.

Right now I believe that the persons who operate the stadium would have difficulties because of damage to the cycle track and also perhaps the field, and that is one of the things that militates against having some of these large functions there and therefore perhaps we should consider ways and means of modifying whatever we have to accommodate these seasonal events, because I do not know if it is true to say, contrary to what is being said by promoters and other persons, that if we had a large auditorium that could seat maybe five or ten thousand people that it would be adequately used, or that it would be used as often as they suggest it would be used.

There are about three events in Crop Over, there is the Richard Stoute Show which fills the Auditorium - and I suppose now that this 2 000 seater auditorium is being built the DLP Auditorium will no longer be used by the Richard Stoute people - but there are only one or two events of that magnitude, and I don't think that we are about to develop, even in terms of our tourism, events that will bring in 15 000 people or 10 000 people to see some other spectacular performance.

In Trinidad when they have the Pan Festival which brings in thousands of people, they modify the National

Stadium. Steel pan is one of the most difficult instruments, as far as I understand, to reproduce through a sound system, whether it is through a record or through a normal sound system. It is a very difficult instrument in terms of acoustics and reproduction and yet the Pan Festival has turned out to be the most successful and is held at the Jean" Pierre complex in Trinidad. They modify whatever existing facilities they have to suit those kinds of events.

In addition, their own calypso tents which thousands of people go to, the largest one, Spectacular Forum, maybe 2 500 people, is full most nights, it is true; but then you are dealing with a population of 2 000 000 and you are dealing with people that love calypso. Not that Barbadians don't love it, but sometimes it is difficult even to fill the Auditorium at George Street for some of the calypso tents that are held there, far less to build a massive structure which may not be utilised in the manner which is most desirable in terms of Government expenditure.

We have to remember always that it may sound impressive but we are spending money that belongs to the people of Barbados and we have a responsibility and a public trust to ensure that whatever decisions we take regarding the expenditure of that money means maximum returns not only in terms of whatever returns we get financially, but maximum returns in terms of the benefits that the citizens of this country enjoy, whether as members of an audience or performers or whatever.

Those are my few comments on this particular Resolution, but I should like to give my support to it.

Thank you.

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I too should like just to make a short contribution and to compliment Government for setting aside this sum of money in order to improve the facilities which we will be having here in Barbados.

I can understand the importance of such a facility because I have had what I consider the pleasure of having to represent our Government at the ACP/EEC meetings over the past year, and I think it should now be knowledge that in January next year Barbados will be hosting the General Assembly meeting of the ACP/EEC countries. Of course that will involve something like between four and five hundred parliamentarians from the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Parliament. Having attended these meetings I am therefore very conscious of the importance of facilities to accommodate such a meeting.

We will not be that fortunate that we will be able to use the facility that is now being started. I think that the meeting will probably be held at the Dover Convention

Centre or some other facility like that, because as I said before the meeting will be in January of next year and this facility will not be ready by that time.

What I really want to say is this, that if we are a tourist oriented country every facility, every chance that we have to enhance our image as a tourist destination, we should use. I am confident of the fact that, having attended those meetings, the parliamentarians from Europe and especially Africa are just eager to get to the Caribbean, and especially to Barbados. What therefore we will be doing is exposing our tourist plant to a multitude of influential people and I am quite sure that when those parliamentarians and other people come here they will be looking at our facilities, and if indeed they are aware of the fact that we are in the process of providing better conference facilities, Barbados therefore will be the venue of much larger meetings. 3.55p.m.

Our tourist dollar therefore and our whole tourist product will be enhanced by such facilities. Therefore it follows as the night the day that the investment will be a worthwhile investment because we recognise that tourism today is the biggest money earner in Barbados, and therefore this kind of investment which will enhance our tourist product can only be to the benefit of all Barbadians. That is I think the most significant thing that will happen in this venture, that this present Government has the foresight to spend this kind of money, and I hope that somewhere in these plans there will be facilities for the expansion of such facility, because I think that we will recognise in time that we will get an expansion of this kind of situation, and that we will also enlarge our tourist plant.

With those words I should like to support this Resolution. I thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have a little confusion in my head as between what the Minister of Education said and what the honourable Member for St. John said. I know we are dealing with Shcrbourne, but we are dealing with Sherbourne in St. Michael, not the one in St. John, and I can understand if he is confused or making a plea or regretting that this is not Sherbourne in St. John as part of the St. John development plan, since we have got the Errol Barrow Memorial Centre or something. The Minister was very careful, and I took a note. I have not seen any plans of the complex, and this is what I understand from the Minister, and I am willing to give way if I am wrong. There will be a conference centre seating 400 delegates. It will not be a cropover location nor will it be a tourist convention centre. That is facility No. 1. Facility No. 2 is an examination hall to seat 1 000 candidates. Facility No. 3 is provision for an auditorium to seat 2 000 patrons, again not available for cropover use or for tourist activities.

(*Aside:* Hon. C. V. WALKER: Not intended to be.)

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Member has put in a word - not intended to be. Now this is an instant refinement of the policy that the auditorium will seat 2 000 patrons, but it is not presently intended for cropover or tourist activities.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have not seen the plans and I heard the honourable Member for St. John making a plea for a more expanded use of the facilities which seems....

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order or elucidation

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Which one? Point of order or elucidation?

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Elucidation, Sir. Well order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I don't see how you can elucidate. You are not the Minister.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The honourable Member for St. Thomas has the ability of putting words in people's mouths, I should say, vicariously, but I was saying that as I understand it, I could be wrong and if I am wrong anybody can point it out to me, it provides convention and conference facilities for a medium-size conference. I said that is what I understand, and had seating facility for 2 000. That is just my understanding separate and apart from what the Minister may have said and actually in consonance with what he has said so there is no confusion.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was trying to point out to the honourable Member for St. John that I agree with his, he does not like the word "plea", his observation, that in so far as we are going to have a large hall that can seat 2 000 patrons, then why at this stage purport to rule out its use by way of convention facilities for tourists? Now what I am saying is that we all agree that Barbados needs a large conference convention facility to capture the convention tourist market out of North America. The Government of Barbados, B or D or whichever one does not have the kind of money to enable us to put up a series of these facilities, perhaps one in the north, one up by Sam Lords and one along Bay Street. We don't have that kind of money; so if we are starting with a facility now inland above Ilaro Court, I think it would be a proper use of space initially to so equip it that if the need arises you can convert your auditorium which is the biggest facility to take account of a group of 1 500, 1 800 coming down from the States for a convention. The fact that it is not on the sea is nothing for us to be worried about yet.... We will creep until we are able to

afford a large convention centre by the sea, and I am supporting what was said about the use, but the Minister was very specific about cropover and tourists in respect of the conference centre and the auditorium as it is called.

I have no information about the need for a separate examination hall to house 1 000 students, but I understand the Minister's problem of the logistics and frequent disruption of organised classes and so on. What we have to do, and this is why I am supporting any call for use of the centre other than by Government, is to make sure that it is a productive facility which earns something in terms to be able to help over time reduce the expenditure that has been made out.

Now mention was made of perhaps renovating or expanding the stadium to provide a facility for different kinds of activities from those which will go on at Sherbourne. Again this is one that will run the Government into substantial capital expenditure. It is one for which we can plan, for which we had indeed examined the feasibility when I was at the Sports Council, but the biggest problem at the stadium is its comparativeness, that area that faces....

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order, I should like to clarify for the honourable Member for St. Thomas that I did not make that point.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The honourable Member for St. John was looking at a variety of facilities. I did not accuse, in fact I did not attribute far less accuse, but the honourable Member for St. John was making the point and it has validity that perhaps the stadium would be more appropriate for certain types of activity, but there are shortcomings in so far as one has to be protective of the track which was laid at pretty substantial cost and so on. 4.05 p.m.

My point is that in terms of future planning, the future planning for the stadium must embrace the enclosure of that open area which looks out to Waterford and the St. George Valley.

The breeze alone that comes through there inhibits an athlete from giving his best time and it is the only stadium that I know that is so constructed. In fact, where the stands are are the wrong place. The stands should be on the other side blocking the wind but, as it now exists

Aside.

• Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How many things go on there during that time? You will have to find some way of dealing with it. The one in Jamaica is an empty one, too. The sun is not a problem but if we are going to develop the

stadium, we have to enclose it. It will increase and improve the security for a start and it will contribute to the better effectiveness of the stadium.

Now, Sir, I note that it is proposed at Sherbourne to use the auditorium also for the development of a national orchestra and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition will make some comments about that.

I just wish to ask the Government this question. Has there been any modification of the plan that was approved when I was Attorney General in December 1985 for the renovation of the Police Band Headquarters because in that plan, I believe, work had started on the Police Band Headquarters, was an area for use by other orchestras and groups, a separate practice area, properly sound proofed so that that was a facility that we were putting in into the original plan for the redevelopment of the Police Band up there so I just want to know if we are duplicating facilities and whether there is this need; because we have a conference centre that would seat 400 delegates at Sherbourne, the Frank Collymore Hall seats 491, we have now an auditorium at George Street, we will have an auditorium at Sherbourne and we will have an auditorium at the Police Band Headquarters no way as large as those last two but providing a facility for orchestras and so on to operate and I just wish to caution Government- it is probably committed now but, in future, look at the existing facilities of similar type before we commit ourselves to the development of one that will only be superfluous when we look at the total needs of Barbados.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me from the tenure of the debate that clearly we will need some more information about Government's proposals and, I am sure, that as questions are asked they will be answered in due course.

I myself, Sir, am concerned about the management of a multi-purpose institution because I am not clear and, surely, I will be advised whether, in fact, this is going to be within the control, for instance, of the National Cultural Foundation, whether that will have control of it or whether the Ministry of Education directly will be responsible or whether a new board or body will have responsibility for this particular institution.

I say this because, I believe, since it is going to be multi-purpose, we have to be very clear in our minds what are the party areas for which the institution is going to be used and whether there will, sometimes, be incompatibility in terms of the use and, therefore, we will have to determine what the parties are.

Now, we are talking, for instance, about an examination centre and, certainly, you will have some idea

about the periods of the year when students are going to be taking exams and we are not talking here about secondary students, I will imagine, we are talking about students who are doing the CGA, the ACCA, whatever. We may be trying to centralise our examination meetings and so on and this, I think is vitally important and one would want to ask, for instance, when that exercise is being carried on, whether it will be compatible, for instance, with having a conference at the same time. I am sure this kind of detailing will be done but, I think, it is going to be very necessary to establish the locus of control of this particular institution and to get planning done on a very regular and a very firm basis.

I am very happy with the idea of a cultural centre because when we think about culture in Barbados sometimes we can only think in terms of Crop-Over, the mass extravaganzas and so on but we tend to forget that we have the National Independence Festival of Creative Arts which has been going for some time and, I believe, that that particular festival is a very important one to us in Barbados and I have always felt that that festival could be strengthened by having it going throughout the year.

As we are aware, generally speaking, a few months before November we hear indications from the NCF saying those persons who can paint, or dance, or whatever, get ready for the festival which is going to come off in November and, it does not seem to me that we are, at this time, able, because we do not have the facilities. NIFCA has to be done in a school hall here, a school there and so on. But we have to, rather than quarterly activities that will culminate in the finals at the end of the year, so that you can get activity going on and you could then cull the best.

It seems to me that you are forcing a situation really where what can be a national festival in the true sense and the wider sense, has to be truncated and, I believe, that having this kind of facility can be useful in that direction, not only for putting on the end product but, certainly, providing space that people can be trained in the various cultural events, training in dancing, training in music, etc., perhaps, certain facilities will be made available for that particular purpose.

But we think only in terms of a cultural centre as exhibiting the final product where the audience comes and sits down and sees this big extravaganza but, I believe, if you talk about culture you will have to be talking in terms of the conception stages, and the training stages, and carry it right through to the final and, as I said, there are very few facilities in Barbados right now that you can draw on for that particular purpose.

There are facilities that are already controlled and owned by other organisations and, therefore, you are only

begging for space in many circumstances, so I believe that this is very welcome.

this is very welcomed.

I will certainly like to engage in the discussion about whether or not these facilities should be used for tourist purposes. Now, I have no difficulty with that whatsoever but I have difficulty, Sir, with perceptions that Government has to provide every type of facility at all times for every event.

There are persons who are talking about Government having to provide huge facilities to bring in 10 000 or 15 000 people to a one off or twice a year extravaganza who would not at the same time talk about any private grouping setting up certain facilities but it is felt that Government must be landed with these fantastic structures when, in fact, sometimes, it is better to have a facility that can take 2 000 on five occasions than to have a facility where you want to put in 10 000 on one occasion.

There is no reason why you cannot cater for 15 000 people by bringing 3 000 people five times. If these persons who put on shows are prepared not only to do a one evening show but to run a show over 3, 4 or five occasions and make back their funds, then you can reach the same situation, but those who are calling on small countries like Barbados to provide these massive facilities out of the taxpayers money when, in fact, most of them only intend it for private purposes, those persons who are entrepreneurs who want to use that facility for themselves, that kind of selfishness should not be encouraged in this country.

We are a small country and let us go small or medium sized in terms of what we have to produce and, as I said, my concern is that whatever we provide, that we manage it in the most excellent way possible. That is what I am saying. 4.15p.m.

Whenever you provide the facilities, make sure that you get the most recent equipment in there, state of the art equipment, state of the art facilities and then manage it effectively.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Something that you can be proud of that when you expose it to people coming from outside they can say it is small but it is suited to our country, but that it is a good facility. That is very important.

And I should like to suggest that from very early, there should be in-house maintenance provided for that kind of facility, not depending on any peripatetic maintenance person to come and look at it sometimes. But let us be sure we have maintenance inside so that that plant can be looked

at very carefully from day to day, preventive maintenance so that it can last us a very long time because this is to me a very important investment and we need to treat it in the best possible way.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have some difficulty myself with the Resolution and to be quite clear from the speeches which I have heard from the back-bench and the front-bench what really was the main purpose of this facility which is being provided.

Honourable Members must be aware that the Government is spending a considerable amount of money, it is \$25 000 000 which is going to be spent on this complex. The resources will be provided by the Government itself. It is not a complex that will attract foreign funding. So that it has to come out of the local resources solely provided from taxation and public revenue without the facility of having the foreign exchange cost aspect of it funded over a period of time by borrowing.

There are aspects of the project which do give the impression of the project being rushed in its planning. In the Estimates which were laid in March, I think the Prime Minister made a brief reference in his introduction of the Capital Estimates to the provision under this particular Head, and in the Resolution which followed the Estimates, the Honourable Minister of Education made a brief reference, before he concluded his speech, to the provision of these facilities.

I am not aware that Government has done any detailed feasibility study of the project at all, and I am not sure how much consideration has been given to it in the Central Planning Committee and how much real time has gone into assessing the needs, the real needs and looking at the best way of spending this capital sum.

The Minister of Education says that there are three main uses to which the complex will be put, one is a Conference Centre for 400 delegates, two as an • Examination Hall and three as an Auditorium. He was very specific to say that neither as a Conference Centre nor as an Auditorium is it intended that it will be used as a tourist facility.

It hardly will be so used as an Examination Hall. However two Honourable Members who have spoken from the back-bench have emphasized the tourist facility implication of this complex as justification, in their own minds, for the expenditure.

Now if it is intended as a tourist complex, it is my view that the Government's planning is misplaced. The location for a proper Convention Centre for the tourist plant

is not Sherbourne. And to combine it in the multi-purpose fashion in which it is combined would be a mistake on any basic Convention Centre. I am not denying, in fact I would be the first to concede that there is a need for adequate convention centre facilities for the tourist plant to cater to the growing needs of convention traffic out of the main areas of North America particularly, and to make use of the benefits which Barbados stands to gain from the various concessions under United States and hopefully Canadian legislation.

But if we were planning for the tourist aspect of it, and I think the Minister has made the point, I am taking his words, taking him as leading for the Government, he is leading off at the face value, if we were planning for a tourist convention a convention centre as an ancillary and a necessary ancillary to our tourism plant in the future looking towards the Twenty-first Century, nobody in their right mind would think that the location for such a convention centre would be Sherbourne. It certainly must be nearer to the main facilities, either on the very dense tourist area of the south coast in the constituencies of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, my own constituency and the Prime Minister's constituency. The hotels are grouped there. Or, you go in the west coast to the constituencies of the Honourable Member for St. James South, St. James North and St. Peter. And as a third resort, if you want the growing and expanding tourist facilities, tourist area of St. Philip. And obviously that would be the correct location for a tourist centre.

I do not believe that the Government, I accept the Minister's word, has conceived of this facility at all for its tourist implication. I think Honourable Members because there has been a public flak on the matter have sought now to stress that aspect of it.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It may have a spin off but I do not believe that it is a priority. It may have a spin off. They do not understand what I am saying.

But I am saying that its primary purpose is not at all to add and to deal with the tourist aspect of this matter. And we are spending \$25 000 000.

Now the Government proposes to spend, I am going to come back to the Examination Centre aspect of it, the Government is proposing between now and the end of the Financial Year in March to spend something like \$13 000 000, the one that is in the Estimates plus an additional twelve. And obviously the bulk of the labour will be over a four month period.

Now, Sir, I know for a fact that the actual planning of this project, the architectural engineering and the other aspects has been extremely hurried. But that is a fact!

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member wants to know, "So what?" So what? In my experience when you do that, So what! You are going to end up in problems. The Government is going by a series of contracts on this, is it not? I am asking you.

It is my understanding you are going in a series of contracts at various stages. Nothing wrong passing out series of contracts. I believe that the Ministry, itself is handling, either your Ministry or the Ministry of Works will be handling the contracts.

But you are spending \$13 000 000 in that period and I expect if you are to complete the project in time for October, between March and September, you have to spend the other \$12 000 000. Now a percentage of this is consultancy fees, in the notes he said \$2.3 million overall. So I take it that the balance of \$22.7 million will go towards structures and of that I expect that a part of that will be spent on acquisition costs. Once again here the Government is rushed. There are some acquisitions of land costs here. The Minister does not seem to know, but I can tell you.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would not want the Honourable Member to get into details of expenditure, but let us stick to the policy.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: But, Sir, we are expending money.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The policy for which the service is being provided. Let us stick to that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We are expending money, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I agree we are expending money, but the Rule in Committee of Supply is that you stick to the policy, not so much the expenditure.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am entitled to ask him, Sir, how he is spending the money, with respect, Sir. 4.25p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, but you are not asking how he is spending the money, you are suggesting how he is spending the money to make a point. You might ask the questions. I agree with that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I would expect that the Government is spending money on the acquisition because in fact I know, Sir, so I don't have to ask.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: So therefore you are not within the rules of the debate.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If you so rule I will respect your ruling, Sir, but it is the first time I have....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am merely cautioning the honourable Member. I have not made any ruling yet.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The position is that the Government is rushed even in relation to the acquisition of land in the area.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Minister of Housing wants to know where. In actual fact they are acquiring residences, not one, near to the area. Five residences, then. The Minister of Housing does not even know. The Minister of Housing has asked me where *sotto voce*.

I began my submission by saying there is a great hurriedness in this matter. The Minister of Housing does not know that land is being acquired, he asked, where. However, Sir, it seems to me that in those circumstances the Government does not appear to me to have thought through the project, and I wonder whether it feels that it must push this project in order to meet the deadline of the CPA Conference. I do not believe that that ought to have been a consideration here.

Let me tell them that in so far as the CPA Conference is concerned, although we have not got ideal facilities, we would have had enough facilities to deal with such a conference. We have the facilities at the Central Bank hall for the plenary, we have adjoining facilities in Queen's Park if you do your sub-committees together, and let me put in one pica here to the Government and I am also looking at the cultural aspect. The Government is the owner of the Empire Cinema which is due for a refurbishing and to be brought back up to its standard and to be used as a further cultural centre.

Now, Sir, I come to the second use the Minister highlighted, an examination hall, because once again I have a little bit of difficulty. He said it is to seat 1 000 candidates, probably not the maximum number. I believe once, and the Prime Minister having served as Minister of Education would know this, or probably twice a year you will need a room to accommodate a large number of persons if you are going to have them all together sitting the

examination at that time, but there are also existing facilities in Barbados already which have been used traditionally as examination centres, including some at CXC in the honourable Member's constituency, I think two large areas, and the various schools.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have another two minutes to wind up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, as an examination hall I raise as well the query which was raised by the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, and it is a valid point. It seems to me that within this multipurpose complex is the possibility - I put it no higher than that - of some incompatibility and disruption that could be caused. I am not saying that it cannot be managed, but one should be conscious of the fact that within the very nature of the complex, particularly the examination hall part of it, is this problem.

The third use is an auditorium, Sir. I am going to concede that we need some additional cultural facilities in Barbados in order to encourage the further development of our culture. The criticism that I have heard on this aspect of the matter is that even conceding, as the honourable Members for St. John and Christ Church East Central have said, that you really do not need to provide one overall facility for 15 000 people, because those events are not held so often, that a figure of 2 000 is too small and that therefore if we were conceiving of the cultural centre aspect of it, that we have planned short in this respect.

I began by saying that I was looking at the planning aspect of it. Those are the points I wish to make here.

I want to deal with the Minister's statement that it is intended to develop an orchestra. I know that within his Ministry the long term planning had been to use the Sherbourne area for the development of a school of music and a major music centre. Just as at the Community College in the Second World Bank plans, there have been plans put in for the development of a school of art, and one of the other steps that was being looked at was whether or not it would have been possible to incorporate within that area a national art gallery. I understand there are now proposals to deal with that by having the national art collection in the West Wing of Parliament at some stage in the future. Consideration is now being given to that aspect of it, but it was always conceived, certainly by us, that that area would go for the overall development of a school of music and I rather believe that the Minister has now modified his proposals to take into account that concept which was a priority, the brainchild of the former Minister of Education, Senator Billie Miller.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to ask for one second to ask a few questions before the Minister replies. Could the Minister tell us what contracts have been awarded, and in what sum, and to whom, and the time for performance of these contracts, and whether or not other contracts will be awarded and whether public tenders are going to be invited for them?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I would wish to speak briefly during this debate on this matter perhaps to address some of the matters that have been raised. Let us admit, and I have no qualms at all in making this statement, there is a certain quickness - let me put it this way - about the planning for this particular centre. That is a fact. The Leader of the Opposition seems to forget that this Government has been in office for just about two years and we are having a conference here next year, and within those two years we are planning to open this centre where the CPA Conference may be held. This was urgency No. 1. 4.35 p.m.

We have a certain programme to implement and we are seeking to carry out that programme, so we have only had two years so far approximately within which to carry out the planning, and we are challenging the architects, planners and workers of Barbados to see if they can get up that building within that time. Most of the buildings that have been constructed in this country have taken protracted periods of time within which to be constructed, and therefore if we can achieve this particular objective and this target, it would be a tribute to the planners and workers of Barbados that we can do this kind of work given the time constraints and given the other factors involved. So there is no point in talking about a hurried plan; so let me take that particular point.

Secondly, let us listen very carefully to the Minister and understand what he has been saying, and if necessary put a creative construction upon what he has said. He is making it quite clear that this is a flexible facility to be used for more than one purpose. One of those purposes would be as a location for the students at whatever level in Barbados who may require a centre where they can take their exams. Right now I believe that they go to different centres with disruptions to some of the operations that go on at these centres. Sometimes it is at the Polytechnic, sometimes it is at the Community College; it used to be at CXC, but I am not sure if any are held there now, but they themselves are under pressure for space. They used to sit exams at the Drill Hall; I am not sure about Marine House. In any event they could not get in there now. We had an exam up there today. They go various places and there is a need for some centralised place where children can take examinations

with proper supervision related to the seriousness of the exercise that is being undertaken.

Thirdly there is need for a facility in this country where conferences and meetings of a certain size can take place with appropriate facilities being available.. Now whether it is people from abroad or people from Barbados or a mixture is neither here nor there; we are providing facilities. What the Minister was in fact stating and I am sure he will clarify this when he gets up to speak, is that this is not the conference facility that has been talked about in relation specifically to attract the convention business. That is all the Minister was saying and that that planning will go on and will go on in consultation with the vested interests including people in the hotel and tourism sectors. You cannot think that the Government will just go and put down a facility like that without consultation if it is meant primarily for the tourism sector. Let us understand that and let us think creatively on these matters.

As far as the acquisition of land is concerned, the Chairman has made an observation and I would not go into that, but in this particular phase there is no question in the foreseeable or immediate future of any acquisitions taking place up there.

Asides.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I don't know where the money is coming from. All the acquisitions have taken place already. They have acquired an area of land from Ilaro Court, and that is going to accommodate the vehicles and so on for parking. That as far as I am concerned is in the latter part of the programme, and wherever down the road.

Let us get back to the facilities. What we are providing here is a facility that can accommodate some 1 000 students in examination conditions, with a flexibility that the area can be broken down into smaller rooms, so that if it is used for another purpose, you can have Committee rooms, Committee A, Committee B, Committee C as the case may be, and rooms where you can set up offices for those who "may require offices related to the conference. That is for a thousand persons, and then an additional 400 persons can get accommodation in there, so that it is 1 400, and then in addition to that you are having an auditorium that can seat 2 000 persons if you have a very large gathering whether it is for a cultural convention or whether it is for some gathering to hear a distinguished speaker or

something like that. You will have 2 000 persons seated in comfortable seats, hopefully with very good acoustics, and we will also ensure that there will be facilities if simultaneous translation equipment would be required.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that in the short and medium term these will provide facilities which can be used for a variety of purposes, but will not inhibit the planning for other facilities which may be needed either in the tourism sector or in the cultural sector if large scale facilities are needed. One thing is sure; we cannot afford in this country to put up a facility for 30 000 people to be filled once or twice a year at Crop-over or something like that. It does not happen in the big countries. If they are having big conventions, they adapt existing facilities for those very large numbers, and we will have to do the same.' We do not have any choice because the resources are simply not there to carry out that kind of development. So what we are doing is within the resources available to us, and hopefully within the time span available we are trying to get a facility that will be architecturally appealing and at the same time meet a felt need in this community.

I need not say that we have been thinking about these kinds of things for some time, but that is a fact, and I agree with the honourable Member for St. Thomas that we will have to look at the National Stadium to see how it can be adapted in time so that it can serve again more than one purpose. I don't think the Leader of the Opposition needs to lose any energy over this particular one and to wax too warm over this. There is a felt need. He is the Vice President of the CPA, and I don't think he would object to the need for getting facilities. All of us are committed to the CPA and to the hosting of conferences here.

Hopefully if the Barbados Labour Party can raise that number of persons for their annual conference maybe that facility in time may become available....

(Aside)

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It will be available for use by the public of this country and by persons who live here, as well as our visitors. Flexibility is the key to this and this is all we are trying to do, Mr. Chairman. 4.45 p.m.

Thank you very much.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head.....

The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Sport.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I rise only to speak on one area that concerns me personally in terms of the fact that I feel that since so much talk has been said about convention facilities and every neophyte around every corner seems to be the repository of everything tourism and the bold policy initiatives that any Government should pursue in enhancing the tourist product.

I feel, Sir, that although I would admit that the Minister and the Prime Minister have more or less given a true indication of what the Government's plans are for this facility, I think it might be well for us to know exactly what is happening as far as conference facilities are concerned.

Now, all over the world, Sir, whenever the entrepreneurs are building hotels, they are looking very seriously at convention facilities. Throughout North America, Europe, South America, you will find that the convention facilities in all hotels are heavily utilised. This is a known fact.

We have a situation in Barbados, Sir, where most of our hotels have been houses and they have more or less been turned into hotels and we have not had the required amount of convention facilities that we would need in Barbados but what are we doing, Sir? We have the Dover Convention facility which now has a capacity of 750, with simultaneous translations in three languages, ideally situated in the south coast, surrounded by many hotels, very close to the new Airport Road, and, Sir, we feel that this will be very well suited in terms of hosting any conferences in Barbados.

One only has to remember that for the second year running, the Caribbean Hotel Association General Meeting which was scheduled for Barbados had to be held in Aruba simply because the hotels in Aruba have a capacity of 800 people and they have been able to stage it simply because of this capacity. I am saying that as of this year Barbados can easily be the venue.

When we look at Rockley, only two weeks ago Rockley opened conference facilities with a capacity of 200 simply because their surveys proved that 80% of the traffic they will be looking at a capacity of 200 would suffice.

Only last night, I had the privilege of opening the Kings Beach Hotel, a luxurious small hotel of 60 rooms and they, too, have facilities for about 60 to 80 personnel in their conference facilities.

One has to look at Sam Lord's. Again, Sir, adequate provision is going to be soon made and when you look at Paradise, consultations have been going on for some time. Again, that is ideally located in the west coast and, again, near the new Airport Road. So, Sir, all I am saying is that when one talks about the facilities, if the Minister says that

it is going to be a flexible facility and, that the major thrust would be an examination centre for 1 000 kids and an auditorium for 2 000, when one understands that the gymnasium will have a capacity for 4 000, it is obvious to me that the Minister is right.

I think what he is saying is that it is flexible enough for us to have any conferences or any convention meetings that we can cater but, in the overall scheme of things, the tourism sector, itself, obviously would be looking to be adequately sufficient in this area and, therefore, Sir, I thought I would just rise for just a few moments to illuminate the dark corners of anyone's minds in this Chamber as regards to convention centres and to say that convention centres and golfing facilities also are something that wherever we have been all over the world we recognize that these facilities bring tourists and not the erroneous view that many people have that tourists bring these things. It is the other way round, Sir. These facilities bring tourists and it has been proven all over the world.

Sir, I am not really going to delve into the other areas since it is an educational project but since tourism was mentioned, and I know that I understand what is going on in tourism, so I figured, Sir, that it would be the best thing to let the members of the House know exactly what are the bold policy initiatives in the Ministry and to let them also understand that if the Minister of Education says that the major thrust is not particularly to the tourist industry, it is a fact. Those are the plans that he has had and I see no reason for us not to believe him.

With those few words, I will just end by saying that I am convinced that within a year or two, we in Barbados will be better placed than any country in the Caribbean and, therefore, there is no real room for us to be apprehensive about our convention facilities.

I think the hoteliers in Barbados understand this quite clearly and they will be taking remedial action as soon as possible.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 76 stand part, those members in.....

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I just want to briefly state that the four words that are relevant here happen to be "the question of priorities", and a word that is being constantly used is "inhibit" and the fact that the point was made that we are dealing with this - what was even reported earlier - in what the architects and the engineers call their fast track method, because we have the 350th anniversary of the CPA coming up next year.

I think if I had to answer all of the things that I really want to answer we probably would be here for another few hours and I think I would just clarify the fact that it is only the point that there is a combination of the examination centre and the conference hall. At any one time when there is not a conference they can be used for an examination. Indeed, when there is not an examination, we can have conferences on one floor or the other.

It is structured and you are welcome to go and visit One is one side and one is the other. The auditorium is in the centre so you can have that kind of combination but the idea is, which must be made clear because I think only last night we had quite a bit said about it. It is not intended to be built as a tourist convention centre and with that I will close.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Once again the question is that Head 26 stand part. Honourable members in favour please say "aye" and those against say "No". I think the "ayes" have it 4.55 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two money Resolutions 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. M. A. KING, the Resolutions were read a first time, a second time and were agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 2.

**RESOLUTION THAT THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY
THE CROWN OF A PARCEL OF LAND IN > ST.
MICHAEL FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE
SAVANNAH CLUB BUILDING**

Order No. 2 was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at the corner of Garrison Road and Highway No. 7, St. Michael for the purpose of the preservation of the historic building known as the Savannah Club.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, we came to Parliament with a Resolution to acquire the Savannah Lodge along with a parcel of land surrounding the Savannah Lodge.

There was an extra parcel of land that we did not come for at that time because the Ministry was not sure of the owner. We were not sure if it were owned by the Savannah Lodge or if it were owned by the Barbados Light and Power.

Well since then we discovered that it is owned by the Savannah Lodge and we are coming now to regularize the situation where we are purchasing the Savannah Lodge and the surrounding lands, and this Resolution seeks parliamentary approval to acquire the extra 1 648 square metres of land.

And with those short remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker I am not speaking to the substance of the Resolution, but when it comes to voting, I should like to declare an interest in that I am one of two persons who have been legally consulted about the question of acquisition. And to the extent that there may be a contract for retainer to give advice on the matter, my interest might be affected. But I have no objections of course.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: This morning, inadvertently, I missed two of the Questions put in by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. I am going to request that that Item be recommitted so that those Questions can now be put in.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas. The presence of "White Fly" disease in Barbados.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir: To ask the Minister of Agriculture:

Will the Minister please state whether his Ministry has conducted research aimed at explaining the presence of "White Fly" disease in Barbados?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister please state the results of the research?

Mr. SPEAKER: And the same Honourable Member: Resignation of Manager of New York Office of the Board of Tourism.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, this is for the Minister of Tourism and Sport

Is the Minister aware of the resignation in 1987, of the Manager of the New York Office of the Board of Tourism?

If the Minister is so aware, will the Minister please state whether he and/or the Board of Tourism has yet appointed a Manager of the said Board's offices in New York?

If the answer is in the affirmative will the Minister please state the name of the appointee and the date of his/her appointment?

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of business for the day, and I now move. Sir, that the House be now adjourned until Tuesday, 1st November, 1988 at 12.00 noon.

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

The question that this sitting be now adjourned until Tuesday the 1st November, 1988 at 12.00 o'clock was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly. 5.03 p.m.