

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 - 91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 27, 1990.

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

PRESENT

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

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., (Econ.), J.P.,
(Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.

Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.
(Hons.), (Minister of Health)

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

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P. (Edin.),
(Leader of the Opposition)

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

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

Hon. W. O. FRANKLY, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P.,
(Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Employment,
Labour Relations and Community Development)

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.), (Minister of
Housing and Lands)

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)

Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH, (Parliamentary
Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture)

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

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of
Committees)

Mr. E. BOURNE

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

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT, B.A., (Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of the Civil Service)

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.

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

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER

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

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

Prayers were led by Fr. Ivan Harewood.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The minutes of Tuesday, February 20, 1990.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes of the proceedings of this Honourable Chamber for the meeting that took place on February 20, 1990 be taken as read and be confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: In many parliamentary governments there is provision made for a Speaker's Gallery. We are not so fortunate in our structure here. However, whenever at the Speaker's invitation distinguished people are invited to Parliament, it is customary to welcome them.

This morning we have a number of Canadian Members of Parliament who are on an exchange visit to Barbados, as well as a Seminar within the Caribbean. I have invited them this morning to look at some of this day's proceedings. I am sure Members will be willing to know some of them and I will ask them to stand.

The Leader of the Delegation, Girve Fretz
 Senator William "Bill" Doody, Deputy Leader in the
 Senate
 Senator W. Petten Dr. Harry
 Brightwell Mr. Ross
 Stevenson Mr. Douglas
 Young Mr. Lyle Kristiansen
 and Secretary, Ian Imrie.

Thank you.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. C. A. NEBLETT: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay before the House the 30th Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Board of Tourism for the year 1988-89.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am not at this moment giving notice of any matters to be dealt with formally in the classical sense, but I am just serving notice to the Honourable House that the Parliament (Administration) Act, 1989-29 was proclaimed and was gazetted yesterday. It has therefore become necessary for the parliamentary Commission to be appointed.

Later in today's sitting, Sir, immediately after lunch, I shall seek leave of the House to appoint the Members of the Commission. There are already Members who are *ex officio* Members. The House will be required to appoint four of its Members to sit on the Commission and later today I will seek the leave of the House for those Members to be so appointed.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 109 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is now ready; also, to indicate that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 118 asked by the same Honourable Member is also ready.

Hon. C. A. NEBLETT: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 115 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, before we embark upon today's business, Government's business, I am moving that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 1.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply. 12.25 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1989-90 NO. 15 -HEAD 84 - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, this is a request to this Honourable House to supplement capital expenditure under Head 84, Subhead 6 of the Capital Estimates of the Ministry of Transport and Works.

In January, 1986 a contract was awarded to Sintra Inc. for the construction of a road then designated the Airport to West Coast Highway, now renamed the Adams/Barrow/Cummins Highways.

It was estimated at that time that the period of construction would be 880 days which would have meant that the project would have been completed on July 31, 1988. However, at that time the contractors recommended an extension which was granted up to October 31, 1988 and then a further extension was granted up to December 21 of the same year. However, work was not concluded by the contractors until May, 1989.

In 1988 claims were made on behalf of the contractor by the consulting engineers, Proctor and Rcdfcrn for an additional \$5 million for work which was added as a result of design changes, extra excavations and additional work also due to the increase of a number of local roads, traffic signals, illuminations, fencing, driveways, drainage and privacy walls.

An additional sum of \$5 million was granted and this brought the cost of construction to \$42.5 million. Here, I might point out, Mr. Chairman, that this contract was awarded to Sintra Inc. at a cost of \$36 958 163. At that point in time, with the additional claims it came to \$42.5 million.

When the Estimates of the current year were prepared, it was not envisaged that the price of \$42.5 million would be exceeded and, indeed, under this item only the sum of \$725 000 was voted for retention payments.

Subsequently, the Ministry received additional claims for work done in March, April and May of 1989 in the sum of \$1.1 million which increased the amount of the cost for construction of the road to \$43 272 659.65.

Some time after that, the Ministry was presented with a claim for additional compensation by the contractor in respect of a long list of items - I will not tire the House by reciting all of these items but will give some idea as to their character - wage adjustments added, haul costs, changes in conditions in such well excavation, method of measurement and delays in placing aggregate base, delays in relocating utilities and the like.

The matter was referred to Proctor and Redfern, the Consulting Engineers and Proctor and Redfern recommended a sum of \$7 246 209.36 as being a reasonable portion of the claim.

It might be pointed out here that one of our technical officers in the Ministry was not particularly happy with the recommended figure and having looked at a legal opinion written on November 13, 1985 by Mr. Alfred Clarke, Attorney-at-Law and Mr. Woodbine Davis, Principal Legal Officer in an assessment of the contract, the Ministry felt that it would be useless to contest this amount any further especially since the Ministry's principal advisor, namely, the Consulting Engineer, is the person who emphatically considered the amount to be reasonable. That effectively brought the cost of the road to a figure in excess of \$50 million, a cost overrun of over 40%.

There are some people who have disputed the use of the term "cost overrun" to describe such a situation where additional work was involved. I use the term in the way that the international financial institutions use it which is that any time an estimate has been exceeded in any way, it constitutes an overrun and for whatever reason.

In spite of that, however, Sir, it is not expected that the estimate of the overall project would be exceeded. You will recall that the project was estimated to cost Bds. \$90 ' million. 12.35 p.m.

The disbursement of the amount now sought from this Honourable House would bring that, the sum that has been expended to date to \$87.5 million and I have been advised that any additional expense would be of a minimal nature. So one of the positive aspects of the execution of the project is that it has been kept within the limits of the total estimate though with the execution of the civil works there has been a considerable cost overrun. This has been achieved by virtue of the fact that the other ancillary work such as relocation of utilities and so forth have cost substantially less than originally estimated. Additional amounts which would be included would come under the rubric of foreign currency conversion for which a sum of \$660 256 is sought.

Under the terms of the contract between Sintra and the Government of Barbados, the Government is required to indemnify the contractor for any foreign exchange losses incurred. The operative and controlling exchange rate against which such losses will be computed would be that rate that occurred on the first working day of the month before the bid was submitted. I think this is some time in July, 1985.

An additional payment of \$301 447.75 is requested for the consultant. As these contracts are drawn up the increase in the fees of consultants are invariably consequential upon increase in the cost of the total construction project.

Other amounts are included for relocation costs of the utilities. A sum of \$1 666 838.73 would go to the Water Authority, \$1 744 to the National Petroleum Corporation and \$5 935 to the Barbados Light and Power. A sum of \$150 is also included to solve the problems of street lighting on the ABC Highway. It has been found that even the slightest vibrations can create outages of the lights on the Highway and this sum of money will enable the Government to rectify that problem and to secure proper illumination on that road.

I now beg to move, Mr. Chairman, that this stand part of the Resolution.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to second the Resolution and reserve my right to speak.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I rise just to make a couple of observations. Firstly let me say that I am pleased to see this Resolution before the House because as you know, Sir, there has been a considerable number of problems caused by the delay in payments to several sub-contractors in Barbados. It is important for the Government to recognize that where it has embarked on a policy which denies credit to small businessmen in Barbados, then they have an obligation to ensure that any monies due to those small businesses or to large businesses who have sub-contracted to them be paid as promptly as possible, otherwise it will lead to the collapse of many small

businesses in Barbados and of course prior to that would lead to even higher levels of unemployment than those prevailing in Barbados today. So from that point of view I welcome the Resolution. According to various reports there is a large number of small businesses whose survival would be dependent on receiving their cheque in their hands by March 31 this year. Certainly many of those who have been laid off because of the Government's failure to honour their obligations more expeditiously may have an opportunity to get back to work hopefully after they receive their cheque.

I hope, Sir, that the passage of this Resolution would be followed equally expeditiously by the release of the money in order that the small contractors' legitimate demands can be satisfied. However since it is near March 31, the end of the Financial Year, there is every reasonable prospect that they will receive their money. I am quite sure, Sir, that this was one of the motivating forces behind the Minister's pressing to get this to Parliament at an early stage because he himself might be fully aware of the kinds of problems caused in this regard.

The second point I wish to raise relates to this question, some call it overruns, some dispute whether overruns would be the correct term, if it is due to the under estimate of the amount of excavation and so on that has to be done and under estimations of the work for which they did in fact bid. But it seems to me to be totally unacceptable where a situation arises where we have to come to this House again and again and again and in respect of construction work be voting money relating to increase in the cost of construction in the area of 30%, 40%. 12.45 p.m.

I can see the views expressed by the contractors because when they bid for a project they bid according to the specifications set out. Therefore, if they are faced with a problem where they are told that the average depth of marl fill or something would be two feet and it ends up at six feet, the project has to continue and then the embarrassment is partially theirs and Government as well. So it seems to me that something has to be done. I rather suspect that a considerable amount of the fault down the years probably relates to the professional advice given to Government in respect of the requirements for adequate fulfillment of the contract.

Therefore, I think the time has come when more realistic estimates of the cost of these projects should be made available to the Ministry before they embark on projects of this nature. I mean a 40% overrun on any project outside of the public sector would probably lead to most companies in Barbados going bankrupt. It is only in the public sector that we can certainly ostensibly tolerate that kind of inadequate forecasting of expenditure. We come in here and pass a Resolution and somewhere along the line a cheque goes out but eventually the bottom line is that that

has to be serviced either through the tax dollar or through borrowings and eventually the people of Barbados have to pay for this kind of exercise.

Whereas I welcome the Resolution because it will solve the serious financial problems of a lot of small businessmen in Barbados - because those owed money by X. Sintra are not the only ones - there are large "numbers of ^{v r} ^ people today where the Government owes them money. ^{-x} The Government is not paying them. They cannot get money from the bank because there is a credit squeeze on and they have to discontinue their businesses and lay off people and so on. So in a situation where you have a severe credit squeeze....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is different in this sense.

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Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I crave your protection.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will always have my protection as long as you do not follow the Asides that are made.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Generally speaking, Sir, in the r~ past when Government has failed to meet its obligations expeditiously, business could continue because people had access to credit. In any event, the banks would lend money to small businesses and other businesses because they had confidence in the fact that the Government would pay their bills someday. What I am saying is that this is an altered situation and it is altered in respect of the fact that the banks simply cannot lend if they are to satisfy the requirements of the Central Bank of Barbados and the Ministry of Finance. -\

So that you have a very unusual situation where credit is removed from the system and the Government is not paying the people expeditiously and, therefore, they cannot continue their businesses. Now it does not take a genius to recognize that this kind of situation differs very much from a situation where credit is readily available. Now the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, Sir, has had some difficulty in appreciating the point but I hope that it has been driven home now. ^

Sir, it does bother me and I know of one particular case where a small businessman was owed 530,000 by a Government Department. He has not been able for some months now to get his \$30,000 and he came to me, Sir.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He came to me and I told him that I did not have the money to lend.

Laughter.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: But I advised him, Sir, to get a document made out demonstrating that the Government owed him the money and to take it to his bank. I called up the bank manager and I spoke to him and expressed the kind of circumstances. All the man wanted to borrow was \$30,000 from the bank against the \$30,000 owed by the Government. The Government did not dispute the debt. The appropriate instructions had gone down to the Accountant General but the Accountant General must have been instructed not to pay or whatever, or he did not have the money. No problem. But what concerned me, Sir, is that normally the bank will say no problem at all. You can have the \$30,000. But the manager called me and said - "Look, I will be very glad to lend the \$30,000 but we have to conform to the Central Bank requirements". Therefore, they could not lend the \$30,000. Sir, that small businessman has been out of business now for several months and 10 people whom he employed have been out of work.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Ten people whom he employed have been out of work. So those of you over there may think that this is a matter to laugh at, but those ten people who cannot feed their children cannot afford to laugh.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that this is not a figment of my imagination. I believe, Sir, now that I reflect carefully that this was not the first time that I made reference to this matter on the floor of this Honourable House. It is my clear recollection that sometime in the month of December I made a tangential reference to that same particular predicament facing a small businessman in Barbados. Today Sir, instead of recognizing the problem and seeking to cure it, my honourable friends on the other side are trying to sweep it under the carpet and Uirough *sotto voce* remarks are suggesting that it was a creature of my imagination, Sir. The suffering of those people who have lost their jobs....

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Sir. I really would not like the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to lose any of his equanimity on this matter. I have not been laughing. I am the Minister of Finance. I have not been laughing. I have not talked about creativity or anything like that. I would like to give you the assurance that if you right now give me the name and address of this company and if there is a problem I will get the matter solved right away. Just give it to the Clerk and I will deal with the matter right away. Give it to the Clerk.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I may continue, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, two minutes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am fully aware of the assurances given by his Ministry who has had a small businessman going down to the Accountant General's Office day after day and being assured that he would get his money for months and now they get up here playing parliamentary games in Parliament.

RL Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I am indicating that I do not know what has been going on at Ministry level, but I am giving him the assurance as the Leader of the Opposition that if he gives me the name, address, and telephone number right now I will go and get the matter investigated and settled.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I can assure the Honourable Prime Minister that I will let him have the name, address, and all of the details at the appropriate time. Furthermore, knowing the levels of victimization practiced by the Government, I am not so foolish, Sir, to submit any name to anyone of you unless I first consult that person.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I want to make it clear that the correct procedure for me will be to consult the person who saw me in my capacity of Leader of the Opposition. If I get the permission from him I can assure you, the Prime Minister of this country and the Minister of Finance, that I will personally deliver it to you. 12.55p.m.

A major section of that person's work has been in relation to doing certain activities for Government and I am not going to give you all any opportunity to deprive him of work in the future, if he gets paid by you and he goes back into business, unless he first gives me the permission to do so.

We believe in integrity, we believe in honesty and we believe in a proper regard for the plight of the small people of this country, and whilst you all can laugh, whilst the Prime Minister of this country can get up to make a parliamentary stand on this matter, knowing full well that anyone with any sense of integrity or any sense of honour, any belief in the confidentiality that should exist between himself and a member of the public who has come and raised a problem with him, would not seek to disclose it in this forum and in this manner, I will not be giving you any name unless I get the permission of the person.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude now. Your time is up.

Certain remarks made by Dr. R. C. HAYNES were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be struck from the record.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman,....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired. You may come back if you want to.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, how could my time have expired if he interrupted and used up part of the time? He spoke in my time on a point of order. ^

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If I have ruled that the matter does not fall under the Head we are discussing, and a Member rose on a point of order, I would have to hear what the point of order is. I am therefore ruling that that aspect of your speech will be struck from the record and that the point of order therefore will not be part of the record.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: May I continue, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, because your time has expired. We will therefore have to hear someone else who wishes to speak.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, of course I will abide by your ruling in the circumstances.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask the Minister of Transport and Works a question about the roundabouts that are proposed for the ABC highway. There is some talk in the public domain of the construction of additional roundabouts, I think near the Belle junction, one by Kendal Hill and a little further on. I am told there will be five. I just want to ask the Government if it has firmly committed itself to the construction of these additional roundabouts.

It seems to me that in deciding now to clutter up the highway with five roundabouts what we are really doing is defeating the purpose of the highway, which was designed to allow the free passage of vehicular traffic on the highway without too much interruption and inconvenience by the construction of roundabouts and obstructions such as that. It seems to me, Sir, that what we are doing is perhaps adjusting the contour of the highway to accommodate the indiscipline of the users of the highway.

There is no doubt that Barbadians have not become fully accustomed to the proper use of highways like the Spring Garden and the ABC highways. I think Honourable Members will recall that soon after the construction of the Spring Garden Highway there were two or three fatal accidents in fairly quick succession the one after the other and people got hysterical. They were calling for a kind of fly-overtake thing across the highway to provide access from one side of the highway to the other, particularly for pedestrians. If memory serves me right, I think the

Democratic Labour Party Manifesto may even have addressed that situation, but it has not come to pass.

I think it is also fair to say that in the last three or four years there has been no fatal accident, as far as I can remember, on Spring Garden. There has also, to the best of my knowledge, been no fatal accident....

Aside.

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Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, I am not saying there has never been, because I was involved as Counsel in one of them, so I know. What I am saying is that in the last three or four years that problem has tended to resolve itself, because I think pedestrians who seek to cross the highway from time to time exercise a greater sense of control. Rather than running across at all times they look left and right and do what they are supposed to do, but I also think the drivers, ^ of vehicles on the highway have become more conscious of "•-their responsibilities and are driving with more care on that highway.

Similarly, on the Northern Access Road, I do not think there has been a fatal accident on that one.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Has there been? Not 2A, the , one going from St. Lucy's Church, the Duncan O'Neal Highway. There is probably only one four cross roads on that highway. 1.05 p.m.

Getting back to the ABC Highway, I really think that Government should reconsider and rethink its position in regard to the construction of as many as five roundabouts on the highway.

Aside.

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Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister is indicating that they may be committed to two. I think we could live with that. One is probably needed on the stretch between Graeme Hall and the Airport but the essential aim of the Minister of Transport and Works and the Police Department should be to instil a greater sense of responsibility in users of the Highway and I think Government must take it very quietly now in regard to the desire to put down more than -^ the two roundabouts on the Highway. As I said, it will 1^s defeat the purpose of the Highway. Let us wait, watch and assess on the basis of some kind of evidence as to whether these things are really necessary.

Now, I hear people complaining that if you get stuck «, on the Highway in the sense that you are going in one direction, you have forgotten something at home and you want to get back, you have to go from one roundabout

down to the other roundabout. Let it be. This is only Barbados. This is 166 square miles.

If you get on an Expressway in Miami and you turn off the wrong one, God help you. You drive for hours before you can come back on to the right way you should go. This is only a little 10, 15 minute inconvenience and what are we going to do?

I am glad the Honourable Members are agreeing with me. What are you going to do? You are going to put in a whole roundabout for \$1 million to really pander to the little prejudices, superstitions and follies of people?

We have built the Highway to enable us to get from the north to the airport with greater expedition than hitherto and I urge Government to tread carefully in this area so that we do not defeat the Highway and spend unnecessary money to solve a problem that is not really a problem, that we, the human being who use the Highway have in our control.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman to respond to a couple of points.

The delay in presenting this Resolution to the House has nothing whatsoever to do with callousness on the part of the Government. Indeed, the small businessmen whose inconvenience I deeply regret, were not subcontractors or agents of the Ministry of Transport and Works. The arrangements they made were privy to themselves and Sintra. It had nothing to do with the Ministry of Transport and Works.

When claims are presented by Sintra to the Ministry it is Sintra that presents the claims and not the small contractors. We deal with them on the basis of Sintra's work. The fact that so many small businessmen were involved in the contract pleasantly surprised me when I saw the lurid headlines of last week's "Nation".

This could have been presented to this Honourable House a long time ago but out of an abundance of caution and with proper regard to ensuring that the Government did not spend anymore money than was absolutely necessary, the officials in the Ministry of Transport and Works worked hard and bargained hard in order to bring these obligations down to the size which they are.

In addition to this, it would have involved taking about two or three bites at the cherry and if that had happened, the Ministry would have been accused of incompetence and we would have been asked why did you not bring all of the debts at one time? Why did you bring one now and another debt two months later and so on so having regard to efficiency and a proper consideration that Government should not spend anymore money than is absolutely necessary, having regard to the monumental

overruns that already existed, I judged this to be the best time to present this Resolution in the public interest.

In so far as the roundabouts are concerned, the fact of the matter is that the people in Barbados who use the road are for the most part driving irresponsibly. We have to accept that fact.

I recall being excoriated by those with little experience of highway driving for not making the speed limit higher. I do not believe there is anybody in this Honourable House who have had more tickets for speeding on highways than this Honourable Member.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I say so because I have developed some expertise in the matter. I know the dangers of the highway when I see them. At one time it was necessary for me to drive a distance of 180 miles per day for about 6 weeks to and from work so I have a little experience in these matters and it is absolutely necessary for this Government to put human safety on the highway over and above everything else. It is for this reason that we have instituted the prohibition of turning right from subsidiary roads on to the Highway.

In certain parts of the Highway, this prohibition is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. In the very junctions which have been identified as locations for roundabouts, one can see drivers sneaking across the Highway in violation of the law day after day after day

There are older middle-aged drivers like the Honourable Member for St. Thomas tempered by this time of life who would undoubtedly...

Aside.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I am old. You are middle-aged.

Aside.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN:... who would like to enjoy a leisurely drive down the Highway unobstructed by roundabouts but such maturity and responsibility constitute an exception to the rule of those people who use the roads 1.15p.m.

There are proposals for the Ministry to construct 5 roundabouts. There have only been concrete decisions on 2 so far. One I deem to be necessary at Kendall Hill because this is necessary to regulate the bus routes between Vauxhall and Kendall. I believe this is absolutely necessary for the safety of persons who use the buses. The adjacent junction, I think that is Kingsland is also a junction that impinges upon the routes of buses.

I will take the views of the Honourable Member into consideration about not proceeding with the other 3 roundabouts. But this can only be done if we have a level of police enforcement on the Highway that is much more efficacious than it is at the present. The Ministry of Transport and Works make the laws but there are other people that enforce these laws. Maybe the Attorney-General when I have a word with him will ensure that there is a greater measure of police surveillance in this part of the Highway which might obviate the necessity for having additional roundabouts in the junctions going towards the airport.

Thank you, Sir.

The question that Head 84 stand part was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

ITEM (b) - SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1989-90 No. 16

HEAD 74 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Subhead 4 - Crop Research and Extension - \$2 154 875

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Resolution seeks the approval of this Honourable House for the sum of \$2 154 875 under Head 74, Subhead 4 Crop Research and Extension to be paid as a subsidy to the sugar industry for the 1989 crop. The sum of \$2 154 875 represents the total of \$32.52 per tonne of sugar for the crop year of 66 236 tonnes for the 1989 crop which is the difference between \$950 a tonne which is the minimum guaranteed price offered by the Government and the industry funds of \$917.48.

Mr. Chairman, from about the year 1982 successive Government have embarked upon a programme of assisting the sugar industry by way of subsidies to make up what we deem inadequate industry funds to keep the industry going. It is of note that this started in the year 1982 and some of the reasons for that is that in that year the industry funds fell very low. The industry then appealed to the Government of the day for support. At that time, Mr. Chairman, the industry was in the fortunate position of owing only about \$1.8 million in total debt in the industry. But between 1982 when that first support scheme came about and 1989 that debt ratio has now risen from \$1.2 million to about \$184 million most of which is now owed to the Barbados National Bank.

There were many reasons given, Mr. Chairman, for the fate of the industry during this period. In 1982 it is of note that the industry funds for that year amounted to \$742 per tonne of sugar and the price support offered which was \$17 million allowed an additional \$193 which brought the average price to \$935 per tonne for sugar.

In the year 1983 the industry funds once again were quite low at about \$755 per tonne of sugar. By way of a support of \$10 million adding an additional \$117 a tonne per sugar the industry in that year received an average price of \$872 per tonne. The industry's fortunes continued to be bad and in 1984 the industry's funds dropped further to \$704 per tonne and by a price support of \$15 million which averaged an additional support price of \$150 per tonne, the average price for sugar was paid at \$854 per tonne. This continued in the year 1985 where the industry's funds were \$716 per tonne of sugar and in that year there was a price support of \$20 million which averaged a further \$200 per tonne and the average price was \$916 per tonne in the year 1985.

In 1986, Mr. Chairman, once again, the basic price was low - \$679 a tonne, and in that year a subsidy of \$21.7 million was granted by the Government, \$3 million of which went to the Sinking Fund allowing \$168 a tonne to go to the industry's funds that year. Average price was paid at \$847 per tonne.

As fortune Would have it, in the year 1987 because of the exchange rate, the ECUs against the American dollar, the industry's funds rose to \$972 per tonne and in that year the industry did not request any price support and therefore we had an average price that year of \$972 per tonne.

Fortune continued in the 1988 year where the industry's funds were once again \$996 per tonne and they did not seek a support. The average price was \$996 per tonne.

In 1989 last year however, the industry's funds fell to \$917.48 which was below a programme of minimum guaranteed price discussed between the Ministry and the industry. The industry agreed for a minimum guaranteed price for the year 1989 of \$950 per tonne. Therefore theic was a shortfall of \$32.52 per tonne which has necessitated coming to this Parliament for a subsidy of \$2 154 875.

Mr. Chairman, the sugar industry has had a very varied history and last year, it produced the second lowest tonnage of sugar only outside 1950 or thereabouts, in 50 years, of about 66 263 tonnes. This is of greater concern for every single Barbadian, the Ministry of Agriculture more so than most and the Barbados Government. We have been looking searchingly at the problems in the industry which have resulted in the commission of the Landell Mills Report which has been received, comments documented, full consultation made with all the parties and recommendations are shortly to go to the Cabinet to assist the industry. 1.25 p.m.

One of the main complaints of the industry and \hc, reason why a minimum guaranteed price was offered was the movement of the EQ's against the United States dollar. This could be seen as one of the uncertainties in the

industry. A quick look at that movement will show that the EQ moved at a high of about 2.84 in 1980 to a low of about 1.47 in 1985 and this caused a tremendous fluctuation of receipts in Barbados dollars - from the majority of sugar sent to the EEC under the LOME Convention. Therefore, the industry was of a view that if they had a minimum guaranteed price that they knew without any speculation that they would be able to plan the industry far in advance.

It is against this that the Government offered a 3-year program, in the first instance, of minimum guaranteed prices for a set of agricultural commodities. These commodities included sugar which we offered \$950 per tonne for and in the first negotiations that 3-year period should have started from the 1990, 1991, and 1992 crops. In discussions with the industry, it was agreed that as was done in the past when the final receipts for sugar came in, which is usually around December, we would review the receipts and if there was need for some topping up we would do just that. As a result of the review of that receipt which totalled \$917.48, it was agreed by the Ministry of Finance and ourselves that the 3-year programme would be brought forward to 1989 and it would now be a 1989, 1990, and 1991 programme. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance collectively after very detailed analysis and examination have offered the industry sums of \$950 per tonne for 1989, \$975 per tonne for the 1990 crop, and \$1 000 per tonne for the 1991 crop. Quite naturally these sums of money are not the same as requested by the industry. The last request from the industry was for a support price of \$1 137 per tonne for sugar or for a price of \$1 222 per tonne for sugar averaged over the 3-year price.

We have examined very, very carefully the industry's submission and there are certain areas in that submission that we have not agreed on. The first thing I want to bring to the attention of the House is that as a result of the Budget of last year there is now a reduction of 15% Stamp Duty for all agricultural inputs. All duties have been removed from agricultural produce but previously there was a fairly comprehensive list of items that were exempted from Import Duty and Consumption Tax. In reality when we look at it, all items are now having the benefit of a 15% reduction in the Stamp Duty that was payable by all agricultural inputs before and there were certain items as well that were all sold with duty and Consumption Tax. We have not been able to quantify that. But we believe this considerable reduction in the inputs of agricultural commodities should be taken into consideration in the analysis,

A second thing we took into consideration in the analysis was the fact that when the industry closed Four Square and Hannays last year they presented to us a Paper which will show that there will be some considerable savings to the industry in the rationalization of their profession. We also took that into consideration. Other areas of their submission that we were not happy with are

known by those familiar with the sugar industry. Their production cost is based on a sample of estates and not all the estates and we have noted in the selection of estates that they have left out many estates that are known to be good producers and have had a very good diversification programme; therefore that has skewed the production cost. We are, as well, of the view that the amount put in for depreciation is an over estimation because the industry's capital outlay is not the same now as was before; and, as usual, there is a sharp difference between the Ministry's calculation for rotation crop as against the submission by the industry on what has been made in rotation crop. When all of these were taken into consideration, we are of the view that the sum of \$950 per tonne offered and accepted by the industry for this year's crop is a sum of money that would allow the industry to break even and the more efficient ones to make some funds.

I would like to say here as I have always said before that in the planning of this Ministry and the Government sugar is essential to all of our diversification efforts. As is known in our Plan, our Plan called for between 85,000 and 90,000 tonnes of sugar. Working very closely with the industry, we have made some projection over the next three years. Although we are of the view that this year's crop is going to be about the same as last year, everything has been put in place - for those familiar with sugar - to make sure that from the 1990 crop we begin to turn the industry upward. The industry is projecting for the 1991 crop a total of 80,000 tonnes of sugar and this is based on an acreage of about 28,540 acres of land under sugar.

I think it is worthwhile to note that the main cause for the extremely low production of sugar in 1989 was not only a reduction in total acreage but a tremendous reduction in yields and this reduction in yield has been going on for sometime now. As a matter of fact, between 1956 and 1964 and between 1980 and 1985 there has been a reduction of some 7 tonnes of canes per acre which represent about one tonne of sugar per acre in yield. Now there have been many reasons given for this reduction in yield and these go from varieties being planted at the moment. It is of interest to note that in the 1989 crop about 77% of the crop was planted in the variety B62163 which are varieties of canes nearly 27 years old. Now one of the problems that we have experienced in the industry is the reluctance of the industry to introduce new varieties of canes in order to keep current. There were many varieties of canes that were passed out to the industry over the years and it is only now for the first time for the 1991 crop that we have seen an effort by the industry to use some of these newer varieties that have been found to be far better both in production yield as well as in quality content. The varieties that have been highly recommended by the Ministry and the technocrats are listed I believe under B84451 and we are advocating a heavy move from the old variety which has now become very susceptible to smut disease as well as other diseases into the newer crop. We are hopeful if the industry takes this

management tool that we will begin to see the increase in yield.

1.35p.m.

The technical people are also of the view that the fertiliser programme has not been what it should be or what it has been in the past, as well as the weed control programme by the industry, as well as the lack of supplying of the canes and the shortfall in this year. There have been continuous discussions going on between our technical people in the industry in an effort to correct the agronomic problems that we have seen.

We are continuing a very close co-operation with the industry. I have said repeatedly that the main problem in the industry at the moment is the debt profile of the industry. As a result of a meeting with the Prime Minister and the industry there is now an inter-Ministry Committee, headed by the Director of Finance and Planning, comprising members of my Ministry and the Bank, that has been holding discussions with the industry to look at ways and means of dealing with the debt programme. It is still too early to say anything about this, since the discussions are ongoing, but I am hopeful that some satisfactory solution would be found to this problem, because that is the root cause, I will say, in the industry. Until a solution is found to that, the morale in the industry will continue to be low, and with low morale in the industry the application to the agronomy of the industry is going to have a problem.

We have offered this three year programme in an effort to allow the industry to know for a certainty what their earnings would be well in advance so they could plan their loan ratio programme, they could plan their production, and I am hopeful that this programme, together with all the other work going on within the Ministry, will see the turnaround of the sugar industry as is projected in forecasts by the industry itself with an upswing in 1991 of 80 000 tonnes and a forecast for 1992 of between 85 and 90 thousand tonnes.

I would like to give this House the assurance that this industry is vital to Barbados and we invite all people of goodwill, if they can, to assist in any way with the problems that exist. We will be willing and able to discuss it with them. At the moment, however, within the financial ability of the Government, and as can be seen from the prices received from the last nine years for sugar, together with the concessions just granted, the average price of \$950 a tonne for sugar, which this subsidy will allow them to pay, I think is adequate for this year and will allow the industry to look forward to next year and the year after.

I now beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if words, assurances, committee meetings, inter-departmental meetings, promises and so on could grow canes and convert those canes into sugar for export, then the present Minister of Agriculture, if he is the Minister of Agriculture, would have been an outstanding success. However, Sir, we today are faced with a harsh reality that the sugar industry in Barbados has declined considerably under his management with words. At a time when this country desperately needs its foreign exchange, at a time when the prices of sugar are significantly higher, we do not have the sugar to sell.

The Honourable Minister has said that as far as he is concerned, the one thing the sugar industry requires is certainty as to their financial status over the next three years. It is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that there is certainty, and this is the certainty, that with the guaranteed prices offered of \$950, \$975 and \$1 000 per tonne over the next three years, one thing is certain, that there is very likely to be a collapse of the sugar industry in Barbados.

I recognise that the Minister spends a lot of time with paper work. I hear he spends long hours in his office. I hear he holds a whole lot of committee meetings, but he must understand that that does not constitute ministerial direction of an industry like the sugar industry, that other dimensions are required if the Minister is to assert his authority and give the kind of leadership that is necessary.

We are not going to get into any contentious argument in relation to sugar today. We belong to the new political order, and the position of this party is part of a new political order. The reality, Sir, is that we need to revitalise agriculture in Barbados to help provide jobs, save foreign exchange and generate foreign exchange for Barbados. We are faced with a situation where for ecological reasons, among others, such revitalisation must take place around sugar. Therefore, Sir, if we are serious about agriculture in Barbados we have to make every effort to ensure that sugar production is rapidly lifted in this country.

There is little point fooling around with this issue any longer. We will not be "dipsy doodling", we will not be entering into any kind of contentious argument. Our position is straightforward, that the overriding issue relating to the sugar industry today is to make sure that you raise the levels of production. We either do it at a cost which is acceptable to us today, or if we try to do it in a year's time, two years' time, I will guarantee you that with increasing acreage of lands going out of production, the cost will be four, five, ten times more than it is today.

We are already below the critical mass of production necessary to maintain continued viability of the industry, and the Minister comes in here and tells us that he has had all sorts of discussions with all sorts of people and he has - come up with a figure which everybody in the industry knows is totally unacceptable. Let us face it. Are we serious

about getting the sugar industry going again? It does not seem to be understood that if more and more fields go out of production, then the industry will collapse and then the question of rehabilitation of a sugar industry would be so costly that the public purse will have to be the only source of that kind of finance to resuscitate an industry. 1.45 p.m.

You have seen what has happened in Antigua. You have seen what has happened in other countries that have allowed the sugar industry to slide and then it has become almost impossible to get that industry going again so we have inched year by year to the crossroads and we are there now. As far as I am concerned, whatever is necessary to get the sugar industry moving, then I am prepared to support that.

There are a whole lot of issues relating to the sugar industry and to agriculture but the point is that at this time the issue has to be production and getting lands back under cane so that after all the argumentation over the years, at least, at this point in time we can focus on what is the immediate action needed.

Now, Sir, if you go into the parish of St. Lucy, and I am sure this must disturb the representative for that parish, and you look and see what has happened to sugar production, what has happened to the estates up there, it must be a matter of grave concern to him. It is quite clear to me that we have to get those estates back under production again.

When the Minister has secret talks with Tate and Lyle who were here either last week or week before, and when the subject of those talks relates to a possible management contract for 2 000 acres of land in the south, in the St. Philip/Christ Church area in the first instance with the possibility of more acreage in St. Lucy and other areas of the north, and when the sugar industry or the plantation owners and the plantation managers hear for the first time that the leverage of the national Bank might be used either to deprive them of their estates or to force them to surrender their estates to Tate and Lyle in order to help resuscitate the sugar industry in that area, and to hear it from third and fourth parties, these things completely undermine the morale of an industry.

I am challenging anyone on the other side to deny that Tate and Lyle were in Barbados either last week or week before or to deny that they have expressed an interest in a management contract for the sugar industry, or to deny that they were looking for some 2 000 acres, or to deny that the point was put to them that the Barbados National Bank might be the instrument through whom they may be able to achieve their objectives through foreclosures.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I did not interrupt the Honourable Member and I do not know why they are disturbing me but it seems to me that those who speak of freedom, those who speak of a new dimension for the black man in Barbados, are the same people entering into discussion now to take us back to the colonial era.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, did you note that no one has risen to deny what I said?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. I do not understand how the Honourable Member could expect anybody over here to deny that his friends, whoever they may be, were in Barbados. He would know who is in Barbados before anybody over here.

If Tate and Lyle came into Barbados to do things secretly one of the first people they would go and talk to is the Honourable Member so I do not understand how he expects us to deny that. If he says that it is so, we accept that it is so. Not only them but a whole host of people came in here last week and week before. We do not have to deny that. If you say it is so, we say it is so too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West, a member of the Cabinet of Barbados, has confirmed that if I said it is so then that is the case and I hope this Honourable House would take note that what I have said on this matter is absolutely true.

Now, Sir, we know that at the present level of price support offered by the Government that it is a problem for those plantations who are indebted to the National Bank. But, Sir, what has emerged now is that even those plantations which had the financial backing some years ago to consolidate their debt and writing it off against their associated companies, that those plantations today, if this is the price that they will get for their sugar, they would not be planting anything next year.

I am warning and I am telling the Minister that whatever formulations he has arrived at in relation to the price support for this year, next year and the following year, that that has not been accepted by the industry and the view of the industry is that this level of support offered during the next three years will guarantee the destruction of the sugar industry in Barbados.

Now, Sir, this is a serious matter and I believe that the Minister if he focuses and targets his problem correctly, that he must recognize that the bottom line for Barbados today

is whether we will be able to increase production and get more fields under cultivation. That is the single issue worthy of debate today. Let us face it.

We have had all sorts of issues discussed in here, race, horses burning down canes, all kinds of things. We have had all those kinds of discussions as part of the old political order. The new political order must focus precisely and target the problem and the problem is that the Minister should be assuring this House today, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that when we vote for this guaranteed price that we will see an increased production and that he has a general agreement and that there is a consensus, not only in his Ministry, not only in relation to the Cabinet, but in relation to those who have to produce the sugar.

There is little point Parliament agreeing to it, little point the Cabinet agreeing to it, little point the officers in the Ministry of Agriculture agreeing to it and then the people who have to grow the canes have a completely different view.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.
1.55p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I would wish an assurance from the Minister that, given the very precarious state of the sugar industry, that he would be able to assure this House and give us the reassurance that those responsible for growing the canes and producing the sugar share the view with him that these levels of support would guarantee the increased production which he has suggested to this Honourable House.

Thank you very much.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North.

LEA VETO SIT AGAIN

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to second that and to assure the Honourable Member what whether he is a born again Christian like the gentleman who spoke the same language as his on the radio or if he is a born again politician, new or old order, we are going to fix you today.

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. Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for

leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3.00 p.m. today.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: 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 2.00 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: The sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply.

During this morning's session the Leader of the House indicated that he wanted to deal with a matter. I would give him that permission so long as there is no objection to that. There being no objection then the Leader of the House can proceed.

MANAGEMENT COMMISSION OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Thank you, Sir. The matter which I indicated that I would want to deal with was the question of the composition of the Management Commission of Parliament. I had indicated earlier, Sir, that the Governor-General had signed the Proclamation for the commencement of the Act with the exception, Sir, of Sections 16 and 17. The commencement would be from the 26th day of February, 1990 which was yesterday and from the 1st of April, 1990 for the commencement of Sections 16 and 17.

It therefore becomes very necessary, as a matter of fact urgent that this matter be dealt with now so that whatever procedures are required to be gone into, we have one month in which to do this. This Commission takes the place of the old Debates Committee. It provides for membership comprising yourself as Chairman, the Prime Minister *ex officio*, the Leader of the House, *ex officio*, the Leader of the Opposition, *ex officio* being Members of this Chamber and 4 other members.

I am proposing, after various consultations, that the 4 Members of this House for election to the Management Commission of Parliament be the Member for St. Michael West who is a Member of the Debates Committee, the Member for St. Michael West Central also a Member of the Debates Committee, the Member for St. Michael North East also a Member of the Debates Committee and the Member for St. Thomas who is also a Member of the Debates

Committee. I move, Sir, that those 4 Members be appointed to the Management Committee.

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

The question that that proposal be now adopted and accepted was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: As I said earlier the House was in Committee of Supply at the time of the suspension and the House shall now resort to that business of the day.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for St. Peter. 3.10p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the price support mechanism which the Minister of Agriculture has brought to the House on this occasion proports to be a price support mechanism with a difference. In the past price support mechanisms, Sir, have been ways of allowing the industry to recover the cost of production particularly in a circumstance where revenues of the industry were in many respects reduced to levels below what were acceptable, largely as a result of exchange rate variations. If one follows the Minister of Agriculture, one would have to come to the conclusion that in this particular respect this price support mechanism is not just intended as a one-shot operation to allow for full cost recovery, but it is also intended to allow the industry to be able to plan a programme of expanded production of sugar in Barbados. Necessarily, Mr. Chairman, anybody in Barbados would have to identify with a programme of expanded sugar production in Barbados and indeed, as the representative of a rural constituency, I could not urge it more strongly as a priority. Indeed, one of the tragedies of Barbados at present is that at a time when the world market conditions for the sale of sugar are better than they have been for many years and indeed, Sir, at a time when we have one of those ten year breaks in the market that make sugar profitable unfortunately at this time, Sir, Barbados does not have sugar to sell. The survival of the sugar industry has been to a large extent predicated on the ability of Barbados to catch those breaks sometimes coming at ten year intervals in the world market for sugar. Fortunately, for us in 1980 when the price of sugar was at record levels we had 135,000 tonnes of production on the ground. Those persons very willing to write off the sugar industry must remember that the industry goes through a cycle of over production and over consumption and back to an equilibrium and that cycle has to be studied and production planned in relation to the fact that the cycle exists. But I make the point, Sir, that this price support mechanism is intended, so one is told, to -

- provide a basis for the planning of expanded production. If that is indeed Government's intention, Mr. Chairman, then I

really believe that there are two major flaws in the approach.

The first is that I am not aware, Sir, that there has ever been an occasion in the past where a price support has ever been brought to the House without their being an agreement on all sides. Indeed Sir, I was the person who chaired the preparation of the 1985 price support. What was brought to the House was a price that all sides agreed on that was necessary to accomplish the objective as set. If indeed therefore, Sir, it is Government's intention to use the price support this year and the projections for the next two years as the basis of creating a framework for expanded production, then there is a greater need for agreement between the parties this year than there has ever been in the past given the objective that Government has set itself. If we are to be told in this House, Mr. Chairman, that the Government and the sugar industry have not yet reached agreement and had a meeting of minds as regards what is a desirable level of price support, then I would want to submit to the Minister that he is being optimistic in his belief that merely to state a position on Government side is to bring about the level of production that all of us would want to agree as being desirable.

Secondly Sir, there is a cycle in agriculture and the timing of this price support is wrong if it is intended to provide the basis upon which people can take planning decisions. It is not by chance, Mr. Chairman, that the Barbados Labour Party brought price supports in September or October of the year in which the price support was intended to have effect. The reason being that by December 15th every year the sugar industry makes its final payments and persons involved in the sugar industry who are planning for the year to come make their production plans based upon the final payments that you receive on December 15th. In the past, Sir, all price supports have been brought to Parliament in sufficiently good time that the growers by December 15th in the year in which the price support is to apply know what the price is and know therefore what their cash flow position will be so that they can take production decisions affecting the future crop. It was always brought in such good time that the price support could form part of the final payment to growers on December 15th. You have to put the people in cash as well so that they can start doing production planning for the year to come.

So that if Government is intending through this price support mechanism, Mr. Chairman, to allow people to be able to plan, I am saying that it is a bit late and a lot of decision would have already been taken based upon peoples' perception of the status as of December 15th last year.

There are numbers of specific questions, Mr. Chairman, that I will have to raise in my first intervention on this matter, Sir. It has always been the custom of the

Government of Barbados when it has been granting price support to the sugar industry to attach conditions to those price supports and the Minister's intervention in this debate, Sir, was extraordinarily silent in so far as it said nothing at all about the conditions that will attach to this price support mechanism, Sir. What is even more to the point is that the Government is not really guaranteeing a loan on behalf of the sugar industry. The Government is, in fact, committing itself this year, next year, and the following year to guarantee a minimum price for sugar, I think, by way of on-budget financing without telling us what are the conditions the Government expects of the sugar industry of this country for committing the taxpayers money to assist in meeting the financial obligations of private capital in Barbados. I really, Mr. Chairman, would welcome the Minister's fullest possible and most forthcoming statement as to what precisely are the conditions that attach themselves, Sir, to this particular price support of 1989.

I also want to say on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, Mr. Chairman, that if indeed we are serious about bringing about expanded sugar production in Barbados, then the mere reliance on a price support will not be enough; and I say that for two reasons. This price support mechanism is not a price support mechanism that allows existing estates to deal with their problem of debt. Even when this price support money is paid all of those estates which are now facing a debt problem and whose production plans, Sir, are affected by the inability to meet their debt will find themselves still in the same position of being unable to produce because of a debt problem. Therefore, Sir, it seems to me that some element of debt relief must accompany a price support mechanism if we are going to bring about the objective of increasing sugar production in the country. The persons as I said, Sir, who are now deep in debt will find that this price support has not been drafted to allow them to reduce their lockups at the bank. The persons who have that cash flow difficulty will not be able to use the proceeds from this price support to expand production in the manner that the Government would like.

Secondly, Sir, the Minister must also remember that sugar production in Barbados has dropped to 60,000 tonnes. If we are thinking in terms of bringing back production to 100,000 tonnes, then a lot of land that is presently laying idle has to be rehabilitated and brought back into production before that 100,000 tonnes can be reached. It seems to me therefore, Mr. Chairman, that not only must there be a price support or a little bit of debt relief but the BNB might have to be recapitalized if we are to bring back into production one-third of the sugar lands which would be necessary in order for us to raise sugar production in Barbados from 66,000 tonnes to 100,000 tonnes. I am saying to the House, Sir, there is simply no way that a price support mechanism by Government that does not address the question of lockups, the inability of the industry to pay

its debts, will allow the industry to press back idle land into production.

3.20 p.m.

There is simply no way that that price support will allow the industry to press back idle land into production. It will require capitalisation, Mr. Chairman, in order for us in Barbados to be able to raise sugar production from 60 or 66[^]-thousand tonnes to 100 or even to 80 thousand tonnes. It ; seems therefore logical that what the Minister has presented to the House by way of a Government programme is incomplete. A price support in itself will not bring back idle land into production, particularly in a situation where the price support is not going to put the estates in a position where they can reduce their existing debts with the Barbados National Bank.

Government has an obligation, as far as I am.**-concerned, if it is serious about raising sugar production, to tell us what level of capitalisation will be required to get the job done, and more importantly, Sir, what terms will be attached. I want to touch on the terms to be attached, because the House knows where I stand on on-budget financing for the sugar industry.

When price supports were introduced in Barbados in 1982, they were introduced in the context of a situation [^] where a real case could have been made that exchange rate : variation was putting the industry in a state where its revenues were falling through factors beyond its control. Indeed, Sir, in 1980 the negotiated price on the European market would have fetched a price of \$875 per tonne of sugar largely because the American dollar strengthened against European currencies. By 1985 that \$875 per tonne had fallen to \$627 per tonne. The industry therefore was clearly in a position where, because of factors beyond its control, the revenues it was earning had plummeted largely[^] because the Barbados dollar had strengthened as the[^] American dollar had strengthened against European" currencies. In that context, Sir, the price support mechanism as introduced in 1982 and followed through in 1985 was designed to put back into the industry that revenue which the industry lost because of exchange rate fluctuations.

It seems to me, Sir, that if we are going to be committing ourselves down the wicket three years in advance to a price support, then there has to be in[^] Government's mind some notion as regards the movement-[^] of foreign exchange. Indeed, if the American dollar was lo[^]-appreciate against European currencies, \$1 000 per tonne in three years' time could mean that we might be coming to this House having to put three or four hundred dollars per tonne on-budget in support of the industry if Government's word is to be taken. I want to repeat the point, Sir, that the Government is telling us they are committing themselves tC* a position where from three years down the line the sugat industry is going to be getting \$100 per tonne of sugar. That implies that the Government has in its mind that there is

going to be an exchange rate relationship between the American dollar and the European currencies, so that what faced us between 1981 and 1985 does not occur again.

Between 1980 and 1985, Sir, the American dollar strengthened against European currencies, and, as you recognise, what was worth \$875 in 1980 was only worth \$627 in 1985. If the American dollar were to strengthen again, you are going to find yourself in a position where the on-budget financing that is required to give rise to support those commitments that you have stated could be extraordinary. I will come back to this debate, Sir, but I have to ask the Government to kindly spell out as clearly as it can what are the conditions that are attached to this price support, because the obligations to which you are committing the people of Barbados can be extraordinarily profound.

I also want to say, Sir, that I would really welcome the Government's position on debt relief, on recapitalisation, because it seems to me that we will not get back our production merely by relying upon the price support mechanism alone. I will come back again, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the central issue really that is being discussed here today is whether or not we are just throwing away another \$2.1 million, or whether it is going to some constructive use for the rehabilitation of the sugar industry. I cannot understand, I really am concerned and I just want to re-emphasise this, that it is my understanding that this figure was arrived at in the Ministry of Agriculture and approved by the Cabinet, and that we are being asked to vote for it today.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: On a point of elucidation. The figure of \$950 we are dealing with has been accepted by the BSIL for the 1989 crop.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is my understanding that the sugar industry has not accepted these figures as being meaningful in terms of the need to raise sugar production back to a level which is acceptable to the country and which will at the same time prevent the collapse of the sugar industry. I think the Minister has a responsibility to let this House know whether or not in his judgment these figures of \$950 for 1989, \$975 for 1990 and \$1 000 for 1991 are agreed figures between the Ministry and the sugar industry, because it seems to me that it does not make any sense offering a level of support which is inadequate - and which those who have the ultimate responsibility for growing sugar in Barbados, bringing back, as the Honourable Member for St. Peter pointed out, another one third of the lands, in addition to those acres under sugar cultivation at the moment - if they say they cannot do it at that price.

Sir, I am reasonably sure that the Minister cannot give us that assurance. I am fairly sure that the Minister has been advised that these levels of subsidies are insufficient to

meet the needs of the industry if you are talking at the same time of bringing back another one third of the lands under cultivation. You only have to judge by the amount of money the Government spent on the Belle Plantation to bring back a few acres under cultivation to recognise that this figure would be totally inadequate. The Ministry will have some idea of what it cost the ADC to bring an acre of land back under cultivation, so you know, and therefore you have to work out in your own mind whether this price can in any way even contribute towards the rehabilitation of lands at the moment that have gone idle.

The Minister also knows that whereas there are two groups of plantations in Barbados, those that are deeply indebted - and the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Peter applied very aptly to those plantations - then you have another group of plantations, those that are not in debt but nevertheless they occupy the best acres of land in Barbados. 3.30 p.m.

The Minister ought to be aware that the projections of those plantations are that at this level of subsidy that they would be cutting back on the production of sugar so it means that what we are being asked to agree to here today would result in a further decline in the acreage under agriculture involving those plantations that fall within the better rainfall area.

The other thing, I do not know whether the Minister is aware of this, that when this is approved, and a cheque goes out for \$2.154 million from the National Bank, all that happens next day is that that cheque goes straight back to the National Bank. Is the Minister aware of that? That is all that is going to happen, it is just going to go through that circle and straight back to the Bank.

I do not see myself, knowing the state of the industry, that this particular subsidy make any significant contribution towards the rehabilitation. I am of that view. This is the only area that I am prepared to debate today - the area dealing with the resuscitation and the rehabilitation of the sugar industry, because no other aspect of this debate makes any sense and for this reason.

Unless you have a sugar industry and a whole agricultural policy, and you yourself have said that your agricultural policy is predicated entirely on a resuscitation of sugar and, at the same time, a rotation of your non-sugar crops around sugar - so if you are going to revitalize agriculture, then you must be making every effort now and the accent is on now.

You have been told this. There are many Members of this House who are not involved in agriculture so when the Honourable Member for St. Peter talks about the timing of a price support, they would not understand.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: They would not understand when he talks about getting a price support in place before December but those of us who have lived in rural areas and have gone through the history, and we have been brought up against the background of....

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

I submit that the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member has not lived in a rural area for at least 35 years now. He has lived in suburban London, suburban Scotland, suburban New York and suburban Barbados but he has not lived in a rural area. You cannot talk of "those of us". I submit that he is misleading the House on a point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member would not know this but once you are a fanner you are always a farmer.

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

I concede, Sir, because he and the Prime Minister are farmers alike.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Now, Sir, if I may continue.

I believe that the House has to look at this thing seriously. I deliberately said that I am not dealing with the history of debates in this House because I believe that we have been very shortsighted over the years and the state of agriculture today has been partially contributed to by the types of debates that have taken place in this Parliament over the years.

I believe that the time has come when as parliamentarians we have to reach a consensus on a matter that is, in fact, a crisis in Barbados. There is a crisis facing sugar production and by extension that means that there is a crisis facing agriculture and I am prepared to lend my support to any measure that would get sugar production back up to somewhere between 80 000 and 110 000 tonnes a year in Barbados. It is critical, as I said, not only in terms of jobs but looking down the road in terms of the foreign exchange needs of this country. We need to earn that foreign exchange and, therefore, whether one is in Government or in Opposition, and you do not have a good sugar crop in 1991, or 1992, then the country's problem would be magnified further and further.

When I said that a decision has to be taken now, Mr. Chairman, from the information that I have available to me, I am satisfied that we really have to take meaningful and fundamental decisions if we are to start that process of

resuscitation of the sugar industry again and it has to be done now because you have reached the point, your production level has fallen to a low where it is not only a matter of the survival of the plantations, but it is also a matter of survival of the factories in Barbados and if you ever have to cut back and reduce the number of factories operating further again, you would never ever be able to bring back your sugar production anywhere near what is required to meet the foreign exchange needs of this country.

If any of those factories because of lack of raw material or lack of available cane and so on is unable to function next year or the year after, and it has to be moth-balled, just imagine the cost of ever being able to build a new sugar factory in Barbados so that when you take all the dimensions, the primary production, the secondary manufacturing of sugar in Barbados, the decision has to be taken now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Only two minutes, Sir? I am just developing a point.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You can come back.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Let us understand that this particular debate has to be seen against a background, of a different level of seriousness from those debates that have taken place before.

In the past we were talking of declines from 130 000 to 115 000 or 110 000. We were arguing about what was the optimum level over 110 000 but we are talking today about the survival of the sugar industry and the Minister should he in position to tell us: yes, we are asking you to vote \$2.1 million and we can guarantee you, short of a natural catastrophe, that we have established those relationships with the sugar industry that we would see the kind of increase in output which we have indicated to this House. Can you do that, Mr. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman? I do not think that is the case because that is not my information nor did you indicate to us that you had any agreement other than among the public sector operative around you. Indeed, there was a clear suggestion in your speech that there was no general agreement with the sugar industry. I am not saying that you should accept everything that they tell you. I am not saying that you should not analyse it, but what I am saying, and if you understand clearly what I am trying to tell you is that I am willing to offer my support for any positive measures that I see that would lead to the rehabilitation of the sugar industry in Barbados because I think that the lives of all of us depend in some measure on the efficiency of our agriculture in Barbados and I have no difficulty whatsoever in dealing with this matter from that perspective. 3.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I really did not intend to get involved in this debate but having heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central before lunch state that what he said before 1986 was all behind him, the old order as he said, and he forgets all about that. He also said it was part of a game, part of a political game. Mr. Chairman, I am going to read what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said. He said when the past administration,....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What are you quoting from?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am quoting from the Debates of the House of Assembly. I will tell you what day it was exactly in a moment. Tuesday, November 5, 1985. The past administration came for a guarantee of, I think, \$10 million in bonds for the sugar industry. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central just stood there and said that the subsidy or grant or whatever it is that we are giving to the sugar industry is not enough and throughout his speech, that was the trend. The money was not enough, it does not go far enough. It does not do this and it does not do that. I got the impression that he was saying, give them whatever they want. It may be a wrong impression. But let me read what he said on this day. It is page 2961. I am not surprised that he said it is part of the political game that he played and continues to play. I will read it:

"Mr. Speaker,"

This is the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central speaking:

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Now you see that? He said he was speaking.... It is part of the political game for him. Let me read it:

"Mr. Speaker,".... Remember, Mr. Speaker, he is saying now that you should give them what they want. This is what he was saying then in 1985: "Mr. Speaker, I have gone on record as saying that I do not support excessive grants to industries such as sugar and I speak from a point of view of principle."

That is the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I continue:

"There is something fundamentally wrong with our using a large amount of public funds to protect the capital of private entities." That is what he said then on principle. I continue.

"The sugar industry"....

And he was pointing out why you should not give them that amount of subsidy. He starts to point it out now. He said:

"... has gone through crises in the past. It went through a crisis in 1897 and in 1987 the result of the crisis was that the industry changed hands. New capital, new management, new entrepreneurship was brought into the industry and the industry was in a position therefore to rise above its crisis."

What he was saying then is that....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Let me go further, Mr. Chairman. Let me continue.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order? Would the Honourable Member proceed.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The page is 2961. He went on to say, Mr. Chairman, about the number of the horses, the race horses. Do you want me to read the exact words you used? I have read them in here already. Do you want me to read them again?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would the Honourable Member address his remarks to the Chair?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He said: "Those of us in here know where the money is going, in race horses in South Africa and in other countries."

The point I am trying to make, Mr. Chairman, is that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said that what he said before 1986 was part of a political game. But he said at that time he was speaking from principle.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Just on a point of order, Sir, I said that I was not interested in the games of the old political order. Anything I say in this house is relevant to that time in the evolution of the history of the sugar industry.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Philip South, have you concluded?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I want to say this, Mr. Chairman, when one makes a speech like the one made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, he has to decide, he has to tell us what level of subsidy he

suggests we should give to the sugar industry. He spoke for 15 minutes, then another 15. The whole trend of the two speeches was that the level of subsidy or grant that we are giving to the sugar industry is too low. He is not telling us what level he suggests that we give to the sugar industry. When he was over here in the Opposition, he was saying that we should not go down the road willy nilly, putting money into the sugar industry. And that was a matter of integrity then. But now that was a matter of a political game then and he is back on integrity now again. The people in Barbados will judge.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Member for St. Philip South would have read enough from one of my former speeches for the House to know that I do not like on budget financing of any industry. I make that point, Sir, regardless of whether it is the sugar industry, the manufacturing industry, whether it is the tourism industry and even whether it is Government's own state enterprises but more particularly private capital. I do not like situations in which the public's taxpayers funds are used to protect the capital of private people. I staked out that position in 1985 when we were the Government and therefore what I have to say this evening, Sir, falls within that particular approach to this matter.

The Minister of Agriculture would seem by implication to be committing this Government of Barbados and future Governments of Barbados to onbudget financing of the sugar industry. That is one of the real important changes that we have to discuss this evening and as a House of Parliament agree as to whether we want to commit this country to this approach or not. Because I have spoken about some of the differences between past price supports and this. 3.50 p.m.

In the past price supports issued by the Government of Barbados, Sir, were in the nature of guarantees of bonds raised by the sugar industry. In principle, the sugar industry was still responsible for managing its own affairs and seeing to its own viability. What the Government was saying was that we recognise because of certain factors, some of them beyond your control, you are not, in this year, able to raise enough revenue to cover your cost and you have to raise a bond to meet the difference between your revenues and your costs. We are prepared as a responsible Government to guarantee the repayment of the bond and that was essentially our approach, Sir, to supporting the sugar industry.

In 1985/86, Sir, the commitment was given that the Government then would have given an on-budget one shot

price support in the form of an on-budget subsidy. But if the Democratic Labour Party Government is now committing itself, Sir, to a system of price support then it becomes the Government's responsibility not just to guarantee the bond but to come up with the funds to meet the difference between the sugar industry's revenues and costs. That is a different matter. Therefore, I am saying, Sir, the House has ^ to be careful about the commitments that we are giving. O- particularly in so far as I said earlier that there is an ^ exchange rate implication built into this. I stop, Sir, at the exchange rate implication because the Minister said enough to suggest to me that you had a trend whereby there was no need to support the sugar industry in recent years because the revenues realized by the industry were enough because of the weakness of the United States dollar against European currencies. To be specific, Sir, in 1985 the industry got \$916 per tonne but by 1988 they were getting \$996 per tonne. In the 1989 harvest the industry which was -> getting \$996 per tonne is now getting \$917 per tonne. I am" ^ asking the question therefore, Sir, whether that reduction in the price per tonne being realized by the sugar industry is due to a downward trend in the weakening of the European currencies against the American dollar and if that trend is likely to continue what is the implication, Sir, three years hence of our committing ourselves today to giving the sugar industry \$1,000 per tonne? Sir, today we are committing ourselves to giving them \$2.1 million. But in the face of -. this exchange rate-position we could be committing "V ourselves to giving the sugar industry a very large amount per tonne by 1991.1 am asking whether those calculations have been done.

Beyond that, Sir, I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture if the sugar industry has yet started to meet the informational requirements of the Sugar Industry Act. I must come back to this point, Sir, even at the expense of being accused of repetition.

In 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1985 under the Barbados ^ Labour Party the sugar industry got the benefit of price support mechanisms on the condition, Sir, that they would comply with the informational requirements of the Sugar Industry Act and this informational requirement, Sir, stated that the sugar industry would put in a cost accounting system of such that we would be in a position to know what are the costs of producing sugar in Barbados and what are the costs of non-sugar commodities when those two things are grown in combination. If the sugar industry should^ come to this House over and over again and ask this House — not just to guarantee loans but for us to put on budget subsidies to meet the difference between its revenues and costs, I think this House has a responsibility to itself to be satisfied that the costs being cited by the sugar industry as sugar costs are in point of fact sugar costs.

The point I am making, Sir, is that the compliancy, with the informational requirements of the Sugar Industry -Act means something very simple, Sir. It simply means that ""

we would be in a position to know in this House that when we are asked by the sugar industry to give a price support of eggs, that that price support is based upon an accounting system whereby the industry from its total cost, by estate, distinguished between the cost of producing the vegetables that they get cash for, and the proceeds which go to the bank, Sir. I want to say, Sir, again because I have said so - before that the sugar industry must not be allowed to make a monkey out of any Government of Barbados by agreeing to things and then not complying with what they have agreed to. Governments of Barbados, Sir, can take pride in the fact that we have always stuck to the letter of the law when we enter agreement with people. We have not yet, Sir, reneged on a debt obligation and we have followed every agreement that we have entered into in CARICOM even sometimes to the point where our compliance with the letter of the law and the letter of the agreement puts Barbados at a disadvantage relative to people who do not comply. If the sugar industry-, Sir, has entered agreements with Government as a condition to so follow the informational requirement of the Sugar Industry Act, we must know what are the costs of producing sugar in Barbados and they must be made to comply with it, Sir. I therefore have to ask the Minister again if the sugar industry has done what it was required to do in 1985 when last I was part and parcel of the negotiations with the sugar industry. Within six months they were to comply with what is within the ambit of any reasonable industry in the world - to set up a cost accounting system so that they can apportion estate costs between the various cost sectors that exist on an estate. In the final analysis, Sir, I want when I go back to the people of St. Peter, to be able to say that in supporting a price support of \$950 per tonne that that is what it really costs to produce sugar in Barbados. If that is what it is, Sir, I can live with myself in the knowledge that the \$950 per tonne is that which is necessary to keep the industry going and what is necessary to keep the industry —[^] expanding. But I do not want to go back to my constituents, — Sir, and say that I have agreed to a price support but I cannot tell them what that price support means because I am agreeing to the price support in the absence of an accounting system which tells me what the costs of producing sugar are. I really feel, Sir, that if this Government is committing itself and future Governments to on-budget financing of the sugar industry which seems to be the implication that could run into millions of dollars, then the sugar industry has a responsibility to live up to its agreement as well. It has to go forward that we want the sugar industry to be serious about complying with the informational requirements of the Sugar Industry Act, Sir. In the final analysis, Mr. Chairman, what we are doing this afternoon is telling the sugar industry that we are prepared to support the cost of production in the sugar industry that bears no relationship with the prices in the market in which '_. it operates. It is a serious thing. We are telling the sugar _ industry that we are prepared to allow the existence of an —' industry in Barbados which is producing for a market like any other industry but that the Government is going to use

taxpayers' money to pay a price which is higher than the price it can get even in the best part of that market. That is a serious undertaking, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is a very serious undertaking. Therefore, Sir, I have made the point throughout my whole presentation that I have no difficulty with our expanding sugar production in Barbados. I have no difficulty with Government supporting the industry but I want to be clear as to what the conditions are. I want them spelled out by the Government and I also want to be sure that when we as a Parliament in 1990 say these are the conditions that the conditions, Sir, must be complied with.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Michael West.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I tried very hard to stay out of the debate concerning sugar because When one gets into this debate one invariably has to repeat oneself. In 1982 when the Barbados Labour Party Government brought price supports to this House, I made a speech then and I stand by that speech. I warned that based on the experience in countries the world over and in particular the United States of America that once you started the principle of price supports there was no way you could escape from a continuation of that concept and the reality of price supports forever and ever thereafter. 4.00 p.m.

Whether you are in the United States, whether you are in Spain, whether you are in the United Kingdom or whether you are in Barbados, those persons who are the beneficiaries of price supports will always find methodologies to continue the price supports.

I am in this debate this afternoon because I was particularly distressed at the intervention by the Leader of the Opposition. One of the things about political expediency is that you can find yourself speared. While you are sitting on the principle of political expediency, that spear can go all the way through parts of your body until it gets to your heart. If you are sitting on the spear, something is bound to happen to you, and what happened to the Leader of the Opposition today is going to happen to the Leader of the Opposition again and again as he constantly rides the twin tiger of integrity on the one hand, his past performance on the other and his ambition on the third.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have it right this time, it does not matter if the order is right, but I know the facts are there. The fact is that while sitting for us and looking at the sugar industry in its pristine reality in 1982, he was required, as all of us were required, to examine the history of sugar in this country. We understood the Barbados

Labour Party to be making an effort to solve the problem of blackmail which constantly is put by the sugar industry to the rest of the country. It is nothing short of blackmail.

This is the position, Mr. Chairman. We have to get foreign exchange from sugar. Everybody, including Courtenay Blackman, knows that and the Hatches and the Blackmans and the rest of them in Barbados are aware that the one thing Barbados will be able to earn foreign exchange from is sugar. Sugar has been used as a weapon in this country from time immemorial, since 1645 when it was introduced, and it continues to be a weapon against people.

Between 1974 and 1975 when I went to Brussels to negotiate the sale of sugar for Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean, we had the same situation where we used to be given two sets of figures, one set of figures for the cost of production when we were going to Brussels to argue for the highest price possible we could get from the European Community, and another set of figures when as Minister of Trade we were discussing the price of sugar in Barbados. All of this has been going on.

Sir Neville Osborne, when he was then Financial Secretary of the country, knew that we had difficulty when we were going to negotiate in Brussels. He knew that the Caribbean Community as a whole had great difficulty when the cost of production in Guyana was one thing and the cost of production in Barbados was three times the cost of production in Guyana, but we had to find a common ground for all of us in the Caribbean because we were proceeding as a single voice before the Community, and we managed to get 45 countries, for the first time in the history of the world, banding as one and presenting themselves before the European Community and the larger countries of the world. We had to muffle some of the facts that we knew when we were discussing what price we were going to get for sugar in the European Community when Britain had decided to go into the European Community.

Prior to that, Sir, we had a thing called the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, and what used to happen is that a delegation used to leave Barbados every year to go to Britain to find out from Tate & Lyle what price they would pay us. We would come back down, having settled the price. When Britain decided to go into the Community, they were going to leave the Caribbean high and dry, and so we had to go and negotiate for ourselves for the first time. We first went to Marlborough House and talked to the British Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and we had to straighten him out. I remember Sonny Ramphal, Willie Demas, P. J. Patterson, Overand Padmore and a host of us recognising that we had a serious responsibility to generations unborn to get a reasonable protocol for sugar, because Britain was leaving us high and dry.

We went to Brussels and we negotiated, all of us to a man, we gave up and sacrificed etc., but in the terms of

Barbados we knew that one of the problems for Barbados was the high cost of production. One of the reasons why we had a higher cost of production than anybody else in the world was that the people on the plantations were including their oxen, their asses and everything else thrown in as part of the cost of production. We have seen the same phenomenon since 1982 through to 1989 and beyond where persons on plantations who grow other provisions and get profits from those provisions are including the cost of producing potatoes and yams and other things in the cost of producing sugar. That is the kind of argument we have to put up with.

They will say, as Hatch said, that it is jealousy. It has nothing to do with jealousy, it has to do with dishonesty and disreputable behaviour by a whole host of people who love money in the way he says you must not love money, and who therefore will do anything for money and who will allow themselves to prostitute facts on the altar of expediency. The result is, this country needs foreign exchange from sugar. It is the only basic product that grows in this country that produces foreign exchange. Any Government, whether it is the Barbados Labour Party, the Democratic Labour Party, or in the 21st century the National Democratic Party, and the Leader of the Opposition must know this, we have to depend on some product that is indigenous to Barbados to produce the core of the foreign exchange that we need.

We get some from tourism, but if we can get foreign exchange from sugar it will mean that our economy will be much more buoyant, because that is coming out of the land as well. We have tried with cotton and they prosecute the Minister of Agriculture, they persecute him, they berate him, they do everything to him because he and the Minister of Finance and the Leader of the Opposition tried to make cotton a viable product. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, having deviated from the party," feels that he must deviate from everything else. He now talks today about the old order.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are not dishonest in that way. You would not do that, but you would do other things.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: They are not part of this debate, so don't you start. You can fool the other people with that kind of language, but you and I understand each other well.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will ask the Honourable to observe the rules of this Chamber. Members who are sitting should be silent.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Chairman, with the greatest respect, do not stop him, let him interfere with me. I want all of it in the record whenever it happens. The point I am making is that when he is deviating from the party he must not deviate from principle, saying that it is a matter of integrity. Deviate from the party if you must.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the rules of this House,....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what point have you risen?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: ... state that an Honourable Member....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what point has the Honourable Member risen?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: ... may rise on a point of privilege, Mr. Chairman, at any point in time during debate. I am rising on a point of privilege. A serious matter of privilege has arisen in this Honourable House at this moment. 4.10p.m.

It is very fundamental that no one should ever misquote from Hansard. There are basic rules about Parliamentary behaviour. The Honourable Member is challenging my integrity on the basis of a deviation from principle which is based on a serious misquotation of Hansard which I would wish to read, Sir.

Only a little while ago the Honourable Member for St. Philip South read to this House an extract from Hansard Page 2 961 and it goes as follows:-

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I have gone on record as saying that I do not in principle support excessive grants to industries such as sugar, and I speak from a point of view of principle - which he stressed.

"There is something fundamentally wrong with our using a large amount of public funds to protect the capital of private entities. The sugar industry has gone through a crisis in the past. It went through a crisis in 1897, and in 1897 the result of the crisis was that the industry changed hands, new capital, new management, new entrepreneurship was brought into the industry and the industry was in a position, therefore, to rise above its crisis."

Mr. Chairman, those words were attributed to me. According to Hansard, they are the words of a Mr. O. S. c j-thur of St. Peter and I would like to submit to you that it is a gross breach of the rules of this House for anyone to read from Hansard and attribute those remarks to another Member because, in point of fact, during that particular debate, I was, in fact, if my memory serves me right, supporting the efforts to refinance the industry in 1985 and

I recalled the Honourable Member from St Peter getting up and saying that this is the day on which it would be said that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was taken captive by the sugar industry, the complete opposite.

Now, this is a very serious matter, Mr. Chairman, and I really do think that this matter should be dealt with decisively because I have never in my entire existence in this Parliament see an Honourable Member try to mislead this House in this manner and using Hansard to do it. I have never ever seen it in this Chamber and I have never heard of it in any Chamber throughout the existence of Parliamentary democracy. It is the first time it has happened.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me just make the point that the motion that is raised by the Honourable Member I will discuss with His Honour the Speaker who will assist me in the ruling in that particular regard.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, fortunately what I am saying about the Honourable Member has nothing whatsoever to do with any quotation that may have come before because I was in here myself in 1982 and I was addressing 1982 when the Honourable Member discussed the horses, the cow, the airconditioning and whatever else that was included as part of the cost of production and I must compliment the Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member, on that point of privilege, did what any other Honourable Member who may have been leaning under the weight of the matters that were then flowing to take that opportunity to cool things a little bit and I think that Your Honour has ruled on this so I can resume.

I am saying, Sir, that the Honourable Member must not, while deviating from the party, deviate from principle. I have told him that before. I will tell him that now and I am going to continue to tell him. He was a member of the Democratic Labour Party. He wintered and summered with us in the Democratic Labour Party and he must not allow the fact that he has decided to go in another direction to blunt either his principle, his morals or his intellect about what occurred when he was in the Democratic Labour Party.

Therefore, while the Honourable Member may fictitiously talk about the old order and the new order, the fact is that the people in this country will have to wonder how you can take one position on a given day and take the complete opposite within a relatively short time while speaking about integrity.

I am saying that his position with regard to the production of sugar in this country as articulated today is a complete 360 degree turn.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order.

There is absolutely no change whatsoever in my position on the production of sugar in Barbados.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is telling us that we should give them more. My understanding of his speech was that the \$950 agreed to is too little and that he has knowledge....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order.

I asked the Minister for an assurance that any price support levy given would be sufficient to ensure the rehabilitation of the sugar industry and that there is general agreement with the sugar industry. Do not confuse my words.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, he wants an assurance and he left me with the impression that he is in touch with the sugar moguls and that if we think that they have agreement for 1991 and 1992 then we are dead wrong. The Honourable Member for St. Peter understanding the economics of this issue, as he does, like the sugar moguls do not understand, and like the Minister of Finance of yore, now the Leader of the Opposition is pretending not to understand, he must know that any price we agree to now must bear some relationship to how the economic system is going to flow in the future.

Therefore, the price we agreed to, if he comes in here and asks a Minister for an assurance, what he is saying is that it is not enough, saying it in the way of a question like Father Hatch did. I have no difficulty mentioning him when we are discussing sugar because he framed his sermon in the context of sugar.

He raised two questions; like the Leader of the Opposition did not have any answers, and decided they were rumour and then on the basis of rumour proceeded to castigate the Government on the basis of rumour. A more intellectually dishonest approach to public affairs has not been demonstrated in this country until this year, and he is a man of God. The difference between him and the Leader of the Opposition is that he is a man of God and the Leader of the Opposition does not worry with that. That is the only difference between the two of them but they are serving the same master. They sip at the same cup. They gobble in the same trough and their objective is to destroy the Democratic Labour Party Government.

I am submitting that there are better and more honourable ways to attempt to do that. You cannot come into this Honourable Chamber or go in the highways and byways of this country and try to give the impression that suddenly there is a love affair between the sugar producers and yourself unless there always was.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, it is my contention that sugar is being used as a weapon against the people of this country and that every Government has necessarily to come to a conclusion with those persons who produce sugar ^ in this country because the threat and I repeat threat, not to ^ produce sugar is a threat against the whole country. If the ,T~ Barbados Workers' Union goes to negotiate a price of labour with any manufacturer, producer or Government in this country and says that if you do not give me what I want I am going to strike, everybody including the Clergy gets up and says that that is immoral. 4.20 p.m.

But if the sugar producers in this country hold the entire country to ransom and say if you do not give me this -^ price we are going to stop producing sugar, not one single^ C^ word against the immorality of that act which is a dastardly threat against the entire community because the raw material of foreign exchange must come from sugar. Nine hundred and fifty dollars is what the Government can afford and we have reached agreement with them. The other two figures we have been discussing are what we can afford.

The Honourable Member, the Leader of the ^ Opposition cannot go in any square, roundabout or circle > and say we are spending too much money. He cannot come into the House every week and say we are spending too much money and then come the following week and say we are not giving the sugar producers enough. He cannot do that and then expect me to believe that his claim to integrity is valid. He cannot do that, Sir.

It is my contention that if you are saying we are spending too much money and the Minister of Finance and^ the Minister of Agriculture offer \$950 a tonne - frankly^ they should not get more than \$700 a tonne but that is what ^ we have to offer in the state of negotiation. It is like the Gantry Crane. You have to negotiate. It is like the people who are playing baseball. The fellows who hit the ball earn more money than the whole collective Parliament of Barbados in a year. The fellows who rake in the funds -1 am finishing up, Sir - get more money than the total budget of Barbados. But the two of them are negotiating. So the negotiated settlement has to be accepted by all and sundry. Nobody gets exactly what he wanted. But the Honourable^ Member is trying to give the public the impression that the ~ Government has some residual amount of gold that it can reach in and give the sugar producers and is not giving the sugar producers. If they gave the sugar producers more, they will then have to give the civil servants much more.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: and they will have to give all oT^ the workers represented by the BWU and all the others^ the nation much, much more. ^

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will be back.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Michael Central.

Mr. C. L. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to say very much on this matter and indeed may not have got pulled into it except that I am very conscious of the fact that we need to recognize that for countries such as ours, especially with the kind of debate that is raging around us, we have to be prepared to address the matter of the position of Governments and the position of the representatives of the people in regard to the matters of the commanding heights of our economy.

There cannot be any question in our minds that there is a school of thought at the moment that would suggest that any approach to economic development for a country that seems to want to go the route of socialisation is a wrong step and that we should start paying obeisance to and start worshipping afresh the great god that is capitalism. Whereas I have no difficulty with understanding the need for surpluses or for profit, I am a little concerned at the tremendous expressions that we are having in our country at the moment to suggest that, if we do not recognize that the underlying principle for all economic endeavour must be the maximization of profit, regardless of the social cost that might be attached to it - if we are not prepared to recognize that that argument is going on and to deal with it frontally, then I believe that we shall have a problem in our country.

Many of those persons around us from up the hill and from down the hill are making very loud noises in that regard, noises that need to concern us. For that reason, Mr. Chairman, I should like to make somewhat of an observation and to make an input into this discussion.

I am satisfied that we have to recognize that we are faced with a very grave problem, a problem that has concerned me and I have no doubt a problem that ought to have concerned my parliamentary colleagues as well. Part of that problem relates to the reports we have seen in the press of refusal as of certain members of the agricultural community to plough their lands against the 1991 crop season.

Problems relating to the threat of refusals of some members again in agriculture, to reap their sugar because they have concerns of problems with members of the Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. The kind of problem that reminds us of an occasion in this country when because the price for carrots was not right or so the owners may have felt at the particular time, they drove through the streets of Bridgetown, along Broad Street, strewing the carrots along ~ the street, not only representing a certain ignorance of what they were doing but at the same time, insulting the integrity

of the peoples of our country. We have to concern ourselves with these kinds of problems because they speak to the worship of a mogul, a god called capital that has no respect for, or recognition of the problems that our country is faced with.

Many of these threats that I see and threats that I believe you, Sir, see, Mr. Chairman, are threats which are supported either openly or threats which are supported covertly by some very strange connections. One has only to read the press, one has only to hear the comments around oneself, and nowadays one has only to listen to certain Sunday night sermons and one is aware of the strange connections that all underscore this particular problem of trying to get the greatest level of profit and if to do so means that you have to reduce the number of workers by 25% or more, if you have to lay off people, if you have to discontinue Social Security benefits like National Insurance, well so be it because nobody should have any fear or concern for those things. And people who do that are persons who have a strange disrespect for, a strange disregard for, a strange ignorance of what the implications in a small society like ours would be for that kind of approach to our economic needs and our economic problems.

I believe that enlightened self interest, just enlightened self interest, if nothing else should be the kind of consideration which should make a number of persons who shout loudest and use whatever they can to pay homage to this god of capitalism realize that if we do not embark on programmes which embrace the largest numbers among the masses of our people, then those of us who have will not be secure in what we have because those who have not will become hungry and, as was said, 50 years ago, a hungry man is still an angry man today.

And so, Sir, I think that we have to recognize that we have got to come to grips with the problem within the commanding heights of the economy. We have got to come to grips with the matter of the lands within the sugar industry and the approaches that the sugar industry has to this matter of the demanding for price support levels.

It is very possible, Mr. Chairman, that with a different approach to the management of sugar lands and to sugar generally that the situation might be better. Whereas I do not intend to be overly critical of any particular person in this particular presentation, I am prepared to have us recognize, Sir, that one of the problems which the industry has failed to come to grips with over and over again is that, even within the very means of the efficiencies that they are looking for, there lies the very roots of the inefficiency which has resulted. The mechanisation which the industry has paid so much attention to has served the purpose of compacting sugar lands, especially in the wet areas in St. George and St. Thomas. By compacting those sugar lands,

they have reduced the possibility of future yields rising to the levels that one would want to make them.

Furthermore by the same process of the combined harvester, very frequently very large clumps of canes are taken out and the management of the industry is not sufficiently careful to replant those areas so that you do not have a facade of a sugar cane field with canes only on the borders of the interior of those fields sometimes being very empty. You can drive a whole racing team through the middle of the sugar cane fields and not particularly know what is within them.

I am suggesting, Sir, that there is, within the system itself, several of the problems that we have to come up against. When you add that, Sir, to the problems raised by some of my colleagues, the problem of the accounting systems which one has not been able even now to recognize and to identify with, then one is able to understand why there is always going to be a problem within this sector. Nobody can deny - and I would be the last person to deny - that the cost of the production of a tonne of canes in Barbados is high in relative terms. 4.30p.m.

But by the same token we have to be able to recognize and identify with that. Then one is able to understand why always there is going to be a problem within the sector. Now nobody can deny, Sir, and I will be the last person to deny that the cost of the production of a tonne of canes in Barbados is high in relative terms, but by the same token we have to be able to recognize that there are methods which might be used by the industry to ensure that those lands which are better able to be used for sugar cane cultivation are used in that area and that the marginal lands are allowed to be put into other uses so that we can maximize the uses of our agricultural land for the benefit of those people with the capital and for the benefit of the country as a whole.

But one gets the impression that this over concern for sugar at all areas and in all fields has been part of the problem which exists. In that context we have to be careful, Sir, not to have anybody decide that although they are paying homage to this great worship of the god of capital and maximization of profits at the same time they can insist that the taxpayers of this country must at any cost underwrite any inefficiencies which there might be in the system. Furthermore, Sir, I am of the view that it is about time that we recognize that with the amount of commitment we are putting into the industry that the people of the country begin to find and recognize that the lands of the sugar industry especially those marginal lands might in fact recognizably be the peoples' lands. The only way that we are going to come to grips with this matter of dealing with the socialization of our country is to be able to have the people recognize that in whatever ways that are satisfactory

we are going to be able to have the people benefit from this exercise which we are presently conducting.

I believe, Sir, that the \$950 which have been put forward is an acceptable level at this time. I believe the sugar industry though it may have wanted to negotiate for more should be able to recognize that that is fair and reasonable. Consequently, I have a concern-for anybody^ who suggests that we are not over the hump yet and that £* come 1991 by implication we are going to have problems with the level of the agricultural commitment to the country as a whole. I would like to think, Sir, that all of our people at all levels would recognize that there must be a commitment first of all to the country and that commitment should represent itself in the level of dialogue and discussion that people want to have without resorting to questions of race, colour, or creed. Furthermore, based on that level of commitment and discussion people would be^ prepared to recognize that we have to look for the greatest" ^v good for the greatest numbers.

As I said, Sir, mine would be a very small intervention and I thought it would have been necessary for us to put the position from the point of view of the masses.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Prime Minister.

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Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I just - wish to make a few points in this debate. Quite a lot has been said on this issue and I believe that this is not a time for intemperate words. This is a time for looking at the issues involved, recognizing that the future orderly growth and development of our society depends upon balanced growth in our country and that the agricultural sector including the most important subsector in the agricultural sector, that is sugar, is a vital component of that balanced growth.

As has been said by one of my colleagues over here, I ** believe it was the Member for St. Michael West, he indicated that the sugar industry was established in Barbados way back in the 17th century and from time to time throughout our history there have been crises in that industry. It has faced collapse from one kind of shock to another kind of shock but it is still with us today. As we projected, it will remain an important segment of our economy. So I do not think that there is any doubt about this and there is no need to grandstand either. What we have^ to seek to work out are ways and means which would" maximize production of sugar in this country so that we will meet our local commitments as well as make use of those opportunities for earning foreign exchange that may exist in guaranteed markets in special niches or on the general world market if that is favourable to us. I do not think there is anything else to it. The question is - how d«\ you achieve that given the prevailing set of circumstances which may be economic, social, agronomic, or otherwiD? But let us not believe that this problem can be solved solely «*»

by economics because that only takes us so far. There may be social, political, or management problems involved which will have to be addressed as well. I do not believe, Sir, that time is available for me to go into the full aspects of this debate because I think the Minister of Agriculture who is piloting this measure through still has to speak in reply to the debate. I am not replying to the debate. I simply wish to clarify certain matters.

The Government has been in discussion with the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited for quite sometime on issues relating to sugar. That involves the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. I will say, Sir, those discussions have been for the most part very amicable because we realize on all sides that there is a problem and that we need to find a solution to those problems. I myself have met with the representatives of Barbados Sugar Industries Limited and up to yesterday afternoon, Sir, I met with representatives from the agricultural sector among others.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, there are many ghosts and spirits around. You cannot see them all. It was Ilaro Court. So you cannot see them all, Sir. I know the Member for St. Thomas would know. He is a source of information in many matters in this country. I wish my supply was as good as yours.

But Sir, we are seeking and exploring ways and means whereby we can deal with the major issues facing this country. I realize, Sir, that there are very high expectations from the Government and from this particular political party, Sir. As I have said, we have had problems in agriculture and in sugar right now through the years. The Barbados Labour Party Government wrestled with this problem and the Member for St. Peter knows that. He was part of all the planning and the policy formulation for agriculture. I believe he can speak with the degree of knowledge with which he speaks because he had a hand in formulating the 1982 legislation or the policy proposals relating to that. 4.40 p.m.

There is an Act on the Statute Book. He has since then been wrestling with the problem of how to get information and how to get compliance, because it is one thing to get up and say - the word is "conditionality" I suppose, Sir, every loan now you have conditionalities, not conditions you know - but it is another thing to attach them. Conditions have been attached before but they have not solved the problem, and in spite of requesting the kinds of information there is always some question about the information.

I must say, Sir, that the sugar industry has submitted information, and has submitted in many instances detailed information, according to their particular statistics, but

these are examined from time to time and in some instances there are queries raised. This can go on for some time, because sometimes it is said "there are lies, damned lies and statistics." That is a quotation, Sir, it is not any unparliamentary language I am using.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. That cannot be regarded as a quotation in itself, because what the Honourable Member is suggesting is that the sugar industry submitted statistics which were damned lies.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not suggesting any such thing. Be that far from me. I said we have had very amicable discussions and these are continuing. On December 22 from my Ministry a letter went to the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited, and I will paraphrase that letter. It said that the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs had agreed to make funds available to the Barbados National Bank so that the obligations of the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited to Barclays Offshore could be met.

Secondly, Sir, in return for this the Minister of Finance wished the industry to accept the terms of his offer of support for the industry in 1989, 1990 and 1991. The Minister also wished that discussions should start urgently on the restructuring of the industry's debt to the Barbados National Bank and on the management in the industry.

There were two key issues, indebtedness to the Barbados National Bank as well as the management of the industry. Those were the contents of a letter dated December 22, 1989.

On December 27 on the letterhead of the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited, and signed by its Managing Director, a reply came in thanking for the letter sent out from the Ministry. "We are most grateful to the Minister for making funds available to meet Barclays Offshore obligations. The terms of his offer of support of the industry for 1989 are accepted." So that when the Minister of Agriculture says that the proposals for 1989 have been accepted and that there is agreement, that is a fact. The industry, through its accredited representatives, has agreed to the 1989 proposals. I continue, Sir, "May we respectfully request however that discussion with regard to support terms for 1990 and 1991 continue along with discussions on restructuring of the industry's debt to the Barbados National Bank and on the management of the industry, which latter discussions you have indicated will begin early in the New Year."

So it is the agreement on the 1989 year at \$950 per tonne, the difference between that \$950 and \$917 per tonne that was obtained, that is what this Resolution is about. It is based on agreement between the Government and the

industry. We agreed that this amount of money would be provided, they accepted that particular offer and this is what is here now, Sir. There is no doubt about it, it comes under Agriculture.

You talk about on-budget and off-budget. This is a subsidy. It is a grant. It is a subsidy or it is a grant. That is how we are doing it, on-budget. It is for \$2.15 million, Sir. That is the amount we are talking about, on-budget. There is nothing wrong with any on-budget grant or subsidy. In 1985 the Barbados Labour Party Government gave an on-budget grant of something like \$10 million, plus guaranteeing another \$10 million in bonds, to the sugar industry, so I do not think there can be any big argument over a subsidy or a grant of \$2.1 million. I admit, Sir, that more money has been granted on-budget, so what is all the talk now about an on-budget grant in 1989 in respect of an item on which there is agreement between the sugar industry and the Government?

I am winding up now, Sir. It is as if we are sorry there has been an agreement. I believe that there is some problem. We are wrestling with these problems and trying to find solutions which have never been found in this country before, if not the industry would not be in this position. That is what we are doing, Sir. I welcome the offer of the Leader of the Opposition. He said he will give any support to anything that would get greater production for the sugar industry.

I think, Sir, that this is not the occasion for me to go into any sociological exposition of the industry. I can do that very well, because I am very well seized, as

Aside.

RL Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: an economic historian. That is not what I was going to say, though, you said it for me. I was going to say as a farmer, but you do not want me to say that I think we will continue on this path and we are seeking, through consensus approaches, to find solutions because we have not found them before. The industry is still there and the problems are still there in our economy, but this Government with the support of the Opposition, because that is what the Leader of this Opposition here said, we will seek to find the solutions to the problems in this country. You cannot withdraw that now, you know. Why are you frowning like that?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.
4.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Will both Honourable Members take their seats?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, it is evident from the statement of the Honourable Member for St.

Michael South Central that in my quotation earlier this afternoon the intervention of the Honourable Member for St. Peter was mixed up with the quotation that I made. I would like to apologize to this Honourable House and to the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central.

The speech that I wanted to quote, however, Mr. Chairman, is found on page 1947 of the Debates of the Honourable House of Assembly and it was made and I am going to ensure that I do not make any mistakes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before you go on with that, I would then ask you to withdraw that section of the speech.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Yes. I unhesitatingly withdraw what I said before.

The speech that I wanted to quote from, Mr. Chairman, is this. It was made on Tuesday, September 21, 1982 and lest anyone believes that I have not been truthful about what I was saying about what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said, I am going to quote what he said about the Managers of the Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. This is what he said:-

"I think that the managers of Barbados Sugar Factories have done a great disservice to this country, have been incompetent and should be dismissed before there is any consideration whatsoever given to any domestic price support in Barbados."

These are the same people whom he wants this Government to give them all the money. The same people are still there.

Now, he went on, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order.

The Honourable Member quoted some remarks that I made in this House in 1982 and then he went on to say that they were the same people whom I want the Government to give money to. I stand by my statement that I made in 1982 and the same people have left the Sugar Industry since 1982 so you do not know what you are talking about.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, let me complete. "

Those remarks were specifically related to the misuse of funds for the building of Portvale before the long-term funding came through which created a cash crisis for the industry in 1982 and my contention on the floor of this House was that it was gross mismanagement that resulted in that cash crisis in 1982. Get that straight.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are therefore explaining of previous speech.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I will continue quoting the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, what he said about the managers of the Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. I quote:-

"I would like to refer to another matter. Many of those loans made to plantations, firstly, have been used to keep race horses, they have been used, Sir, to finance holidays, to pay for the education of their children abroad, they have been used to finance businesses in' Bridgetown, because it suits them to get loans at a concessionary rate rather than paying the high interest rates prevailing in Bridgetown, so that you can have a situation where you have a run-down plantation with falling productivity and yet increased loans through the Barbados National Bank."

That is what he said and the point that he is making today is that we should put more money into the plantations when he is saying here not to give them any money at all. In fact, he is saying that they are taking money on false pretenses. That is what he said.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, may I speak on this occasion. Mr. Chairman, I want to address the Honourable House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I stand in this Honourable House by every single word that I said in this debate in 1982 and I say it for this reason.

In 1982 the sugar industry of Barbados was faced with a different category of problems than which it is faced today. Up to 1980 sugar production in Barbados was somewhere about 130 000 tonnes and the surpluses in the sugar industry were more satisfactory.

In 1981 you had three factors operating against the sugar industry (1) the late start of the crop due to difficulties in settling negotiations in that year, (2) heavy rains and compaction of the crop in 1981 and a drastic reduction in the output of sugar in 1981 due to those two factors.

Then, additionally, you had the very serious appreciation of the dollar in relation to sterling in 1981/82. The result of that was a significant drop not only in the overall earnings but in the domestic dollar value of production in 1981/82.

Over and above that what happened? A very serious error was made by the management of Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd., when they started the building of Portvale

and the funds that would normally flow in order to finance the next year's crop had to be applied to cover the cost of Portvale whilst, at the same time, they were waiting for permanent financing from the CDB.

It was in those circumstances that a request came to this Honourable House for money in 1982 and I felt at that time that a major problem was mismanagement of the industry in 1982.

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

The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member is now recollecting what his thoughts were but the record, according to this House, had nothing whatsoever to do with Portvale. It had to do, as he started off by saying....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At what page are you starting?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have not started yet, Sir. I was looking to make sure that I do not misquote him. Page 1945 is when he begins to speak and he talks about Barbados Sugar Factories Limited in the second paragraph and he goes through discussing that and he says:-

"Sir, I would like to refer to another matter. Many of those loans made to plantations, firstly, have been used"...

Earlier he said, Sir, and this is familiar territory, I am quoting from Page 1945:-

"I have said that there has been a substantial lobby for the devaluation of the Barbados dollar. Whether the Government was approached or not, I do not know. I am saying that there has been a lobby in this country. It is as simple as that. That, Sir, would mean additional Barbados dollars but would have other adverse effects on the economy. Now, that is one area."

He went on, and I am quoting:

"There has also been a proposal that the people of Barbados should support the industry by means of a surcharge on the U.S. dollar in respect of imports into this country. I think the suggestion was a 2.5% surcharge, or tax if you like, as is charged in some Eastern Caribbean country in respect of exchange rates which would yield some \$25 million roughly the amount assessed would be required on an annual basis over the next two to three years for price support" 5.00 p.m.

That is the opening gambit, Sir. No reference whatsoever to Portvale. The Portvale debate was an entirely different debate.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if I may continue. The Honourable Member has occupied 3 1/2 minutes of my time. He has just illustrated beyond any doubt what I was saying that one of the factors being addressed was the domestic dollar component because of the rise in the US dollar and hence some people at that time were suggesting some means of getting around that factor in relation to the sugar industry. So the mere fact that he has got up and quoted from my speech shows beyond a shadow of doubt that they were the conditions and circumstances in which that debate took place. So I have no difficulty with that.

The fact that I say that I am prepared to support the sugar industry does not mean that I will support any incompetence by anybody at any time. There is no doubt whatsoever that what happened in 1981-82 was largely due to mismanagement and was not structural. By 1985.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: - Not structural in terms of factors other than management - a different picture emerged in the sugar industry. By 1985 I was in a position to come in this House and say that the circumstances had changed and I had no difficulty in supporting a subsidy and a guarantee for the sugar industry.

Now, Sir, what had changed? Let me tell you what had changed. What had changed was that we had a Sugar Industry Bill. A Sugar Industry Bill was brought into this country and that Sugar Industry Bill had set out very clearly the conditions and the conditionalities relating to the receipt of any monies from Government.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: No, not in 1981. The Bill came later. The relationship between the Government and the sugar industry....

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: - No, no. The Sugar Industry Bill came in 1983, 1984 down there - had changed substantially in the intervening years because the Government was now armed with a tool where it could control the very kind of factors that I was speaking about.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDDFORD: On a point of order, Sir. The Member does not wish, and quite correctly so, for there to be any misrepresentation and distortion. He is placing an Act of this House in a year, 1985 I think he is saying, when in fact it was 1982.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: What I said is that between the 1981-82 period of the sugar crisis and the 1985 situation that we had brought into Parliament and had passed in this House sugar Bills. We had introduced legislation in the

intervening period which placed in a different perspective any kind of financial assistance from Government to the industry. For example the complaints that I made in 1981, 1982 would have been covered by the informational requirements of the sugar Bill because a fundamental aspect of the informational requirements of the sugar Bill deals with the question of the allocation of costs, the allocation of revenues, the allocation of expenditure in relation to the -operations of plantations in Barbados. So that I have no difficulty at all. You are dealing with 2 different situations. Certainly from 1985 until now, my position has been the same. I will tell you this, if tomorrow I detected any serious mismanagement or anything that was dishonest going on in relation to the sugar industry, I would have no difficulty in coming in here and talking about it. The issue of production and levels of production has never been a matter of debate in this Honourable House, except on one occasion during debate on the sugar Bill and then an Amendment to the-s-v sugar Bill I think, or something like that, when the only ^ issue under discussion then was whether the ceiling that you should seek to reach should be 135 000 tonnes or 150 000. What we are addressing and what we were addressing in 1985 and today was the levels of production.

It is fundamental silliness to say that if I come in here and complain of practices well known to the sugar industry that obtained in 1981 and if those practices have been -^ corrected, under the-influence of law, that I should maintain - the same position. Of course not. Foolishness.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, he said foolishness. The Honourable Member continues to mislead the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is on a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I quote from page 1948 to him what the real problem is and I am going to use his own words. On page 1948, I am reading, Sir, and he said to the then Prime Minister:

"Remember the Budgets, Sir, of 1978, 1979 and 1980 how wonderful everything was going in the sugar industry? And then all of a sudden you found out that the industry is rotten through and through and you are virtually faced with a major rehabilitation process."

And he went on, and this is relevant:

"But you see, in economic matters, what you say today and tomorrow will be backed up by what is evident in 2 or 3 weeks' time or 2 or 3 months' time."

That is what he said. So the real problem in 1985 the problem between 1985 and 1989 and 1990 is the economic situation and what position you have to take depending on how the wind is blowing.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I may continue, Mr. Chairman, everything he quotes substantiates my position. I have repeatedly pointed out that among the golden years for sugar in Barbados were the years 1977 to 1980. Everybody knows that. You got the best sugar prices in 1979, 1980 period. You got the highest levels in production in Barbados. These are facts. In a matter of 12 months, there was a major turn around in the fortunes of the industry. I have no problem. I was critical of the sugar industry then and my criticisms were justified. There were management problems. What I addressed in 1985 and am addressing today are problems related to production and saving an industry. Two completely different things.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes to conclude.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Let me get back to the other question that I want to deal with, the question of debt. During that same period He has taken up 5 of the minutes. I am watching that very carefully. It is just a strategy to stop me from talking. But I will just continue. What is quite clear again is that an industry that was largely debt free....

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: - The sugar industry - around 1980.

Aside.
5.10p.m.

Oh yes, they do not know what they are doing. Look, let me tell you something. The sugar industry had record cycles of deep indebtedness and then every 5 years their total debt is liquidated. In 1980 the sugar industry in Barbados was largely debt free. By 1989 we have a serious crisis of debt and I am saying this. At the level of the plantation and factory, and at the level of every unit of production apart from those estates largely owned by Shipping and Trading in the high sugar yielding areas of Barbados on the best lands, those estates are so overburdened with debt that if you are ever going to get those estates back to reasonable levels of production, you are going to find some means of relieving the debt burden. You have to find some mechanism. If you are going to leave a plantation in private hands and you are going to ask a man to work it and he cannot see at the end of a reasonable lifetime where he would at least recover the plantation, then, you are not going to get any production. You are going to have all kinds of difficulties in getting compliance with the informational requirements under the Sugar Act. You are going to have all kind of problems and this party will be coming up with specific proposals in relation to relief of the debt burden.

I have said here before that I see nothing wrong subject to not compromising the asset liability position of the Barbados National Bank either (1) to consider some kind of moratorium or, (2) to consider spreading the debt over a longer period, 20 to 50 years, at lower interest rates. There are all kinds of formulas that you can arrive at. But Mr. Chairman, it is my considered judgment that unless you assume that that debt burden can be relieved through earnings, and I doubt that very much not according to the projections that I see, then you have to do something to deal with the debt problem.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am absolutely clear. I am totally consistent in terms of my commitment to the sugar industry. But Sir, I will be damned if I will ever come inside here and support anything in the face of mismanagement. If a Resolution came here tomorrow indicating any malpractices on the part of anyone relating either to sugar or anything else, I will get up and speak against it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now the time has expired.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not in the pockets of anyone. I am free to view every Resolution here on merit and those who cannot recognize consistency, the consistency lies in the integrity of the oneness of approach.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, just quickly in regards to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central for those of us who were not in here between 1981 and 1986. Those of us who were in here between 1981 and 1986 know that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central attacked the Barbados sugar factories and sugar producers right down through that period and the only year that he did not attack them was when the Honourable Tom Adams brought them here in 1985 on January 29th and he could not say a word.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He is misleading the House because it was not Tom Adams that brought them down here. It was another Member. I will take a seat, Sir.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The point is whoever brought them that he was sitting on this side at that time. They were sitting there with their big long jackets. He could not say a single word and the Hon. L. S. Craig turned to him and said, "Look at you. You are a different man today." Because the people were sitting there is when you changed. That is the integrity that you have.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture. Let me just state that the guillotine will be in effect at 5.30 p.m. on this Resolution.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all let me thank all Members for their contribution to the debate and let me deal with a few matters very quickly before I get into the debate.

The point raised by the Honourable Member for St. Peter is a very, very valid one and that is specifically why the minimum level of the price support has to be so carefully studied. We are projecting the industry fund of \$875 for this 1990 crop and \$875 for the 1991 crop which means that this Government has to come back to this House if all goes right on a 80,000 sugar crop for \$8 million later this year and in 1991 on the same projection for some \$10 million. This is on the present offer that we have made. So you see we have to be very, very careful in what we are doing.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made some statements today which I would like to record. He started by saying that the state of agriculture is very dependent on the type of debates that have gone on in the past. I thank him for that reckoning. The second thing I want to say, Mr. Chairman, is that he has repeatedly said in this Parliament that I am one of the worst, if not the worst, Agriculture Minister that he has known. If this is true, it is due to the fact that I had the misfortune of serving as Agriculture Minister when he worked as Minister of Finance and I will tell you exactly why I say so. He has just gotten up here today and said that he would do everything possible for the sugar industry to put it back on its feet and he addressed the question of debt. I want to refresh his memory about a few things when he was Minister of Finance about the question of debt.

The first thing I want to start with and let him know where the problem is. The problem in the sugar industry and the low morale started with a letter from the then chairman of the Bank, a Mr. Wendell McClean, to a Mr. Errie Deane in which he said then and I quote:

"The problem of insolvency was manifested in the audited financial statements for the year 1985 which have recently become available. Two points must be noted. First, future decisions by the Bank must be conditioned by the contents of the latest audited statements of the various companies in farm. Secondly, the proposals in your Memorandum to the Minister of Agriculture will not obliterate the problem. A necessary element of any solution to the problem of negative net worth of a company is the injection of equity.

In this regard, the first question to be resolved is whether or not the owners of the insolvent farming companies are able and willing to inject additional equity

into their company. My present impression is that some are able but none is willing. The disinclination of those who are able is rooted in the fear of continued losses within the sugar industry. The threat of mass resignations with directors of farming companies makes it imperative for the Bank to take urgent action to protect its financial integrity. Any action taken by the Bank will be designated to protect both the interest of the Bank and of the owners of farms in farming companies."

As a result of that letter, instructions were issued to the Bank quite rightly that from that time on all the plantations applying for funds must come with a farm plan. In that year there were four or five months behind and funds were disbursed four or five months late and they were not able to fertilize that year. Because when the funds were disbursed by the Bank it had passed the period of fertilization which resulted in the 1987 crop being what it was. -"

Further, I would want to revert to another thing. I wrote then in a prepared Paper from the Ministry in which we put some proposals for the comment of the Ministry of Finance and the Minister for some approach to the debt problem of the estates at that time and he wrote me back with this of December 30, 1986 - the then Minister R. C. Haynes.

"The recommendations re: The remission of interest by the Barbados National Bank will wipe out the equity of the Bank instantaneously. Surely, it should be known that such interests are either being recognized as incomes or incorporated in restructured loans for the most part."

In other words, he dismissed out of hand any suggestion for addressing the debt question.
5.20 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. That particular suggestion would obviously have totally wiped out the Bank, unless the Government is going to put in money. There are other ways of doing it. We are dealing with one suggestion.

The second point, and I do not wish to interrupt the Minister, the point is that in 1986-87 the accumulated liabilities of Barbados Sugar Industries in relation to its assets had reached the stage where the sugar industry was advised by its lawyers that under the bankruptcy laws in Barbados they would be trading in bankruptcy and that that would have certain implications in respect of entering into transactions as Directors.

I believe that in conjunction with the Bank steps were, taken for a revaluation of the assets, or something in that area, to allow for further lending. I believe that any lawyer would understand what that means.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, let me go on now to a suggestion that was made then for me to consider as Minister of Agriculture for the solving of the debt problem. This was addressed to Dr. the Honourable Richard Haynes and copied to me, and it was sent by A. Wendell McClean, Chairman of the Board of Directors. He suggested as follows:

- "(a) Establish notional and consistent valuations for the assets involved, such valuations to be based on a hypothesised level of profitability within the agricultural sector;
- (b) Allocate shares to the participating owners on the basis of notional net worth as implied by the notional valuation of assets, having regard to individual indebtedness of farms and farming companies.

Matters for discussion would be the treatment of the difference between the current and notional valuation of assets, and appropriate implementation procedure."

In other words, he was encouraging me to say to the people of Barbados that the sugar industry was worth more than it was really worth; to have two valuations of the sugar industry, one a notional valuation and the other one a correct valuation, and then he went on to say that "the funds realised by the company from the acquisition of shares by the Government Corporation must be sufficient to render the new company solvent."

He then went on and said that the Barbados Government, through the ADC, should inject the difference between the true valuations of the plantations and the notional valuations and allow the existing plantation owners to retain minority interest in the plantations.

Aside.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: He referred me to this. As a matter of fact, when the Leader of the Opposition (Dr. Haynes) wrote me then, these are his words in the last paragraph: "I have asked the Chairman of the Barbados National Bank to submit a proposal to you which could provide an acceptable basis for dealing with the financial problems of the industry *inter alia*," and those were the suggestions he sent to me.

If I am a bad Minister because I served under that Minister of Finance at the time, and I was unable to accept that proposal.....

Aside.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: To take away the people's lands, because I happen to know, being trained in valuation,

it would not only be intellectually dishonest but it would have been against...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. It is the same person who wrote about morals today.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I will make them all documents of the House, Mr. Chairman. I consulted at that time the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, who is a qualified Accountant, and I asked him if that was not a crime for you to enter on the books of any company valuations that you know are wrong and inflated valuations. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew is right here. I asked him to research that for me and he told me that could not have been done.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. It is important that the House understands that while that activity was going on the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, was getting ready to pay the same gentleman \$120 000 a year as Chairman.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. It is totally untrue that I ever offered anyone or that Mr. McClean ever asked me for any job at the Barbados National Bank for \$120 000 a year, or any other job. That is a total untruth. That is the first thing.

Secondly, I have heard the Minister referring to a letter today which I have no recollection of having seen before, and I would wish that the Minister would make that correspondence...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. I do not understand how the Honourable Member could say that what I said is untrue.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of privilege. He is calling me a liar, Sir. I am saying that that Honourable Member told us that the man asked for \$108 000 and then wrote back and said it was a miscalculation, that what he wanted was \$120 000 a year, and you say nobody ever asked you? I am saying that you said that McClean asked you for \$120 000 a year.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, that is totally untrue. Mr. McClean never at any time applied for any job at the Barbados National Bank. Mr. McClean is a Lecturer at the University and was Chairman of the Barbados National Bank. Secondly, the correspondence that the Honourable Member has been referring to, and I heard him use the word "crime", I would be very grateful if the Honourable Member would make that letter a document of this Honourable House. I really think so.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, it is with pleasure that I would make anything I read a document of this House. It is with great pleasure. I have endured a lot in this Parliament. Those were the things I had to work against in the Ministry of Agriculture and I am certain that the Prime Minister will tell you that we are within sight of a solution to the problem and history will record it

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please? Can I say to both Honourable Members for St. Michael West and St. Michael South Central I cannot tolerate that kind of behaviour? Let the Minister proceed.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I brought this Resolution to Parliament with the belief that the Ministry has offered a package which is equitable and which is one that those people in the industry, if they realise and accept their civil responsibility to Barbados, would operate within.

I therefore have great pleasure in asking that this Head stand part.

The question that Head 74 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 78 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 5.30p.m.

RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE EXPLANATORY NOTE TO HEAD 19 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: At least, Sir, this is a very simple amendment. The Ministry of Finance wishes to obtain, I believe, items of furniture, chairs, a desk and those items are not included in the present note and we are simply amending the note to purchase those items.

I therefore beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, this is about the nth time during this session that Parliament's time has been taken up by having to amend a note in order to permit the purchase of, in some cases, a fan, in this case a desk and a chair.

Obviously, what the note has in mind is the provision in the Financial and Audit Act which deals with the question of virement. I think it is unfortunate that we have reverted to this position in this House. I thought we had cleared this situation when the Government went to the expense of taking advice in the Public Investment Unit from, I believe, it was the IMF advisors on ways of putting sufficient classification into the Estimate which would i respect the Financial and Audit Rules and, at the same time, ^ save the House the problem of having to come down here from time to time with this type of textual amendment because it is really a textual amendment.

If we would go back to the system of Estimates which we had before where there is a general classification and the Minister in outlining in the Estimates Debate his situation, draws our attention to the particular items that they have in contemplation and one would know that if the Government ^.. wishes, for instance, to buy a computer printer instead of a ~ •"* desk, it could so proceed without having to come to ask the House's time to change that note to permit it to buy a desk.

I think the problem, as has been pointed out by us before, occurred because a former Permanent Secretary who became a Minister had a method of doing things in a particular way. He had held forth on the point that that was the only and correct way and he, obviously, persuaded the -^ then Minister of Finance to change to come back to this ^ — system.

I would respectfully suggest to the committee and to the RL Honourable Prime Minister that we should really revert to the system. I believe that parliament can live within the Financial and Audit Rules without the sort of exactitude which has now crept back into ways of classifying the Heads of expenditure and I cannot see that there will be any misdeed or any misappropriation in circumstances such as these where, at the time of th&3 Estimates, you have the general classification and you ^{iv} know that the Government can, within that framework, decide whether or not it wishes to buy a computer printer rather than a chair or a desk.

I am seriously suggesting that the Ministry of Finance look at it again. I believe the submissions which were made to us at the time I was in Cabinet as to the reasons why it would save time and expense - we can think of the cost of Parliament, the cost of Reporters' time, the cost of this debate, the cost of the paper and the cost of Cabinet's time and the cost of my speech, the time you have given me here so I would believe that this can be agreed on both sides of the House and I would hope that the Committee would be saved this type of exercise.

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The question that the Explanatory Note to Head 1\$ stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative withd/i division.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1989/90
PART 1 CURRENT NO. 17 - HEAD 19
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, under Head 19, subhead 6 - Energy and Natural Resources, there are two items which are in need of supplement, Object No. 6 travel where the sum of \$2 220 is required and Object No. 12 Operating Expenses where the sum of \$197 000 is required.

The need for this supplement has arisen because a jeep which was used by members of the staff of the Energy Division of the Ministry of Finance is out of working order and members of staff have, therefore, been using their own vehicles to get to the Barbados oilfields and, therefore, the vote has been used up in this particular way and it is therefore necessary for the supplement of \$2 220 to be provided by this Honourable Committee.

As far as Operating Expenses are concerned, the sum of \$458 269 was voted to pay royalties to the owners of land where drilling operations are carried out. Some arrears have been approved and paid recently to Carrington Estates 1962 Ltd. and that has made a big dent, Sir, in the vote and the supplementary provision of \$197 000 is therefore required to replenish that vote.

I beg to move that the sums for these two Object Nos. under Subhead 6 - Energy and Natural Resources stand part of the Schedule. 5.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, under this Head, Operating Expenses, funds are being sought to cover the Operating Expenses of that department of Government that has a responsibility of energy. This House has not had a debate on energy for a considerably long time and it is not my proposal now, Sir, to enter into an extended debate, except to raise a matter which I think is a very burning issue.

The Agreement between the Government of Barbados and Mobil of 1962 put Mobil in a position of monopoly and great advantage in relation to the importation of petroleum products and the operation of petroleum refinery in this country. As I understand it, Sir, that Agreement falls due to be renegotiated and possibly to be renewed.

The Barbados Labour Party had, as a governing party, to execute aspects of an Agreement entered into before it assumed office and there were many respects in which, when we were the Government of this country, we found ourselves bound by an Agreement in which we had not had an input but which we found difficult to operate and in

many different respects, not in the best interest of Barbados. We are now conscious that the Government is now in the process of renegotiating a new Agreement with Mobil that will possibly bind future governments of this country. I think on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, that I have a responsibility to say that the Barbados Labour Party is very unhappy with aspects of the monopoly position that has been enjoyed by Mobil in relation to the operation of a refinery in this country. We are unhappy with aspects of the past Agreement as it applied to the pricing of energy products and we really want this entire matter of this country's relationship with Mobil in all of its facets opened as fully as possible and indeed all of the assumptions relaxed.

Mobil has not been a good corporate citizen in relation to some of its relationships in Barbados. I think it is a scandal, Mr. Chairman, that Mobil has not even while operating under the auspices of an Agreement that has given it a monopoly in Barbados, it has not invested funds in its refinery capacity that will allow it to operate in this country, a capacity that is environmentally pleasant and one that is the sort of capacity that we want to have in this country. I think it has abused that aspect of the monopoly that it has enjoyed.

There were aspects of the old Agreement which required that Barbados' energy prices should be set in accordance with the platts oil gram which has gone out of existence as far as I can remember, as far back as 1985 and a new energy pricing formula covered by a new Agreement obviously has to be put in place. But it is a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, that the Barbados Labour Party had to set oil prices by reference to a set of criteria built into an Agreement that in many respects caused energy prices in this country to rise at a level that we ourselves found very unfortunate. Mind you, we were being criticized by the Democratic Labour Party for them.

We want that whole matter re-examined because the setting of oil prices in this country under that old Agreement, in our view and in our experience as a party were entirely unsatisfactory and we do not want that kind of situation obtaining again.

We are glad now that Barbados has had the opportunity to independently develop our energy sources that we have managed over time to be able to expand the oil reserves of this country and also to expand the natural gas reserves making it possible for communities in this society that were not in a position many years ago to enjoy the benefit of natural gas utilization to do so. But we had to do that without the real assistance or investment of the entity who had a monopoly position in this particular respect.

I am saying to this House and I am saying so, Sir, with the full backing of the Barbados Labour Party that there are many very important ways in which Mobil has not been a

good corporate citizen and it is not our wish or our desire to perpetuate the kind of monopoly relationship that Mobil has exercised and enjoyed and, to some extent, abused since 1962. Therefore we believe that, insofar as one Government has to inherit the undertakings of another Government and inherit them in good faith, that we want to see this whole matter opened as widely as possible so that the best interest of Barbados in this most critical area could be the issue that governs our deliberations with Mobil or with any entity which has exercised in this country's behalf, the responsibilities that Mobil has done since 1962.

I just give clear warning that, at the appropriate occasion, the Barbados Labour Party will want to put very clearly and very forcibly its position in relation to any clauses. First of all we will put our case as to whether there should be a new Agreement at all that puts Mobil into a monopoly position in certain respects. And also if there is to be a new Agreement, be very clear as to the specific amendments that we would want to see brought to bear, to make sure that aspects of energy pricing, the whole question of the refining of energy products do not operate within the kind of status quo that has existed since 1962.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a couple of points on this also. I should like to know from the Prime Minister whether Government is considering trying to get the Mobil people to produce a second type of petrol, a premium type that if you have to pay a couple of extra cents for, I do not mind, but that the public would be assured that the longevity of their carburetors, mufflers and other parts would be enhanced.

Mr. Chairman, you remember, Sir, just before we went on Christmas recess, downstairs in the dining room last year, I mentioned to you about the great difficulty I was having with my car. I was one of the first because my car started to give trouble, contrary to what Mobil said. My car gave trouble from the Friday in the week after Oscar Jordan's father and Charlie Griffith's mother were buried. That was the day that I topped up my car with gas at a Mobil station and by the Friday of that week, it was spluttering, Sir. The following Monday night going into Tuesday morning coming from a parliamentary party meeting after 12.00 o'clock going back home, it took me about 20 minutes to get from the bottom of My Lord's Hill to Neil's where I live because the car was stopping and dying out all over the road.

A lot of consumers in this country suffered. It was regrettable that the whole of the driving public was dependent upon Mobil for the supply of the one type of gas. I feel that in addition to negotiating any Agreement, which

the Labour Party is not conceding, that it will be prepared to re-negotiate with Mobil, if it comes up during our time again, but if an Agreement has been negotiated with Mobil I really think that as a concession to the driving public, Government should seek to get Mobil to produce a high quality petrol, unleaded, premium, whatever they call it, Sir.

5.50p.m.

The majority of carburetors in motor cars which are * imported in this country are very sensitive and I think that we owe it to the people of Barbados to make provision for some kind of supply of gas other than this routine thing that they turn out every week to assist in the preservation of those vehicles, Sir. I do not want ever again to find a piece of splinter of wood in my carburetor chamber. That is what I found after three weeks pulling down parts, going down to Mr. Percy King to buy a fuel pump which I did not need^, and changing wires. We found just a little splinter of wood down in the chamber the Saturday before Christmas, Sir. That messed up all of my plans for visiting my constituency and seeing people for Christmas. I broke down all on the ABC Highway and people were passing me. I was in a mess. I do not want that situation to arise, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, there are very few people I think who fully realize the extent to which the^ operations of Mobil affect Barbados on the one hand, and*- on the other hand the constraints that it puts upon any sort of policy position in the area of energy, because all policy, positions have to be determined within the framework of the Mobil Agreement. So what is good for Barbados or bad for Barbados, all those things have to be considered in the context of the arrangements with Mobil.

The National Democratic Party is a very consumer oriented organization and it has spoken out quite eloquently on the problems relating to owners of motor vehicles C^" Barbados that occurred in December. There is no doubtT whatsoever that that was not the only occasion on which fuel was brought into Barbados and did not go through the usual cleaning process before being sold to consumers.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I do not know. It may have happened when I was Minister of Finance too. I do not know. We know that there have been occasions when it ha"* happened. " "

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Take it easy. No foolishness now. Never mind the foolishness. Okay. I think that these things are very important. Then there is another issue whic% has not been dealt with, that is the question of the tSx liabilities of Mobil in situations where they import finisO3 products and not even cleaning the product in Barbados and ,

then selling the product to the consumer and whether they get the same kind of rebate as if they had refined the product as they are supposed to do. Now we know for a fact that not only gasoline but Bunker-C fuel has been brought in as finished product and sold. The question is what has happened. Now I am not trying to blame any Minister of Finance or any Minister of Energy. The point is that we have to watch the operations of these monopolies. If that problem with the motorist did not arise in November or December when it did, then there would not have been such clear evidence of people caught doing what they should not have been doing of importing finished product and not cleaning the product and selling it to the public at large. I gather the contaminate was in fact some chemical that came in with the fuel which was imported in the refined state. In other words, when they import the stuff they should put it through some kind of cleansing process.

- But there are other problems. There is a big problem relating to a policy on land use, the question of pollution, and the question of contamination of the environment in a prime tourist area. I understand that persons who are responsible for the care of the soil adjacent to the refinery that from time to time they see evidence of seepage of oil or oil products as far down as 5 to 6 feet in the earth. I cannot confirm this and I also understand that there are other environmental problems involved.

So that I think that when the time for the renewal of that agreement with Mobil comes up that that is something which has to be reviewed in its totality. In other words, the Government has to start now working on it. Let us face it regardless of Administrations. It is pointless saying what was good for Barbados or appeared to be good for Barbados 30 years ago is not necessarily good for Barbados today and the fact that one Administration signed an agreement at that point in time does not mean that that Administration was necessarily acting in the best interest of Barbados by continuing to subscribe to that agreement. So that the thing has to be looked at in the light of the present needs of Barbados.

Another very important point, Sir, is that I think that arrangement with Mobil in a way impinges on the regional integration movement and it limits very severely your options. It impinges in some areas of trade-offs and trade if you see what I mean. In fact, Sir, there has been a lot of work done. This is not new what I am saying. There was work done by Dr. Byer when he was at the Caribbean Development Bank some years ago setting out very clearly the kind of options that have to be considered in the whole question of security and supply. Does Mobil in fact, in this iLy and age, enhance your security and supply? Does Mobil in fact increase your environmental risks over and beyond where it is located? It was a very extensive paper. He used

- to be at the CDB at the time. Whether it was part of a .World Bank operation, I do not know. But it is worthwhile looking at that paper and see the parameters which were

raised in very broad concept. For example, Sir, there are certain situations in which a Minister of Energy or Finance might have to inform the Barbados National Bank that he cannot instruct that bank to give loans or credit to anyone or that he cannot entertain proposals that would result in the printing of money and result in pressure on the balance of payments, or that he cannot entertain proposals which would result in the destruction of the integrity of the Barbados National Bank even if he did so in 1986, which is the sole content of this letter that was made a document of the House earlier today. 6.00 p.m.

The other letter, Sir, I see was sent to the Minister apparently on 23rd February, 1988 when I was no longer a Minister. The other one apparently came to the Ministry of Finance in April 1987 and this is the first time I think I am seeing it That is the sum total of the three letters, a bunch of foolishness.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Because the Minister of Finance is responsible for energy, which has to be financed through the National Bank. Therefore any money involved in energy has to relate to those structures.

If I may continue, Sir, I think that looking back over the years it strikes me to some extent as a compromise of the sovereignty of this country in some respects in terms of its capacity to engage in an energy policy in its best interest. At best, if any agreement is ever entered into again, I sincerely hope that it would not be for any scope of any 15, 20, 25 years again, because the whole energy thing has changed so drastically. The fact is that I am not so sure whether today we would not get better and cheaper products if the various oil companies in Barbados were competing against each other. The very request of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for different types and different grades of gasoline could easily be responded to if we were importing clean products.

Then there is the question of the area of competition, because the monopoly of course effectively excludes the competition. There is very little competition in that area of distribution in relation to gasoline and diesel, so there is a multiplicity of reasons that are consumer oriented, that in a sense relate to national sovereignty, that relate to the overall structure and probably the security of our oil supplies.

There was a time when one of the very important reasons, I thought, for entering into the agreement with Mobil was the question of a guarantee of continuity of supplies. I think a lot has changed since then in the world and there are many, many people who today would recognise that you can have a reliable supply of gasoline and other products without having to have a refinery. There are many countries who have had no refineries, they just

buy the clean products, they get the products at a better price and they get better products than we get in Barbados.

I do not think that in recent times we have been served well by Mobil and there is a whole heap of considerations which have to be addressed when that agreement comes up, so I am at one with those Members of the House who have spoken so far on this matter. Certainly from our public statements it ought to be quite clear that we feel that the time has come when this matter should be reviewed.

I think I have heard the former Minister of Trade, the Honourable Minister of Health, address this subject or a related subject some years ago. He should be seized of the problems and certainly as fully seized of the kind of constraints that had been imposed down the years, because I believe that in the 1971-76 period he himself had to focus much attention on this particular problem or problems related to energy etc.

Thank you very much.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, although we are getting to a late hour and both Honourable Members for St. Peter and St. Thomas have spoken, I would wish to develop further and to make quite clear to this House the position of the Barbados Labour Party in relation to the renegotiation of the Mobil Agreement.

At the time of the problems confronting motorists with the bad petroleum which came into this island towards the end of last year, I issued a policy statement on behalf of the party, and so that there can be no misunderstanding in the minds of Mobil of the Barbados Labour Party's position, I take the opportunity provided by this Supplementary Resolution to spell out in clear terms the position of the Barbados Labour Party.

Our position is that the Mobil Agreement should not be renegotiated at all. The Honourable Member for St. Peter has stated the problems which have resulted from an Agreement into which we entered in 1962 and which has not worked to the benefit of this island, but rather to the benefit of Mobil down through the years. It is a fact that the cost of products which Mobil produces for the Ministry of Transport and Works is way above the comparable cost of products which could be obtained elsewhere, and in many instances are not of the high quality which is desired. Part of the problem we are having with our roads has been caused by the failure of the refinery to produce a product of acceptable standards.

In addition, despite its monopoly position, Mobil has done nothing during the years to improve its operations, other than building a new headquarters, and the refinery remains just a bit of old iron with no real particular value to anyone who knows anything about the refinery business.

When we negotiated the bilateral agreement with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, we at that time raised with Dr. Williams the possibility of Barbados and Trinidad jointly developing its oil and natural gas resources with a view to having an overall Caribbean policy. You will note, Mr. Chairman, that it is during that period in particular that the oil and natural gas production in Barbados increased significantly, so that today Barbados is 45% self-sufficient in the production of its natural gas and oil resources. In fact, Mr. Chairman, had not the drilling programme been curtailed in 1986, I would say that today we would be 100% self-sufficient. I know as a fact, and I am stating this, that the oil resources on-land in Barbados are today sufficient with a proper and adequate drilling programme to attain self-sufficiency within five years.

The Honourable Member will find out that my information is usually ahead of the Government's and the Honourable Member will discover as well that the surveys ~ done offshore during our time show that Barbados has substantial deposits of oil and natural gas and other minerals. I will concede that because of our continental shelf there is a cost in recovering these resources, but more and more with the new technology that is being developed in the oil industry it will be possible for us to bring those resources into use in the future.

6.10 p.m.

We should also be discussing with our CARICOM partners the development of the other resources within the territorial and other marine areas of CARICOM. Our neighbouring state of Grenada, for instance, against information on this is within our Ministry, has tremendous deposits of oil and natural gas that are easily minable offshore and we would say that as part of the energy policy that the Government under the Labour Party will pursue, will be to make the country fully self-sufficient in oil within five years and that is part of the policy and towards that end we will see no need in the future for renewing the Mobil Agreement.

I am also aware of the fact that Mobil has invited the Government to agree to the renewal of an agreement for a period of 25 years together with the renewal of the lease. From an environmental point of view, the area at which the refinery is now cited is not suitable and the refinery in any event ought to be moved from that area.

I can announce as well that the Barbados Labour Party has given consideration to the establishment of a convention centre on that site as an adjunct and support to the tourist industry and Mobil will have to move out of the site even if the Government goes ahead and renegotiates with them, whenever there is a change of Government and we assume the Government of the country as well.

I am saying to the Government that if it is considering the renegotiation of the agreement, it must be understood by

Mobil that any renegotiation will not have the support of an incoming Labour Party Government and under no circumstances will I feel bound to honour any such agreement.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I, yes, on behalf of the Government of Barbados when the time comes... I want to make it absolutely clear what is the position so that there can be no misunderstanding on the position because I feel that Mobil has never ever lived up to the agreement that it had with us in any proper manner. I can show that over a period of time the minute benefits that have accrued have been as beneficial as the benefits that have accrued to Mobil over the period of time.

We have taken considerable advice on many of these issues both when we were in Government and since we have been out of Government and with the assistance of people within the Caribbean and elsewhere, we have monitored the position very closely and I have spoken in a timely manner about the matter so that the Government could know that it is an issue that could well become divisive if it is not handled in a particular way. I think I have said enough on the issue this afternoon.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: Mr. Chairman, I wish to participate in this debate for two reasons, one is that in the 1970's between 1972 particularly and 1975 I had the responsibility and the difficulty of being the Minister responsible for Energy in this country and many will remember the problems which we were able to solve and so I say that I had original fights with Mobil and some of them were solved to the satisfaction of the country.

That notwithstanding, I do not know what the present difficulty is with the Barbados Labour Party and Mobil per se and they will know why they have taken a particular position as they say they have been advised. I do not purport to speak to that position because time in this Committee does not allow for it.

I wish, first of all, however, to deal with the position taken by the National Democratic Party only to say that the position would have been much stronger had the spokesman for that party who first uttered words concerning energy indicated an interest in the matter.

I feel that when a public entity is taking a position that all of the sides and all of the matters in the issue should be made known and it is not nasty when someone in the Other Place, makes a statement concerning Mobil and implicates the Government in some failure to perform in a particular way, that someone ought to have made known that there is an interest which that person had.

It is not fair to the public of Barbados to articulate a position which appears to be motivated only by the highest

moral principles when, in fact, there is a substantive interest in the matter, a pecuniary interest, if you will.

I am not able to drag as other people are able to drag the families of Members of Parliament or politicians into debate and I am not going to deal with that in this particular debate. I am not going to dig b any families but I say that if you are going to take a moral position by saying it is a moral position and you are going to att*.~k other people you have a duty to declare that you have an invresL

Aside.

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Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are only asking what intero so that you can get me to say it.

If I were a Senator and I were married to someone who was working at a company and that someone was dismissed from that company for whatever reason and I had anything to say about that company which was going to be interpreted by the public as a high moral position I would be the first to state categorically that my husband or my wife, as the case may be, used to work in this situation and was dismissed and/or parted company.

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

M. TAITT: I know you want me to say it.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The person whom the Honourable Member is referring to, is a very distinguished member of the National Democratic Party who took the trouble of consulting me as Leader of the Party on that particular matter.

I am convinced that the person was sufficiently equipped and had the knowledge and the expertise to deal with the matter in the public interest and the fact that someone related to her had a working relationship with a sister company should not in any way stop her from carrying out her public duties. Those are the facts.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not know what facts he is talking about because he is talking about sister company and there are no sister companies.

I am saying that the Leader of the Opposition himself if he came in here and did what was done in the Other Place I would find him to be reprehensibly in error. You cannot go giving the public of this country and if he checks the statement the statement made reference to the Democratic Labour Party and specifically the Minister of health and constantly the Leader of the Opposition is putting in the mouth of a babe words that he himself did not wish to say and allowing the poor child to get herself into all kinds of difficulties since he has identified her. He is doing it all the time and laughing at her and she does not even understand that he is manipulating her.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There he goes. She does not understand manipulation. She is accustomed to being manipulated and allowing him to manipulate her but I am saying that if you are going to make high moral statements, you ought to say "I have an interest in this matter." 6.20 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. The fact that someone on a public platform referred to the Honourable Member as "one pot" Taitt should not let him come in here and start that kind of assault

Mr. CHAIRMAN: How could that be perceived as a point of order? No point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That should be taken from the record, Sir. We were going to discuss the one pot. He is anticipating a debate because he demonstrates what I said, he made the child look so stupid to go talking about one pot when the record had been articulated for even a primer standard child. It would take only a moron, an idiot or someone who is supremely wicked to have misunderstood the statement that was made that there were installing new pots. Either he distinctly dislikes the particular individual, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central must dislike her intensely to allow her constantly to be paraded before the public community, as an idiot. I do not understand how he can do that. And then the irony of it is that he put the two Vs together. He had a public meeting and put the two Vs together like two vectors.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am lost. He put "she" and "the little child". Is he speaking of the Senator in the Other Place, Sir? Who are they speaking about in here? Come out with it, lick it up, mash it up, finish and go ahead. But do not speak in these parables. I do not understand what is going on. I want to know who you are speaking about

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are still dealing with energy. I will invite the Honourable Member for St. Michael West to continue.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The point I was making, Sir, and the only point I am making is that the question of morality, especially if your political experience and your political life is pitted on, and if you stake your entire reputation on the question of, integrity I feel that integrity must be seen holistically. It must be understood to apply in all that you do. You cannot discuss integrity in a vacuum nor can you back it into a corner, it must be open to scrutiny by all and sundry. That is why I am saying that in the issue of the environmental integrity of this country, we cannot make mock sport.

Aside.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Members for St. Michael West and St. Michael South Central were ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be struck from the record,

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the Mobil Agreement that was made in 1962 was made in the face of a tremendous crisis which the country had at the time. The Government which had been in operation from the 1950s through to 1961 had, in fact, a very spotty problem regarding the supply of petrol to the country. The Agreement with Mobil in 1962 was a landmark Agreement of its time. It was a landmark Agreement signed, I believe by the then Crown Solicitor, Mr. Algy Symmonds for and on behalf of the Government and it was a landmark decision. It has served the country well, despite what has been said. It served the country between 1962 and 1971. When the energy crisis came between 1972 and thereafter, all of the problems related to the gas supplies, all of the problems related to the major companies manifested themselves in Barbados as well.

I wish to say however that if one understands how oil is traded, it would make no difference if you have an Agreement with Mobil or with Shell or with BP, or any of the other giants because they themselves have interlocking relationships by which they divide up the smaller part of the world, as it were, into spheres and by which they agree that they will operate on behalf of each other in the respective areas.

Therefore while a new Agreement of any kind must have within it all of the safeguards and all of the positives for a country that is sovereign - which Barbados was not in 1962 but which it will be by the time the Agreement runs out - all of the requirements of a sovereign country must be taken account of, no matter with whom we sign. In other words, I am saying that we need not be prejudiced against Mobil or any other supplier of petrol. What we need to do is to be absolutely clear in our mind what it is that we, as a country, require both for the environmental health of the community and for an equitable production of petrol and other fuel in the country.

I will make bold to say that moving towards the supply of premium gasoline only or, put another way, that this country must move towards the supply of non-leaded gasoline, as a matter of course. It must happen. We cannot move towards the twenty-first Century still having the supply of leaded gasoline in Barbados. We are among the few countries in the world, "we" meaning the region, where leaded gasoline is still available.

There is an economic factor and therefore there will have to be some overlap as you introduce premium gasoline while the regular gasoline or the leaded gasoline is on its way out, because in order to supply premium

gasolene only, you would have to take account of the vintage of the various vehicles which are on the roads in Barbados. How the gasolene reacts within a particular combustion system is germane to what kind of gasolene is supplied. For example, in the United States now where only premium gasolene is available, they have done it over a 10 year period where they have very systematically eliminated - leaded gasolene from the environment. Barbados like all the other places will have to go there.

It is instructive, too, that what has been the problem with the recent gasolene was not the petrol per se, but the reformat, which is part of the input, which together with other ingredients constitute what we describe as gasolene.

The fact is that in Trinidad for some considerable time, they have had the same problem that we have had. I have heard people talking about getting our supplies from - Trinidad. We get our supplies from Venezuela basically, mixed with our own supplies; but with respect to the supplies coming out of Trinidad, the people in Trinidad and Tobago have had the same basic problem with their reformat because we get our reformat from Trinidad.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You have your sources. I have mine. I am told that in Trinidad and Tobago they have had the same basic problem that we experienced around Christmas time. I am one of the sufferers. My car is a modern car.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: First of all, that place up there is not a refinery. It is a top up plant. When the reformat comes in, the reformat as you know goes through the system and you get your asphalt, your gasolene, your diesel, and what not. That was not the root of the problem.

The problem was that instead of bringing in reformat, they brought in finished product that was contaminated. As you well know, your tax rebate system operates in relation to the inputs here in Barbados.

So you had two problems at that point in time. It was imported finished product that they brought in - which they are entitled to do - to fill gaps in the event of certain emergencies, after consultation with the Government, not ; just like that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not dispute what the Honourable Member is saying in relation to reformat and finished product and the Agreement which we have. All I a.n saying is that since we bring reformat from Venezuela and we bring in some of the ingredients from Trinidad and - Tobago, we always do, and we mix it with ours because our ""own raw material, if I may use the term has a very high Qieseline content.
6.30p.m.

The dieselene content of our raw fuel out of the ground is sufficiently high that there has to be a cocktail mix and there has to be a certain amount of importation of a certain reformat from Trinidad and Tobago. The same thing happens in Trinidad where in spite of the fact that they produce massive amounts of oil they have to import a special light oil from Libya and one other country. They are the only two countries in the world that produce the light crude that will allow them to mix with their heavier crude in order for them to export to the United States. So even though they are net exporters, they are also importers of crude. Our crude has a very high dieselene content, as I said, and therefore we have constantly to be shifting it around.

I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church West made an error when he said that the old iron at Gravesend has not been interfered with for sometime. Mobil, in fact, in the 1970's was required to spend about \$3 million or \$4 million to upgrade what was then the old iron to a point where they can do some refining because at that time I remember requiring them to do so. They had said up until 1972 that Barbados crude could not be refined in Barbados and therefore all of it had to be shipped out. I remember giving them a dkective that they had so refine it in Barbados and as a result they had to make certain adjustments in the plant. They now refine all of the Barbados crude bringing the requisite mix from Venezuela and Trinidad in order to produce the finished product here.

The real problem is that the oil companies generally have not had a lot of interest in ordinary people. They have had an interest in profits and it is only in the very recent times that the oil companies especially the giants out of the United States and Europe have been required by their own Governments to take certain positions in their own countries and some of that has extended out to our countries. It is for the country Barbados to determine what standards it must have for the operation of a refinery in Barbados. In a sense, it does not matter where the refinery is located. What I can <>ay is that in 1974 when I suggested to the Government of the day that we build a new refinery the cost was \$7 million. It was my view at that time that we should put the refinery in or near to the airport so that we would have been in a position to supply both the aviation fuel and the other fuel. It would have meant using a long pipeline back down to Bridgetown. That was not accepted at the time and today the cost of a refinery will be in the vicinity I believe of \$60 million or \$70 million.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg your indulgence just to finish the sentence. If we are going to spend another \$60 or \$70 million on a refinery, the cost benefit analysis will have to be done and at that time I think all right thinking people will agree on what is the best alternate use of the land at Gravesend.

Mr. Chairman, at another time, during the Estimates perhaps, I will spend a little more time on this.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Just a very brief intervention. It is getting rather late. I think if we were to see this matter in its total perspective there are many, many issues involved and not just a simple matter. If you take Bunker-C fuel, the main users of Bunker-C in Barbados are the Arawak Cement Plant and the Light and Power. I can assure you that if you were to look over the past 10 years that if they had been importing their Bunker-C directly that (he savings would have been "gynormous" for them of substantial savings which translates into the cost of electricity on the one hand and the cost of building on the other hand. So that indeed the cost of construction and electricity very much impinges on what happens at Mobil. I say this only to point out to people the extent to which that operation prevails on the entire Me of the country. It so happens that if you were to look over the historic period of five to ten years, Barbadians would have been better off if they were importing the Bunker-C fuel directly. The other area that should be of some concern is the area of asphalt. We vote and spend a whole lot of money for the repairs of roads in Barbados.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, I did not shut it down. What I am saying is that we vote a lot of money for asphalt and repairs. Now the contractors tell me that the quality asphalt that they get today is much worse than what they got in the past and far inferior to what they can get overseas at about four times the cost. Did you hear the figure? For four times the cost you get inferior asphalt! So, then, you can work out now what that has been in terms of cost to the public purse, in terms of your road maintenance and your road rehabilitation programmes.

Just two areas I will cite - the diesel and the impact of that on energy cost by electricity and what has happened at the cement plant on building. We all talk about the unleaded gasoline. But it is important to recognize that the overall lifespan, the performance of an engine, and the amount of pollution that goes out into the atmosphere consequential on vehicular traffic depends a lot on the quality of fuel, lubricants and so on that go into that vehicle. So there is a whole lot of negative things which are today flowing from that agreement.

We in the NDP are very fortunate to have someone who puts the public interest before her own interest and who is very alert indeed and has a very thorough understanding of the energy problems facing Barbados. This is an indication, Sir, of what the freshness of youth can bring to the political process and whereas, Sir, I appreciate the concerns of my good friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, he must recognize that he has a very serious problem in dealing with the NDP person who is

shadowing him, who is always alert, and deals with him, Sir, at a level of facts which makes it very difficult for him to respond. He also has the additional difficulty of not being able to respond outside because he thinks that he may appear to be a bully, Sir. I know the Honourable Member's P.R. So he feels the way to reply is to attack the leader of the party. That is how he is going to reply. He feels much safer in attacking me, Sir.

Sir, the point I am making is that I am very pleased to see that a young person who has recently entered the political fray is concentrating on environmental matters and energy matters. I think this is very, very important, Sir. I think that as time goes on I would rather suspect that in ten years time that the dominant debate in this country is going to relate more to consumer matters and environmental matters than to the kind of debates that took place over the past 15 or 20 years. I am pleased, Sir, that the NDP will be in the vanguard of that movement that allocates the highest ^ priority to environmental matters - a part of the green revolution that is overcoming the world, a recognition that the lives of human beings have an important place on this universe, and above all recognizing and responding to the sovereign demands of the people of Barbados. 6.40 p.m.

Aside.

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Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, in this Honourable House there is a tradition, it is part of the rules and it is accepted as part of the Westminster parliamentary system, that you address no one other than the Chair, no matter in what direction you might be looking at any point in time.

Thank you very much.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: After all the histrionics and the Press Releases and so on, Sir, I want it clearly understood that the Barbados Labour Party is thoroughly against any agreement made with Mobil to become effective on May 17 this year for a period of 25 years from May 17. An agreement is being negotiated now.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have it.

Aside.

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Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The proposals. In Article 9 it is proposed....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Government of Barbados and Mobil. The agreement is between two parties. We are not against you on this, I am only warning you. Let us.

us say it is proposed by Mobil, Sir, to get the Barbados Government to sign this. Listen to what it says.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is this?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This is a draft agreement that Mobil has in circulation for Government to sign.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to make it a document of the House?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, I can make a copy for the House. "This agreement shall be effective on May 17, 1990 or such earlier time as is mutually agreed between the Government and the company. The term of this agreement shall be for an initial period of 25 years from the effective date, provided however that at any time prior to 12 months before the termination of such initial period the company shall have the right to apply to Government to renew this agreement for an additional period of not less than ten years from the expiration of the initial period on terms and conditions to be mutually agreed between Government and the company."

The first thing, 25 years. Twelve months before the expiration of the 25 years, option to renew for another ten. Do you know the problem, Sir? Way back in 1962, on October 19, when the Democratic Labour Party formed the Government, there was an agreement between the Government then and the Mobil people to become effective on May 17, 1965. We had that long agreement with Mobil for 25 years. What is happening now is that these people want a new agreement for another 25 years. All we are concerned to warn from this side, Sir, is that we have had 25 years' experience. The DLP gave Mobil 25 years' tenure in Barbados, we have seen them operate for 25 years and we do not think that it is in the interest of Barbados to give them another 25 years. The period of the lease would have to be a material term that is up for renegotiation when the parties start to negotiate. That is all I am concerned about, Sir, in this submission.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, there is one quick comment I would like to make on this particular matter. When the Honourable Member got up and started to speak and purported to read from an agreement, I am sure that Honourable Members in this Chamber and within hearing distance of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas got the impression that the Government of Barbados had signed an agreement with Mobil.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: It was only on prompting. I want it to be unmistakably clear that the document which the Honourable Member presumably has in his possession and purports to read from, as I understood it after he went on to speak, is a document which contains proposals from

Mobil to the Government of Barbados concerning the renewal of the agreement I think that has to be made absolutely clear, because I do not want anybody leaving here with the impression that the Government of Barbados has signed an agreement, or is about to sign an agreement, with Mobil for 25 years. This has to be made very clear.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation. Let me make it very clear and put it in the record, Sir. What I was dealing with was a draft agreement that is up for discussion, proposed by Mobil. The Government of Barbados has not signed it, but since the proposal....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not understand why they are nervous, Sir. The Government has not signed the agreement, but because that Government previously had signed for 25 years, I am afraid that they might sign for another 25 years.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman,....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Has the Honourable Member for St. Lucy concluded?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He was only making a point, Sir. The point has to be made because, again for the uninitiated, once you throw in the figure 25 years you get all kinds of questions in the minds of people. It is standard practice. If you go into the IDC's Industrial Parks you will see property leased, for example, between the IDC and Barbados Shipping and Trading for 25 years, you see leases for ten years plus an option for another ten plus an option for five, so the 25 years is a standard period for which there are leases and agreements of a certain time if the works that are involved go beyond a certain kind of money.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You can find all kinds of 25 year agreements about here. Ask the two lawyers. You can find them for five years, you can find them for seven years, you can find them for 15 years. No Government is likely or lightly to sign any agreement for any 25 years.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But in 1962 they would have signed for 42 years. Mr. Chairman, what has to be recognised is what I said earlier, that in 1962....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, that was not the old order, that was the beginning of the order. Nineteen sixty one was the beginning of the order. 6.50 p.m.

In 1962 the best advice which came to the Government of the day - I have read that Agreement over and over again - was considered to be a landmark decision in the whole of the Caribbean because up until then the oil companies like Mobil, the giants, had not dealt with the colonial countries.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: No, No. I just want to make the point. It is important.

Mr. Chairman, take, for example, the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition. If you check with the kind of leases - Mr. Chairman, I am not going to go down that road.

I just wanted to finish a point. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West rose and talked and said that if we want to, and I am not sure if he said the Barbados Labour Party will, that we could become self-sufficient in oil in Barbados in 5 years.

There is an advisor to the Government of longstanding, a man called Mr. DeVerteuil - I call his name not pejoratively, Sir - who has always cautioned the Government that we must not become involved in what he termed "rapid drilling" because of the frail ecological nature of the structure of the underpinnings of Barbados so that while the actual oil underground might add up to a self-sufficiency in Barbados in technical terms, the question as to whether it is desirable for Barbados to drill itself into a position of self-sufficiency is a matter which has to be taken very seriously and very deeply.

The point is that when you are looking at oil in Barbados you will find that it tends to congregate in pockets. It is formulated in pockets in the limestone and, therefore, the geology of the country requires...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, No, this is serious.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, when I was going to school, every now and again you would get a report card where the teacher would say, this is a bird that can sing and would not sing. I have no sympathy for those birds over there who can sing and will not sing.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is corrupting Mr. Ossie Moore. Ossie Moore said, "I can swim but I do not swim."

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I do not know if the teachers at Combermere were Ossie Moores but they used to write on the Report Cards for people who would not behave themselves that this is a bird that could sing but would not sing.

The point I am making is that unlike in places like Trinidad and Tobago and in other places where the geological structure is entirely different from Barbados, it has been indicated that the oil that is found in Barbados is found in pockets and indeed, that drilling that oil requires a certain serious examination because wells that are full today or appearing to be full can, in fact, on short notice, without more be empty and we have evidence of it. -

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There is a well at South Ridge which had all of the characteristics of a productive well. It was a gas well, but it had all of the characteristics and soon after they capped it, put on the pipe and did all of the things that should be done, they run the pipes, the well has demonstrated a barrenness that is very reminiscent of some of the political mournings which come from the NDP. That is the sort of thing which you have to be wary of, a certain freshness which you have to be wary of in terms of oil. -

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Up on the East Coast, in the Belleplaine area - one of the reasons why I am going back in history and the Honourable Member for St. Peter should be aware of this - that in Belleplaine where the soil is chalky and there is some clay soil they did, in fact, find and they still find from time to time evidence of oil oozing which, in fact, led people to believe and caused some drilling to be done in that area which turned out to be uneconomic precisely because of the way in which oil is formed in the East Coast.

Now, as for the oil which the Honourable Member discussed in what he called the territorial and other marine areas, the fact is that while the seismic examinations indicated that there was a very high probability that oil could be found in sufficient quantities, it was also demonstrated and very carefully articulated that the cost of a deep sea drilling rig, given what was happening with the price of oil at that time, and since the price of oil has started to come down, that it might not be economic and that Barbados would wait for a process in time when it might be economic or desirable and that they could get a deep sea rig available because the other thing, Mr. Chairman, is not only the economics, it is the availability of a deep drilling rig and the kind of deep drilling rig of the times made it uneconomic.

Now, the Honourable Member is saying and I think there is merit in this, that the technology for deep sea drilling has been changing rapidly and I am agreeing with him that at any point when the technology equates with the economics of drilling in between Barbados and St. Vincent as far as 50 miles out from Barbados, we would be able to produce oil so that technically, it is possible to say that Barbados would be self-sufficient in 5 years.

However, a realist rationalisation of our approach to the development of the country as a whole

suggests that to become self-sufficient in oil in 5 years might not necessarily be the most efficacious approach to the planning of the development of this country.

Secondly, in 1986 when it was decided to go out of drilling the decision was based on purely economic grounds. I think the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition was at that time presiding over energy and I say this, not in a critical way, but I think the decision was made properly in the light of the actual cost of bringing a barrel of oil up out of the ground it turned out to be a net loss per barrel and the decision was made to cut back on the drilling and this is the nature of the beast.

You have to make decisions about drilling based on the prevailing economic conditions at the time and so for - anyone to project that they are going to be self-sufficient in oil in five years is nothing new. Anybody can say we will be self-sufficient in oil in five years. The question will be, is that the most desirable way for the planning of the community to proceed at that time.

We do not have to have a divide on oil. Oil is there in the ground and whether you bring it up or not is dependent on the kind of advice you are getting, the kind of geological information you have and the availability of alternate methods of funding. If it is more expensive not to drill you will not drill.

Mr. Chairman, when one is not seised of these matters and one hears arguments that are put which might suggest that the Government is somehow not doing its duty, I think it is very important that these issues be clarified. I believe that the oil industry in Barbados has proceeded apace. I think that the find that was made somewhere near the St. Philip area which appears to be a massive find which the * then Deputy Prime Minister as he was responsible for energy, had announced again the decision not to mobilize, no pun intended, that particular oilfield...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The decision not to bring in to production that particular field of what appears to be massive natural gas was based on economic and ecological grounds and I think that that was a decision which has to be respected and I hope that whomever is responsible for energy in Barbados whether it is this Government or some other Government in time that we will always approach the issue of drilling oil in Barbados, bearing in mind the ecological difficulty which this country will have because of the very fragile nature of its infrastructure. 7.00p.m.

This is not a country like Trinidad and Tobago or like some of the other islands where the rock is sufficiently hard that you can withstand certain errors. This country is frail in

regard to its infrastructure. The limestone does not allow for any errors of a certain kind to be made because it will take forever for them to be corrected. And so, when certain kinds of statements are made, they may be made for a certain political gain but in the final analysis, we all have a stake in ensuring that those kinds of decisions are made in the most efficacious manner.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again.

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

The question 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: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 8.00 o'clock tonight.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly at 7.05 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, I wish to rise on a matter of privilege. Earlier today, I had occasion to raise a matter of privilege before this Honourable House which I understand has been referred to you for your adjudication in the matter, a matter of privilege, which I raised. I would expect a formal response to it. So I am hoping, in due course, I will be able to have your formal response in that area.

I propose, Sir, to raise a second matter of privilege this evening because I believe that the privileges of Members of this Honourable House should not be infringed by anyone and least of all, those who are Members of this House. During a debate today, three documents were made documents of this Honourable House. I propose to go slowly and establish the basis of my complaint, under the provisions of privilege.

The first document is dated the 30th December, 1986. The document was partially read and I will read it now for

the entire House, Sir, so as to establish my case of breach of privilege:

"Dear Minister,

The recommendation re the remission of interest by the Barbados National Bank would wipe out the equity of the bank instantaneously. Surely it should be known that such interest has either been recognized as income or incorporated in restructured loans for the most part

The Barbados National Bank cannot be instructed by me or anyone else on matters relating to loans credit management, et cetera. The Central Bank cannot be invited to undertake the role suggested in paragraph 6 of page 19. The dual exchange rate explicit in the proposals relating to the Central Bank financing has very serious implications for the parity of the Barbados dollar, the printing of money by the Central Bank and the balance of payments of the country.

I have asked the Chairman of the Barbados National Bank to submit a proposal to you which could provide an acceptable basis for dealing with the financial problems of the industry inter alia."

That was dated the 30th December, 1986, signed by myself and addressed to the Minister of Agriculture.

That document, Sir, when it was laid in this House was linked to another document where there was a suggestion of some criminality.

RL Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of fjr&

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am establishing a point of privilege. You cannot rise.

RL Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Speaker will indicate whether I rise on a point of order, not you.

Mr. Speaker, I refer to Standing Order No.76, Section 2 which states:

"Any Member desiring to raise a matter under this Standing Order shall first obtain leave of the Speaker."

I am respectfully asking whether the Honourable Member has obtained your leave, under this Standing Order, on this particular matter? Before he establishes any cause for the privilege, your leave must first be obtained and you will then determine whether the Member is entitled to raise the matter, as a question of privilege and then, after that, when you have given permission, the Member may raise the matter and so on. I am simply asking, because I have not

heard, if the Standing Orders are being followed in this matter?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Conventions of this House have always accepted that any Member can rise on a matter of privilege at any time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now that the Honourable MembC" has risen on that point, there are 2 things: (1) From what I x can gather, the matter arose in Committee of Supply. Standing Order 75 (5) says:

"If during a sitting of the House a matter suddenly arises which appears to involve the privilege of the House which calls for immediate intervention of the House, the proceedings may be interrupted."

It is at that point that you should have made, in my view interruption if a breach of privilege had taken place.

It is during that sitting that that interruption should have taken place; that is Standing Order 75 (5). 8.05 p.m.

In respect of the second one, if it is a question of privilege beyond that then the Rules of the House would apply in respect of giving notice. So therefore my ruling i that if the breach of privilege had taken place during thar sitting it is at that particular point in time that the Point of Privilege should have been raised.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, are you suggesting that at the present moment that I cannot raise a matter of privilege which as I understand it supercedes all other business in any House under the Westminster system at all times.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is why I allowed the HonouraO Member to state his position so that he could establish hiC Point of Privilege and then I relate it to the relevant Standing Orders, which suggests that if you thought at that time there was a breach of privilege at that point in the sitting, then the House should have been interrupted and that should be taken.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, you have not given me the opportunity to establish the basis of my complaint.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am dealing with the question of privilege because you prephrased your remark by saying "during the sitting". I take it that was the time when you considered the breach had taken place, during that sitting.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I dealt with another matter during the sitting. Mr. Speaker, the point I ajx making is that the Honourable Member was on his fe"er. Therefore, these documents would not have been in>*5y hands until after he had taken his seat and then they were ,-

photostated and circulated. So therefore it would have been impossible to have raised the matter instantaneously since the documents and the nature of the breach.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I was making the — point that the documents were made available to the House after the Honourable Member had completed his speech and I am choosing the first available opportunity having studied the documents and having established in my own mind that they constitute a breach of the privilege of another Member to raise it. This is the first opportunity, Sir. This is the first opportunity I have had because it arises out of the documents and the documents were subsequently circulated.

.-" Mr. SPEAKER: In this circumstance, I do not have „/" the proceedings before me and I have to take your word on it. I would prefer that this matter as it stands at the moment be dealt with on fact rather than on the basis of your own observation. Unless we can have the correct procedure as to how the whole situation developed, then I would not be in a position to determine whether the point you raised is relevant at this time. That is the reason why I am saying the relevant Standing Order stands because it was in Committee of Supply.

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Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to establish that on a previous occasion today I rose immediately on their being a breach in my view of the privilege of the House. On this occasion I am rising at the first available opportunity because documents had to be photostated, made available, and studied. I took the first occasion, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Rule does not say first or second ^occasion. It says immediately and this is my problem. As - long as it says immediately....

Mr. R. P. B YER: Sir, on a point of order. Let me be of assistance to the House. I myself have some difficulty in understanding the provision as well, Sir, if during a sitting of the House a matter suddenly arises. As the Leader of the Opposition said and from his interpretation, the matter has in my opinion suddenly arose. He only is fully seised of the facts because the document is now circulated to him. A „- part of it was read in here, but I am going on what he said.

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Mr. SPEAKER: Well, this is the point I am making.

Mr. R. P. BYER: This is a sitting of the House, Sir, and the matter suddenly arises and it appears to involve a question of privilege.

V Mr. SPEAKER: Even under those circumstances the Chairman of Committees would still have to report to me

the matter. So therefore I am not apprised of the circumstances.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the Chairman of Committees has not reported any matter to me and therefore I would think....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if it occurs in a rum shop tonight, anyone can come in here and raise it. We are here primarily to protect the privileges of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then it goes back to what has been said that notice will have to be given if you want to raise on a privilege....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, you can give notice on your feet. I am giving notice on my feet, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: But you just cannot give me notice like that.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have a genuine concern, Mr. Speaker. Since I have been in this Honourable House, any Member who feels aggrieved rises on a point of privilege. The matter of privilege is raised on behalf of the House by a Member not on his own behalf. The moment he rises on a matter of privilege that is notice.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already interpreted the Rules as I see them as it pertains to the House itself and the Rules. I understood it was something that arose from the Honourable Member within the sitting of another sitting. It has not been reported to me and neither has the Member risen to say anything on it no more than to prephrase his remark by saying that the Chairman intended to raise some matter with myself which was never raised and therefore the second one would be difficult at this stage to be entertained.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, that is another matter you are referring to. Mr. Speaker, if I may start all over again. I indicated that the Chairman, on another matter involving the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, indicated to me when I rose on a matter of privilege that he would have to refer that matter to you, and the matter rested there. That was raised immediately as required by the Rules. This second matter, Sir, is a separate and distinct matter and another alleged infringement of the privileges of an Honourable Member by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North on this occasion. I am saying, Sir, that this is the first occasion since those documents have been made available to this Honourable House and to me by him that I have the opportunity to raise the matter, Sir. I believe, Sir, it is part of my duty to seek leave of you to proceed.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already given my ruling in the circumstances and I think that is the end of the matter.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed.

The question that Head 19 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 8.15p.m.

HEAD 20 - REVENUE COLLECTION

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, Subhead 1 of Head 20 includes the Items of Travel, Rental of Property, Library, Supplies and Materials, Plant, Equipment and Furniture. The sums required for these are set out in the Schedule.

I beg to move that Head 20 stand part. If, of course, there are any questions I will be happy, if I have the information, to respond to them.

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

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

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, this is a Resolution for \$2 431 665 which is being sought under this Head to supplement the Estimates of Current Expenditure.

The first Subhead deals with Travel. New rates which became effective July 1, 1988 resulted in a sum of \$51 648. being due in respect of arrears for the period ending April 1989, while monthly expenditure of \$28 100 had risen to \$34 485 in respect of fixed and claimed travel allowances.

Expenditure in respect of passage and baggage allowances of contract officers recruited for service is also met from within this vote. A sum of \$90 000 was originally requested for the recruitment and departure of some 33 officers and \$51 975 has already been expended. You may recall, Mr. Chairman, that out of a policy to assist in the recruitment of nurses in the system it was determined that we would include, for the first time in the history of Barbados, nurses as contract officers and therefore the increases are warranted. The account at 31st August, 1989 indicated that we needed a supplementary of roughly \$175000.

Under Rental of Property, a sum of \$408 000 was approved to meet the cost of rent for approximately 65 contract officers. However, the rates have been increased with effect from April 1, 1989 and monthly expenditure has risen from an average of \$34 000 to \$40 000, so we need a supplementary to carry us to the end of the financial year.

The arrangement for the Medical Library is that the University of the West Indies will pay for the purchase of books while the Hospital pays for the journals and publications. Publications' costs have increased some 20% and so the annual standing orders amount to \$42 000 approximately. We have commitments of \$26 000 in respect of standing orders and there is a remainder of \$12 300 which is required for the remainder of the financial year. The need for about \$26 275 is being sought in this supplementary.

Under Supplies and Materials, Sir, some \$6 274 450⁰;- was approved for this year's Estimates to meet expenditure on supplies and materials. By the end of August, disbursements including commitments totalled \$5.2 million, leaving a balance....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Buying second hand gloves? You, do not buy second hand gloves. As you recall from your - time, you used them a second time. In your time you used ' to use them four and five times, and you used to patch them. The Honourable Member knows, Sir, when he was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee, that they used to have the CSD where they were actually patching the gloves, and any of the surgeons will tell you that when the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, was practising as a doctor at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and he was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee, that while the actual operations on patients were going on, to patched gloves they used to use would split in their hands.'"- They did not recycle them, they used to recycle them twice.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. I wish to make it absolutely clear that the only two truthful things the Honourable Member has said so far is (1) that I was at the QEH as a doctor, and (2) that I was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee. All the other things he said about gloves are totally untrue.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, there ought to be^Os^ law to put him in prison. He should be in prison for saying that, because he knows that what I am saying is true. He was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I mean the Leader of the Opposition. His name went as Dr. R.C. Haynes in uV5e days, Sir. He was deemed to be the second most important

man in Barbados by a Minister at that time, Dr. Caddie who was Minister of Health, who had tremendous difficulty with him, Sir. He used to carry Dr. Caddie's name to the Prime Minister.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, we had better try and get this record straight Again, it is totally untrue to say that I ever carried anybody's name to anybody anywhere, and again I would like to emphasise that the Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee has absolutely nothing to do with the ordering of gloves. It is purely a surgical matter. As a physician you are not involved in that exercise.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: That is not true, Sir. He is misleading the House. I have nothing but time for him and this. Everything that happened with every Committee, including the Theatre Users Committee, had to go to the Chairman. The Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee was au fait with, and responsible for, every single thing that happened among the professional staff, and he was aware then, he is aware now, he has always been aware that recycling of gloves, as stated by the present Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee, Dr. Jordan, has always been the case. It is dishonest and disreputable for the Honourable Member....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member will not be allowed, with this tissue of misrepresentations, to create the kind of impressions that he is seeking to create. The facts are, Sir, as I understand it, that in the past there were such things as rubber gloves which were used and reused, before you had disposable gloves. The present Minister of Health is the only Minister that has authorised the recycling of disposable gloves in the QEH, as far as I know.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think I have allowed enough latitude on this and I think we should try and get on.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Please do not stop him, Sir, I beg you. He said earlier that I was lying when I talked about the gloves, he comes back now and he admits that they were rubber gloves. He says now that he remembers, impliedly. I am saying it is a fact.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members are on their feet. I would wish to know what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has risen on.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member has said that I said I now remember something, which I did not say. What I have said is that as far as I know the QEH, like hospitals all over the world, before disposable gloves were manufactured or used at all,

would use rubber gloves that were sterilised and reused. Rubber gloves! Rubber gloves! 8.25 p.m.

What you are doing is you are reusing disposable gloves made for use once only.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I say that what he just said is diabolically a distinct departure from what he was saying before outside of this House. He now, for the first time, is suggesting that they have always used, and I hope everybody out there can hear that he is saying that all hospitals everywhere in the whole world recycle rubber gloves.

I am saying further that the gloves that we use to take up the bedpans we recycle them for bedpan use now are rubber gloves, that all disposable for once use are disposed and that the Honourable Member wickedly, malevolently, despitefully told the public of this country from his position as a doctor that the hospital was putting the patients at risk by recycling gloves, he and his entire party.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: There are certain words wickedly, malevolently, etc. which are a clear imputation of improper motives on the part of an Honourable Member. This is a breach of the very fundamental rules.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. My ruling is that I have allowed enough latitude on this and I do not want to go any further down that line. Will the Honourable Member proceed with the presentation on this Resolution.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not intend to go down any other road than the straight and narrow. I am stating categorically that at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital as indicated by the Director of the hospital and as indicated by the Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee at a Press Conference which they held at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, they confirmed that they were continuing the practice that has been going on from time immemorial including the time when the Honourable Member was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee of recycling gloves. The only difference now is that they only recycle them for picking up bedpans whereas during his time they used to recycle them for doing actual operations in the operating theatre. Get up and deny that.

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

The Honourable Member has said that I was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee at the time when gloves were recycled for use in the operating theatre.

As I said before, I have no specific knowledge of what would have gone on in the surgery. As far as I know, the only gloves that were reused and recycled were rubber gloves. What has happened recently is that gloves labelled

and made for use "once only" had been reused at the QEH. That is something different.

If you do not think it is a problem, and if you are using those kinds of words you are using about me, I only hope the next time you go inside there that somebody examine your mouth with the same gloves that they had examined someone else's other part sometime next time. That is all I am going to tell you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, if as a doctor who swear to the Hippocratic oath that is what he wishes for me, let me say that one of the things I am certain of is that he will not be the doctor who examines me. I am certain about that I am certain that he will not be the doctor but he is ducking away now, Sir, he has gone the length and breadth of this country and he has allowed his spokesman for health....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No. She is not the problem. She is a child that I taught. I am dealing with him. I am talking about it. You are always talking about integrity but whenever one is talking...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order, please?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We are not moving from here. We are talking about supplies and we are talking costs and we are talking about recycling and we are going to talk about the pots.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member please take his seat.

It appears to me that we are heading down the street of disorder and I do not wish to have this. I would just counsel the Honourable Member to continue with his presentation and let us stop this thing.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, all I am doing is, putting the information which I believe is my duty as the Minister responsible for Health to this Honourable House.

I am saying and I will repeat it again, that the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, was a member of this Hospital. I am saying that he was Chairman...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I would like to inform the Honourable Member for St. George South, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown that they should not try my faith because what they are doing is daring me to apply the rules of this Chamber and I will not be afraid to do it. Do not push me that way. Proceed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Believe me, whenever we have a broadcast I am going to repeat it. I want the whole world to

know that the Honourable Member who is seized of total integrity in this country said to this Committee that he cannot remember and I know of my own knowledge that a prominent surgeon reminded him recently that he was the Chairman when that surgeon was operating in the theatre on persons...

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order. —

I have had no discussion on anything with any prominent surgeon recently or not so recently.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He might not be prominent in his contemplation but he is prominent in Barbados and he had discussions with him. He told me so, Sir and he reminded him, as all the other doctors in the Hospital of a certain vintage reminded that gentleman that he was the Chairman when they used to patch the gloves. They used to actually get a pack-needle and patch the gloves to work in the operating theatre on actual opening of bodies.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is why it is dishonest and disreputable for anybody to go across the country, as they did as recently as this weekend, talking about recycling of gloves. It is dishonest in the highest order. Only a moron who has absolutely no regard for the truth, no regard for integrity, could go on doing it with the full knowledge but the Honourable Member is going to lead them to destruction.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Only a moron would do it. That is what I said that only a moron.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member move on now so that we can move on.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I want to talk about the other part. I have to give the information to the House. I am talking about the pots now, Sir.

This Government as part of the programme of refurbishing in the Hospital, has ordered a number of new pots for the Hospital. New steam pots had arrived and, therefore, they needed to be installed in the kitchen. The Hospital Engineer informed the dietitian in writing about two weeks on February 9 of his intention to replace the existing old and defective pots and that they would need to turn the steam off.

The weekend around February 20, the two working steam pots were taken out leaving just one pot and one steamer to cook meals for the patients and staff. A dietitian

and her supervisory staff were able to make adjustments to the menu for February 19.
8.35p.m.

No adjustment was made to the day's menu which would have required the use of at least two pots and a ^steamer since the impression, as given, was that all would have been in order by that day. It turned out that there was a T^ problem and the staff, mainly cooks and maids, left the kitchen at about 9.30 saying that it was impossible to work under those conditions. The staff was soon assured and they were also told that steps would be taken to modify the menus to take into account the availability of cooking equipment and they volunteered their co-operation for the next 10 days while the engineer would install the new steam pots. The Geriatric Hospital came to the rescue and some of the food of that day was cooked at the Geriatric Hospital.

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„; " Sir, I believe that the matters in this country of serious import require that where two or three are gathered together that information which is sent forth should be information with a certain validity and integrity. Let me put it another way. It would take a very strange mentality, it would take a very strange group of people who, in the face of an official explanation by the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the National Union of Public Workers as to what had happened, f it would take a very strange mentality when the explanation ?>. ' had been put in both newspapers for anyone to then say that the state of health in the country has reached the point where there was only one pot in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. When anybody who makes massive statements about integrity who will reduce the serious matters of this country to try to suggest that the hospital had only one pot when in fact there was a genuine misunderstanding because the Hospital administration was putting in new steam pots. Only a person who is bereft of all integrity, only a person jivho is bereft of all honesty could risk to put it out in the ' public domain that this was a serious issue.

The fact is the Leader of the Opposition who puts out the information signed by other people in his Party could lead in this charade, this facade of intellectual honesty when they are trying to give the people the impression that there is only one pot at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Aside.

""- Hon. B. M. TAITT: There are enough, more than two, ^more than three, more than four.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is interrupting the debate. May I counsel you to desist from so doing.

*•- Hon. B. M. TAITT: They are not causing me any pain, Sir. They are mouthing just like the people who mouthed 3hd they put out the press releases. I am addressing you, =” Sir, and this House so that there will be aware that when we

come to this House for supplies for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital we are serious people.

For anyone in this country to say that health is stagnating, that person would have to be living somewhere else. In this country today....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: All of you. You have been saying it for some time. You said you left because we did not love and care you enough. That is what you said. I really thought I was embracing you enough. But if I were here - you know when Martha ran to Jesus as she saw him coming from afar off, she said if you had been here, my brother would not have died. And if I had been here in this country, you would not have been drawn over to any NDP because I would have embraced you some more. Because apparently all you needed was a little embracing and a little love in your ear and you would not have gone over there.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, with Maintenance of Property, an amount of \$1.1 million was approved to meet expenditure under this item and the amount required to pay maintenance contracts has not proved enough. Under Operating Expenses, the Medical Aid Scheme which is about \$1.6 million needs another \$1/2 million to take care of a number of the patients we send up.

The Emergency Ambulance Service. In the Emergency Ambulance Service, one of the problems we have is that the mechanics have to be paid some overtime and the Transport Levy and the National Insurance proved to be more than we anticipated. Therefore we need to have some additional money.

In the Maintenance of Property, the purchase of gasoline was a little higher than we anticipated and so we need to supplement the vote. For Plant, Equipment and Furniture and the Purchase of Vehicles, there has been some considerable writing off of the ambulances and I can say that none of the ambulances which has been written off has been the fault of the driver. So far all the write-offs we have had, liability has been accepted by the other party. So that even though there has been unfortunately the write-offs of some ambulances, it is not the fault of the drivers or any carelessness on the part of the Emergency Ambulance personnel.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If it skids and it hits somewhere, it would not be anybody's fault The insurance company accepts the liability. That takes care of the \$2 431 000. I cannot think of anything that I would wish to speak on now that I have not touched. But if the Honourable Members

would like any questions answered, especially my friend the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central whose memory about his say at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a little cloudy, I would be happy to answer any questions which he might have at this time.

I beg to move that this Head stand part, Sir.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I always knew that my good friend was rather thin skinned and it is quite clear to me that the Shadow Minister of Health for the NDP has really got him very upset today. Of course as a very keen politician, he would have recognized the significance of the 4 000 plus crowd as reported, at least 20 times more than at other meetings held by the ruling Party. But of course the Honourable Member told a good friend of mine that it was because he was not speaking at the meeting that they got such a small crowd.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That may well be true, Sir. But I am going to pay the Honourable Member a very....

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is right, Sir. It was reliably reported that there were more fishing boats than people. Because, as you know the fishing boats hardly go out to sea these days because of the inability of the Government to conclude an Agreement with Trinidad and Tobago. So the boats are all up there. So there were more fishing boats at Oistin than people listening to the DLP meeting. 8.45 p.m.

If I may continue, Sir. It is amazing, Sir, that a man who has been Minister of Health for some time now does not understand the role of the Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee at the QEH. The Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee is purely advisory to the Hospital Director and apart from matters relating to the appointment, disciplines, transfers and so on of medical staff the Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee would deal only with matters referred to him. Let us get this straight. In other words, the day to day duties of a chairman relate to the medical staff of the QEH. You could be chairman at the hospital for ten years and, if the Hospital Director has not got a problem with gloves that he thinks needs to be referred to you, it will never be referred to you. The Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee is not involved in the day to day running of the hospital except in matters relating to the medical staff.

Now as far as I know and can recall there was at the same time a Theatre Users Committee which was headed at

that time by the Head of the Surgical Department, Mr. Leacock, and all matters relating to surgical matters outside of the ambit of staff and so on, would go to the Theatre Users Committee. So let us get the record straight.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir. The Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee forms part of the management team of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I have been chairman and I have been there for a long time. All I am saying is that you deal with matters referred to you for advice by the Hospital Director. The Hospital Director is the man in charge of the hospital and everything you write you send through the Hospital Director. You advise the Hospital Director even on matters relating to medical staff. So that unless the Hospital Director referred a matter to you outside of appointments and so on, which he did not have to do either, you may be there for 100 years.

Now Sir, on the question....

Asides

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not dealing with you and gloves now. All I am saying is this. The Honourable Member realizes that, he has a problem as Minister and I am not going to allow him to deflect me in any way. Let me deal first of all with this. The Honourable Member has had several public health problems arising in the Ministry of Health since he became Minister. He has a problem, Sir, in relation to the health of the food affecting this nation and patients in the Hospital as well that was a national problem.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. If he wants to discuss the issue, he has to do it differently. There has not been any report whatsoever of any difficulty with the food and the health of the patients in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That is what this Head is dealing with.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I may continue, Sir, a question with food, more specifically chickens. He has had a problem with mosquitos and dengue fever.

Certain remarks made by Dr. R. C. HAYNES were asked to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If I may now continue, Sir. He has a problem, Sir, where the entire nation is concerned over the water supplies of Barbados. At least the Honourable Member for St. Michael East took forms up to his constituents and you can say that he has done something. But what has the Honourable Minister of Health done? Not one word, Sir. Not a word, Sir. He is afraid, Sir, to come out and say what the Chief Medical Officer has told him, what all his professional staff in his Ministry have told him, and what all the sanitary inspectors have told him.

They have all told him, Sir, that he is sitting over a public health powder keg.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is speculating but I state categorically that not a single person and not even the Honourable Member has told me that I am sitting on any powder keg, powder bomb, or any relation thereto.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, those words were my words. I just tried to be brief. But the point is that the words add up to that. He is afraid. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East is a very gentle man. There is no need to be afraid of him. What are you afraid of? Are you really afraid of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South? The nation awaits word from its Health Minister and not a word. If you are half a man as your mouth will suggest, I will invite you ^, to get up and make a statement tonight on the public health - ^ implications of the events in the Belle Tenantry. I invite you to do that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Give way.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Do you want to do it now?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, give way.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what does the Honourable Member rise?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He has given way, Sir. We are in Committee. The public health implications are not what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has sought to give the public. There is no danger of cholera. There is no danger of any disease arising out of the well in the Belle. There is none whatsoever. The coliform levels are below the norm and any coliform that has come out of " the Belle which is monitored on an ongoing basis can be ^ dealt with by purification. That is the information which has been given and therefore the scare tactics which the Honourable Member should know better than to go out into the community trying to fool the community that there is some imminent danger. Mr. Arthur Archer, the leading exponent in this matter, has indicated that there is no danger whatsoever. The tests in the Belle show that the only danger from the Belle comes more from nitrates but not from coliforms. That is the answer.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, you know the longer you practice medicine the more you learn. I have learned some new medicine this evening. But Sir, what can you expect? You know when you are dealing with an Honourable Member who to attract attention would hire people to pelt big rocks at his house in the middle of an s- election then you would expect anything from him. The _point I am trying to make, Sir...

As/des.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I never said that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, I want you to withdraw that. It is a total implication and I want to have it struck from the record. I wish you to do that What do you mean that you never said so? You implied that I am the person.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members are on their feet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I challenge the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member is doing a disservice to this House. He implied that I may have hired someone to pelt big rocks at my house during campaign. I challenge the Honourable Member to get up and state categorically that that ever happened or stand forever condemned in the eyes of all of his Honourable colleagues and everybody else as a despicable liar. 8.55 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if I may continue - and that is the way we will handle you tonight, we will get you in that mode - the whole point about water pollution with the faeces...

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Not at all! Why? I want it to stay in the record. If I may continue, Sir. The Honourable Member was very careful to state, and note what he said, that the present test on coliforms in the water coming from the Belle shows a normal level of bacteria which can be dealt with with the normal levels of chlorination, but that is not the issue, Sir. The issue is that if you increase the amount of faecal effluent that can seep into the water, then the situation may arise where the ordinary levels of chlorination cannot deal with it So the question is not what is happening today, it is a question of the risk inherent in the process, and the assurance that the public wants is whether or not you can tell them that if you continue to function in the way you are functioning now whether the health of the nation cannot be compromised down the road. You see, you have not answered it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. He has been found wanting and he does not know how to deal with it. He has been told there is a problem and now he is talking about faecal. I have been told by my experts that there have been no faecal coliforms, and it is faecal coliforms and not total coliforms that are indicative of pollution by human waste, and I am saying that in the Belle there has been no evidence of faecal coliforms. I am stating categorically as a fact that there has been no faecal coliforms.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I would put my professional reputation on the line, that if you continue to have toilets and housing and you increase the density of

persons living in Zone 1 land and the water is below that coral, then you increase substantially the risk of almost all waterborne diseases. That is the whole point behind zoning as a matter of preventive medicine. The whole point behind it is that the coral in Barbados is subject to cracks, and what could be a normal level of coli, what could be adequate chlorination today, if a crack occurs tonight and that seepage occurs in there, then it is only after there has been pollution of the water and illnesses appear that it is recognised.

In the past 23 years that I have been practising in Barbados we have had outbreaks of waterborne disease in this country. We have had outbreaks of typhoid, we have had outbreaks of infectious hepatitis, we have had these things in Barbados, and the point is this. Any Minister of Health who presides over a situation where those risks are increased, he is not serving the best interests of this nation. The whole point behind preventive health medicine in water zoning is to reduce the risks. Under no circumstances would you ever completely eradicate it. At the best of times you will not completely eradicate it, but you do not go and increase the risks. That is the whole point behind it, that is your job and you are not doing your job.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. He cannot tell me what my job is. He does not know what my job is, he has never done my job and the job he had he ran away from. He does not know about jobs, he cannot tell me about my job. I stand as one of the persons wherever they have put me to work I have done my job well. Ask anybody and they will tell you that You cannot tell me about my job. I am a better Minister than you are a doctor.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will concede that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To say that a Minister ran away from his job is unparliamentary, Sir. It implies cowardice.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Not at all, Sir. I will accept all those things, but I recall a certain mutual friend told me of a telephone conversation he had with the Honourable Member, and the Honourable Member told him that if the Prime Minister of this country gave him the job to clean his toilets he would take it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get serious about this debate. Let us get back to a serious evaluation of the matter under discussion.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. I categorically deny ever having said that, and I state in so denying that only a person of the most twisted mentality could have considered that as a possibility, as hearsay. He has the strangest friends that tell him the strangest things, but I do not call anybody at night.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, is the Honourable Member going to deny that he had a conversation, since I do not know the person

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the conversation have anything to do with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir. Very much so, a conversation with a certain Mr. Knight that lives somewhere on the southern coast of the South East United States.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And in your estimation it has something to do with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir, on the question of pots. Do not trouble trouble until trouble troubles you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I have demonstrated in here today that he is incapable of standing up to an argument, and he is shifting and moving to vilification.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: When we have all listened to the exchanges here tonight, it is quite clear who has been personal and who has not. I am avoiding any personal references to my good friend, because I do not want to compromise any possibilities of future productive relationships. I am avoiding any personal references, Sir, I will leave all the personal attacks, all the malevolence, all those things. However, Sir, if I may continue.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member said that as Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee he did not have any responsibilities of a certain kind. Chapter 44, Health Services Medical Staff Committee Regulations 1977, which are a repeat of the Regulations that existed before for the Medical Staff Committee, except that the powers were reduced, but these powers can be found in both the Regulations that existed when he was Chairman, and section 4: "The functions of the Committee are -

to monitor the quality of medical care at the Hospital .

He said he does not remember if the gloves that were used by Surgeons were recycled.

¹¹ to develop a planning mechanism for the purpose of ensuring continuous improvements in all aspects of medical care; to advise the Hospital Director of priorities in the Hospital budget, and to advise the Hospital Director on all aspects of Hospital administration affecting the well being of patients." -«^

And he comes here and tells you that he did not know that were recycling gloves and that it was not his job, but it is all

right to go out and suggest that a Minister, who is removed from the Hospital, had a responsibility in the recycling of gloves.

Stand condemned, as you will be before the bar of public opinion, as a man who has no concept of what truth may be when he does not want to.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I noted that he cited the Regulations of 1977. 9.05 p.m.

However, I am saying categorically that the way in which a Chairman of the Hospital functions is on matters advisory to the Hospital Director and only on matters referred to him by the Hospital Director who is the person in charge of the Hospital. It is as simple and straightforward as that and it has always worked that way.

However, Sir, if I may continue. The Honourable Member has clearly been very neglectful in protecting the public health of this nation which is his primary responsibility and I am not prepared to go any further this evening. That is my only charge. I have made no other charges. I have sat down and I have listened to all of the vilification, all the personal attacks and I have sat back and listened very quietly. I have heard all the shouting.

I am very glad that he has sought to explain that there was more than one pot at the QEH because, as you know, he is now referred to affectionately in his constituency as "One Pot Taitt". That has now succeeded. It was "Chicken Taitt" and now it is "One Pot Taitt".

I feel very sorry for my good friend. I feel a deep sense of pain that you have found yourself in this kind of situation and I would urge you to look at those areas where there is evidence of things going wrong in terms of the public health of Barbados.

There are not many doctors around now who would have seen a typhoid outbreak in Barbados. I think there was only one major one or significant one since the mid-1960's *7 sut* it is something that you do not want to see.

On the question of cholera I agree that there is no immediate risk of cholera in Barbados but you may recall that only a few years ago there was a threat of a cholera pandemic and the Pan American Health Organisations and other people had to mount a major exercise in the Caribbean and elsewhere to try to isolate this. That is why we try to maintain at all times the integrity of our water supplies and it is a foolish argument to come and say that because the alkaline count is X today that there is not a

problem. That is the whole point behind public health and preventive medicine.

The reason today why you get certain types of vaccines in Barbados is because the country has a history of these things. Why you thought they had a typhoid ward at the old Hospital? As a matter of fact, these things probably raise a greater danger because the diagnosis is often missed as you do not think typhoid: you do not think these things nowadays. Whereas some time ago a patient came and you looked at certain criteria and that is one of the early things that would have occurred to you, it is usually diagnosed now after there has been some serious fatality or someone not responding to a situation so that we know it and there is no point fooling ourselves that we must not take appropriate steps in dealing with these matters.

The whole Aedes Egypti Programme - that has always been a major problem. I appreciate that in Barbados for many years... but the point is that it is something we have to pay attention to. I honestly believe that the Minister should now assign the highest priority to the public health aspects of his Ministry because I will tell you something. No matter how good a secondary health care structure you have, no matter how good your polyclinics, you would be surprised to see what could happen overnight in Barbados if there is a breakdown in your public health services and, certainly in matters relating to your water supply.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude his speech.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: This is not the first time I have made this kind of speech in here. In fact, my maiden speech in Parliament in 1978 dealt with the question of the consequences of cracks and cauls in the sewage disposal in Barbados so it is nothing that is not my primary aim that the Honourable Member is speaking of. It is a matter of concern. I have seen it.

I have been in Bangladesh and I have seen what has happened there during a cholera outbreak and during typhoid outbreaks. You do not want these things to happen and they can happen in any society.

It happened in Zermac, Sir. I remember in 1968 or thereabouts, Zermac of all places, one of the top resorts in Europe, some contamination of the water supply, a few people died and nobody going to the place for several years. If you had done an alkaline count the week before it would have been normal. If the level of chlorination was one in ten, one in a hundred, one in a thousand, whatever, that would have been all right but something happened overnight. Somebody carrying the typhus vicillus or something and his faeces or something happened to contaminate the water and it is a problem. So, as I say, you can never totally eliminate the risk and we have as a duty never to do anything to increase the risk.

When you forget all the fulminations of the Minister I am saying that I am concerned about the frequency with which public health matters are rising in Barbados because in the past most of the concerns that we debated in this House about health have been in the area of secondary health care.

Talking about people talking the truth? Who was the man that announced - I would not bother with that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Because the time has expired.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The point I am making, Sir, is let us in all sobriety recognize that we must never in a situation where the health of the country can be compromised and that public health area, I think, in a sense, that is what has made the big difference. We spend least money in that area and that is what makes the big difference to health in any country so that I would urge the Minister - he says that he is a much better Minister than I am a doctor. He is also a much better doctor than I am a doctor. I know that.

I am sure he knows the problems relating to infectious hepatitis so that I think he understands the problem so you cannot shout your way out of these kinds of difficulties.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: There are people over here who will sit back and analyze it and then you have to deal with the question of argument, not by shouting...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Thank you very much.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member has a technique which has worked well for him for those persons who are not familiar with it and for the unsuspecting may pass as words well spoken because he drops his voice, bends down his head and looks serious.

The Honourable Member cannot have any more interest in public health than any other person in Barbados. The Honourable Member cannot try to give the impression that has, unfortunately, been put abroad that because a person has been a doctor, or is a doctor, that that person becomes the repository of all knowledge that there is about the particular field or about matters relating to health.

As a matter of fact, some of the most ignorant people about public health have been demonstrated to be doctors who have concentrated on the business of making a living and some of them have not bothered with continuing medical education and, as a result, they are not always au fait with what is happening.

The Honourable Member is in possession of a copy of the Development Plan of the Ministry of Health and the Honourable Member is, as all Honourable Members, aware that the Ministry of Health has made primary health care the main thrust around which the country would go into the 21st Century as we seek towards health for all by the year 2000 in concert with large numbers of countries around the world.

The Honourable Member will know that at the level of public health Barbados ranks among the highest level of public health countries anywhere, not only in the region but in the Western Hemisphere, and the Honourable Member knows, he must know and I know that he knows that in terms of the Pan American Health Organization Barbados is considered to have a very high quality of public health.

In fact, there are countries in the Western Hemisphere^N who are coming to Barbados now to participate with us, to learn what techniques have been used over many years to bring us to this level.

The Honourable Member also knows that the mere fact that he trots out what the dangers are of typhoid, the dangers of cholera, the dangers of any of the infectious diseases, that that in itself, except to frighten and put a sense of alarm in the minds of the population that may be initiated as he is, that that does not do anything towards helping the country towards a higher and different level of discussion and debate about public health. 9.15p.m.

To use the chicken incident - where in fact the country eventually ate more chicken during that year than ever before - as an indication of the level of debate in public health in this country while having nothing to say about smoking or alcohol abuse or any of these more terrible dangers is really to draw a red herring across the trail. Any Minister of Health who is worthy of his hire^N would be interested in the public health of the community. It is well that this society called Barbados should have a high profile in the discussion of its public health.

But what the Minister will not do is allow any political party or group to draw him into an unnecessary statement that will allow for the contradiction with other statements made by other Ministers so that the Opposition can have a field day. What they wanted was to have the headline saying, Blackman and Blackman versus Taitt. That is what would titillate them.

But the fact is that my public health advisors have advised me as they advise me every week. There is a meeting of the Chief Medical Officer and the Senior Medical Officers of Health with the Minister every week and, which serious matters are discussed. The question of the Belle arose. No one in the Belle sought the permission of the Ministry of Health. None of the squatters, whomever.

they may be, sought the permission of the Ministry of Health and therefore the Ministry of Health would not be aware of them in the normal course of time. If the Ministry of Health had given a single person permission to put a house anywhere that it should not have been put, the said very Honourable Member would be the first to get up in the House talking about how the Ministry of Health has acted — ultra vires and beyond its powers.

Is he suggesting that the people in the Ministry of Health are not interested in the public health? Is he suggesting that the massive amount of time, effort and money devoted to primary health care in this country for the last two years is an indication of disinterest? The Honourable Member cannot fool people all of the time. The Honourable Member cannot talk about impressions and then go on to discuss public health that he studied 20 years - sgo and talk about when he was in Bangladesh. Bangladesh .-"is a country that is in fact at the lowest level of public health in the entire world. So if you go to Bangladesh, whether you go as a doctor or you go as a tourist, you will see the manifestations of bad public health. But that is why people come to Barbados because we have good public health. We have potable water, potable drinking water that has been acceptable across the world, that is talked about. And we are to preserve it. Yes! But we are not to preserve it -^at the expense of political tomfoolery. The Honourable Member should know better. Obviously if you are in the Opposition you have a right to keep the Government on its toes and you have the right to raise questions.

But a Minister of this Government spoke about his responsibility and a representative from a constituency spoke as a representative from a constituency. And what the Opposition parties, in particular the NDP is seeking to do is to "parlay" it into a national issue and requiring the Democratic Labour Party to run around like people who do - *iot understand what is going on. We have been running the - country for a very long time, since 1961 and we are the ones who brought this country to the level of public health that the Honourable Member can talk about. We are the ones who are preserving it now because it is our responsibility to preserve it.

Everywhere, except in the corridors of the NDP and a few non well wishers of the Democratic Labour Party, Barbados is regarded as having a very high standard of Health care at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

The Honourable Member must not....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What is the point? That they have ,'; few houses in the Belle. What is in danger? This is a report I have had from....What is the danger? The danger y6u talk about about the danger you have tried to give, I am ..- saying that we are not in the danger that you are discussing.

Why did I not hear the NDP when we were out there saying that all of the gullies in this country were being contaminated. We took up a hundred and something loads of stuff out of one gully in Barbados. Where was the NDP? Every gully in this country has been contaminated by the people of the country. Where was the NDP when you were over here? Where were you? All of this sudden movement because of a few houses in the Belle. We have been talking about public health. We have been talking about it almost every week. So do not come to tell me, the Minister of Health has to make a statement. Is the Minister a knee jerk reactor? Is the Minister to make a statement because you say to make a statement?

I am telling this House, this is where I am to tell the public of Barbados, that there is no danger and I am responding to something the Honourable Member raised because he is a doctor and he carries all of the aura that the principles of maximum confusion carry, that once you are a doctor and you speak that you may be speaking something that you know. This Honourable Member here can confirm that there are many doctors who speak things they do not know.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But when he does speak on medical matters, he takes his time and makes sure that he speaks. Well I am speaking of medical matters. He made a lot of errors about you.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes. But we are not going to discuss those.

I wish to repeat, Mr. Chairman, studies done and a report submitted in July 1978 showed no significant pollution problems at any water supply wells since the development control zone restrictions were imposed in 1963. Since then we have had studies done by PAHO. We have had studies done within the Ministry and there is a study, the results of which are now before other Ministries in which we have examined the water. The Ministry of Health has a division that is an ongoing monitor of the water. An ongoing monitoring of the water in Barbados.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Honourable Member has trotted out a whole lot of statistics relating to the water supply as it is now. No one is questioning that. What everybody in this country has been addressing is the increased risks that would convert the situation you are describing into a different matter altogether.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am going to quote from the official information in the Ministry of Health:

"The major pollutants in the Belle well and other wells are the nitrates which are derived from sewage as well as from fertilizers used in agriculture. It is commonly felt that agriculture contributes more nutrients to the supply wells than sewage. The Belle well has been recording nitrates above the WHO levels. Above this level nitrates are dangerous to the health of bottle fed infants and children up to 5 years old as they may be affected by certain diseases. The recent study by PAHO and the British Geological Society, a recent study which was completed in 1989 with the Ministry's of Health Environmental Division as the main local participant sees pesticides and nutrients"....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The asides are too loud.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: "nitrates and phostrates as a greater health threat in the Belle area than bacterial pollution."
9.25 p.m.

I want to repeat that. The British Geological Society with the Ministry of Health and Environmental Engineering Division did a study recently and they saw that there is a greater health threat from pesticides and nutrients than from bacteria pollution. The Ministry of Health has recommended and will recommend the use of less toxic pesticide with greater control of the distribution and application particularly among small farmers and the use of fertilizers which will bio-degrade more rapidly in the soil than are currently used in agriculture.

The Ministry of Health has had an ongoing monitoring system and it is monitoring all of the drain-off both for the coastal waters and for the waters in Barbados as a continuing total test which happens every week. There is a Department that does nothing else but this. So that what one is saying is not that we should not look towards the future* and not that we should not do all of the things and take all of the precautions to guard our environment for the future. What we are saying is that the attempts which have been made using the Belle as the scape-goat activity to frighten the population that we are in current danger, should not be done. The Honourable Member himself just said that he agreed that we are not in any current danger and my contention is, and that is all I am addressing, that we should not try to fool the population that there is some current danger arising out of the information which was said by one of the Opposition parties. I am saying further that we are in much more danger from the gullies if we do not stop dumping waste in the gullies of Barbados than from any house or houses which may have been sited legally or illegally in the Belle. I am saying that, without prejudice to the solution to the Belle problem, it is not in the interest of the country for any group, Opposition or otherwise, to be

trying to frighten the population and thereby frighten all other persons who have an interest in Barbados that we are in some danger.

That is my position and that is the position of the Minister of Health. Anyone who wants a statement from the Minister of Health can ask the question anytime. If I believe that there is some reason why I must make a statement &... the interest of the community, I will so do. But I am not going to respond for purposes of politics as a knee jerk reaction to what anyone in the NDP says merely because they have bludgeoned the particular Minister that he has not made a statement. The Honourable Member came into this House and tried to be nasty by suggesting that he listened to somebody. He said it and it was in the record. Do not look at him. Well, he listened to somebody. I am saying that I do not speak to any people about what I would or would not do as a Minister. I have no overweening ambitions that^ cannot keep within my breast. All of my ambitions I am^ able to keep to myself and my actions and reactions are not likely therefore to be promulgated to various people who would telephone the Honourable Member and tell him anything about me. These little childish and puerile expressions which the Honourable Member is able to use with the neophytes around him will not suit when he comes to talk to those people who know him well. Those of us who know him well find it not strange that he will around things that have been done to him on other people, hence his use of the word "impressions". It is well known across this country that to say the word "impression" is to bring up measures and images of the Honourable Member because the Honourable Member has been identified by persons who would know as a person who would prefer an impression to truth anytime. Whether that is true or false, that is how he has been identified and therefore for him to try to turn it around is an exercise in futility.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time. The Member for ^ Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, if you did not see the fight between Tyson and Douglas, imagine from the experiences here in the last hour and a half, Sir, because a lot of lashes were shared in here. I do not know who was Tyson and who was Douglas but some jabs were going inside and hitting straight.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that this Resolution hTfc come today because you remember, Sir, that last week -'. produced a letter in here that had gone out from the Hospital under the hand of somebody called Miss Blackman, I think that was the name, regarding persons who were renting property to doctors and apologizing for the fact that the Hospital had no money to pay the rental. The Minister would have seen a copy of the letter by I wonder if under Object No. 8 - Supplementary of \$113,000 would take care of those problems as a loi of people were very concerned. f

Generally, Sir, in relation to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, I wish also to mention to the Minister that I think the correspondence coming from the Hospital and indeed the Geriatric Hospital from the people who write letters on matters of public concern that that procedure for corresponding with the letter writers needs to be speeded up.

I have a very distressing situation of a constituent, a very old man who is very, very gravely ill and has been so for about four or five weeks now. I saw him Sunday before last coming up to two weeks. But prior to that, a week in advance, I had written the Hospital and asked for some arrangements to be made to have this man sent from the QEH to a district hospital where he could be attended. He wants to go. He is unable to return to his private house not being able to help himself. He does not have a family who - can provide that kind of domestic assistance for him.

I wrote the people at the Geriatric Hospital. I spoke to the Chief Welfare Officer. I wrote the Medical Social Worker. I think that is what she is called in the QEH. To tell you the truth, Sir, they did not spit on me. They have not spat on me since I have written. I feel that that kind of treatment is less than considerate. They know the problem. Nobody has telephoned and nobody has replied to the correspondence to say that we are investigating and we are going to try and help. This is an old person who has made a substantial contribution, a well known person in St. Thomas. He is in his 80's and he has made a substantial contribution to agriculture in the parish. I feel personally very hurt that the attitude of the two hospitals has been one of total callousness. I am giving them until Thursday. If I do not hear from them, I am going to go public. I just want them to know tonight that it is inhumane to behave like that. I do not want to say too much about the man. I say that he is gravely ill and 80 something years old. That is how they behave.

They promised me a Medical Report on somebody who had an accident two and a half years ago. I never got it. I called (hem week before last and they said it was coming within two days. It has not come yet. You cannot behave like that. Sir, the Minister cannot be blamed for these things. The Minister in our system unfortunately has to accept some kind of political responsibility. I am not blaming the Minister for that. What I would be grateful for ^, is if the Minister would communicate my concerns to the , hospital's Director and try and ask him to motivate his staff to be more businesslike particularly in dealing with members of the public. I am not blaming the Minister. 9.35p.m.

I am very grateful that the Minister, even though he , seemed to believe that the calls for him to make public ""statements of reassurance to the general public in relation to ~ne Belle matter was a matter of political ploy or whatever....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, he accused the Members of the National Democratic Party of doing things for political advantage. It is easy to say that, but on the other hand, Sir, the Minister did not even realise what he was doing. The Minister gave all the information tonight that we would have wanted, quite freely. I feel that since it had so much public ventilation he could have given it before, but he is saying that we have nothing to be afraid of, they are monitoring the situation and so on, and the public health aspect is well in hand.

The Minister must not see in every request for a public statement some political ploy. He dealt with the matter very effectively at Cabinet last Thursday. He even had my representative rushing up to the Belle Thursday night telling people "don't open your mouth and talk, you hear? You all talk too fast. Don't let anybody come in here and make you all talk." All that was dealt with at Cabinet on Thursday, but we will talk about that next month during the Estimates. It is too late to go into that now, Sir.

I will just ask the Minister to keep on top of the matter so that we do not have to add to the list of items for which he is responsible. He is Minister of pots, according to the Leader of the Opposition, chickens, gloves, what next, Sir?

Mr. R. P. BYER: Sir, I just want to make a very brief intervention more or less to support the Leader of the Opposition in what he has been saying, and also to make the point that the Minister of Health seemed to have been missing the point the Leader of the Opposition was establishing.

It has nothing to do, Sir, with trying to frighten the population of Barbados about what could result if effluent above an acceptable level should seep into the underground water supply. It has to do with letting the Minister know that even though we face more danger from other types of contaminates, we should not add to the list of possible contaminates. It is all right to say that the gullies and so on are a source of contamination, that nitrates and other pollutants are sources of danger, but why should we add to that list?

Sir, part of one of the districts in my constituency, Dash Valley, is also in a Zone 1 water area and I have said in here before that some of the problems we will have in the long term future about development in these areas have to do with the kind of impact the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act has had. Many people who have lived in Dash Valley for many years now have the opportunity, because of the fact that they now own those lands, to develop those lands. I know of many applications that have been made to the Chief Town Planner to develop those areas and the Chief Town Planner has turned down those applications for good reason.

I know the Member for St. Michael East has been very forceful in his argument about allowing development in those areas for various reasons. I also have in my possession a policy position as stated by the Barbados Water Authority in a communication to the Chief Town Planner about development in these areas. That policy paper came into my possession because on one occasion in my professional capacity I was advised to make an appeal against disallowance.

An Enforcement Notice was issued on my client for development in Colleton, St. John. He developed his land when he heard that that parcel of land he occupied would have been transferred to him under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, not knowing that he had to seek the permission of the Chief Town Planner. He did not know the town planning history of the land he was on, that it was Zone 1 land as well, and he went ahead and built a wall house, a substantial dwelling.

Aside.

Mr. R. P. BYER: I know that, but I am talking about the problems that people face not knowing. I am talking about the impact of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act in Zone 1 areas. People look forward to developing their houses and so on. This person did not apply/he went ahead and built and then he was faced with this problem when he made the application then for retention, after the Enforcement Notice was served on him. He discovered then that it was Zone 1 and no building was allowed, and he could not qualify under the protection of water resources policy that was enunciated in 1963 and further amplified in 1970 or 1971.

The point I am making is that even though we have had town and country planning legislation for some time, people are not very aware of the dangers that they face and the possibility of rejection whenever they make applications for development in these areas.

I remember there was a lady in my constituency, who lived in Dash Valley. The parcel of land on which she lived was passed to her under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and she developed on the land. I told her that she had to move the house because the Chief Town Planner would not allow the development. She had lived there for about a year or so and in the meantime we were looking for accommodation for her. Eventually she was resided in St. Lawrence.

What happened during that period was that she built an outside pit toilet and the water came upwards from the soil. She had a guest staying with her on one occasion. That guest used the toilet and was bitten by a mosquito in a very tender area of her anatomy and she had to go to the hospital and was in the Intensive Care Unit for some time.

So when the Minister of Housing said that most of the people were going to build outside toilets and that there was no danger, I do not think that that was a very responsible statement, because I knew what had happened to some person before who was in a very awkward situation. We are not saying, Sir, that there ought not to be development in these areas, what we are saying is that there should be development in the areas within the context of the law at that time within the context of the policy that was laid out in 1963 and further amplified in 1970 or 1971. That is our argument. 9.45 p.m.

We are not saying that the water resources could not become contaminated other than by effluent getting into the water resources. We are not saying that. We are saying that we should try and eliminate as much of the dangers as possible because of the long-term effects that are likely to occur as these things happen.

As the Honourable Member for the City is saying *sotto voce* do not add insult to injury. We have to be very careful. I feel sorry for those people who have gone and developed in Zone 1 areas and are now faced with the possibility of having to comply with an enforcement notice if Government does not do something to alleviate their plight.

There are many people in Barbados who are in that position, not only people in the Belle. There are people in Dash Valley in that situation as well. People in Colleton, St. John. There is a part of St. Lucy or St. Peter that is also in a Zone 1 area so we have to be very careful about these things. The question we have to ask ourselves is which comes first. In my books the health of the nation comes first.

I think that as a Government we have to further educate our people that there are certain rules and regulations that have to be complied with. That is what we have to do if we are to avoid this kind of discussion, if we are to avoid this kind of embarrassment from time to time.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, just a few brief points because if I have to talk on this issue it would take me about an hour and a half to deal with it adequately but just to respond to a few statements made.

There is nobody that I know of in Barbados, including the people who live in the Belle Tenantry who have been pejoratively referred to as squatters who want to drink dirty water. I do not want to drink dirty water and I do not believe that anybody who lives in the Belle would want to do it, particularly if they happen to defecate in the water. Nobody would want to drink water that is contaminated even by the waste from their own bodies.

I believe there is an unwarranted amount of self-righteousness when people state that they are for pure drinking water. Everybody is for pure drinking water.

This matter in relation to the analysis of water is supposed to be an exercise in science. Yet the entire argumentation is the very antithesis of science. It is based upon the reasoning of common sense, using common sense as a method that is opposed to what is called the scientific method.

It stands to reason that the more pollutants you put in any given body of water the greater the contamination will be. That is not a statement that anybody will quarrel with. Any child of five years old can come to that conclusion. The more of any pollutant you put in any given body of water the greater the contamination will be.

The question as to what is Zone 1 is shrouded in mystification and there is a good reason why there is this mystification because historically, it was believed that these are technical matters beyond the ken of ordinary mortals and that some technocrats somewhere should pontificate about what is good for Barbados and once we hear the term "technical man" had spoken we should genuflect and say "Amen" and be on our way. In these matters I would concede superior engineering literacy to technical men so-called but I would not concede superior understanding.

The Zone 1 area represents a bacteriological protection zone which every developed country in the world has around a given source of water. In Barbados this is determined by the estimate of the time that bacteria can survive. At the time the zone was first demarcated, it was demarcated at 300 travel days and this is still the estimated time in which bacteria would be deemed to be capable of surviving. ❖»-

❖»*- The Stanley Report which has been referred to time and again, indicates that this figure of 300 is overly conservative. I will make this a document of the House, Mr. Chairman. In that Report it states that they now know a lot more about pathogenic bacteria and their survivability than in the past and the survival times for bacteria like salmonella 7-168 days, leptospira 15-43 days, erysipelatic, 21 days. Viruses: enterovirus 25-170 days, polio virus 32 days. According to the Stanley Report these figures clearly justify a maximum survival time for major pathogenic bacteria and viruses of less than 170 days.

It is clear, therefore, that the assumption on which the current Zone 1 boundary is drawn in Barbados is outdated. Not only that, Stanley goes on to say - it is better for me to let Stanley speak for himself than to paraphrase it:

"Ground water protection practice in Europe is to limit ~»*- bacteriological protection zones to 60 days' time of travel. The reduction in required travel time is

supported in Barbados by the fact that the West Coast wells of Carlton and Molyneux have Zone 1 boundaries at calculated travel times of 25 and 56 days respectively."

It means that in the Belle the travel time is 300 days, at Carlton, St. James it is 25 days, at Molyneux it is 56 days and Stanley goes on to say:

"And no serious contamination problems have been experienced."

The justification for imposing the 350 day travel limit is always based upon the notion that there is more water pumped at the Belle than in other Zone 1 wells. 9.55 p.m.

"The above information presents a strong argument for revision of the bacteriological protection zone limits. Although a 60 day travel time appears safe the following revisions are based on a 100 day travel time, as it is preferable to remain on the side of caution."

The people who have been quoting from the Stanley Report so freely have failed to inform the public that the proposal for a Zone 1 area as contained in the Stanley Report makes the Zone 1 area in the Belle 1/3 of the size that it is at the present time. Under the Stanley proposal therefore for Zone 1 the people who live at Blenheim would not be in Zone 1 at all. He then went on to say:

"Nevertheless further reduction to 60 days should not be discounted as a possibility."

In short, the Stanley Report is recommending an area that is 1/3 of the size of the current area around the Belle demarcated for Zone 1. I do not know why the Stanley Report proposal in relation to Zone 1 has never been accepted though I do know that Zone 1 boundary changes have been made. They were made in 1979 and the basis for making those changes was the Stanley Report. The Zone 1 boundaries which were altered at that time do not conform at all to the parameters of the boundaries as indicated by Stanley. I can also make this a document of the House. This is a map, the proposal on the basis of the Stanley Report.

To deal specifically with the Belle, after dealing with Zone 1 characteristics in general, I now turn my attention to the Belle and here is where methodology is of great significance in the formulation of public policy. Methodology is determined essentially by the philosophy of a person. Water does not exist by itself. Water exists only because it is identified as such by human beings. It is something that is consumed by human beings for the benefit of human beings. Therefore this Parliamentarian - I will see if I can summarize what I have to say in 2 minutes - believe that in analyzing a given situation that human ends always have to be taken into consideration. It is absurd to

deal with the Belle question therefore unless the demographic history of the area is taken into consideration.

At the time the first Report by Tulstrom was presented it is estimated that twice as many people were living in Belle Tenantry as now live there. So even with the new construction done in the last two years or so, and I use "new" advisedly because there are cases within the law where new does not mean new; so even with the new development, the number of people living there is just $\frac{1}{2}$ of the residents living in that area at the time the first Report on the underground water supply of Barbados was submitted which revealed no evidence of serious contamination.

But the law is this - that a new house can be put on land which was used previously as residential land. In short if a house were on a spot the law is that in Zone 1 a new house can be put on that spot. That is the right of any person who acquires or owns a spot in the Belle Tenantry to put a house there, Zone 1 or no Zone 1. That is the law. x

My criticism of the Chief Town Planner and the Chief Engineer of the Water Authority has been this and nothing more than this that by administrative fiat, not by legislation, they have sought to limit this right to 5 years. That is my criticism of them. I believe that this is arbitrary. If a man has a right to build on a spot, I do not believe that it is right, fair or just to tell him if he does not have the money to build a house that he must build a house within 5 years or not build it at all. That has been my quarrel all along. I maintain they are violating the rights of such persons whenever that administrative edict is executed. That has been my position.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I am sorry I cannot continue this, Mr. Chairman, but there will be other opportunities.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Health will reply now because the time has expired for debate on the matter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I just want to say to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that I too sorrow with him if in fact after three letters he has not had a response. What I have been trying to do is to ensure that all of the departments in the Ministry which behave with what I consider to be normal administrative courtesy respond to correspondence within a reasonable time. I also give him the assurance that the matter will be examined.

I have to say however that the question of the placement of persons of old age in the district hospitals is one of some difficulty because our population has been living much longer in recent times. 10.05 p.m.

It means that there are more old persons than we have facilities and the rationalization and policy for keeping persons in their homes as much as possible leads to some administrative difficulty. Also, there are some shortages of staff in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital notably in the Social Workers Section where they move from a position of not much social work to a large quantity of social work[^] including a large number of Medical Aid Scheme casO which are given priority. So if in any given period we get three or four urgent Medical Aid Scheme cases this might occasion some kind of delay in the Social Work Department. That is not an excuse. It is just an explanation.

There are a number of persons who wish to be placed or wish their relatives to be placed. But what is important, and Honourable Members must take note of it for future action, is that there be a referral from a doctor, whereas in the past persons of good standing in the community or eve* MP's would in fact try to refer a person. We now have geriatrician at the Hospital who is a consultant and the same principle that applies for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital applies here. So that if the doctor of the person in the future can be the one with the referral letter to the Hospital, the geriatrician at the St. Michael Hospital which is the major geriatric and receiving, that is where all persons going into the Geriatric Hospital and the district hospital must go - then that consultant will deal with the doctor referre[^]t patients much faster than the patients referred by the old. time method.

In the case of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, it is a case of moving persons. We have recently opened 18 beds at the St. Philip District Hospital and we have tried to leave 10 beds available at the St. Michael Hospital at Beckles Road for persons of a certain urgency. We also have been quietly taking those persons who are homeless off the street and giving them an opportunity to be rehabilitated and \jffi leave some space at the Geriatric Hospital for this. In alNrf _ these cases if Honourable Members would get the doctor oi record to make the referral to the hospital, this will assist in speeding up the implementation.

I beg to move that this Head stand part, Sir.

The question that Head 36 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: How many Resolutions were there?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just one minute. Earlier in debate I gave the commitment that I would refer a matter to His Honour the Speaker. Subsequent to that, the Member of whom the complaint was made got up and explained his position, withdrew the remark, made an apology, and as j*V as I am concerned the matter on that particular issue rested. That is the position which I have taken and any report that I will make to His Honour the Speaker will be to tell him""

what has transpired up to that point. The Leader of the House.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of four Money Resolutions in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Resolutions were read a first and second time, and passed.

ADJOURNMENT . •

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I think that concludes for us today Government Business. Sir, before I move the Adjournment, I want to state that as I have indicated to this House earlier the Estimates will be debated ' between March 12th and 16th inclusively and the documents that we are proposing subject to any unforeseen circumstances will be laid at the next meeting of this House which I shall move later, which I think will be March 6th. However, Sir, I am giving the Honourable Members and the House the assurance that we shall seek by the end of this week, Sir, to circulate the Estimates. So that even before

they are laid the documents will be in the hands of Honourable Members so that they will have ample time in which to study the documents and make their contributions when the debates are held.

I also want to state, Sir, that the same applies for the Report of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. It is planned, Sir, to give notice in accordance with Standing Orders of the Amendment to the draft of the Governor General's Order later this week and hopefully we will be able to debate that and conclude it at the next meeting of this House which should take place on March 6th, Sir. I thought, Sir, I should put Honourable Members on their notice about these two very important measures.

I .now, Sir, move that this sitting of the House be adjourned until Tuesday, March 6, 1990 at 12 o'clock noon.

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

The question that the sitting be adjourned until Tuesday, March 6, 1990 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly. 10.15 p.m.

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