

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 30, 1991.

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 T. C. ESTWICK, (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.),
J.P., (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic
Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.
(Hons.), (Minister of Health)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General
and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P.,
(Minister of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the
Environment)
Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Justice and
Public Safety)
Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Hon. C. V. WALKER, (Minister of Education)
Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of
Committees)
Hon. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of
Housing and Lands)
Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M. (Minister of
Tourism and Sports)
Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.
Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Mr. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.
Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A.
Miss B. A. MILLER
Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW
Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)

Mr. J. O. TUDOR
Mr. D. W. BOWEN
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.

Prayers were led by Fr. Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Monday, 18th March, 1991. Also, the Minutes of Tuesday, 2nd April, 1991.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that these Minutes be taken as read.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I am in receipt of the Accounts and Statements for the months of January and February, 1991 as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Guarantees granted under the Exempt Insurance Act, Cap. 308A section 32 to the following:-

- (1) Trimac Exit Insurance Limited
- (2) Beaumark Insurance Company Limited

- (3) ABX Insurance Limited
- (4) Telstar Resources Insurance Limited
- (5) London Life and Casualty Reinsurance Corporation
- (6) DBB Insurance Company Limited
- (7) Royal National Insurance Company Ltd.
- (8) First City Insurance Company Inc.
- (9) Colchester Reinsurance Limited
- (10) Cape Environment Insurance Ltd.
- (11) Montbados Insurance Co. Corporation, and
- (12) Horsham Insurance Company Inc.

I am also commanded to lay the Report on the Audit of the Accounts of the Auditor General's Department for the financial year 1989-90.

Also, Sir, on behalf of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, I beg to lay the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police for the financial year 1987.

I beg to lay the Annual Reports on the Immigration and Passport Department for the years ended 31st December, 1988 and 31st December, 1989.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Thirty-first Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Barbados Board of Tourism for the year 1989-90. I am also commanded to lay the Twelfth Annual Report and Audited Financial Statement of the National Sports Council for the financial year ended 31st March, 1990.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, to ask the Minister of Tourism and Sports, will the Minister state whether there are proposals in the current programme for the construction of pavilions.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Minister of Tourism and Sports:

1. Will the Minister state whether there are proposals in the current programmes of Government for the construction of pavilions for the playing fields at Lears, St. Michael and Bridgefield, St. Thomas?
2. If there are no such proposals, will the Minister recognise the need for those facilities and treat their establishment as matters of urgency and priority?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same Honourable Member, bus services for the parish of St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation:

Will the Minister undertake to schedule bus services for Hopewell and Canefield Tenancies in the parish of St. Thomas at a very early date and so alleviate the major inconvenience which residents of those areas continuously suffer through the absence of those services?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same Honourable Member, to the same Minister.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To the same Honourable Minister, for Public Works, Communications and Transportation:

1. Is the Minister aware that when there are heavy rains, Jackson Main Road, Saint Michael, particularly near its junction with Rockhampton Road, floods severely?
2. If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Minister please state Government's plans to alleviate flooding in the area?

Mr. SPEAKER: By the same Honourable Member, to the Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation:

1. Is the Minister aware that the following roads in St. Thomas are in a terrible state of disrepair, namely: (a) Whitehall Village Road, (b) the road leading from the Nazarene Church in Shop Hill, (c) another unnamed subsidiary road North of the road near the Nazarene Church, (d) all of the subsidiary roads on either side of the main Rock Hall road and (e) Vault Road, Welchman Hall?
2. If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Minister please state Government's plans for the proper repair of the said roads?

Mr. SPEAKER: And by the same Honourable Member, to ask the same Minister a similar question on tenantry roads.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: To ask the Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation:

1. Is the Minister aware that the following plantation tenantry roads in St. Thomas are in need of urgent repair, namely: (a) Highland Tenantry Road and (b) Content Tenantry Road?

2. If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Minister please state when it is anticipated that repairs to those roads will commence?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the end of Notices of Questions.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 6, asked by the Honourable Member for St. Peter, is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this sitting.

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

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

12.25 p.m.

ORDER NO. 5 – TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT FREE HILL, BLACK ROCK, ST. MICHAEL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW ST. STEPHEN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is a rather simple one, since it follows a series of resolutions which we have been bringing to this Honourable Chamber, from time to time, to acquire various pieces of lands for the purposes of facilitating the construction programme which has been embarked on by the Ministry of Education for the provision of new schools. A lot of this has to do with the amalgamation of the schools and this particular Resolution relates to the new St. Stephen's Primary School which will see, I gather, the amalgamation of two schools there, that is, the St. Stephen's Infants and Junior Schools.

We are seeking to acquire six parcels of land for this particular purpose and I would therefore want to commend this Resolution to the Honourable Chamber. If they require, the maps for the six parcels of land are available and could be inspected by the Honourable Members. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, did I understand the Honourable Minister to say that maps were available? In the meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, this proposed construction of the St. Stephen's Primary School is part of what is popularly known as the second World Bank School Building Project, negotiated before 1986 by the Barbados Labour Party. It has taken an inordinately long time, Mr. Speaker, to complete this project. The first World Bank School Building Project was completed well within its time-frame for construction, well within its time-frame of costs. In other words, Sir, there were no time or costs overruns.

I was very deeply concerned just a few days ago as the new school term started, the last term of this school year, well known to be examination term, when the amalgamation of the St. Mary's Infants and the St. Mary's Junior School took place and the St. Mary's New Primary School opened its doors for the first time. After all of the delay, Mr. Speaker, Sir, after the cutting-back on the size of the St. Mary's Primary School, it really was....

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, I always permit Members to make a point if it does not develop into the major topic. What we are dealing with is St. Stephen's Junior School.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am going to deal with St. Stephen's, Sir, but St. Stephen's is part of this package. I appreciate Mr. Speaker's concern but in the rush, the delay having taken years, we found school children going in at the beginning of this term in dust, all sorts of finishes, important finishes including toilet finishes incomplete, and it created quite a situation. Those who were subject to asthma – at least one asthma attack that I know of... In the end, the school had to be closed and proper steps had to be taken so that the children could comfortably be transferred from the old to the new. I am hoping, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that this is not going to happen in the case of the St. Stephen's Primary School when it is completed.

I would want to know of the Minister, in the first place, what is the proposed size for the St. Stephen's Primary School. I wouldn't like to think that, like St. Mary's, we are going to hear that that, too, has been cut back. St. Stephen's serves a very densely populated area. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are well aware. It is in your constituency. I believe, to some extent, I speak for Your Honour.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would wish that every Member speaks for me when the time comes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Quite, Sir. Mr. Speaker is grateful for small mercies. St. Stephen's Primary School services a very densely populated area, known to many of

us. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West, myself, all who grew up in those environs are well aware and it is still a densely populated area. Great care was taken in the selection of this alternative siting for it, but I am merely concerned about the size. As I have said before, in this Honourable Chamber, the second World Bank Project Schools come in specific sizes. You have 420 schools and 840 schools and 620 schools and so on. I am much concerned to know if this is going to be the subject of yet another cutback. In other words, I would wish to know what size the new St. Stephen's Primary is going to be.

I would wish to know what plans there are for recreational and other playground facilities. At the St. Mary's, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hard courts which are part of the Murphy Pasture complex and the Murphy Pasture itself were converted for use of the people who live in the surrounding areas, anticipating the school at a much earlier date. We are glad that we have it at all, but the old St. Mary School suffered very badly in respect of recreational and other such ancillary facilities and I would want to be assured that with these six parcels of land that proper plans and specifications and arrangements generally are going to be made for the provision of playing and other such facilities.

I am also concerned, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the people who live in that catchment area are the people who are going to get priority when the time comes for transferring from one school to another. We know we have the West Terrace on the hill servicing another very densely populated area, Haynesville, West Terrace itself, Wanstead, Cave Hill and other surrounding districts.
12.35 p.m.

It is very important because this is another spin off. I go back to the St. Mary's School. The schools in the City of Bridgetown are much sought after by parents who do not live in Bridgetown because of convenience, bringing children into work in and around Bridgetown, because of the high reputation of several of those schools like Wesley Hall, Westbury School and St. Ambrose schools in the uptown area. This is one of the main concerns about the cut-back inside St. Mary's. The children of the surrounding areas within the City of Bridgetown may well find themselves without a place in a school, like all primary schools in Barbados, that purport to be within walking distance of all school children. This is the old tradition in Barbados that every primary school child should be within walking distance of his or her primary school. That is a concern that I am sure Your Honour would have for the St. Stephen's School as I have still about the St. Mary's School. I will be watching very carefully the intake next September.

I would want to have these assurances from the Minister. I would like to think that the Minister would be generous enough to give me certain assurances about the

St. Mary's Primary School as well because there is still an atmosphere of unsettlement – if I may use that word – prevailing at Mason Hall Street.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I am aware the Honourable Member for the City was not in here for the last five years. Certainly, we have discussed these schools on numerous occasions. I would like to start by responding to a few of her queries and a few of her misconceptions, if not her errors, in terms of information received from whatever source.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the whole timing of the Second Loan. It is well known that the whole project was rescheduled in 1986. Therefore, that is the reason why we are now into the third stage of a second Education Loan. I would like to give her the assurance that because there was that delay it does not necessarily mean that there were any significant changes in terms of the size of the schools. She continues to make the point that there was a reduction at St. Mary's School. I will say again, as I have said in here, that St. Mary's School is built to accommodate 420 students. The occupancy of the two schools which are now amalgamated there are 145 in one school and 145 in another, 290 students. We are making provision for 420. It has not been cut back to the 360 as we constantly hear.

The second point is in terms of recreational facilities. Recreational facilities are provided and will be completed at St. Mary's along with the demolition of the old building which adjoins the new building which will make provision for a parking area next to the new St. Mary's School. Recreational facilities will also be provided at St. Stephen's as we have done for all the schools within the project. We will shortly be coming here to formalise the acquisition from the diocese of that old school to expand the St. Mary's School.

Mr. Speaker, while I am on this, let me expand because the Honourable Member for the City is making reference to the whole project. I would like to make a few points to clarify any misconceptions which one may have. I am sorry that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew is not here because the third phase of the project which is the St. Stephen's School, amalgamating the two schools, which the Tenders Committee has already awarded a contract is just awaiting the final arrangements with the bank. That has been given to a local construction firm.

The second one, Black Bess/St. Boniface, has been awarded and that too has been given to a local construction firm. There is a third, the extension to the Springer School which has also been given to a local construction firm. Then there is Hillaby/Turner's Hall which has also been awarded and given to a Barbadian firm. Mr. Speaker, as I have stated on several occasions before, we are continuing with this project. Indeed, we are now trying to look into a

possible third project which will continue the expansion of the school places.

Concerning the point made by the Honourable Member for the City in terms of catchment, we are endeavouring, wherever possible, to instruct the Principals or Headteachers to ensure that the intake of the particular schools are from within the particular catchment area. Day by day we are hearing stories of the problems with the transportation and the movement of children from one location within the country to another. That has been the policy. We are endeavouring to put some teeth into that. Hopefully, in a very short time, we will see some success in that area.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Free Hill, Black Rock, St. Michael for the purpose of constructing the new St. Stephen's Primary School. For a very long time, Sir, the wonderful people in Black Rock, any area about one mile radius from the present St. Stephen's School, will tell you – I am sure you are well aware of this – that they have been very anxious that this new school should really come along.

There are many people in the St. Stephen's Landing Scheme, people along Oxley Road, Murray's Land, Yearwood's Road on this side and over by your side in the Constituency of St. Michael North West, Carlton and Deane's Land who will be very happy to hear the good news about this school.

First of all, Sir, the present conditions at this school have been below par, to say the least. The headteachers, the teachers and, indeed, the students at this school, and you in your capacity as the representative for the area, I am sure would have had many questions asked in the last 10 years or so. If you were to go back even 40 years in the 1950's and, perhaps, in the 1940's you would recall those same buildings housed the St. Stephen's Primary School.
12.45 p.m.

The recreational facilities even then were rather deplorable. I recall, Sir, as a small boy at St. Giles having to journey all the way down to Black Rock on foot and playing on a little ground in St. Stephen's. It is true that that school produced the great Seymour Nurse, one of the greatest West Indian players of all times. But there was a boy called Jasper, I do not recall his last name, you may recall....

Mr. SPEAKER: Forde.

Hon. W. W. HALL: ...the exploits of this youngster, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: His name was Jasper Forde.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Jasper Weekes, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Jasper Forde.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I have hardly seen, even in these days a better player at the junior level. What I am saying is that this school, despite the fact that it had its limitations when it came to recreational facilities still produced some very good boys in the area.

I am very happy that the new school will have the space for recreational facilities. The Member for the City asked, and aptly so, whether they would have enough space for recreational facilities. I say yes, there will be a playing field, so that the kids from the school would be able to play. And since the well-known football club Blackspurs, of which I know, Sir, that you are the prestigious President and Patron, you are well aware and I would like to make the Honourable Members of this Chamber aware that Blackspurs will be playing there. Blackspurs is a First Division club. It means that the youngsters in the area at long last would have some facilities which have been lacking for a long time.

In this school as indeed at the National Stadium since I was the Minister responsible for Sports, we will have ramps for the disabled. We will have ramps so that any kids who are disabled will not be inconvenienced. I think this is a matter of Government policy now.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Maybe all the rest of schools, Sir, but I am interested right now in St. Stephen's Primary School. Since I left school there were no ramps. There were hardly doors sometimes. I would like to inform the Member for the City that there will be ramps. I went to two great schools, Sir, St. Giles and Combermere and I was so impressed with those two schools that I did not go to any other.

I also wish to say, as you are well aware, that we have just put in some facilities, basketball, netball and volleyball in the Free Hill area about 50 yards away from this school. I have no doubt that the students at the St. Stephen's Primary School would avail themselves of these new and spanking recreational facilities only about 50 yards away down the hill.

There will also be a play park so that the youngsters going to the St. Stephen's Primary School will have somewhere where they can play and they will be playing under supervised conditions. In other words, I am sure there will be officers there making sure that everything that is done will be done in an orderly fashion.

So, Sir, I have the greatest pleasure to thank the Minister for presenting this Resolution to the Honourable House today and to say that the children from the St. Michael area around the area of St. Michael West Central, St. Michael North West and St. Michael West.... they might even come from the City. You will find that they will come from even as far afield as the City because the conditions there at that school will be rather happy and congenial. Therefore, Sir, I wish to say that the youngsters in the contiguous areas will be able to play cricket, football and all other games and as far as the team games like basketball, volleyball and netball are concerned the area will be very well served.

I should like on behalf of all the people in the Black Rock area, all the people in your constituency because I know you cannot make a speech on this one and I will do so, Sir, for you on this occasion, to thank the Government for these facilities and to say it seems to me that this is an ongoing programme of providing adequate education not only at the primary level but, I dare say, at secondary level so that the school children in Barbados will be able to go to school, as I said, in rather happy and congenial surroundings. Having said so, I should just like again to commend the Government on this Resolution which would provide adequate facilities for the children in the Black Rock area.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Resolution is about the acquisition of land. But it goes on to mention the structure of the school at St. Stephen's. The gestation period for this school has been a very, very long one. The Second World Bank Project had been negotiated, according to my recollection, as long ago as 1985 and a number of schools had been earmarked for construction under that Project.

I really do not see anything for the Government to get up for in their fulsome self-congratulation. I think the long-suffering people of the Black Rock and the area in the general St. Stephen's area should really be raking the Government over the coals for the way in which they delayed them, waited and toiled so long in primitive conditions in those two schools. I know the two schools, the St. Stephen's Infants and the St. Stephen's Junior. Those schools have been in extremely bad shape for a very long time.

I would have thought that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central would have brought his colossal personality and volubility of speech to impress on the Government long ago that this school should have been treated with far more urgency than it has been treated. So all this getting up and congratulating yourself is really not worth it.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: If there are to be any congratulations in here, Mr. Speaker, Sir....

Mr. SPEAKER: May I have some order, please.

Mr. L. R. TULL: perhaps it is congratulations for the Barbados Labour Party administration who had the vision to set about serious building programmes for primary schools when the plant of most of the primary schools in Barbados had deteriorated to such a state that they were unworthy of use by primary school children.

I well remember that the Democratic Labour Party Government prior to 1976 sought to borrow money from the World Bank for school buildings and the Bank told them no. So if there are going to be any congratulations, congratulate the Barbados Labour Party that the present Government can now ride piggy back on the BLP administration for bringing these things to fruition. We negotiated these things. I was Minister of Education when we negotiated the first one.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, I want to say that. I want that in the record.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to allow Honourable Members....

Mr. L. R. TULL: And the second....

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. We cannot debate with other Members debating as well. We cannot do that. The rules do not permit a Member to be speaking and a debate going on within a debate, neither does it permit Members to shout across at each other. I am not permitting that kind of behaviour. Continue.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Thank you, Sir. Thanks for the protection.

The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown then negotiated the second World Bank loan. This is merely carrying out what has been negotiated by the Honourable Member for the City.
12.55 p.m.

As long ago as 1986, Sir, well before the Democratic Labour Party became the Government this school was earmarked for construction. It was part of the programme, it was approved by the World Bank and plans were made in the Ministry of Education to have this school

constructed. So, don't let us get in here and get up congratulating ourselves as if something great has happened.

I also want, Mr. Speaker, since this Resolution is only to do with the acquisition of land, to hear when they are going to build this school. The Minister of Education got up and he never told us anything about when they are going to start to construct the school. They have all these fantastic facilities, according to my friend the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, all these recreational facilities, and ramps and all of these things just for buying six pieces of land, Sir. This is all this Resolution is doing.

I would like to hear from the Minister of Education rather than just filling in, because that is all he has done, Sir, fill in, to tell this Honourable Chamber when will the construction of the new school at St. Stephen's start. There is usually a yawning gap between acquisition of land and start of construction, and I do not at this stage know, Sir, whether this school will start in 1994, 1995, 1996, and I would like the Minister of Education to inform this Honourable Chamber when does the construction start. If he can't tell us that, could he tell us, has it been put out to tender?

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid the Honourable Minister cannot sit and make a speech, neither does the Honourable Member expect the Minister to have a second reply in this speech, so maybe you could ask that, this is just my advice, it could be put in the form of a question.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, speaking on a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George South was obviously not listening. I was very careful to point out, Sir, that the contract has been awarded. I can call the name of the company too.

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Edghill Associates, and it is anticipated that the start will be in July, because the ground has been cleared and it is just a matter of the formalities. The Honourable Member is a man who is versed ...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has made his point and that is the end of the point of order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The one thing, Sir, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North - he is my representative - Sir, has shown is that he can reply because I was told that he couldn't. Now I want, and I am very glad the Minister has got up, because if I knew he would have got up I would have left one or two other questions for him to deal with in these points of order.

I want to know further, Sir, why is it that the combined student population of the St. Stephen's Primary and the St. Stephen's Infants schools is 280 and the Minister is building a school for 420, 290, the population of two schools, but he is building a school for 420, and in the very next breath he says, Sir, that his Ministry is not in favour of people coming from districts far and beyond and coming into the area to go to school, so I can't understand that. There is a gap of 130 and it is important, Sir, and I will tell you why it is important.

Mr. SPEAKER: Perhaps I can help the Honourable Minister that he can use the facilities of elucidation or explanation if he needs to respond to that kind of question.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, I have been absent from this Chamber for a short break, Sir, but I thought that any Minister could wind up the debate. The Minister of Housing could sit down at the end and let the Minister of Education wind up. I don't know if the rules have changed, but those were the rules as I remember them, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, they have not changed, but he cannot make two speeches.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, I was making the point about the gap between the joint population of the two schools and the size of the new school and the further point made by the Minister of Education in relation to discouragement by his Ministry of people coming from far and wide into local schools and I mention it in this context, Sir. I understand and the census shows that there is a declining primary school population in Barbados. The Minister can help us in these things. If there is a declining primary school population, of necessity any planning by the Ministry of Education in relation to construction of new schools must take into consideration that very important fact and if a plan was made for 420 children in 1985 with a falling population, maybe we should hear something of the adjustments.

I know, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that there are some schools in Barbados where you can land a 747 jet in the middle of the school day and not knock down anybody because of the massive spare capacity in the number of primary schools in Barbados.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Speaking on a point of elucidation, Sir, the whole question of the St. Mary's School and the reason why it is at 420, when we described the catchment area, the catchment area for St. Mary's can very well extend to the same catchment area as Westbury, it is just up the road. Westbury, we know, is totally overcrowded. The Honourable Member for the City is totally aware of that. The same thing applies to St. Stephen's, Mr. Speaker, in relation to West Terrace just up the hill. There are applicants, but there is no room and West Terrace is overcrowded. That was built by the

Barbados Labour Party for a number and it is way past that number, so therefore St. Stephens will also accommodate some of the students from up the hill.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Because he is from my constituency don't say I can't say that about him, he is from a good constituency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I will go on Mr. Speaker, Sir. I am glad to hear that the Minister of Education has now explained to this Honourable Chamber that the school is not intended only for the joint population of the two schools. Those words came out of his mouth, Sir. I did not know that, that was information that was vouchsafed on the floor of this Honourable Chamber by the Minister of Education. I would not have known that, Sir. I am glad to hear, Sir, that he is now showing a certain facility in the use of his feet.

I want to raise one other point, Sir, because this is a serious debate, Sir. The Government is talking about cutting back on capital expenditure. The last time we were in here there was a lot of talk about the state of government's finances and the size of the deficit and all of that, and one of the ways that was suggested to deal with these things was the cutting back of wastage in Government. I reiterate the point, Sir, that there are, and the Minister can do another one of his elucidation acts and say if it is not a fact that many primary schools, Sir, not half a dozen, many primary schools in Barbados are under populated and I would like to know what the Minister and the Ministry of Education and the Government, Sir, are doing to rationalise the numbers of children of primary school age with the existing school plant.

One final point, Sir, what architectural model has been used for the building of the World Bank schools. Everybody has had a chance, both the children and the teachers, the people who use the school, have had an opportunity by experience to evaluate the functional aspects of that model, Sir. I am sure the Honourable Minister of Education cannot but agree with me that there have been a number of complaints about the functionality of the model of the World Bank that has been used in almost twenty schools so far. That is not putting any blame on the government because they are very defensive, Sir, they are extremely defensive but perhaps with good reason, so I am not putting the blame there.

1.05 p.m.

I am saying that the time has come to review that particular model because of the problems of excessive heat in the classrooms. There is a problem of water coming into the classrooms when the rain falls and I am submitting that it is timely that the Government review that particular model.

A new school was constructed, Sir, in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Education and that school is already experiencing problems even though it was only opened last year.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I live in St. George, Sir. I live in the St. Augustine area where the school was built. The Minister of Education would do well to listen to me because he lives in St. Thomas. So that is the kind of point I am making, Sir. I think that it is timely that this architecture of these schools be reviewed because there is something about those schools that is not right. There are too many problems. I feel that, if the Government of Barbados is borrowing all of this money and you have got to pay it back, they should have more say in conjunction with the teachers. They have to talk to the teachers in the schools. They have to go into dialogue with these teachers. I do not know of all the plans that I see, Sir, that the Minister and the people in the Ministry have gone down to St. Stephen's School and have sat down with the staff or invited the staff to Jemmotts Lane to discuss with them, as people who are in the classrooms on a daily basis, what kind of construction of classrooms they consider to be in the best interest of their children at this particular time.

Now two schools are being joined, Sir – the Junior and the Infants, Sir. The Democratic Labour Party Government, Sir, has introduced a programme without any thought of putting pre-primary children into existing primary schools. There is a certain nobility in trying to get children into school at an early age because all the social and educational psychologists say that it is good for children to start getting into a learning environment at an early age. But one has to be very careful, Sir, when you are dealing with young children. It is not like the Ministry of Works where you build a bridge and if it is not right that you can take it down and start again. When the young children are misdirected or start wrong or whatever it is, it is not easy to bend it back.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the rash and thoughtless decision of picking up pre-primary children and throwing them into primary schools without any preparation for them, not only in terms of physical facilities because a number of young pre-primary children are so small that God knows how they do not get flushed down the toilets that were prepared for adults and not for themselves. But it is not only the physical facilities that I am talking about. I am talking about the human resources in those schools.

Everybody knows that with pre-primary children that there has to be a greater concentration of supervision of teacher to pupil, and nothing has happened. I have kept my ears open from the time the Government started their ill advised policy, in 1987 I think it was. I have listened to

hear what has the Government done to improve the ratio of teachers to those pre-primary children in the primary schools in Barbados and I have not heard anything, Sir. When I have inquired, they get on as if I am from Outer Mongolia and not a citizen of this country who is entitled to get useful information out of the Ministry of Education. These are things that need to be considered. It is very easy, Sir, for some Members not all on the other side to make a lot of loose remarks when matters of substance are being debated and we are talking about education, and we are talking about primary education. This is nothing to joke about and I believe, Sir, that the Government would do well to listen to people in the schools, community, and even among people who themselves have gone through the educational mill at a policy and administrative level to see if their experience can be brought to bear on proper planning in the existing Ministry of Education.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, in winding up this debate before I move the passing of this Resolution, there are a few points that I would like to make. Of course, I am in no position to speak for the Minister of Education. But it just occurred to me, Sir, the point which has been made by the Honourable Member who has just sat down relating to this whole question of consultation and all this sort of thing that he is talking about relating to primary school education that I remember in the late 1970's or early 1980's, but certainly between 1976 and 1981, when co-education, for practical purposes, was fully introduced into this country by the same Honourable Member when he was Minister of Education. Girls were put into boys school where no preparation at all had been done for that. All I am saying is that it is interesting to hear the Honourable Member....

Mr. L. R. TULL: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is grossly misrepresenting what is a historical fact. In every case in relation to co-education in Barbados, the Ministry of Education under my aegis had long consultations not only with the teachers in the schools but with the Boards of Management, the governing body, and the parents in each case. If you will bear with me for one more sentence, Sir. You see a blow has been made on me so I have got to answer it. The Honourable Member perhaps speaks of Foundation School where he had a connection. This Honourable Member went to the Foundation School and sat down in the staff room and had long consultations with the staff before....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure you understand what a sentence is.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of record that inadequate preparations were made for that particular changeover. Anyhow, let us move on, Sir. Both the Honourable Member for the City and the Honourable

Member for St. George South questioned two things. The Honourable Member for the City talked about the area which was being acquired for this school and wondered whether or not the size of the school was being scaled down or what were the arrangements relating to other activities relating to the school. The Member for St. George South queried as to why there was such a long delay in the implementation of the school.

Let me refer, Sir, to the notes which I have here which I suspect will answer a number of the questions which they have raised. On January 16, 1986, during the Barbados Labour Party Administration I presume, the Cabinet agreed to several proposals in respect of the construction of a number of primary schools and including in that was the proposal to amalgamate and replace the existing St. Stephen's Junior and St. Stephen's Infants Schools. Initially, three parcels of land were identified for acquisition purposes. Additional areas of land were subsequently found to be required and at its meeting on April 16, 1987, presumably during the Democratic Labour Party Administration, the Cabinet agreed to a number of proposals including the acquisition of additional land areas to facilitate the construction of the new school at St. Stephens. So in truth and in fact what has happened is that the Barbados Labour Party took a decision to acquire three parcels of land for the construction of the school. When it was examined, this area was found to be inadequate and the Democratic Labour Party Cabinet reviewed the matter and took a decision to acquire additional areas of land for the construction of the school.

1.15 p.m.

As far as the point which has been made relating to the delay, I am informed that a number of difficulties arose in the particular area, mainly relating to the surveying arrangements, of which I believe they know, but over which the political directorate had little or no control, except that we were urging the surveyors – and the file is replete with letters emanating from the Ministry to the surveyor concerned – about getting the plans ready so that we could proceed with this, but in that particular profession I suppose everybody is aware of what difficulties are experienced, not only by the Government but also by private people relating to the completion of survey plans. That was one of the major factors that held up the completion of this particular area. However, as the Minister of Education has indicated, we are at a point where the contract has been awarded and construction will begin in the not too distant future.

With those few remarks, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 6 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND
AT MANGROVE POND, ST. THOMAS
FOR THE PURPOSE OF LAND
FILLING OPERATIONS

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution seeks to acquire some land in Mangrove, St. Thomas for the purpose of land filling operations. The plans for the areas concerned are available and can be seen by Honourable Members, but this is a matter which has been going for some time.

I think it is a matter of record that the initial arrangement which was made with the owners of the land was for the lease of the property. I think the owner of the land is DaCostas Limited, but because of the pressure which there has been a decision was taken to acquire the area which was leased, 5.7618 hectares, of the existing land fill and to also an additional area on the opposite side to the south of the existing land fill to the tune of 8.408 hectares with a view to extending the land filling operations there.

I think it is generally accepted that we have to find a convenient and certainly a careful way to deal with the disposal of our waste. I am sure that Honourable Members must be aware of the fact that this is a matter which concerns all of us and we would certainly want to bring to bear our collective efforts in ensuring that people are not misguided in this particular matter, because I think it has to be clearly understood that waste has to be disposed of.

We therefore have decided that this Resolution now to acquire the area which was, in the first instance, obtained on lease and also acquire an additional area. Basically, the original area was about 13 acres and the additional area would be about 18 acres. This is for the purpose of providing a facility for the Sanitation Service Authority to carry out its land filling and garbage disposal programme.

I therefore beg to move, Sir, with this introduction, that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, it is no point my beating about the bush with this Resolution. I am very blunt and direct. We on this side are going to vote against this Resolution. Let it be clearly understood, Sir.

I have not seen the plans, but as the representative of the constituency of St. Thomas, I have to express the greatest possible national, as well as parochial, concern about Government's decision to extend what we call the

dump at Mangrove Pond. I say it is a dump, Sir, because we ought not to be euphemistic and dress it up in the language of a land fill for solid waste management and disposal and all of that linguistic gymnastics; it is a dump, bad looking and bad smelling. It is an affront to the environment. There is nothing in the history of the management of this land fill, dump or whatever it is to be called in the last three years that inspires confidence in me and my constituents that these additional 18 acres will be properly managed.

I want to deal, first of all, with the history of this matter. On May 10, 1988 I wrote the Minister of Health, who fortunately is the present Minister of Health, in these terms - I will make these letters and this bundle of correspondence which I shall read out today documents of the House:

"I write to draw to your attention that foul smells are once again being emitted from the dump at Mangrove Pond, St. Thomas. These malodorous effusions are a serious nuisance to the residents in surrounding districts West of the dump.

In particular, the residents of Arch Hall suffer immeasurably. I am reliably informed that raw sewage is being off loaded at the dump and some of this has actually found its way as far as the St. Thomas Mixed School.

I am sure you will agree that this is most unhealthy and unsatisfactory and I shall be obliged if you would use your good offices to ensure that the dump is properly used and such controls are effected to minimise the foul smells.

Grateful for your attention."

1.25 p.m.

May 10th, I heard nothing. So, I wrote the Minister again on July 5th, 1988:

"Further to my letter of May 10, 1988, I write to inform you that the waste disposal dump at Mangrove Pond, St. Thomas, is still causing environmental problems.

In particular, it appears that either materials being dumped or chemicals being used at the site are having a deleterious effect on persons living west and down-wind of the dump.

Complaints have reached me that many residents of Arch Hall are suffering from excessive itching of the skin and/or respiratory discomforts.

A few weeks ago, when I visited Arch Hall on a Saturday morning, and was exposed to the wind drift

for a period in excess of two hours, I suffered severe itching...."

That is me.

"... to the exposed parts of my body, namely, face, neck and arms. This caused me to attend Dr. A. Liverpool, who prescribed a cream which brought relief, but has left my right elbow discoloured."

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It was a darker shade of black. Navy black.

"I most sincerely request that, as a matter of urgency, your Ministry carry out a thorough investigation to determine the nature of the problem being experienced and to take the necessary corrective action. Grateful for your attention."

That was the fifth of July, Sir.

On 26th July, the Minister, obviously out of concern for my elbow replied:

"Thank you for your recent letter of May 10th...."

This is July 26th.

"Thank you for your recent letter of May 10, 1988 referring to complaints from the residents of Arch Hall, St. Thomas, about the sanitary landfill at Mangrove Pond, St. Thomas.

Visits have been made to the area on July 14, 22 and 25, 1988 by teams from my Ministry. The following problems were noted:"

Now, he is admitting problems.

1. The solid waste deposited at the site is covered daily in order to reduce the problems usually associated with sanitary landfills.
2. Oil which has been deposited on land adjacent to the landfill has settled in a depression near to the gully.
3. Cow itch which may be associated with problems involving the skin and upper respiratory tract was found growing on the side of the ridge and in the sugar cane fields to the west of the sanitary landfill.
4. The odour characteristic of sanitary landfills was detected in the Arch Hall area."

That is the clearest admission of the malodorous nature of the landfill to which I alluded in my first letter.

"On July 22, 1988, a survey was carried out in the Arch Hall area and 52 households were investigated. The main finding of the survey was that 100 per cent of the householders interviewed were concerned about the offensive odour emanating from the sanitary landfill and 5 per cent complained of itching of the skin. There were no complaints of respiratory disorder.

In an effort to improve the conditions at the site the following will be done:

1. The oil that has settled on the plot adjacent to the landfill will be burnt off on Thursday, July 28th, weather permitting.
2. The cow itch vines will be destroyed in due course as agricultural experts have advised against disturbance of the vines at this stage when they contain pods, as cutting them down will only aggravate the situation.
3. Public Health Inspectors will monitor the wastes that are coming to the sanitary landfill, especially blood and fish offal from the Barbados Marketing Corporation and the offal from poultry processing plants.
4. The residents of the Arch Hall area will be informed of the corrective measures being taken.

I hope that the corrective measures being taken will alleviate the problems being experienced by the residents of Arch Hall, St. Thomas.

Sincerely,

Minister"

Now, Sir, in the meantime, the residents, particularly of Arch Hall and Bennetts, had requested a meeting with the Minister and they were quite satisfied – let me make it very clear – at this stage, when the Minister was unable to attend but did exert himself to send at least three senior representatives of the Ministry of Health and the Sanitation Service Authority, including the Manager.

Now, we had a meeting in a church hall in Arch Hall at about seven o'clock a night. It went on for a couple of hours when all of the concerns of the residents were ventilated and the position of the Ministry and the Sanitation Service Authority was explained to the residents. Arising out of that meeting, we were assured that there would be improved management and control of the dump

and the waste matter that was being dumped up there; particularly, there would be enhanced security which would try to ensure that trucks which had no right going to the site out of hours and dumping no longer continue those practices. For some time, a few months, there was, let us be fair, a distinct improvement.

However, it seems that the Sanitation Service Authority has not got the capacity to manage solid waste disposal effectively and efficiently on an ongoing and long-term basis. Within a matter of months, the dump started smelling again. It is very high, higher to heaven. We even had a fire that broke out in the dump and for about a week it was not properly controlled. Now, that fire caused another problem, almost suffocation of the residents of Arch Hall. What saved them from severe respiratory problems was a shift in the wind after about three days and instead of the smoke going towards Arch Hall, it went back towards Bucks and in the general direction of Redman's Village. Not that it offended people in Redman's Village, but the wind shifted and went that way.

Last year, intermittently, we had the recurrent problem of foul smells being emitted from the dump. Most recently, on the Sunday before Christmas, I was going to church service at St. Thomas Parish Church at half past seven that Sunday morning. We had had a sprinkling of rain the night before and the area was very offensive. I have the list here of over 190 residents, who, unable to take the circumstances that ever so often the dump will flare up, either with fire or foul smells, signed a petition accompanying a letter of February 18th this year to the Minister.
1.35 p.m.

This is not the whole population of Arch Hall but a substantial number, certainly a very substantial number of the adult population of Arch Hall. I wrote the Minister on February 21, 1991 because this letter and the petition had been copied to me. I said:-

"I write in support of a petition dated February 18, 1991 signed by a large number of residents of Arch Hall, protesting the continued use and planned expansion of the dump at Mangrove Pond.

I have drawn the problems associated with this dump to your attention on several occasions previously, both by Official Parliamentary Question - that was in the last session, Sir - "and by direct verbal correspondence.

In response thereto, there have been meetings convened by me with the residents and Officials of your Ministry but the problems still persist.

I have information that it is planned to acquire more land adjoining the present site for an extension of the

dump and I wish to advise you early that if Government insists on this acquisition and user, public reaction will be dramatic.

The residents of Arch Hall and surrounding districts have been very patient and have put up for too long with the pollution of their environment and the frequent - I used a different phrase there, Sir - "malodorous effluvia from Mangrove Pond. Nothing less than closure of the existing site would suffice and I implore you to search for or contrive an alternative site which will not cause similar offence to other residents of Barbados."

Something appeared in the newspaper and the Minister replied castigating me.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, April 5, 1991. I received this from the Minister addressed to me.

"Dear Mr. SIMMONS:

I was most surprised to see the text of your letter written to me about the refuse disposal site at Mangrove Pond, St. Thomas reproduced in the "Nation" newspaper of March 4, 1991. It has never been my policy to conduct business through the media, although it appears that the accepted rules for conducting correspondence between responsible individuals have now been jettisoned and the Press has become the new medium."

Now, if that was not an implied castigation of me and an implied suggestion that I had something to do with the publication of the letter, I do not know what. But do not let us get involved in that. I spoke to the Minister after he came from abroad about it and disabused his mind. We understand how the thing got into the newspaper, Sir.

The Minister also sent me a copy of a letter he had written to one of the residents of Arch Hall who had headed the delegation petitioning against this extension. Lest there be any mis-understanding of the history and the facts, I think it is well that I read this letter. The Minister said:-

"I am aware that this landfill has been the cause of concern for residents of this area from time to time over the past two years. My investigations revealed that much of the difficulty has stemmed from the management of operations at the site."

We are going to talk about that, Sir.

"Initially some difficulty was experienced because of inadequate application of cover material. Accordingly I gave the Manager, Sanitation Service Authority, specific instructions to institute the measures necessary for an

efficient landfill operation. He was also instructed to apply a deodoriser in order to eliminate any nuisance to the residents in the area surrounding the landfill.

The use of sanitary landfilling has been accepted worldwide as the most cost effective way of disposing of refuse. This is the method used in Barbados and over the past ten to twelve years the following sites have been used:-

Fordes Road, Clapham, St. Michael
Cottage, St. Lucy
Hannays, St. Lucy
Lonesome Hill, St. Peter
Black Bess, St. Peter
Jordans, St. George
Workmans, St. George
Kingsland, Christ Church
Melrose, St. Thomas.

Disposal of waste by sanitary landfill is becoming more and more problematic in Barbados because of the gradual disappearance of suitable sites. Over the years extensive searches have been made to identify sites for future landfill operations. There are two major inhibiting factors - the limitation of land use caused by the presence of protection zones which are needed to safeguard the country's underground water supply and the ever increasing housing developments throughout Barbados.

When it became evident in 1984 that the landfills at Black Bess and Kingsland were reaching the end of their lives, the search for an alternative was intensified and the site at Mangrove Pond was eventually located. The Sanitation Service Authority entered into discussions with DaCosta and Co. Ltd. in August, 1985. The Ministry of Agriculture, the Town and Country Planning Department and the Environmental Engineering Division of the Ministry of Health were consulted in December, 1985 and subsequently gave approval for use of the site. A formal application was submitted to the Town and Country Planning Department and formal approval to use the land was given by letter dated September 22, 1986. Operations commenced on the site on September 1, 1986."

I verily believe these operations commenced after the change of Government. I think that was in May 1986.

"Since work started at Mangrove Pond, the Authority has continued to search for other sites. Areas examined include Mount Gay, Lamberts, Springhead, Hopewell, Coverly and Searles. The site at Searles at first appeared to be suitable for the purpose, but on further examination by a Consultant Engineer, it was revealed that the use of that particular site would have posed a threat to the Hampton water catchment area.

In the present circumstances the Ministry has been forced to continue to use Mangrove Pond to dispose of solid waste. The landfill now in use will be closed as soon as additional land is acquired."

He did not specifically say that additional land was going to be acquired at Mangrove Pond although my letter which prompted this reply had indicated that information reaching me in February 1991 had suggested that precisely what we are dealing with today had been in Government's mind.

"The necessary steps will be taken to ensure that any nuisance will be eliminated after operations have ceased.

I have already instructed the Sanitation Service Authority to ensure that appropriate measures are instituted for the efficient operation of the new landfill. Every precaution will be taken to eliminate any nuisance to the residents in the surrounding area and the operation of the landfill will be monitored on a continuous basis. I wish to assure you that I shall take a personal interest in this matter.

We in the Ministry are very conscious of the need to protect the health of every citizen and resident in our country. To this end we are seeking a more permanent solution to the problem of disposal of solid waste in Barbados. I hope to be in a position to make a public statement not long from now.

Branford M. Taitt

Minister."

It was signed by the Minister.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The last paragraph? "Please accept my very best wishes?" Sir, I am not attributing any ill will. The Minister of Health is steeped in the courtesies and the graces that attend a Minister of the Crown. I would expect him to end his letter in the appropriate fashion. But he wanted it read into the record so he is happy.

Sir, implicit in all of that correspondence is a concession by Government that they are having difficulty not only in locating a suitable site for landfill operations, but more importantly, they are having difficulty in managing and controlling the existing site. The Minister is aware of the problems. He has never denied it.
1.45 p.m.

In fact his surveys have shown the truth of the assertion that the residents are genuinely affected by the foul smells. The problem is partly that of the Ministry and partly that of the Sanitation Service Authority because what

the Minister has not said in either of those letters and I hope he will admit later on today, is that the Ministry of Health itself has two acres of land up there for which it is responsible, not the SSA, and on which two acres is dumped raw sewage. That is on high authority from within the Ministry of Health – that raw faeces is dumped on land under the control of the Ministry of Health at Mangrove Pond. Other land at Mangrove Pond....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member. The term which is used is night soil. It is not only raw faeces. It is the disposal of oils and other matter. There has to be a place and that two acre site was agreed by all of the environmental people. I give that information to help the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Again he is admitting the truth of what I said and he is even agreeing with me when I began this speech that He might be concerned about euphemisms but I am not. I am speaking, talking, about raw sewage. I am going to put it in the raw way as the Bajans would say so that everybody could understand. I am not going to use the language. I have already used the language.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no. I have explained what I mean already, Sir. I think that that is a matter which should cause the whole of this House the greatest possible concern that, among other things, the Ministry is admitting that it dumped raw sewage, call it night soil, day soil, top soil, I do not care what, up there. That is one of the things that offends my people in Arch Hall and the people in Seaview and Rock Hall and Bennetts and sometimes as far down as Sandy Lane. It cannot continue.

I will have to hear from the Minister what plans the Ministry has – he said he is going to make a public statement soon, today is the time – to ensure that this raw sewage stops. When I drew it to their attention in 1988, May 10 that some was finding its way down the hill, through the gully coming out by the St. Thomas Mixed School, it was not denied. But I was not being over dramatic because people had seen it and drawn my attention to it, people on whom I can rely.

I do not think any of us, other than Members who from time to time may use Highway 2A and pass that area, has any idea of the extent of the odours. It cannot continue. People have complained to me who have come from overseas, staying with friends and relatives in Arch Hall, and cannot believe that in Barbados where we pretend to be concerned about the environment that that situation can obtain.

As I understand it Government wants to acquire land south, that is going back towards Bucks. That is going to offend another set of people as well as Arch Hall. It is a very messy affair, Sir, and I cannot exempt from any strictures today the Sanitation Service Authority because I believe that they are the day to day agency that are responsible for the proper management and control of the dump.

The first thing that has to be done in the Sanitation Service Authority is to put in a proper management structure. Get rid of the confusion that is in there right now where the Deputy Manager, for one, who has knowledge about the management of solid waste, who has some skills and a lot of experience, has to be put back in the job. Do not have an accountant who has no skills, no special training in charge of the Authority when the substantive Manager is away and expect that business can run properly. There is need – the Prime Minister knows what I am talking about – for a proper look at the management of the Sanitation Service Authority from the Chairman down.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I thought it was well-known the extent to which the Deputy Manager of the Sanitation Authority has been harassed out of the job to a position where he has been sent on all kinds of leave, special leave, vacation leave.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He sings well. That is true. He cannot even sing now he is so upset. Do you believe, Sir, that when the Manager is going on leave he writes to the substantive Deputy Manager and says "You may come back to work on April 15 or as soon thereafter as possible." Now what kind of foolishness is that? You tell a Manager come when you like, it is a laissez faire attitude. "You may report for work on April 15 or as soon as possible thereafter." Take your time. A Manager writes that letter? I have it. Let us sort out the management of the Sanitation Service Authority first. Put the people who have the skills in the job and let them do it.

I am satisfied from the officials in the Ministry representing the Environmental Engineering Department that those people understand and have the skills and competence. I am not calling any names.

Mr. SPEAKER: Because I was thinking that we may be getting very close to the rule that protects public officers.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not calling any names.

Mr. SPEAKER: But if you identify that person enough then I would take the feeling that you better call the name.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am very careful about that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In respect of the people in the Environmental....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not saying that you have but I am just starting to wonder if you are proceeding along that line. We should not get into that kind of criticism.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You would have to be telling me, Sir, because in respect of the people in the Environmental Engineering Department I was giving them eulogistic commendation. Is that all right, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing in the rules.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am saying, Sir, that I am satisfied that the people in that department understand the nature of the problems and how they can be controlled. I don't think we can speak of total solutions. I don't want to be unreasonable, but how they can be controlled to prevent the kinds of circumstances that flare up every two or three months. Perhaps there needs to be an attachment from that department to the Sanitation Service Authority by way of secondment or something to ensure the proper management of land fills, but that is a matter that the Ministry is in a better position to work out.
1.55 p.m.

I am only offering ideas based on meetings that I have had with these people, but what concerns me particularly about this resolution and the decision to acquire now an additional 18 acres is that so far as I am aware ... I will have to go up there tomorrow and check it now I have seen the actual plan because I was under the impression that the site for acquisition, was, as you proceed from Vacluse towards the existing dump on your right hand side, but the Minister moving the Resolution says it is south, so it would be on your left hand side as you go towards the dump from Vacluse.

I am not aware of any areas of great depression which would be suitable for dumping the refuse similar to the site that we originally used on the other side of the road. There was a big depression there and you could fill it up, but on the other side I am not aware of a similar depression. It is worse than that, Sir. As you drive from Vacluse towards the dump now it is so flat that the present refuse which is being dumped now that the old site has been closed is spilling back towards Vacluse and if I may put it this way, Sir, if you continue on from Vacluse and go to the corner of Porey Spring that is known as Barker's Corner opposite the playing field and look across to your left you will see a sea of refuse. You can see it quite clearly, if you are in the Police Station at Rock Hall or the Courts, you can look across and all you can see is rubbish.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I understand you can see it from Highway 2A, I have not gone that side, that is, going past St. Thomas Church recently, but I know you can see it as you get to the junction at Barker Corner and turn to go down to the Police Station. Just look across to your left. It is the most unsightly and disgraceful thing that you can imagine. It does not enhance our reputation for cleanliness. They have closed one and what I am saying is, having closed one they are continuing to use other land near the one that has been closed and those lands are so shallow that even now you have this vast expanse of rubbish.

Sir, I would like to let the Minister know that I intend to continue a little longer so if he wants to take the adjournment for lunch now, Sir....

Mr. SPEAKER: I also take it that you are speaking as the person speaking first on behalf of the Opposition.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 3.00 p.m. for lunch.

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we took the adjournment I was dealing with my view of the problem as I have understood it over the last three and half years or so and I am submitting that it seems that the problem is rooted at the Sanitation Service Authority.

Now apart from the question of that piece of land which the Ministry of Health rents for the disposal of raw sewage, I may have spoken, Sir, in very strong terms before the adjournment but I wish the Minister to know one thing, Sir, and that is the people of Arch Hall would be happy... All right, Sir, let us leave that until later on. See how kind I am, Sir. I am going to give him something that he wants and I hope that the press will carry it if they come back in time, Sir.

I am trying to deal with this matter in a very fair way, Sir. I thought I had made it clear how the Ministry has reacted but I will deal with that and keep my eye a certain place and deal with it later on.

Now, Sir, I am concerned that it isn't only this dump that is causing the people of St. Thomas concern. I have previously mentioned in here that we appear to be a

neglected parish in terms of having consideration given to enhancing the aesthetic qualities of St. Thomas. I speak, Sir, in particular in reference to Welches Terrace and Warren's Terrace, Sir, where the Honourable Minister....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You don't go? Welches Terrace and Warrens Terrace. In fact I was in Warren's Terrace yesterday evening and we are overrun by bush. Warren's Terrace and Welches Terrace. The Minister of Education is aware of the problem, Sir, but what is particularly annoying is that these are comparatively new developments and they are losing a lot of their aesthetic beauty because of the failure to control, particularly bush in the area.

The Minister responsible for the National Conservation Commission had assured me during the Estimates that he would give some consideration. I am going to give him a little note now that we are into the new financial year to see if some help can be given, because this bears also on the operations of the public health people, Sir.

In Warren's Terrace there is a depression in an open lot which was ostensibly left as an open area for a playing field. It is too small to be a playing field. It is east of Lot 70 and this depression has a well which is completely blocked. Up to yesterday afternoon, it had about three feet of water in it and full of mosquitoes. The mosquitoes make a mess of the whole of Warrens Terrace. That has been reported to the Public Health Authority, Sir, based in St. Peter and they come, look, and say that they cannot do anything. Do not tell me that they cannot do anything. They have got to be able to do something. I just feel, as I said, the problem with the dump is but one aspect of a problem of neglect and unsatisfactory environment in St. Thomas. I hope that Government will look seriously at helping to clean up St. Thomas, Sir. It is one of the few parishes left where there is still a fair amount of green to be seen and we need as far as possible to maintain that harmony between the green and the development that takes place elsewhere.

3.05 p.m.

In relation to the dump, Sir, I wish the Minister to know that the residents of Arch Hall and Bennetts in particular, as recently as last night, have asked me to let the Minister know that they would welcome his presence at a meeting sometime in the near future to give them first hand, Sir, what he is going to tell us today. They also wish me to assure the Minister that they have absolutely no animosity against the Minister and that they are grateful for his efforts thus far, in particular, when he sent the representatives of the Ministry to meet with them when he could not be there. So the Minister need have no fear, Sir, that there is any feeling of a personal nature against him. I assure him of that.

But for all of that, Sir, and as the Head of the Department which oversees the dump, the Minister has to give the people of Arch Hall some hope that these problems which they have faced in the past will cease. I have said that I do not believe, Sir, that the fact that we are about to close the former dump and have started a new one will alleviate the problems in toto. I want to hear, for example, what plans the Government has for the establishment of an incinerator or some other type of equipment that could deal with the disposal of waste matter in a more efficient and less offensive way. Money has been spent on projects not of a comparable social value and, if it means that Government has to spend a few million dollars to buy an incinerator, I think it would be money well spent, Sir. Because what we have done since September 1986 is to relegate the Bennetts, Arch Hall, Seaview, and Reeves Hill districts to the status of recipients of foul smelling matter and the refuse not of St. Thomas, but the refuse of Barbados as a whole.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, if we get a taste of Workmans, we do not like it in Arch Hall. I think it is unfair to ask a cluster of districts to carry that burden. I think it is unfair. I think it is burdensome and I think that we are asking too much of the kind and good nature of the people of those districts to put up incessantly with this situation, Sir.

Now the Minister in moving this Resolution has told us that they are acquiring 18 acres of land. He does not tell us what is the anticipated life of this new acquisition. Is this going to be enough land to hold all of the refuse of Barbados for the next three, four, or five years? Is it a temporary measure to give Government a breathing spell between now and the time they establish a total incinerator plant or some similar thing? All these are matters that I wish the Minister to address. I want to know of Government's long term plan. I want to know of Government's medium term plan because we in St. Thomas are committed, Sir, to the closure of the dump. But Government has the power and authority notwithstanding the desires of the citizens to continue to carry out its plans.

I have already expressed some unhappiness with what I concede from this plan to be the site. I think it is shallow and one can see even now the rubbish that is being stacked near to the old site, Sir. I think it is conceded on all sides that the rubbish that we can see is unsightly from different parts of the Island not only in St. Thomas but on Highway 2 and parts of St. James and so on, Sir. I wish to hear how Government is going to address this question of managing that environment. It is all right to put down the rubbish compacted and rolled. But when you can look from miles around and see it, it is an awful thing. I want to know what Government is going to do about that, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, it has been indicated to me that a number of other Members wish to speak on this Resolution and I am going to give them a chance to contribute, Sir. But I hope that the Minister will be open and frank with us and give us as much information as he presently has. He will have to visit because I have to report back to the constituents in Arch Hall, Sir, by the weekend what are Government's plans. I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I did see the Honourable Member for St. James North. I do not know if he has given way. If he has given way, that is it.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before the House invites, to my mind, discussion not only on Mangrove and the proposal to extend Mangrove but on a number of environmental issues. In my view, Sir, the original location at Mangrove was unfortunate from the point of view, Sir, that if you examine the location it is very much on a hill and then open plains beneath the hill to the west with several villages below. So that whenever there are high winds, Sir, a number of people not only immediately under the dump at Arch Hall but also Reeves Hill, Seaview, Greenwich Village, Sunset Crest and Hometown.... There are times, Sir, when the problem of the offensive smells emanating from Mangrove is very much compounded by problems originating from a pond nearby at Portvale and the combination of the two, Sir, often creates discomfort among all of those residents who live close by. So that to extend Mangrove at this stage, Sir, without adequate explanation as to if there are alternative sites available, without giving the Honourable House any indication as to how the problems of offensive smells will be addressed, will leave us wondering in the mind of my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, precisely how Government proposes to address the problem.
3.15 p.m.

Sir, I want to share a few thoughts on a number of concerns as they affect the environment. It would seem to me as though the time has come for all Honourable Members, as patriotic Barbadians, to look closely at this question of the environment. We must isolate the environment as a special resource and in consequence we must come with a concerted policy for the environment. You are aware, Sir, that in times of heavy rains several areas of Barbados are prone to flooding and consequential on this flooding we often get problems to do with health, mosquitoes and related problems.

I believe that the time has come for the Government of Barbados to begin looking closely at the question of the environment. I am aware that Honourable Members on my side would have known when our party, the Barbados Labour Party, was the first party in the history of politics

in Barbados to create a special Ministry of the Environment to address a number of environmental concerns.

Why we must be concerned, as patriotic Barbadians, about matters to do with the environment is that we are now living in an era when, as a tourist resort, we are faced with stiff competition from our neighbours in St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada and Antigua and if tourists ever form the view that the environment of Barbados is not healthy, that we are suffering from problems of garbage disposal and such like, then these environmental problems can severely impact on our tourist industry. That is why I am suggesting that the time has come for Government to look at a comprehensive policy to do with the environment.

In St. James North, Sir, there are problems of unreliable garbage collection in areas like Sweet Home Gap.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure the Honourable Member would take advantage of the fact that I will give him an opportunity to make references, but not to develop the points that do not surround the Resolution.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, I will not be deviating too much, I am just drawing examples here and there in support of what I have to say. As a matter of fact, I do not propose to be very much longer. In about five minutes I will be through.

Mr. SPEAKER: It was not my intention to go that route, what I want to help you to do is to get the best out of the Resolution as you make your presentation.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, I will not be deviating too far, but it is a fact that at Mangrove, St. Thomas, especially in times of very high winds, we have this problem where the offensive smells travel far. It is true too, Sir, that if you are able to visit peaks higher than Mangrove and look down, you can see over a very wide expanse of land, which is an eyesore. I am wondering if the advent of scientific and technological means cannot help us at least to suppress these offensive odours.

In relation to this whole problem of offensive smells and such like, I would like with your permission, Sir, to look at a few environmental matters to do with the social environment. Barbados has been rather fortunate, where we do not have the same problem of Trinidad with a massive outbreak of vagrancy, but we are still seeing creeping into Barbados something impacting on the social environment where we do in fact seem to be having an incipient problem of vagrants. I am aware that one Honourable Member from the other side has already said in a public place that he has studied the problem and that the vagrancy seen in Barbados is the result of a number of problems.....

Aside.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, I am suggesting that vagrancy and having vagrants on the streets is a problem polluting the social environment. I do not understand why the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has decided that he will not understand this.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I was just wondering if there were any vagrants in the vicinity of the acquisition site. That is all I was wondering.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, it is indeed amazing that the Minister has to ask the question when he should be the one to provide the answers. There have also been problems in the country with the indiscriminate discharge of effluent. Only last week, relatively close to the Mangrove location, there was a problem where an inordinately high amount of effluent was discharged west of Mangrove. It is true that the Ministry of Health was prompt in trying to deal with the problem, but the very next day, even though health officials came to investigate and tried their utmost, effluent showed up in the same area.

I am suggesting, Sir, that Barbadians are becoming more and more sensitive to the need to protect the environment, to be clean. In circumstances where Barbados' position as a tourist resort may not be occupying one of supremacy with other destinations for tourist arrivals, we have to be extremely careful and I am going to urge the Honourable Minister of Health to take a close look, not only at Mangrove, but also to investigate the whole of Barbados to see if perhaps he cannot reserve areas that would not be as badly affected as the current areas, because Mangrove is currently affecting no fewer than eight or nine villages. When it is extended it is going to affect Dukes and Bucks, Central cricket field, Vaucuse and possibly even as far as Shop Hill, Sir, along of course with all the areas lying west, like Sandy Lane, Bennetts, Sunset Crest, Hometown and such like.

As I conclude, Sir, it is my concern that we should approach this question of environmental cleanliness in a concerted way and that we should do our utmost to make sure that the problems referred to by my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, would be averted.

Thank you, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This difficulty at Mangrove Pond is part of a continuing problem in Barbados, the whole question of solid waste disposal. Sanitary land fill, as has been said by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, is the tradition in Barbados. Sanitary land fill, Sir, has its pluses and it has its minuses. Among the minuses referred to already this afternoon, again by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, something I think we have all been familiar with, particularly when we were youngsters, internal combustion. Leaking of all sorts of hazardous

effluent into the ground water supply of Barbados is another minus of the land fill. The nuisance of smell, the nuisance of rodent and other vermin, flies and other insects which will carry disease and carry germs, those are the minuses of the land fill, which although described as sanitary is more often than not kept in an insanitary condition. Certainly that is the history of Barbados.

There are some pluses to the land fill, the most obvious of which is the reclamation of land. We have reclaimed many old pond bottoms in Barbados, many old gullies. Several of the playing fields in Barbados today – I think the Empire Cricket Ground is one of them – are some of the pluses which we reap from the sanitary land fill. But through the years, because of the nature of the composition of soil in Barbados, because of the nature of the way in which the ground water supply is situated in Barbados where we have our water percolating down through the coral cap and sitting literally, because of the difference in density between sea water and fresh water, on the sea water underneath the coral cap. We have no surface water to speak of – the odd pond here and there. There was a time when the Constitution River was tidal. That time has long since passed.

3.25 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have over the years been looking at alternate methods of disposal of solid waste. We had looked at pulverisation and we built a pulverisation plant at Workman's in St. George. That, too, has had its minuses and its pluses. I believe that the Government at the moment is considering the question of incineration. That, too, is going to have its minuses and its pluses. Incineration is going to raise the horror of air pollution. We take it for granted that the Trade Winds in Barbados will always keep our atmospheric environment clean. That is not true any more. We have looked at all sorts of alternative methods but waste disposal is a serious problem in Barbados. We have had problems in respect of waste disposal on the beaches. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I live on one where people's kitchen waste is thrown right on to the reef, and I can see with my eyes on a daily basis the damage that the detergents alone are doing to the reefs. This is nothing to do with other poisons which we dump into our inshore waters on a daily basis in Barbados. It raises problems in respect of, not only the beaches, but the coral reefs. We have been reading in the newspapers, and we have just heard the Honourable Member for St. James North speak of the disposal problems at Sunset Crest. The Barbados Labour Party left on file plans for the sewerage, not only of the South Coast, but of the West Coast as well. Most of the hotels along these two coasts tend to carry what we describe as "package plants", Mr. Speaker, Sir. They are small and inadequate, especially at the height of the tourist season. They break down frequently and in the end, the raw sewage is dumped into the ocean. That does untold damage.

It is true that we lived with that all through our lives. Like you, Sir, I lived close to Brandons with an outfall line from the Psychiatric Hospital that went off where people now bathe in droves every day. There was an outfall line off the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, just north of Browne's Beach, and God knows what went out in that outfall line when we were children. We have tried alternate methods. We have tried the sewerage system. That, too has its pluses and minuses. The ponds, they have their pluses and minuses. As I said, Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a continuing problem and we mustn't take – and I say this particularly because I know that the Government is considering incineration as a method of solid waste disposal. We have something called the Smoke Control Board in Barbados whose job mainly is to make sure that sugar factories do not emit ash and other pollutants to the point where it would damage, not only human life, but crop life in Barbados. I think, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that the time has come for the role and function of the Smoke Control Board to be much expanded. We hear about the damage that is being done by cow itch. During crop time you get the ash from the factories and when the cane is arrowing the people who suffer from respiratory diseases also have that difficulty as well.

I think that this whole problem of solid waste disposal and management needs to be accorded higher priority in Barbados. For too long everybody has been dumping – and I am using the word now and punning, and I am doing it deliberately – everybody has been dumping on the Sanitation Service Authority but the truth is that the SSA is the lame-duck Board. It is the Board that everybody looks on as the last class Board. We are not giving the kind of priority that we ought to give to this whole question of waste disposal. We want high-life style of developed countries, but you go out there, Mr. Speaker, Sir, and you look at the landfills in Barbados. Mangrove is one. It is like a rainbow. You know why, Mr. Speaker? Too much plastic material and other material which are petrochemical derivatives are dumped into the landfill and they are not bio-degradable. Only God knows again, Sir, what we are doing to the special magic – I cannot use any other word – that the coral works in the way in which it filters in a very natural manner our water supply. We are putting plastic. We are putting vinyls. We are putting oils. We are putting nitrates and a whole array of petro and other chemicals into the ground water supply.

There are other matters that I am going to advert to as well because there are other pluses with this question of solid waste disposal. It has, as I said, its minuses, but it has its pluses. Not only the reclamation of land, but experience has shown now in modern times that there is an economic resource component in this whole question of reclamation. We have hazardous waste, serious hazardous waste, some of it coming from industrial effluent. In fact, the majority, I would say, comes from industrial effluent in Barbados. We must find ways and means to extract this before it can get to our ground water supply.

But there are other components in our solid waste which we are going to have to look at from the point of view of reclamation and some of them have an economic value. There are metals. There are plastics, as I said before. Paper, in some countries paper is being extracted and recycled. There is a whole new technology in this whole question of reclaiming from solid waste and recycling. But, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we need to start off with an attitudinal change. This whole business of the management of solid waste really needs to be given a different and a higher priority.

The Barbados Labour Party started it. The Barbados Labour Party supplied the Sanitation Authority with a new image. We brought in professional management. There has been a movement backward from that since 1986, but we brought in new, professional management. We renewed the fleet of the Sanitation Service Authority – not only renewed it, fitted the fleet to the task at hand. The small compactors that you see on the street to handle the small alleyways, particularly in Bridgetown and the surroundings of Bridgetown, these were introduced by the Barbados Labour Party. We provided for the Sanitation Service Authority a new headquarters at Wildey.
3.35 p.m.

Something had to be wrong when the Town Hall in modern times, in the 1980's and 1990's could have been conceived as a headquarters for an authority such as the Sanitation Service Authority. We gave them an excellent new headquarters at Wildey. We put the Pulverisation Plant on the ground. We started to put large bins on the ground. We improved legislation for the protection of the environment against litter and other such social behaviour. We did much to improve public awareness of the need for better waste disposal habits. We established new routes.

The Sanitation Authority continues to need a better and higher profile in our community. We need to treat it with more respect. We need to get away from the old-fashioned concept that it is a dumping ground and only the dregs go and work there. It is not true. They do a very important task in our community. We must continue to look at what new technology we can bring to this whole question of waste disposal. We have to find ways and means, in my opinion, to discover the balance between ourselves and the kind of lifestyle we want to lead and the environment in which we live.

There are different kinds of waste, as I said, in Barbados. There is a growing quantity of hazardous waste that I am much concerned about. Some of it is to be found in fertilisers and other such chemicals. We have to find this balance between human habitations, that is, the villages and the other districts, parks and terraces where people live. We have to find that balance between human habitation, wild life such as exists in Barbados, agriculture and, in the large picture, that correct balance in the ecology. It all must be

brought into a harmonious co-existence in Barbados. Attacking individuals and institutions is not going to solve the problem.

Nobody wants a landfill sanitary or otherwise near them. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas does not want it in St. Thomas. The Honourable Member for St. Peter does not want it in St. Peter. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West does not want it in Christ Church West. Nobody wants it. The fact is because we are humans we generate greater and greater quantities of waste on a daily basis. We have to find a way of disposing of it so that it does not offend against us in our communities and in our homes where we live but so that it does not offend against the environment which has to support the lifestyle that we seem to want, we have to find that balance.

I can understand the difficulties at Mangrove. I do understand there is a scarcity of land felt to be suitable for sanitary landfill in Barbados because there are so many tests which it has to pass. It has to pass the water zone test. It has to pass the population density test and the human habitation test. It is very difficult but it has to be done. In the past it has not proved to be beyond the creativity of the Government of the day to find ways and means of managing solid waste disposal in Barbados. I would hate to think that the Government has now reached a position where it has thrown its hands into the air and is going to resort to incineration without a careful study of the pluses or minuses attached thereto or that it has taken the attitude that you can always go into the country and dump.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am gravely concerned to hear the Honourable Member for St. Thomas suggest that raw sewage is being dumped at a location in St. Thomas. We have a Sewerage Treatment Plant which, as I said, has its pluses and minuses. I have to live with that in the City of Bridgetown and those who live in the immediate vicinity of it. But there is really no good reason why raw sewage ought to be dumped on any land in Barbados.

You know what the problem is with us, Mr. Speaker, not only in the public sector but in the private sector as well and especially if we are going to be looking forward to the new technology? We know how to put something in place but we do not always know how to service on a continuous basis and how to manage the technology that we put on the ground. We are always into crisis intervention. We wait until it breaks down to run to see if we can fix it. If we cannot fix it we dump that too. The whole business of on-going preventive maintenance is where we fall down. This is where productivity has to enter into the picture.

We have breakdowns sometimes at the Sewerage Plant in Bridgetown. That works by solar action. The only reason why that will malfunction is because on-going preventive

maintenance does not occur. I hope in all we are hearing in Barbados about where the Government has to cut back and where it has to make certain savings and effect certain economies that the question of preventive maintenance of plant will not fall into that category. I really hope not.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sherbourne is not a bottomless pit, Mr. Speaker. The Pulverisation Plant at Workmans in St. George is another example where we put the most modern technology on the ground but we will not insist and monitor carefully the preventive maintenance programme which will keep it working at optimum. If the Government pursues incineration that will be a consideration as well. That is part of the reason why we have had difficulty over all our generations with sanitary landfill.

There is a way in which sanitary landfill is done where you lay down your solid waste, then you would alternate it with layers of other material – in Barbados we use earth. Then there are other preventive measures that you take to keep your sanitary landfill in a certain condition. These things are not done in Barbados. I attach no blame when it comes to vision for what is needed in the future and a plan for what needs to be put on the ground. If there is a difficulty with the Sanitation Service Authority it is that they are not monitoring of a sufficient or in some areas like the same Mangrove any basis at all, daily or otherwise, the management of the landfills. That is a problem that is going to plague us no matter what alternative waste disposal method we will resort to in the future. As I said, Mr. Speaker, we have to go to an attitudinal change and stop low-rating the SSA and other allied services.

The Environmental Engineering Unit which is situated in another Ministry – this is another problem. When you have the whole question of the environmental health of Barbados fragmented between four, five or six departments of Government or three or four Ministries, and you know in Barbados we suffer an awful disease which is called inter and intra ministerial refusal to co-operate, we ought not to be surprised that the people in the Environmental Engineering Division know not what is happening in the Sanitation Service Authority. They are two different examples altogether.
3.45 p.m.

It is two different camps altogether. Mr. Speaker, I think that what we need is for all of the agencies which are supposed to be co-operating and allied in this whole question not only of solid but other waste disposal in Barbados, we need a co-ordinating Ministry. When I was in the Ministry of Health I used to think that it was the Ministry of Health. But they criticized me and said, no, no, no you are going to put a public health plan on everything. In the end no slant was put on it. In the end what happens

is that the Ministry of Health is expected to mop up. If that is the case, well then, let the Ministry of Health do it.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Not that I am saying that I have any lot of confidence in the present Minister of Health to do what has to be done but I hope that he would have learnt just a little bit from some of what I have said. But I have no doubt in my mind that the technicians and the professionals in that Ministry and in all of the other allied agencies and units which are responsible even in the most tenuous way for solid waste management in Barbados know what they have to do. They have to be permitted to do what has to be done. Once we have put the systems in place, we really must protect them, care them and maintain them so that they do the job which the taxpayers are paying for them to do so that in due course therefore the taxpayers will get the service for which they have paid.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, having not introduced this Resolution I believe the point has come where I have to make an intervention because enough has been said that requires response from the Minister responsible for Health.

I want to say that the Honourable Member who has just sat down, except for the moments when she felt constrained to take the partisan position which was at a minimal part of her speech, the Honourable Member has made a statement which I think I wish to say is a commendable statement. I cannot on the basis of the political situation say other than that the Honourable Member has touched on a number of issues which are important in understanding the reality of health in this country.

The question of solid waste disposal is not a Democratic Labour Party or Barbados Labour Party issue. It is an issue for all of the people of this country. The question has to be where are we going to put the place which is the receptacle for the solid waste in Barbados. It has nothing to do with the people of Arch Hall or the people of Bank Hall or the people of Eagle Hall, except in the sense that we first have to protect the environment as a whole.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas properly defends the position of his constituents. I have no quarrel with that. The Honourable Member read some letters from his constituents in Arch Hall especially, and from himself to the Minister of Health which letters were written in good faith by persons who were concerned about a nuisance which they are suffering as a result of something that relates to the entire country. I think it is proper that he should raise those questions about and for his constituents.

I think that in the interest of clarification, when he writes a letter in May, it has to be remembered that during the month of May the Minister goes to Geneva to participate in the World Health Assembly and he happened to have gone in that year. I am just saying it because the press might give the impression that the Minister treated the Member with some contempt. I think the Honourable Member himself will agree that we have shown a sensitivity to this issue.

My heart bleeds for the people of Arch Hall, Bennetts and the surrounding areas. It is not known and I have not made it known that sometimes when they were having difficulties on Sundays they would call me on the telephone. I am not surprised that they indicate that they look forward to seeing me to discuss the matter in a particular way because we have had an almost umbilical relationship. Every single Barbadian in Barbados who believes that he has a health problem calls the Minister of Health at home because the Minister of Health's number is listed and it will remain listed and that is my job.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: And he is at home most of the time, especially recently. But I have no difficulty in that because I believe that that is proper. I believe that in a small community like ours that we are on the frontline and therefore we have to take the burdens and the benefits. There are some benefits and therefore we have to take the burdens. I have no difficulty. You would have recognized, Mr. Speaker, from the letters which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas read that I have tried to be scrupulously honest in my dealings in this matter of solid waste disposal because with solid waste disposal there is no political divide as far as I am concerned. Whomever is the Minister responsible for Health at the given time has a responsibility to the entire rest of Barbados to see that we do the best we can to deal with this very difficult situation.

Mr. Speaker, there is a problem which is recognized worldwide by an acronym called "nimby", not in my backyard. Put it everywhere else but not in my backyard. There are many people in Barbados who deal with that in a particular way, they bring their garbage from wherever they are and they dump it in the areas of constituencies like St. Michael West and the City and surrounding areas. Anyone who represents or knows about these areas know that there are areas where garbage is thrown which garbage is not representative of the people who live in the area. That is also systematic of some of the problems related to the disposal of solid waste.

Many years ago when Barbados was merely an agricultural area everybody used to throw everything out in their backyard. It used to be turned over. We did not have a lot of plastic. We did not have a lot of other chemical waste, *et cetera* and these things used to turn over and life

was easy. But Barbados especially in the last 25 years has developed to the point where the disposal of solid waste is one of the fundamental problems. In fact the disposal of waste. But we cannot rest in any special knowledge because we become aware either by the fact of the CNN or some other agency that the disposal of waste everywhere in the world is a problem. Man has so debased his environment that he is now caught on his own petard where he has to deal with the disposal of his own waste.

The solid waste that we are discussing today is not from Trinidad and Tobago. It is not from St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It is not from St. Lucia. This is a problem peculiar to Barbados. It is how Barbados is going to dispose of its solid waste.

When in 1984 – for the record the Democratic Labour Party was not in office in 1984 – the search was started for a place to dispose solid waste in, the Democratic Labour Party was not in office. The Barbados Labour Party did what we would have expected of them and they searched far and wide, high and low to find a place for the disposal of solid waste that would fit the criteria where it is not offensive to people, where it is not destructive of our water zones. That, Mr. Speaker, is the key. Where we dispose solid waste is not determined primarily by the smells or the effluvia or any of those things. It is determined primarily by how it is going to affect our water resources. You are aware, Mr. Speaker, as all Honourable Members in this House that recently, when a few persons were going to be disposing of their solid waste or part thereof in the Belle, even though the experts indicated that there was more structural difficulty and danger from the nitrates from agricultural enterprises than from the new outhouses that might be there, there was a substantial hue and cry in the community, and correctly so, about the possibility of danger to the water resources. How much more so, Sir, when we come to discuss the actual dump as my friend the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has called it – but the landfill for the entire country – we need to know how it is going to affect our water resources. When they looked in 1984 as they had looked before, as we had looked in the seventies, we recognized that it is necessary for a landfill with all of the attendant problems of a landfill, to be located in Zone 5 land.

3.55 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, every child that is able to read and write in Barbados, and understands, knows that there are a number of zones in Barbados where you have to walk and tread carefully if our water is to be preserved. Zones 1, 2, and 3 are zones on which we are never to put anything that even remotely interferes with our water resources. Zones 1, 2 and 3 take up a substantial part of the land mass of this community which after all, Sir, is only still 166 square miles, maybe 167 or so.

So, it has to be zone 4 or 5 but we are agreed generally speaking that while one will allow some construction and some movement in zone 4 we are not, repeat not, going to put any land fills in zone 4. We are all agreed on that.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas and all other Honourable Members on that side and we on this side are agreed that whatever we do we are not going to put any land fills in zone 4, so we are reduced to zone 5. We have put them in zone 4 in the past but, Sir, we are agreed that we are only going to put them in zone 5 and in the letter which the Honourable Member was kind enough to read accurately, that I sent to his constituents, I pointed out to them that we in fact had land fills before and we had land fills....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I was very careful to write those letters, Sir. No, I have the copies. We had put land fills in Forde's Road in Clapham, St. Michael. Now these are in the last ten years. If we go back before then the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East as Your Honour and I and the Honourable Members who have ever lived in the vicinity of Eagle Hall know that in Hill Road there was a dump, in Grazettes there was a dump, in St. Michael South, the Prime Minister's constituency, there was a dump that until recently was smoking continuously, almost forever.

The Honourable Members are aware that we used to dump raw sewage in Cowell Street up until a few years ago, all the raw sewage was dumped in Cowell Street. There was a dump in Military Road, there was a dump in every neighbourhood and anybody who is over 40 years old, in fact anybody who is over thirty years old lived within a mile of some kind of solid waste disposal unit at some time or other.

Barbados is not something that started yesterday. There is a Barbados which all of us know and therefore we cannot pretend. I have objections to the ones who want to make the gullies a dump for solid waste disposal but we do not have enough time to go into that. I will talk about that subsequently. What I am saying, Sir, is that the people of Forde's Road in Clapham, as I said in the letter, over the past ten to twelve years the people in Cottage, St. Lucy, the people in Hannays, St. Lucy, the people in Lonesome Hill, St. Peter, the people in Black Bess, St. Peter, the people in Jordan, St. George, those in Workman's, St. George before and now, the people in Kingsland, Christ Church, the people in Melrose, St. Thomas, the people in Oldbury, St. Philip – we did not mention all here – and a number of other places have all suffered some of the inconveniences which the good people of St. Thomas, Arch Hall and company are now suffering.

As I said, my heart bleeds for them and this particular decision to acquire the land is in fact to correct the situation as it now exists in Arch Hall. What we are doing here, Sir, is not closing the existing dump, as he calls it, but closing the existing land fill because the existing land fill was hurriedly put together in 1984 when the people who owned Kingsland unceremoniously chased the government out of Kingsland.

The people who owned Kingsland who had been gracious enough to allow, because that is what it comes down to, unless the government acquires the land, then it is a question of a mutual agreement... Kingsland recognised that the amount of solid waste being generated in Barbados was increasing in such a volume that they said, while we were prepared over the past few years to allow you to operate here we are now calling upon you to move. At the same time the Barbados Labour Party administration discovered zone 5 land in St. Thomas and it has to be said, it is the only place in Barbados at the moment, all things considered. Somebody has been saying that there is a possibility of a place in Hackelton's Cliff, but that is only on the face of it.

I wish the Honourable Members of this House to know that we have been examining almost every possible area. We have gone to St. Lucy and we have said to the people in the cement plant, we believe that now you have been digging the holes to extract the limestone for the cement that we can begin to refill some of that; they are not ready.

We have suggested to them that they put lead at the bottom so we can start refilling those massive holes which we are obviously creating in the cement works. They said, after examination, they are not ready. We have been to Foster's Funland and we have examined the entire St. Andrew area. They said we are not ready. We went to Searles and we had an almost perfect place until the engineers told us it is going to harm the Hampton water catchment, and they could not put it there. The only place we have not been so far with the engineers is in St. Lucia, but we have explored all of Barbados and the only place that is acceptable, given the criteria that we both accept is in the area: but, Sir, I could not be so callous as to feel that all we have to do is put in a land fill. We have done something else and the Honourable Member for the City raised a question which is a legitimate question. We couldn't make the decision to just simply go in and put in incineration, it would be irresponsible.

When I became the Minister of Health and I recognised the problem I went with the officials to Switzerland, I went to Canada, I looked at a number of places where they are using incineration and we examined the places and on the face of it, Mr. Speaker, it appears that is the solution for Barbados. But, not all that glitters is gold and incineration is not necessarily the answer per se, incineration requires examination in detail by experts.

So, what we have done, Sir, is, we went to the Inter-American Development Bank and asked them if they would help us. They engaged the services of an expert, a Mr. Walter Neilson, a consultant in Sanitary Engineering in 1989, under a technical cooperation agreement with the Government of Barbados. He prepared the terms of reference for a feasibility study to be undertaken in accordance with the Bank's procedures. Under the terms of reference there will be two phases to the study which will outline a solid waste management programme for the entire country.

The main purpose of the study is to develop a comprehensive solid waste management programme in which all the elements of an integrated approach will be considered. Attention will be paid to land use monitoring, collection and disposal systems, and financing cost recovery methods. The study will also examine the institutional coordination, training and education.

4.05 p.m.

The alternatives of incineration and landfilling, composting, and energy recovery, recycling and pollution will be examined. Household waste, commercial waste, hazardous waste, and all aspects of waste will be taken into account. The relevant legislation and institutional framework will be reviewed. The first stage of the study will entail preparation of a twenty year long-term plan for Barbados; I repeat, Mr. Speaker, a twenty year long-term plan for Barbados to be carried out in stages. The second phase will involve the examination of the recommendations, alternatives, and projections of the feasibility report, the preparation of an environmental assessment report and the making of financial projections. The final report will be submitted after the initiation of activities.

The study is estimated to cost \$1.71 million. It is expected that the Bank will provide a loan of \$1.54 million. In anticipation of the approval of this loan, prequalification notices were issued to firms in member countries of the Bank and we are in the process of reviewing to select the firms considered best suited to undertake the study.

The answer is that we have determined to approach this matter not on the basis that it has been approached in the past, but we are approaching it on a scientific basis with the assistance of the IADB. I think the Honourable Member for St. Thomas asked that he wanted to hear what it is we are doing. I am saying to him that this acquisition of land is a temporary measure in respect of a medium-term and long-term measure. What we are saying is that the present landfill in its existence and the way in which it has been managed constitutes and represents as far as we are concerned a matter that should be brought to a close. We want to bring the present landfill in its existence to a close. It is true that we are going to be using land adjacent to the present landfill, but on that land we will be able to apply

modern techniques of landfill operations. Anyone who saw the television programme coming from Trinidad and Tobago would see how a local company has applied modern techniques to landfill operations. I think this was on CBC through CARIBSCOPE two Sundays ago.

I said in the letter to the people of St. Thomas that I am taking a personal interest in this and I intend to. I have given the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that assurance. We intend to assure that we have management of this new landfill at a certain level and competence. I am not going to touch on the personal issues which the Honourable Member raised, which information he was privy to in his capacity as counsel, which I cannot respond to and I do not intend to respond to. As legal counsel, he is in a privileged position which I, neither by practice nor inclination, do not aspire to. But what I am saying, Sir, is that we will ensure that whereas the last landfill, the one that is currently under siege, which was undertaken somewhat in a hurry, even though it is in close proximity can be dealt with in such a manner as to reduce considerably if not eliminate the nuisances which have been the legacy of ten neighbourhoods in Barbados and which we will be able in due course to eliminate.

Sir, I do not feel happy at the prospect of continuing difficulties for the people of Arch Hall and the surrounding areas. I submit that the Barbados Labour Party is unable, as indeed anybody else in Barbados, to state categorically where we might locate the next landfill operation. Until we are in a position to give an alternative to the site which we have found, then they cannot be heard to be criticizing this Government for acquiring the land, whereas I accept that criticism of the methodology for managing the last landfill is valid and I have no quarrel with that.

I will say in passing, however, that such management fell not between two stools but was a continuum between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party Governments. I have no quarrel. What I am saying, however, is that it is necessary for us to bring that to a close and to introduce and implement a modern system of managing the new land which we acquire and have a landfill in its temporary nature until the solution is found. I have to say on the basis of information that it seems as though incineration is the way we will have to go. But it must be understood that we are talking about a plant in the vicinity of \$70 million or \$80 million. We are not talking about a \$2 million plant. We are talking about a plant that on the basis of present day prices will be in the vicinity of Bds\$60 million to Bds\$80 million.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the Member for Christ Church South is saying that that is no big thing. I am sorry that I do not want to trivialize it. Let me say that it is the kind of money which we will have to spend for our solid waste

disposal and this has nothing whatsoever to do with the sewage disposal which is going to be part of the South Coast Sewerage Project and the West Coast Sewerage Project which is something if we do not do in Barbados that we might as well lie down and die. We only have to recognize that sewage disposal is fundamental to the economic development of this country. So any money that is spent in the sewage disposal – either on the West Coast or South Coast – of solid waste, is a mere investment in the actual life of this community, because if it is social, economic, or otherwise our sewage disposal is a *sine qua non* for our own economic development.

I want to talk about a matter which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas raised, what he called the disposal of raw sewage in a plot of land proximate to the property which we are trying to acquire. I want to say to him that it is not entirely as he articulated it; although as a layman he articulated as a prosecutor. Let me put it this way – as a prosecutor would put it. I think that I saw some Honourable Members flinching as they pictured this sewage coming into the ground in its raw state.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, he is bound to tell you that in the circumstances. The truth is that it is systematic scientific disposal of what they euphemistically call "night soil". Night soil is the name attributed in Barbados to all of that human excreta and other related matter that has to be disposed of in Barbados. Many years ago they used to have rose tree trimmers. These days they have night soil deliverers. But the night soil deliverers deliver this night soil which again is Barbadian night soil and they deliver it to a prescribed spot that was agreed by all of the environmentalists.

4.15 p.m.

There is a methodology for its disposal. There is a lock and key and a bar at the entrance to the disposal. The persons who are going to dispose of it, who are both in the private sector and public sector areas must make contact to indicate that they are bringing a load. They must do it in a particular way and when it is delivered there is a set of circumstances which go into operation, so that the cover, the white lime and all of the other ancillary relationships to the disposal of night soil must go into effect. The reason why we have not included this two-acre lot in any discussion is because it has a scientific management capability and in fact, it is run by the EED, the Environment Engineering Division of the Ministry of Health. At one point for a couple of days, some people had illegally started to put things on it and now what we have is a systematic methodology by which people have to telephone and/or make an appointment to deliver the night soil. In other words, it is having, what according to the information I have, and the expertise I have, is the scientific way in which it is disposed of all over the world.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, that there is one area which is of some concern to me and it is the disposal of hazardous waste. There has not been a sufficient arrangement for the disposal of hazardous waste in Barbados and in this respect, I have sought the advice of the Pan American Health Organisation, and expert advisers have been helping us to put together a method of disposing of hazardous waste. Indeed, it has now been extended to the Caribbean region, so that the disposal of hazardous waste is a matter which concerns the entire Caribbean region in conjunction with PAHO. I expect that in due course we will have a set of criteria for the disposal of hazardous waste which will be immediately apparent to all and sundry, because there would be a set of rules.

We do not have a chemical Board in Barbados and we are in the process of setting one up. The Ministry, through its experts... Let's face it, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter which Minister goes into the Ministry of Health, there are some matters that are peculiarly within the ambit of those whose expertise it is to advise the Minister. It doesn't matter whether it is the Minister from over there or the Minister from over here, you must get advice from the technical people. You can use your commonsense but it is the technical people who have to tell you what is correct and what is incorrect.

I hope, Sir, that the people of St. Thomas, will recognise that in our quest to bring incineration and/or some other equivalent to Barbados - I think that we have virtually run out of landfill areas. I do not see myself, as an intelligent being, that there is much scope for further landfill operations, given the circumstances of the small size of our country, our land resources and our water resources. It seems to me that we are going to have to go to incineration. However, Mr. Speaker, if we do, we must have in Barbados what I saw in Berne in Switzerland, where the plant nestled in the midst of a community and what I saw in Vancouver where they are using state-of-the-art with the ash arresters and all of the other paraphernalia. I have had some discussion with some people who feel that it is too expensive. There can be nothing that is too expensive in the context of disposal of solid waste.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. The Minister may be having certain matter misrepresented to him and in consequence, may be therefore misrepresenting the position to this Honourable House. There are dust arresters at Portvale Factory, from which I had to move before it killed me before my time, and down at the Cement Plant. They don't work first class because they are not maintained in an ongoing way. Preventative maintenance is unknown in Barbados.

I see them working in other places in the world, but somehow when they get here they don't work. So the

Minister, having been misled himself, must not seek now to mislead us.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, Sir, the difference between the Honourable Member and me is a very simple one apart from our... The Honourable Member is quite right if I, in fact, have allowed myself to be misled, but the fact is that we constantly put square pegs in round holes. If we take the plant in Bridgetown that is responsible for sewage disposal, the Sewerage Plant, the failure of preventative maintenance is the major - we have just had a report - the only cause why the plant has not worked according to how it should be worked.

While I am Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, let me assure this country that there will be none of that. The people who must be in preventative maintenance must be qualified and they must be regarded in the same way as engineers in other areas. I will give an example of how we have done that, Sir, at the risk of importing into this discussion. There is a sewerage plant which we had to set up in another institution in the north and the first thing we did was to send two....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Right. St. Joseph Hospital. I don't have any difficulty with that. St. Joseph Hospital required a sewerage plant and we have created a sewerage plant. We took the two technicians, two young people, who are very qualified and we sent them overseas to be trained and they are now in place.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Members can't ask me about that, because they told us not to spend any money and now want me to commission it. We are not commissioning it while you say... Sorry, Sir, I am not diverting. Sewerage plants are not going to be commissioned if we don't have any money to spend. I went to see the plant in Canada and the reason why the plant in Canada works is that they have high quality technologists and technicians functioning. We cannot build expensive plants and then put people in them to work because somebody knows somebody. It will not be that. It cannot be that. It has to be that we must have people who are trained to do the preventative maintenance; because without preventative maintenance, we will run into the problems that we have run into.

Mr. Speaker, I know my time is running out, Sir. In the pulverisation plant - I want to say this, because it is important. I started off by saying that the question of disposal of garbage and the disposal of solid waste in particular is not and ought not to be a partisan issue. Those persons who find that there is incompetence in management should properly criticise it. I have no quarrel with that. If

the Minister of Health proves to be incompetent, whenever he proves to be incompetent, criticism is in order, but I, as Minister of Health, have had to defend a previous Minister of Health because residents at Workmans in St. George indicated that the Honourable Member for the City had said in her opening speech that the plant would only last five years. Now, it was a golden opportunity to use partisan political position to agree with them but when we searched the Ministry, Sir, I could find no evidence whatsoever that that had occurred, and I told them and defended the Honourable Member when she was Minister, because it is important that the people in Barbados understand that the disposal of solid waste and the disposal of sewage has to do with all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to wind up the debate. I was not winding up. I was speaking in my capacity as a Minister who had not yet spoken and I am grateful to you. 4.25 p.m.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, one must look at this debate in the context of the duty of Honourable Members in here to represent the interest of their constituents. I cannot blame in any way the stand taken by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because I have absolutely no doubt that he has been besieged by calls and by entreaties in a number of manners and forms by his constituents because of their fears.

Now, if one looks at the position from the point of view of the constituents, one can only come to the conclusion that their fears are justified. It is justified based upon their experience of what other communities in Barbados have experienced with landfills and what they themselves have experienced with the one in their area. I live in an area in Christ Church which is near to St. Philip. It is also an area which has two landfills. People must not forget the experience we had just to the east of the Airport at another landfill area, whether you call it Oldbury or Mangrove.

I well recall in this very House a former Member for St. Philip who was very anxious and adept at bringing to the attention of this Honourable Chamber the concerns of his constituents. I refer to the former Honourable Member for St. Philip South, a man whose ear was always close to the ground with his constituents in particular. On numerous occasions he made the same kind of complaint that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is making here today that his constituents have indicated quite clearly that the experience has been bad. We cannot deny that. It, therefore, is the duty of the Honourable Minister of Health, if he wishes to get the support from this side and I have heard him in here now for over half an hour and he has said nothing to indicate that he can allay the legitimate fears....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I can allay those fears now, Sir, if he did not hear because I do not think he was always listening.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. It is clear to me that the Honourable Member was not always listening. Let me allay the fears for him and all Honourable Members. I will personally see that the people of Arch Hall and company have their fears allayed. I will see to it that the methodology which is used is different from that which had been used in the past.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: No, Sir. The Honourable Member has been Minister for a considerable period of time. The complaints which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is speaking about here today are complaints which arose from the failure of the Honourable Minister to do the very things that he has just said he would do. If the Honourable Member had been successful...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, if the Honourable Member would give way. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas himself was clear to point out that so far as the Minister was concerned he was satisfied. I heard it myself. I go further and state that in conversation with the Honourable Member he has indicated he understands my problem.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Before I am misquoted, I did say I understood the Minister's problem. I also explained that the Minister, as head of the Ministry which incorporated the Sanitation Service Authority, had to accept responsibility for the inability of the SSA properly over three years to control the problems that the people at Arch Hall complain of, because you personally have tried. I said that earlier on. I gave you the encomium you wanted at the personal level. You have tried but your trying does not excuse the inefficiency and the inability of the SSA. As Minister responsible therefore we cannot support it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. As Minister responsible for the SSA I would be irresponsible if I allowed that remark which the Honourable Member has made, perhaps, in a moment of expansion, to go on. I think he could modify that language a little bit. I do not think he means it in its entirety. Like any other organisation it has its little ups and downs but not in the language the Honourable Member used.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Now, Sir, the truth is that for some reason or the other we have been unable to bring the level of management to the landfill programmes we have in Barbados which have been practised in other countries. I know because of experience both as the representative of the constituents in Christ Church when there was a

Kingsland landfill area there and also as a person who lives in Christ Church who had the nauseating experience of having particularly at night to submit to the smells that came from the Mangrove/Oldbury Dump. That is a fact and I live a considerable distance from that.

We have the same problem with the chicken farms too. When I say that the Honourable Minister has been unable to allay the fears of the constituents of the Honourable Member I am only indicating once again that unless something dramatic takes place, it is not unreasonable for the constituents of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to feel that they will be affected by an expansion of the dump in St. Thomas.

Sir, they tell me that proper management requires you have a traxcavator on the site which I have seen. In addition to that, you should bring loads of mould or some other proper material and regularly use the traxcavator to spread this material. In conjunction with that, you use sprays and other things. For some reason or the other, that well known method is not followed with the degree of regularity that is necessary in Barbados. Whether it is a lack of money I do not know because Barbados is such a commercial community that I know whenever mould is extracted it is piled up to be sold.

The Honourable Member would have to be able to give us the assurance that the Government would provide money in the Estimates for it. There is not enough money. The Honourable Member is anxious to rise to tell me there is more than enough money there. Why is it then that on all of these sites there is not a regular spreading of the mould with such intensity as to prevent the problems from arising?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member would give way on a point of elucidation. To the extent that does not occur, it is a human reason. I have given the people of St. Thomas and I give the Honourable Member the assurance that to the extent that has been in default in the past, it will not be in default because where we do not now have on the spot we will have a manager of the landfill. The new landfill will be run in a particular way. We are giving the assurance, since the Honourable Member asked for it. The traxcavators are working. They are on site.
4.35 p.m.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, I have great respect for a gentleman called the late W. W. Merriitt. He used to be the Chief Public Health Inspector of St. Michael, Sir. I remember hearing him argue, in the days of Local Government, about the utility of landfills and he was one of the first people I heard convince a whole area that it was possible. He was the one that used to insist that you had to have a traxcavator and you had to have mould, that you would invite people who had waste mould to dump it there. He was also very insistent that after a certain period of

time, if it was well done that you could in turn use these landfill sites for playing fields and for even resiting of light chattel houses. There are landfill sites in Barbados in which that was done. That is so.

Why is it then that if in the past we have been able to do that satisfactorily that over the last three years in St. Thomas ...and I know at the one at Mangrove in St. Philip, Oldbury, that has not yet been completely covered with mould and properly done. You can go up there and see it for yourself, that at Mangrove particularly, near to the road in St. Philip, that it is in an unsightly condition. If it had been so well managed as the Honourable Member tells, it would today be....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I did not in any way brag that the site which is there now was so well managed that none of the discrepancies which the Honourable Member.... I had admitted on the Floor of the House that the management of the landfill was not at the standard it should have been. I am not embarrassed to say that. What I am saying to the Honourable Member is that that is why I have decided to close it. That is why I have decided to move to the site next door so that we can implement management that I can be in charge of. That is all.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: You see, Sir, Kingsland is another one. Up there by now that ought to be so beautifully landscaped that it would be an area of great beauty, a joy to behold – the one at Kingsland. You have left that tool. That is the position. The private enterprise gave you permission to go in there. They chased you out. I believe that they chased you out because you so badly managed it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point or order, Sir, they chased him out. They did not chase me out and they would not let us come back in to landscape it.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not believe that, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not mean him personally.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, we are in the job of convincing people in the national interest. That is the job that we have to do today. The Honourable Member must not approach it in his usual manner because you cannot convince the people unless the people feel that a new method, a new standard is going to be brought to bear on this. I agree it is of great importance that we do it because until we make the decision with respect to incineration we will continue to have these problems in convincing the neighbourhood.

I am all in favour of incineration. The last study that I saw claimed that there were side benefits in the form of electricity generation which would have the effect of really

and truly reducing the overall capital cost. I remember that. The Honourable Member for St. Peter would tell you it was one of the projects that was before the Finance Committee – the sub-committee that we had, the Planning and Priorities Committee – and that was one that was agreed should be the subject of more intensive study. It should move from a pre-feasibility to a feasibility study.

But the community as a whole must be sensitized to the fact that these things are necessary. We can only do it if we convince everybody who is responsible for it of the need to ensure that when they are placed in a position where they have to supervise that they will bring supervision to this job.

I was just going to mention it very quickly, Sir, because I know the restrictive rules under which we have to debate in these matters. The Honourable Minister mentioned about the Sewerage Scheme. Again that is money that has to be spent. The one on the South Coast. You only have to go around St. Lawrence Gap at any time in the night and you will understand how bad the conditions are and how urgent it is to have that.

I want it to be clearly understood that our stand on this side is based upon the fact that we recognize that it is necessary to dispose of solid waste. But in truth and in fact because of the experience that we have had particularly the people in this area have had, the experience that we have had in Christ Church, that we do not have any confidence. There is nothing that the Honourable Member has said that indicates that there is going to be any difference at all.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for St Thomas has put a very strong case seeing this matter not only from the point of view of his constituents but I think also seeing it from the point of view of the country as a whole.

We on this side are entirely unconvinced by the argument that has been advanced as yet by the Minister. The burden of the Minister's case, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is that the land is to be acquired in the vicinity of the existing landfill in order to correct the maladies associated with the existing facility.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. The Honourable Member may not have heard all that I have said. The present landfill has reached its capacity. It is not only in order. It has reached its capacity and reached it before. The problem is that there is so much more solid waste generated than anticipated that the landfill reached its capacity long before it was anticipated.

In the interim while we are seeking the medium-term and long-term solution the land at St. Thomas is the only land at the moment where a landfill can be put. That is the gravamen of my argument.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, for all that this whole matter boils down to one single issue. One cluster of districts in Barbados is being saturated with landfill facilities and, in a way, is being asked, unreasonably in our judgment, to carry a national burden in relation to the supply of facility or land area in order to deal with the problem of refuse disposal. That is the core and the burden of our argument in this particular matter that the Government has not yet established any good case to support its decision for that area or that cluster of villages in St. Thomas, Sir, to be the one part of Barbados which has to shoulder the national burden of living with all of the inconvenience attendant to the country's disposal of garbage.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has to convince the House regarding the matter of the availability of other sites. If indeed other sites are available, then we are saying that the cluster of village in St. Thomas deserve a relief at least from the inconvenience which it has had to experience in the recent past. Indeed if other sites are available then having regard to the kinds of problems that have been experienced in St. Thomas in recent times the Government should be proceeding to go to those other sites to give St. Thomas a relief. If no other sites are available then it would seem to me that some alternative system for the disposal of refuse in Barbados would have to be put in place.

Government is now therefore asking the people in St Thomas to pay a price for Government's procrastination. The Minister is now coming dangerously to the point of conceding that no other site is available in Barbados for the landfill solution for the treatment of refuse. The Minister is coming close to making that concession.

It seems to me therefore that this is intended to be the last in a series – that is apparently what the Government is attempting to say – but at the same time the Minister is also trying to draw reference to a large number of other alternatives that could have been used were it not for some qualification or some caveat expressed by some person who has interest in the matter.

We are saying, Sir, that this matter has not been gone into sufficiently fully by the Minister or the Government with a view to satisfying all of the quite proper concerns that have been raised particularly by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Why is it that that district in St. Thomas be saturated with landfills without regard to the inconvenience caused to the residents of the district, without regard to the health hazards that the existing landfills have so demonstrably caused to those persons. 4.45 p.m.

The other issue which the Minister seems to be making light of, Sir, is that one cannot disassociate the level of management that has been shown in the past from

the inconvenience that the people have experienced and the Minister has made too light, Mr. Speaker, of that particular issue. There can be no doubt that problems have been experienced and great inconvenience caused by the residents of the surrounding areas.

There has been no doubt that the Minister, Sir, has admitted that some of those problems have been caused by a lack of proper management. Yet the Minister would want us to agree that those very persons who have been inconvenienced by a landfill, because of bad management practices at the landfill, Sir, must continue, Sir, to experience additional inconvenience without his telling the House precisely what new management techniques will be brought to bear in this new site to differ fundamentally from the management techniques and systems, Sir, that caused the problems in the first instance.

We are saying, Sir, that the Minister of Health has not addressed the question as to how and in what material respects this new facility will be managed differently from the old facility, such as would satisfy us collectively, that we are not asking a small district in Barbados to pay an enormous price for allowing the rest of the society, Sir, the benefit of having its refuse disposed of.

That is the issue, and we are sad, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister has recognised that there is a problem of management but is not telling us the specifics as to how that management problem can be overcome. We are therefore, Sir, very fundamentally opposed to committing that small district in St. Thomas to have to carry the burden. Really, Mr. Speaker, we are very serious about this, that small district in St. Thomas is being asked to carry a burden, a national burden.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir, I was very careful to point out when I spoke – I recall using the phrase that my heart bleeds for the people of St. Thomas. The fact is, that there is no where else. It isn't St. Thomas, it just so happens that that piece of land is the only piece of land that fits all of the criteria we have set out and it is a relatively temporary measure. That is the only point. We do not deny any of the questions raised by the Honourable Members; we are merely saying that there is no where else, and other neighbourhoods have carried the national burden in the past. The national burden has to be carried at some time and therefore that is it, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Minister seems, because he was deep in conversation with his colleague, not to recognise that we have moved away from the issue of site and the question as to whether there is an alternative site or not, to begin to address the other issue that this debate has raised, that a part of the problem, Sir, experienced in St. Thomas is a question of the poor management of the land fill facility, and that the Minister, Sir, has not at all....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. As I said earlier, Sir, I said I would give it my personal attention. I cannot now give him chapter and verse about the structure of the management of the landfill, because I would then be behaving like a most man. I am saying, Sir, that we intend for the management of this landfill to be different from how it has been in the past and I will give that assurance. I have given the House that assurance. A Minister cannot go higher than that, Sir, except he wants me to say that I am going to be the Manager, but I like being Minister, better than I like being Manager of the land fill.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister has asked us in good faith to accept his assurances regarding his ability to get things done within a specific time frame, but if the House were to invoke that as the basis for which to take a decision, Sir, then we would have to vote against the Government on that alone, using the St. Joseph Hospital, Mr. Speaker, as a gauging point. The Minister has given this House and the country the assurance, over and over again, that the St. Joseph Hospital was going to be opened....

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, we are saying that having regard to the quality of management that lies behind the Minister's assurances of the past, particularly in relation to the St. Joseph Hospital, Sir, we cannot attach too much significance to the depth of those assurances, Mr. Speaker. The Minister has not shown any competence in getting the St. Joseph Hospital open despite assurances over and over again. But, this battle is too fundamental to people's health for this house, Mr. Speaker, not to assure itself that the very best possible management is to be put in place and we are yet to hear that from the Minister.

I, for my part, Mr. Speaker, do not really accept that no other sites are available. I believe that a little bit of politics is being played here. I really feel so, Sir. I believe, Sir, that there must be other zone 4 or zone 5 lands in Barbados and I refuse to believe that this is the only zone 4 or zone 5 land in Barbados that is suitable for a landfill, but nobody else wants a landfill in their constituency, Sir, and it is convenient to treat St. Thomas as the dumping ground. Nobody else wants a landfill. You put it in St. Lucy and the Member for St. Lucy does not want a land fill in his constituency. It was supposed to be in Christ Church, the Member for Christ Church East Central does not want a landfill in his constituency, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir, I am prepared to point out that the only reason we did not go

to Searles was because our expert advice was that it would threaten the Hampton water. I was clear to point that out.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to say, Sir, there is an element of politics involved there. That element of politics, Sir, is that pressure has been brought to bear on the Minister not to....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, I wish to submit that the Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir, in that perversely after having been assured that it was a technical reason why the issue has not occurred he continues to state that it is a political reason. I think that if in the assurance which I have given to the House, if the Honourable Member continues, Sir, he is either casting aspersions on my integrity as a Minister or he is deliberately misleading the House. I submit, Sir, that the Honourable Member is out of order. He knows that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think also that the Honourable Member should bear in mind Rule 28(7). "No Member may impute improper motives to another Member". That cannot be a proper motive to say the member did it on a basis like that, so I think the Member should be very careful on that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it really does appear that St. Thomas is being made the dumping ground of Barbados, Sir, and that not only St. Thomas, but a small district in St. Thomas, and it really does appear, Sir, that when you want to have a crematorium that no other constituency wants, you look to put it in St. Thomas.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, I give this House the assurance that the Government has no intention of putting any crematorium in St. Thomas, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point is, Sir, that we do not want the appearance to go abroad that St. Thomas is the dumping ground of Barbados and that more to the point, that a little district in St. Thomas must really carry the burden in this particular respect, Sir.

As I understand it now, Sir, the Minister is about to go on record as saying that this is going to be the last, the absolute last, land fill facility in Barbados. That is my understanding. He says that there are no other sites. We are being asked by the Government to accept and approve this Resolution, Sir, because there are no other sites. If there are no other sites, Sir, then this will have to be the last absolute....
4.55 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member continues. I said that there were no sites at the present that meet the criteria because I went on, Mr. Speaker, to say that at Arawak where they are digging massive holes in the ground they say that they are not

ready. The implication of that is that at some point in the future some part of the Arawak Cement works will form an area for landfill. Therefore, the Honourable Member cannot reasonably call upon me to be saying that this is the last absolute.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, since the Minister has been good enough to say that potentially other sites that can be used in the future and at present, Sir, as landfills in Barbados, all I am saying is that it would behoove the Government then to fully explore the possibility and feasibility of using alternative sites having regard to the very recent and unfortunate experience that this small district in St. Thomas, Sir, has had to endure. If there are other sites, Sir, we are saying give that part of St. Thomas a break and let some other part of Barbados shoulder some of this burden. But to ask one small district year after year....

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: ...Exhaust all possibilities! But surely, Mr. Speaker, it cannot be fair to a small district over an extended period of time to...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. We have stated categorically that to the best knowledge available that we have exhausted all possibilities at the present. The Honourable Member is persisting in going down the same road, Sir. I submit, Sir, that not only is he being repetitious but that he is misleading the House. I submit that, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question of management. The Minister is going to be winding up, Sir, but we are very concerned on the question of management. We are concerned as well that the Minister is making light of this very serious issue.

We need, Sir, to be satisfied on this side as regards the state of planning of Government in relation to the alternative sites. You all do not have a management team.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now we must not allow ourselves to be carried away. The only person who has a given permission to speak is the Honourable Member for St. Peter and I do not think that we should really allow ourselves to be carried away by the moments of time. Will the Honourable Member continue his speech?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what has come out of this debate and if it is one point that has come out, it is that the situation regarding the management of refuse in Barbados has reached a point now where a very urgent step has to be taken to find an alternative to landfills to deal with this problem. Because even if we were to

agree about the possibility of Arawak coming on stream as another alternative sometime in the future, the fact is that we are being left with the impression, Sir, that the only other option....

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: So that Arawak may not even be a possibility, Sir. But what is coming across very clearly, Mr. Speaker, is that we have virtually run out of sites in Barbados for landfills. Therefore, there is a measure of urgency attaching itself to this country finding and putting down in a physical form an alternative system. That is what is coming out of this debate, Mr. Speaker. We, therefore, need to hear from Government where is Government's planning in relation to this matter of great urgency. Mr. Speaker, if this is the second last remaining site after three years....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of elucidation. I do not recall the Honourable Member being out of his place. I specifically outlined the steps which we have taken – the fast-forward acceleration we have in relation to the IADB and we are seeking to have a project as a matter of urgency. How can the Honourable Member discuss this in the context of planning? I have pointed out on the floor of this House that we are taking all deliberate steps with all deliberate speed to get the alternate arrangements in place. Did you not hear that?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my colleagues and I are, therefore, at one on this, Sir. We heard a lot of pros and cons being expressed by the Minister, Sir, weighing the different costs and benefits of alternatives but we have not yet heard from the Government that the Government has come to a point where it has decided that it is going to go with system "X" as opposed to system "Y". I have not heard that, Sir, and that it has secured financing for it, and that three years from now when we have exhausted the possibility....

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, all I am really saying is that it is now my understanding, Sir, that Barbados has reached a stage where we are either at the last or second last site for a landfill solution for refuse management. Three years from now, Sir, Barbados will have to find itself in a position where it knows how it is going to dispose of its garbage. To deal with the problem three years from now, Sir, you have to know now what you are going to be doing and have the financing secured.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I crave the Honourable Member's indulgence. I said that we engaged the IADB and they engaged the services of a Mr. Neilson, a consultant in sanitary engineering, in 1989 under a Technical Cooperation Agreement with the Government

of Barbados. He prepared the terms of reference for a feasibility study to be undertaken in accordance with the Bank's procedure. I then went on to read in detail. I said that in the debate. The Honourable Member might not have been in his place, but I do not think it is fair for him to go on in those terms. I will send the brief for him to see so I do not waste the House's time. Okay. What it is that we are preparing is a comprehensive feasibility study of solid waste disposal in the country so that we do not do it by the seat of our pants but that we do it in a systematic way. I said that the prequalification had begun and we had started evaluation. That is what I said. We have got \$1.4 million from the IADB for the feasibility study.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, then the issues that were raised by my learned colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, become even more pertinent, Sir. Because if we are only at the feasibility study stage, then the House will have to be told very clearly, Sir, as regards the useful life period... There could be a long gestation period between study and the putting in place of facilities to deal with this refuse problem in the future. To put in a plant, Sir, as you know in Barbados, as in most countries, can take fifteen years.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the Minister that there is already garbage at Stanmore Terrace and he is only adding to it, Sir. But that is not the point. The point we are making here is this. If we have reached the stage where this is the last site and that the Government is only at the stage of planning some other alternative system for dealing with refuse, then the question arises, Sir – how adequate is this arrangement going to be?

5.05 p.m.

That is precisely one of the issues that my colleague from St. Thomas raised, and to which there has been no response by Government. If Government, for example, intends to put in an incinerator and they are now only studying the feasibility of it, it has to plan that, Sir. It has to go to the level of technical drawings and designs and whatever else. The funding has to be negotiated. All the whole system of tendering for construction and so has to be gone into and it will take ten to fifteen years between pre-feasibility and plan and product actually coming into existence. The Member for St. Thomas, Sir, was specific in asking Government how does this relate to Government's short, medium and long-term? We have not yet heard from Government in relation to the point and we are pressing on the question of Government's management of the problem precisely to get from Government satisfaction that Government is on top of the problem.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member has asked for specific information and I am going to repeat what I said. The first phase of the study will entail a

preparation of a twenty-year long term plan to be carried out in stages. This will take about nine months. The second phase will involve the examination of the recommendations, alternatives and projections of the feasibility report, preparation of an environmental assessment report and the making of financial projections; the final report to be submitted after sixteen months. The Honourable Member is fully seized of what the IADB process is like and therefore we are talking about this as a temporary measure until we get to that. Okay? I hope that satisfies the Honourable Member.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I take the point, Sir, and I understand what the Honourable Minister said. Since he is so obliging now, Sir, and to satisfy all our concerns on this side, we would be grateful to hear from him as well, precisely when the new landfill management systems will go into place to make sure that the kind of problems that you have had on the former site do not reoccur on the new site. We also want to know, Sir, exactly what those management arrangements will be and what system the Minister will personally ensure to go into place to establish quality control. This House, Sir, has not been assured of these basic and fundamental things that the Minister....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member will give way. I will be using the Merritt – you remember Mr. Merritt? I am using nothing more sophisticated than the Merritt principle.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We are going to have a person on site who will be responsible for managing the landfill. We are going to have someone at the appropriate level. We will have people who have been trained in the management of landfills who will be on site and we will seek to ensure that the methodology which worked – the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said that when we intervened... We will seek to make sure that what worked for six months, as he said, will work continuously, because we will make sure. We are going to have a rendering plant that will take much of the offal that go on to the site and a number of areas like that. So, I promise the House that when we have put all the matters into detail I will come back to this House and give them the information as to the detailed assignment of the management *pro tem*.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I think that this debate has gone on for a long time and a lot of discussion has taken place. I almost said that the debate ran true to form, but let me say, I think all sides recognise that this is a matter of national concern. The Honourable Minister has been at pains to point his bleeding heart in this particular matter, particularly for those persons who have to tolerate what is obviously a nuisance. The fact of the matter is that in the present circumstances, we have to find something to deal, in a temporary manner, with the problem which we

have. It is for this reason we are acquiring this additional area of land. The Minister has indicated that this is a temporary matter and he has also indicated that, as has been pointed out, that we have to pay closer attention to the management of the landfill.

I think all of us who have constituencies where this particular technique has been put in place know the horrors which residents in the surrounding areas have had to endure. I could talk about Mount Gay. I could talk about Hannays. But the fact of the matter is that we have to find some place where this will be done and I, myself, sympathise with the points which have been made by Honourable Members on the other side, because at times I do have to pass that area and I know how obnoxious the smell can be.

The Minister has given the assurance, and this is the position of the Government, that this is a temporary measure. We will pursue, as he has indicated, our contacts with the IDB. We will put in place proper management systems to ensure that the landfill is properly managed and that the techniques which have been used in the past and which have been tried in other countries to control the stench and all of the other problems which are associated with this kind of refuse disposal would be put in place.

Thirdly, I think it is very important that the Government is committed to putting in place a rendering plant which would have the effect of taking off the offal. When you look at it and you examine the production of poultry in Barbados, which has risen considerably over the last couple of years and as I understand it, a lot of that waste is dumped in that area and this also adds to the stench. It includes fish offal and a whole set of waste with animals from the Barbados Marketing Corporation. There was a time when, I believe, that some consideration was given to the establishment of a rendering plant in Barbados. It was not feasible, because there was not enough waste to make it a feasible proposition. However, I think we have been informed now, based on studies which have been done, that because of the production of poultry in Barbados, and because of the fact that we are able to process fish in the way it is being processed now and with the remains from the operations of the Barbados Marketing Corporation, that it is quite feasible that that rendering plant would be something that we could go for. Therefore, this would be the third factor which we would put in place to alleviate this particular problem.

I would hope, Sir, that this is clearly understood. We certainly sympathise with the Honourable Member, but in truth and in fact, this is a matter which is deserving of national support. I really would like to suggest to the Honourable Members on the other side that we should treat this not as a party matter. I don't think it is fair for the Honourable Member to suggest that it is being dealt with on a purely political basis. There are a number of

constituencies which have had landfills. St. Thomas has had one. St. Peter has had two. St. Lucy has had two. Christ Church has had two. The City and St. George. The point is that they are all over the place and it is a matter of concern to all of us. This is a national matter. A matter relating to the environment. A matter relating to the whole question of waste disposal. I would humbly suggest that this particular approach which has been enunciated by the Government be given total support by this Honourable House.

With those words, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

5.15 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 7.

ORDER NO. 7 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
THE SALE OF LAND AT WORKHALL,
SAINT PHILIP TO HITNEY
BARTON TO BE USED FOR
RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this is a simple Resolution. The genesis of it relates to the decision of the Government to dispose by way of sale or lease those properties which were known as public conveniences. This is one of those which was situated at Workhall in St. Philip. A notice was put in the newspapers. Of course, the public conveniences were closed down in 1984. It was public knowledge these were for sale. A number of offers were made. The offer for this particular one by Mr. Whitney Barton in the sum of \$12 000 was accepted by Cabinet. We are now, therefore, seeking approval for the sale of this land to Mr. Barton. This is the purpose of this particular Resolution.

I therefore beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would just like to say a few words about this. I believe the very first public convenience in Barbados of this type was opened at Rosegate in St. John. It is still there. You drive up going towards Massiah Street, very unsightly with broken glass and rotting woodwork.... My late father, I believe, was the person who opened it. Although I was only a child at the time it is remembered that what he said then shocked a lot of people because this was the Barbados Labour Party embarking on its social services programme. He said he hoped within his lifetime they would all have been phased out of existence, but at the moment that was what Barbados needed.

The wheels of history turned. In my term I became a Minister of Health. I was, perhaps, the first person who moved the Cabinet for the conversion of the use of what were formerly public conveniences to some other good social use. The old public bath at the corner of 8th Avenue of New Orleans was converted to a community centre and pavilion which looks on to the Westbury School pasture where Beverley Hills plays. Other people have followed in that mode.

I am sorry the Minister did not say for what use Mr. Barton....

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Into a house. What I rise to point out, Sir, is there are several of these now derelict public conveniences which are the breeding places for mosquitoes and rats. They have dripping taps with the faucets off and facilitate gambling and other undesirable pastimes there. The point that has to be made is this. There are still a few districts in Barbados where certain basic services are yet to be supplied. Very careful studies have to be done before these conveniences and facilities are closed off. You have to be satisfied that in the surrounding neighbourhood there is nobody who still needs to have access for toilet facilities, for water, bathing or whatever else before you close off this service. It is cheaper in the long run for the Government to provide those services and convert these old facilities to more modern and better uses than to leave them in their derelict and rotting condition and for a pocketful of people in a district to be without the basic necessities of running water in their homes or electricity or waterborne services.

I have to assume and I am sure the Minister will reassure us all that these studies have been carried out and that, in fact, all the people in that district are themselves satisfied that they no longer have a use for the facility and where there is need that need has been satisfied. I would hope that with despatch now the Government would move to do something about those remaining, many of which are eyesores and public health hazards.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, just before the question is put I think the Honourable Member for the City is quite right that some of the buildings are in a dilapidated state. Wherever there are derelict buildings they are not only unsightly but they also create a whole set of health problems and provide the opportunity for social problems to arise many of which you would certainly want to contain.

The Government, in continuation, I suppose, of the policy which was put in place by the Barbados Labour Party in 1984 when a decision was taken to close down all of the public conveniences in Barbados... That was the decision which was taken by the Barbados Labour Party. I

therefore would assume when this was done that surveys would have been carried out, or were carried out by the Barbados Labour Party to ensure that decision was based on results of their survey that water and other facilities were available to everybody in the areas where the facilities were operating.

I would want to make the point that I think there is need for one or two public conveniences in certain areas of Barbados. If, for argument sake, you are driving through a particular district and you suddenly had a call of nature, there is really nowhere for you to go. You have to stop, if there is a friend around. If you do not have a friend or you do not know anybody – people nowadays are very reluctant to allow strangers into their houses: one cannot get vexed with that position... I would like to suggest and I really believe that there is need for some carefully located public conveniences in Barbados.

The point also has to be made that it was the Barbados Labour Party that decided to close down all of them. I assume those studies would have been done. I therefore agree with the Honourable Member that where these derelict buildings exist, and there are a number of these buildings which are owned by the Government, not only public conveniences but some other buildings, something has to be done about them.

In the Ministry of Housing and Lands we are carrying out a survey to see where these buildings are located to evaluate the value of them and the use to the Government. We may very well come to a decision that we will have to dispose of some of them as, indeed, we are disposing of these public conveniences. There are a number of requests that have been made. As I said, advertisements were put in the newspapers. There were a number of responses to them. A number of them have been disposed of already. We would certainly like to dispose of all of them because some people have been able to find alternative uses for them.
5.25 p.m.

With those remarks, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 6.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the Reply to Question No. 6 is as follows:

The Ministry of Public Works, Communication and Transportation is presently negotiating with the World Bank for a loan to finance the construction and improvement of

several roads. The road between All Saints Boys' School and Mile-and-a-Quarter is included among the list of roads.

Mr. SPEAKER: Supplementaries? None. End of Oral Replies to Questions.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that brings us to the end of Government Business for the day. I think that the House could profit from a period of reflection next week or so.

I should like to thank Honourable Members for the level of their debate today and the assistance which they have given in helping to put matters in perspective.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 14, 1991 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, speaking on the Adjournment I think that we have all been a little careless in our human relations today. During the little recess that we have just come from, one of our colleagues, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, and his wife, suffered what I can only guess would be a most frightening and chastening experience overseas along with several other Barbadians.

I think we are all grateful that the Honourable Member has not suffered so severely that he could not continue his attendance in this House. Indeed we are all grateful that the lives of all of the Barbadians who were in that coach have been spared.

In particular, on behalf of the Opposition, Sir, I wish to tender our deepest regards to the Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, and his wife, and to express our sincere wishes for a speedy and uneventful recovery on the part of all those who were involved in that unfortunate accident in Florida, Sir.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I should just like to associate the Government naturally and associate myself with the remarks. I would like to say that when I heard of the incident it was not only traumatic. I happened to be in Washington on my way to the University in Jamaica and I got a report that it was these school children. The report came through the room at an OAS meeting that the Minister of Education and these school children were involved. Here I was. However, I attempted to get to Miami in due course on my way to Jamaica. I arrived there shortly after the school children had left for Barbados, but I was briefed.

I am glad to see that the Minister is here. We realize that his wife is still under some pressure but we look forward to both of them being fully recovered in the very, very near future, and all the others who were involved.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not now in his place but I know that had he been here he would wish to join with all of us in saying how happy we are that the incident involving our colleague turned out to be no more dangerous than it actually was. His wife and some other members of the group have suffered some pain and discomfort, but the fact is that we are grateful to God that all of them are with us. My colleague here and I have wintered and summered in this Place and I hate to think of this place without him, Sir. I know that the experience will serve him in greater stead and add to his wisdom in these matters. But I think that in all things we have to give thanks to God that he has been spared.

We are all grateful to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for giving us this opportunity to place on record our distinct pleasure in having him with us in good health, or nearly good health, and we hope that his wife and all the other persons involved will soon recuperate and be back to full health in the shortest possible time.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do endorse the sentiments. I do not know if the Honourable Member wants to make some comment.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I really do not intend to say much on this because just to relive the experience brings back some memories to me which I really want to forget as soon as possible.

But let me say that I have been very heartened by the sentiments which have been expressed in here today by

Honourable Members. I must say that, certainly from the point of view of my family and other people who were involved, we received a tremendous amount of support from Barbadians who are living in the United States of America, particularly the Florida area, and also Barbadians here who called and expressed concern and certainly offered whatever assistance they could. It really brought home to me the realization that in difficult times Barbadians stand together. I think this is a very heartening experience which we have had. I suppose, being a member of the Government, a lot of the enquiries were channelled through me to find out about the welfare of those other persons who were involved in the accident. On their behalf I would certainly also want to express appreciation for the many concerns that were expressed.

I think that the governmental representatives in Miami, the Honorary Consul and other Barbadians who are working there operated beyond the call of duty when they were contacted. They came up from Miami on a regular basis and visited the hospitals to get a report on all of the people so that they could report the matter here. Of course, the school officials – luckily the Headmaster from Combermere School was there and he was able to take charge of that particular area. I think that everybody worked extremely hard to allay the fears of the persons who were involved. Once more I say that we are very pleased with the sentiments which have been expressed.

I wish to thank the Honourable House for this.

The question that this sitting be now adjourned until Tuesday, May 14, 1991, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly.
5.35 p.m.

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ARTHUR, Mr. O. S. (St. Peter)
EASTMOND, Mr. R. C. (St. James North)
GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy)
HALL, Hon. W. W. (St. Michael West Central)
MILLER, Miss B. A. (City of Bridgetown)
SIMMONS, Mr. D. A. C. (St. Thomas)
St. JOHN, Mr. H. B. (Christ Church South)
TAITT, Hon. B. M. (St. Michael West)
TULL, Mr. L. R. (St. George South)
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