THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 12, 1991.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 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. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition)
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A.(Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Health)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation and Leader of the House)
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)
Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc.(Econ.), (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)
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.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Development and Culture)
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. G. W. PAYNE
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND

Prayers were led by Fr. Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes for the last meeting have now been circulated and so I am going to ask that those Minutes be deferred until the next meeting of the House.

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 October and November 1990. Also, the Auditor General's Report, together with the Appropriation and other accounts, for the year ended 31st March, 1990.

MESSAGES FROM HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER: Her Excellency the Governor-General has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that she will be absent from the country during the period 11th to 24th February, 1991 on a private visit to Australia.

Under the provisions of section 29(1)(b) of the Constitution, the Chief Justice, the Honourable Sir Denys Williams, GCM, will perform the functions of the office of Governor-General during the period of Her Excellency's absence.

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Representation of the People (Expenses)(Amendment) Regulations, 1991.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of a Resolution to approve the guarantee by the Government of a loan in the sum of U.S. dollars equivalent to Can. $3,900,000, not to exceed U.S. $3.9 million, to be made by the Export Development Corporation to the Barbados National Oil Company Limited in order to finance the purchase of materials and equipment.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of this day's sitting.

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the order of the day. Order No. 8.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1990-91,
No. 12 – $4,336,717

HEAD 14 – MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that Head 14 stand part. In doing so, Sir, I think it is fair that I should just make a few comments on the need for these various sums of money to supplement this particular Head, although in my opinion the Addendum that accompanies this Resolution is fairly explanatory.

In the first place, Sir, Subhead 1 – General Administration – $39,455 was voted for this Head and we are now seeking to supplement it by $4,961. This sum was provided to meet the payment of entertainment allowances and substitutes. By August 31, 1990 the expenditure amounted to $21,049, leaving a balance of $18,406, but it is anticipated that by the end of the financial year that is, between the period September 1, 1990 and March 31, 1991 – that $23,357 would be required. The arithmetic would therefore show that the amount of money in hand, when taken from the amount of money required, that we now require $4,961 in order to supplement this particular item.

Under Utilities, $45,431 was voted and we are now seeking to supplement it in the sum of $35,262.
12.30 p.m.

By the end of August, the amount spent under this particular item was $44,103. Included in that expenditure, Sir, was a figure from the previous financial year which could not have been met at the time of the closure of the last financial year and had to be paid from this year's allocations and therefore, the amount which we are now seeking, Sir, $35,262 represents the difference between the existing funds, existing at the end of August which was $1,238 and the amount estimated that would be required for the end of the financial year which was $36,500.

Airport Management Services, Item 7, Utilities. Sir, the vote was $1,837,286; $414,015 is required. Here again, Sir, included in this year's figure, but not taken account of at the time of the vote was the sum of $424,851, which was used to pay outstanding bills for January, February and March at the end of the last financial year 1989-90, but which had not been brought into account by the time the year ended. I would also state, Sir, that in this particular case as well, some provision is being made for some increase due to the increase in the global price of fuel, a very small amount, Sir.

Under Subhead 4: Maintenance and Development Unit, Supplies and Materials. This is a very small amount required. It was a small vote in the first place and a small amount now is required. The amount required is to purchase photocopying equipment material – the sum of $750, computer supplies $750, office supplies $500 and stationery $500, the amount being $2,500.

Operating Expenses, Item 12 – Vote $42,500, the amount required is $26,393. This vote was for the payment of postage, purchase of tickets for issue at the airport car park, purchase of uniforms for the staff at the Maintenance and Development Unit. The expenditure at the end of

August was $1,067 but, Sir, $41,344 was committed in respect of orders that had been made for which no bills had been received at that particular time. Also, the amount of $9,563 is required for the purchase of car-park tickets printed and supplied during the period September 1, 1989 and March 21, 1990. That is during the last financial year. The bills had not been submitted at the end of the last financial year so that, Sir, I hope it is understood that the amount of $26,393 is a reasonable amount. The amount is first, for the supply of those tickets and then an additional $7,000 as well to meet the cost of uniforms for the Maintenance of Personnel.

Air Traffic Control Services, Subhead 5, – $13,019 voted, now seeking to supplement it by the amount of $9,500. This amount of money, Sir, the exact amount of money, $9,500, was expended during this financial year to meet the costs of arrears of acting allowances payable as a consequence of the recent upgrading exercise. This should have been paid during the last financial year but is now paid, Sir, during this financial year.

The Immigration Department – $26,909 voted, required now $4,111. This amount, Sir, was a result of additional sums being required for purchase of a safe for $1,840 as well as required for the purchase of 12 filing cabinets and a trolley for use at the Immigration Office at the airport. The additional sum for 12 filing cabinets was $2,271. The original quotations had been $1,760. In fact, the final purchase was $3,760 for the purchase of those filing cabinets.

I therefore move, Sir, that Head 14 stand part.

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

CAPITAL – HEAD 70 – MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND IMMIGRATION
SUBHEAD 1: CONSTRUCTION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Subhead 1: Construction, Item 24 – Purchase of Vehicles. Sir, the amount of $84,000 was voted to meet the cost of a number of vehicles, three vehicles, that is – a station wagon, one land rover and one general purpose vehicle for use at the Air Traffic Control Office, Maintenance Development Unit and the Immigration Department respectively.

The sum of $6,840 was paid from the current provision this year to the Crown Agents as a 15% procurement fee on the vehicles and the equipment is now being sought to offset this amount in this year's Estimates.

Under Item 25, $268,600 were voted. Out of that amount, Sir, $100 was allocated to provide for a microwave link between the radar station at the Grantley Adams International Airport and the Air Traffic Control section of the airport. The purpose of the link, Sir, is to replace the cable communications system that is currently in place. It will now be done, Sir, by a microwave link. The current communications system is susceptible to breakdown or interference and any interruption in this telecommunications link could contribute to a serious catastrophe at the airport.
12.40 p.m.

The airport authorities are now ready to install the new Microwave Communications System. We are seeking supplementary provision of $35 000 in order to meet that expenditure.

I wish to move that Head 70 stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I cannot recall the Crown Agents Service Agreement 1989/90 being made a document of the House or, in fact, being made available to the Committee of the whole House. I must ask the Minister if he would be so kind as to make the Agreement available for the benefit of Honourable Members of this Committee.

I am still hearing complaints and representations from local Barbadians doing business with companies in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, principally because the Crown Agents receive a procurement fee. As a result, the local agents receive no fees on transactions entered into directly between the Crown Agents on behalf of the Government with overseas suppliers. What happens thereafter is the Crown Agents do not give follow up service. Very often the local suppliers are asked to perform the functions that normally agents or suppliers importing would have done. It not only results, therefore, in lack of money being available in payment of fees to the agents but it has an effect, of course, on their viability and their employment.

I think we would wish to be satisfied that the arrangement is not all in favour of the Crown Agents and to the detriment of local employment opportunities. I must therefore ask the Minister if he would give us the details of this Agreement or to make, at the appropriate time, a copy of it available for the benefit of the House and give the Committee the assurance that the arrangement is not working to the detriment of local employment opportunities as well as to the viability of local businesses.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I have listened to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition. I would wish to give him the assurance that we will make the Agreement available to him or to the House in whatever form he would wish it to be made. I believe the

usual processes of consultation can take place. We will make the information available after those consultations.

The question that Head 70 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, under Head 19, Subhead 6, $13 117 is required to supplement the provision for the Energy Division. That sum of money is needed to meet the cost of rental for the months of February and March, 1991, $4 750. That was due to the payment of the outstanding rents from the current provisions.

We have also to provide the balance of funds which is $8 367 for the replacement of a stereo microscope. I believe the stereo microscope is some type of equipment they use to sound. It is also used in the geophysical survey in the Energy and Natural Resources Division. The sum of $7 650 was provided in the Estimates.

One question that might be asked is how the sum in the Estimates was $7 650 and now we are coming for a supplementary of $8 367. The reason for that is that one of the officers in the Ministry did not convert that $7 650 to Barbadian dollars. It was Canadian dollars. That is the reason for the difference there.

Subhead 8 – an additional sum of $20 000 is required under this item to provide payment of an honorarium to the Honorary Consul and the Business Advisor in Toronto and to meet further contingencies which may arise during the balance of the financial year. I think the Honorary Consul is a Mr. Williams, as far as I can remember.

Under Subhead 11 the sum of $2 500 is required to supplement the provision of $50 944. It is to meet the cost of fuel and the maintenance of vehicles. This request for the additional funds is due mainly to the increased cost of fuel and for the payment of increased insurance premiums because a new vehicle was acquired during the year.

I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister just mentioned that some of this money was earmarked for the paying of an Honorary Consul in Toronto. I wonder if the Minister would be good enough to give an indication to the House who is the Honorary Consul? Why, indeed, is it necessary to have an Honorary Consul in a city where there is already a Consulate General? This seems a little bit unusual. I would like the Minister to explain it for the benefit of the House.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: While the Honourable Minister is being briefed, because he obviously has not been briefed today, perhaps he could explain to us the wording of the Note because it says it is to meet the increased cost of technical assistance provided on behalf of the Government of Barbados. It would be a little unusual for an Honorary Consul to provide technical assistance on behalf of the Government and then ask for money for it. He then, certainly, would not be honorary. There is something wrong with this. There is something wrong with what is being presented. It is not only the Minister's presentation but the written document.

Barbados is giving technical assistance, as I understand it, in this area to some other person. The terms of that technical assistance, it appears, are that the Government did not use its own resources but outside resources. Those outside resources have charged a fee which we are now seeking the approval of the House to pay. Something is wrong there.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have already provided the name of the Honorary Consul. His name is Mr. Sykes Williams, a Barbadian. As far as I am aware, it was not a question of the Honorary Consul asking for fees. As was stated by me when I introduced this supplementary, this item is to provide an honorarium to the Honorary Consul. It is not a question of fees. It is an honorarium of $10 935 to the gentleman. That is all it is. 12.50 p.m.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, unfortunately I was not in my place when this issue was raised so I do not know that I am fully seized of what the issue is. But I understand that some reference was made to the appointment of an Honorary Consul in Toronto, Mr. Sykes Williams. Negotiations are not entirely complete in relation to the appointment of Mr. Sykes Williams at the moment. A decision has been taken, in principle, for the appointment of an Honorary Consul. Mr. Williams has been down. We have been negotiating the terms and conditions of his employment. They are very close to being completed. But that is the present state. We have almost completed the negotiations with Mr. Williams with a view to his appointment as Honorary Consul, principally with a view to promoting trade and investment for us in Toronto and in Canada generally.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is digging a deeper hole for the Government.

I cannot understand – and as the Honourable Minister was not in the House, and perhaps if he hears the question, he will give an answer that makes a lot more sense than what he has already said – why must there be an appointment of an Honorary Consul in a city where there is a permanent Consulate-General? The Government has also

noised abroad its intention to establish a number of trade commissioners or commercial attaches or whatever name it seeks to call these people. Why is it necessary to have commercial attaches or trade representatives attached to our consulates and missions abroad and still pay out money to Honorary Consuls who work outside the missions? In my experience, I know they are very rarely accountable to the people in the missions. Why is there need for this duplication? The further question was, why is it necessary to pay an Honorary Consul? Honorary Consuls are not paid.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the question which the Honourable Member has asked, why is it necessary to pay Honorary Consuls? Honorary Consuls are not paid a salary. There are certain expenses in relation to their offices which are met and which are not unreasonable, things like telephone calls, things like certain aspects of entertainment. But there is no salary attaching to the office of Honorary Consul.

The suggestion is that there is duplication of effort in areas where there are consulates, where there is a Consul-General in the city. What one has to recognize, Mr. Chairman, is that our missions abroad, the consulates, are not perhaps as fully staffed as they need to be to deal with all aspects of consular work, trade promotions, the investment which is needed. This is an effort to highlight the importance of the need to aggressively market what we want to achieve.

It is a matter of the bodies you have to do the promotion which you need. If you do not use the skills of people who are able and effective and who live in the jurisdiction who have important contacts in the jurisdictions and skills which are achieved at minimal cost, it means that you have to look around for persons to appoint to positions to achieve the same objective. I am saying you can use advantageously the services of people who reside in the jurisdictions who, by virtue of that residence and participation of business activity in the areas are in a position to assist in promoting development, in encouraging investment and things of that kind. It is, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, an effective way of assisting in the overall effort which the consulate is required to perform. It is a matter of assisting the consulate in its work and not duplicating the effort. If you do not provide the service one way, it has to be provided in another way.

The other alternative would be to look around for persons to appoint to strengthen the Consulate-General in order to do the work which is required. If the services can be provided and obtained by this technique we think this is a more useful and economical technique of achieving the same objectives, in providing the service you need.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, perhaps it is a little bit too early in this session for me to needle. But I genuinely want information. I will needle later on, if necessary.

Is the Minister of Foreign Affairs now telling the House that this $20 000 honorarium is to pay telephone bills, money to travel to banquets, host receptions and pay for stationery? I know the Minister has not got to tell me that – it is customary for the Government of Barbados to pay for stationery and so on for Honorary Consuls abroad.

The Minister who introduced this measure, in Committee, refers to an honorarium. There can be no definition of honorarium which means you are paying money for telephone bills, hosting a luncheon and for travelling across the province and so on.

I want to sound a note of caution, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. There are a number of foreign Governments – I do not know if the Canadian Government is one of them, I do not remember – who are uncomfortable with the appointment of these so-called trade people. They do not want to give the normal courtesies, diplomatic status and this kind of thing because they do not consider them as falling within the ambit of the Vienna Convention which deals with diplomats and their rights to status and so on. Th y are nervous about them. Therefore I want to ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to hasten slowly before he rushes into these things.

In this context, I also want to mention that the Government, not many years ago, paid an Honorary Consul in Atlanta, Georgia in excess of $200 000 to do some work in Atlanta, Georgia. There has also been an Honorary Consul in Ontario, Canada. That is why I want to know why he has another one now. If you want me to call names I will call names. He was also paid tens of thousands of dollars to do I do not know what, I think it was some work. I am not complaining about payment of the money if a service was provided for the Government and people of Barbados that merited it.

But it is certainly a very strange practice to appoint Honorary Consuls and then pay them large sums of money. In respect to the one of over $200 000, you could not even find it anywhere in the Estimates, Sir. It was hidden somewhere. The man is the President of some airline in Florida.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: It did not operate so in my time. In my time, we used to follow the rules.
1.00 p.m.

We followed the rules in our time.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. L. R. TULL: It goes now from following the rules to narrow focus, but I don't mind if the focus is narrow so long as we follow the rules; and Mr. Chairman I am looking for somebody to replace it. I am not sure yet which one but I am looking for a man. I have not decided yet. But this is not being contentious, Sir, there may be a few things that may be contentious about it but you have to be very careful, Sir, that we do not set bad precedents with the appointments of Honorary Consuls overseas because when you start it, Sir, it is very difficult to stop it and we have no idea where this will all end.

Hon. M. A. KING: I just want to make one final point and perhaps I could then leave the issue. The direction in which we are going is to deal with this type of appointment on the basis of incentive payments so that incentive payments will be made in relation to any benefits which accrue to the country. The Honourable Member is suggesting that sums of money have been paid out to Honorary Consuls without being accounted for. That will not be the basis on which arrangements are made here-on in. The whole point about the negotiations which are going on with the proposed Honorary Consul in Toronto is that whatever payments he receives will be on the basis of incentive awards for business which comes into Barbados, for benefit which the country receives and that will be the main structure on which payments to this proposed Honorary Consul will be paid.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: That is a very dangerous statement just made by the Honourable Minister because we now seem to have a new category of person, a person who is paid on a contingency basis, the more useful he is, the more fees he gets, but the Honourable Minister I am sure is very much in a position to remember and recognise that it is a practice which is illegal under our laws. You cannot pay anybody on a contingent basis like that. What is disturbing about this is, Sir, that the explanation we have received so far do not square with what is set out in the notes. The notes say very clearly that the sum of $20,000 is required to supplement the provision under this item to meet the increase cost of technical assistance provided on behalf of the Government of Barbados. Somebody did work on behalf of the Government of Barbados and we want to know the details of it. We do not know what he did, we don't know if it is the technical assistance the Government of Barbados provided to somebody else which they did not have officers to be able to provide and they hired somebody else to do it. It does not say it was provided to the Government of Barbados, it does not say the technical assistance was provided to the Government of Barbados, it says it was provided on behalf of the Government of Barbados so the obligation is the Government of Barbados and then the Government of Barbados did not do it and they got somebody else to do it. So now we hear it is all tied in now with the fact that the person who happens to have provided this service is now being regarded as considered on a special fee basis to be the Honorary Consul, but if he is going to be paid on a fee for reward basis or a fee for service basis he could not be honorary. That is just a different method of remunerating him. Instead of paying him a monthly salary, you are going to have some yardstick to pay him and that yard stick is going to relate to your evaluation of how useful he is to you or not and then he will not be honorary. So we must look at this whole thing in the context.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I really have to get into this because we are about to have a major debate on an issue that does not really exist. The whole question of whether a person is called honorary or not in the consular field bears no relationship to the issue which the Honourable Member is raising. An honorarium or honorary suggests that it is not a salary. We accept that as given, however, when a person who is a citizen of the receiving country is about to be appointed for work to be done in that country, if the person cannot carry the status that would exempt that person from the laws of the country then the status which is conferred is an honorary status. Hence we have honorary consuls in Barbados representing countries overseas, those countries acknowledge that they are doing some consular work but those persons are citizens of Barbados and, therefore, they can only be honorary because they fall fully within the laws of Barbados, whereas if they were consular officers or diplomats they would be exempted under International Law. Therefore the designation honorary relates more to the diplomatic or consular status than to the question of payment.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There is no one over there who is going to be able to tell me that what I am saying is not valid and I accept it unless they can show reason why. The fact is that you can have an honorary consular officer in the jurisdiction of a Consulate General. It happens for Barbados now because for the Consul General at New York his jurisdiction is the United States.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me have some order please.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The jurisdiction of the Consul General at New York is the United States and there are Honorary Consuls at Florida, there are Honorary Consuls at Georgia, there are Honorary Consuls everywhere. The question as to whether an honorary consul can be attached to a Consulate General is a matter of style and form.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well if you want to talk dollars and cents talk dollars and cents but don't discuss it on terms

of Honorary Consuls. Deal with the dollars and cents but leave out the Honorary Consuls, confusing people who don't know any better. Mr. Chairman the matter of whether the man is called honorary ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Member just give me a minute. I would just like to caution Honourable Members that we cannot tolerate talking across the Chamber when an Honourable Member is speaking. Desist from it, thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What disappoints me is that the Leader of the Opposition is in a position to help guide the ones over there. He knows the position with regard to what constitutes an honorary consul. I am not discussing anything to do with any money, I am discussing the point raised by the Honourable Member ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am discussing the point raised by the Honourable Member about how a person can be an Honorary Consul where there is a Consulate General and I am saying that is standard everyday garden variety procedure. The Honourable Member can mumble as much as he wants about foolishness.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well get up and talk sense. If the Honourable Member gets up and talks sense I will listen to him, but the issue he raised is a non-issue. This is the point I am making, Sir, you can have an Honorary Consular officer within the jurisdiction of a Consulate. That is a straightforward fact.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am nothing to do with that. That is a matter for you to worry about. That is not an issue. The Honourable Member has already spoken to that issue. The Foreign Minister has addressed that issue. He says that the issue does not arise because the man does not even exist as an employee or whatever. That is a matter for you all. I am not getting in that. I am dealing with the final principle. Don't get in here trying to confuse the issue about honorary.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let me just say that the addendum that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was reading, I believe that, in an effort to – I am putting it this way – probably to make it as short as possible, I should state that this Addendum did not set out fully the situation as I understand it and as written on my file. The Addendum and the whole idea behind this, Mr. Speaker, was not that the $20,000 was to pay the Honorary Consul for professional services.

1.10 p.m.

The sum of $20,000 was required to supplement the provision under the item for two things: To enable a payment of an honorarium to the proposed Honorary Consul/Business Developer-Adviser if that became necessary and to cover contingencies under the item which is used to support technical assistance provided to and by the Government and by non-Governmental agencies and institutions.

Now the first point made by the Member for Christ Church South was that the $20,000 was to pay the Honorary Consul and that was what was on his Addendum. I am saying and apologizing for this Addendum because this Addendum did not set out fully what it should have done. The thing was not fully done. I must go ahead and point out, Mr. Chairman, as well that the professional services that you are hearing about here and the technical assistance were services given on the United States/Barbados double taxation agreement and the local costs including housing for experts and advisers assigned to various agencies. So it is not a sum of money specifically for the Honorary Consul. It is a sum of money that we are providing part of in case you had to pay it and the other half is for services rendered otherwise with regards to the double taxation treaty and other incidental costs. That is what it is all about.

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

HEAD 20 – REVENUE COLLECTION

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Head 20, Mr. Chairman, is a request for supplementary provision of $62,364 which has become necessary because the Customs Department had to meet the full payment of wages to unestablished and casual staff, entertainment, duty allowances, and overtime to the end of the financial year. Now the incidence of overtime payments, Mr. Chairman, during the year has been quite high and it has made inroads into the allocations for the payment of wages and allowances. They were inescapable commitments where you had to get people to do overtime in order that certain work could be kept up and it is considered that $62,364 will be adequate to carry us over to the end of the financial year.

I beg that Head 20 stand part.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very pleased that although my good friend, Honourable Member for St. Philip South, is not the only Minister of Finance and that very early in this term, Sir, he is introducing Bills and Resolutions rather than having to wait until the other only Minister of Finance is not in the country in order to do so as one was led to believe, Sir. I also want to say, Sir, that even though his contributions to date to this session have been

modest so far, they have been far more fluent and far more outstanding than we have in this House in recent times been accustomed to hearing, Sir, from the Minister of Finance. I would want him to know, Sir, that I am very pleased on his behalf that he has been elevated to that position, Sir. I am very pleased for him, Sir, and trust that he will use all of his economics to bring greater insight to bear in the presentation of economic issues from the other side, Sir.

I just want to say there will be ample time in the days to come for us to dilate in the House on economic issues. But there is a wide debate sweeping the country, Sir, concerning revenue collection which is really the substance of this Head which the House is dealing with. We are in remarkable times, Sir. For the first year since full internal self-government in Barbados we are in the process in this country of experiencing a very substantial decrease in Government's revenues without their having been a decrease in the taxes. As far as I can recollect, Sir, the only other previous occasion on which Government's revenues in Barbados have ever fallen in a financial year was in 1959 and then so modestly that one could have presumed that it was because of a seasonal factor. But this year, Sir, the decline in Government's revenues since 1990 for sure has been year long and savage. For the first three months of the calendar year Government's revenues were $285 million, Sir, as compared to $300 million for the year previously. For months like May, if one may illustrate, Government in 1990 collected $64.3 million as compared, Sir, to $81 million in 1989. In October, Sir, Government collected $86.9 million last year as compared to $110 million in 1989, a substantial reduction in Government revenues without a cut in the tax rate. This, Mr. Speaker, could only have occurred if there had been a considerable contraction in the level of economic activity in this country.

It is significant, Sir, when one compares what is happening now with trends in Barbados that even in the two previous recessions, Sir, the recession of 1974-75 and 1981-82, there was no reduction in Government revenues. But this last calendar year, Sir, without a cut in the tax rate there has been a substantial and fierce reduction in the level of Government revenues. I think, Sir, that beyond any other indication the pattern of Government's revenues for the last calendar year tells its own story about the grief and difficulties that the Barbados economy has had to experience. The decline has been real despite the attempts by some persons to try to provide a lot of misinformation about the extent of that decline and the causes of it. The decline is real and Government's revenues are the best indicator of that decline. But the misinformation, Sir, is abroad. For example, we are being told that one of the reasons for the decline in Government's Consumption Tax has to do with the nature of the concessions that Government provided in this last Budget and that is asking us, Sir, to ignore the fact, first of all, that the decline in the Consumption Tax preceded the Budget, but also if one understands the administration and application of the Consumption Tax in Barbados you can never believe that the movement of the grace period for the payment of Consumption Tax from 21 days to 60 days could cause a decline in the Consumption Tax of the order and magnitude that is now being observed in this country and observed, Sir, from the other side. A leading university academic is telling us, Sir, that that change from 21 days to 60 days has accounted for almost 2 months loss of revenue.

Anybody, Sir, familiar with Chapter 63, Section 11 of the Laws of Barbados will know that that is foolishness. Section 11, Sir, of the Consumption Tax Act prescribes the two situations that will arise where consumption tax has to be paid. If you import into Barbados a finished good, you have to pay consumption tax on that finished good at the point of entry. There is no grace period, has never been, and is not now. However, Sir, if you import a good into Barbados to be used in the manufacture of another good, then you were previously given a 21 days grace period within which to pay the consumption tax and in the last Budget that was extended to 60 days. The point however, Mr. Chairman, is that the bulk of the consumption tax raised in Barbados falls on the implication of finished goods and not on that latter category of goods for which a grace period applies for good reasons, one reason being, Mr. Chairman, is that a large number of enterprises producing commodities in Barbados using raw materials operate under the Fiscal Incentives Act and under the Consumption Tax Act, Sir, those enterprises do not pay consumption tax on those commodities. The House must also be told, Sir, that there are some commodities that are produced in Barbados that are not regarded as chargeable goods for the purpose of the Consumption Tax Act. We remember, Sir, how a former Minister of the Democratic Labour Party almost tried to make local vegetables chargeable goods for the purpose of the payment of consumption tax by including it in the Appendix. But the point I am making is that a former Minister of the Democratic Labour Party who is no longer with us almost made local vegetables as chargeable goods by simply including it in the Appendix of the Act.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order please?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I said in 1987. You can say when it was done and all of you praised him when he did it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: But the point I am making, Sir, is that it is wrong for the impression to be put abroad that concessions given to the private sector by way of the extension of the grace period from 21 days to 60 days for the payment of the consumption tax is at the base of decline in the consumption tax. That is not true, Sir.

1.20 p.m.

The commodities that are produced form only a small proportion of the base against which consumption tax is raised, and therefore one has to have a wider set of reasons to explain why Government's revenues have been declining, and in particular why the consumption tax has fallen as savagely as it has. The point that has to be made, Sir, is that the revenue performance for the last calendar year indicates a tremendous contraction in the level of economic activity.

Sir, I will have more time in days to come to deal with this matter, but I want to advert to two techniques that the Government is now using in order to provide misinformation to the public about the nature of the economic decline that Barbados has experienced. One was perpetrated in the Throne Speech, and it is unworthy of Government. The Government is trying now to suggest that the decline in economic activity last year was forecast by the Government, predicted by the Government, and that we were not understanding the Minister of Finance when he was telling us that the economy was declining. We are now hearing that, Mr. Chairman, and in the Throne Speech we even had the remarkable situation where from the lips of the Head of State of this country came the words: "However during 1990, as predicted in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals of May 2, 1990, economic activity contracted..." The Head of State of this country, Sir, said those words in her Throne Speech.

Now, Sir, we go to the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, which is a document of the House, page 10: "On present trends the Barbados economy is expected to record moderate real growth.....", not to contract, "..... by 2 per cent", so that we have a situation in this country where a Governor-General giving a Throne Speech, written by the Government, could tell the country what is in essence a blatant lie.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would suggest that you withdraw that remark and rephrase your comment.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I withdraw the remark, Sir, but it is said that last year the Minister of Finance came to this House and told all Barbados to expect real growth of 2% and now we are hearing that we did not understand what he was trying to tell us, but it is here written down for posterity that "tourism and manufacturing are expected to expand...." That is what was said in this House last year in the Budget. It is part of our economic history and now we did not understand what we were being told. I say, Sir, it reaches the stage where that misinformation is about to become official.

I believe that we have a responsibility to fight that kind of tendency in this country. We have a responsibility from this side to draw to Government's attention wherever Government sets out to mislead the people of this country, and we will fight from this side to make sure that statements on the Barbados economy are accurate and truthful.

We are also hearing another person speaking at length about the Barbados economy. I wish to advise my good friend, the Member for St. Philip South, that now he has so admirably and so fluently taken on the responsibility of being Government's main spokesman on finance that he must not by any means abdicate his responsibility and let that other person be the main spokesman on finance on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party. He is doing a horrible job.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Yesterday, Sir, we would have read a statement where he is using the other technique of misinformation, trying to say that the information published by the Central Bank, or at the disposal of the Central Bank, is overstating the extent of the decline. He refers to the fact that the Central Bank is presenting a figure that is worse than the real facts because their estimation of the decline in tourism is 20%. I am telling this House, Mr. Chairman, that that person who is also a Director of the Central Bank has access to the economic outlook that was prepared by the Central Bank and presented to its Board at the start of the year. He will not find in that economic report any statement to the effect that construction activity declined by 20%. I challenge anybody on the other side to get up and say that the decline in construction activity, as contained in the Central Bank document, was more than 12.1%, but he finds it convenient to exaggerate the decline in construction by a factor of 50% in order to bring the integrity of the Central Bank into disrepute.

When people start to use this kind of technique, Sir, we have to fight it, because he is in a position to know that the Central Bank is not operating on the basis that construction activity fell by 20%. The public at large does not have access to the information that he has, but he is prepared to mislead the public mainly to reduce the effect of the Central Bank saying that the Barbados economy declined by 3 1/2%.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

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

HEAD 73 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, this supplementary became necessary because the original amount voted has become short. It is not enough. The provision was $630,000 under this Item and it needs to be supplemented by $153,000 to enable the final payment of $112,000 approximately to the consultants, Maxwell Stamp Associates, who are carrying out the consultancy on the export and marketing study on contract with the Government of Barbados. It is also to make payment of $40,000 to the lobbyist the Barbados Government has in the United States of America. This sum is necessary to take us through to the end of the financial year.

With those remarks, I beg to move that Head 73 stand part.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, at the very outset of this session I would really want to repeat a plea that I used to make in the previous session. Whenever Government prepares these studies, it also sends copies to members of the private sector organisations. Let us agree that if it can send these studies to private sector groups and other interest groups in Barbados for their comments, that out of courtesy and respect for our status as Members, the people's representatives, that it will with the same effort send copies of these studies to Members of the House.
1.30 p.m.

I really believe, Sir, that we will eventually get a copy of this study, but our recent parliamentary experience has been sullied. There is a long standing practice that we must stop whereby we get these studies. Members of the private sector in a generality can see them, but we as Members of the House cannot, and we can only see them by a member of the private sector who has access to a study that is too confidential for our eyes, making a copy available to us. We have to stop that Sir. We have to start treating ourselves properly as parliamentarians and I, on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, would want to say to the Government that we are interested in seeing export competitive studies; that we are all in this together where the problem of export development is concerned.

Our manifesto, Sir, is absolutely wonderful in relation to the strategies that it has prescribed for export development. If the Government has not yet had the opportunity to study it in depth, I commend it to Government as a working document that could even amplify what might be contained in this export competitive study, Sir. But above all, we need to get these studies coming to the House and to enshrine the primacy of the House as a place for the discussion of publications, Sir. That is my only consideration in this matter.

The question that Head 73 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 85 – MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND SPORTS
SUBHEAD 5 – GYMNASIUM

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, under Head 85, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Subhead 5 – Gymnasium, Object 23 – Structures. The amount of $3,547,154 is required. This amount is required to facilitate a further drawing down of the Chinese loan for the construction of the gymnasium and to meet certain contractual obligations associated with the gymnasium project.

I would just like to begin by saying Sir, that the amount of $7,107,511 was provided in the approved Estimates of 1990-91 under Head 85, Subhead 5, Gymnasium, Item 23 – Structures, and today an expenditure of $2,159,283 has been spent leaving an uncommitted balance of $4,948,223. The projected expenditure for the period November 1990 to March 31, 1991 is as follows:

Civil Works, that is road works, car parks and drainage – $700,000.
Electrical equipment and installation – $400,000.
Thirty-five percent of the Chinese contribution due on November 1, 1990 as per the contract – $5,344,518.
Forty percent of the Barbados contribution due on December 1, 1990 also as per the contract – $2,050,884.
A total therefore of $8,495,382.

Sir, the contribution by the Chinese side will be drawn down from the Chinese loan of approximately BDS$16 million and the amount of $5,341,518 will enable the book transaction to be made. The contribution of the $2,050,884 by the Barbados side will represent actual cash disbursements. Sir, in a nutshell, what we are saying is that the amount projected is $8.4 million and we have an uncommitted amount of $4.9 million and therefore what is required is $8 million minus the $4.9 million which will be $3,547,154.

I only need to say Sir, that the work commenced on October 1, 1990 and the Chinese have been very hard at work and are on schedule and therefore this provision, Sir, is required so that we can get on with the job. If there are any other things that Honourable Members would like to know, Sir, I would gladly give but I would just like to think, Sir, that so far the project is on stream and we expect that the gymnasium will finish on time in June 1992.

I would also mention that the gymnasium will now have a seating capacity of 4 000 people and we will have about 12 indoor disciplines in this gymnasium, Sir. Having said that, Sir, I would now ask that Head 85 stand part.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I wonder why this project has taken so long. I owe it to this country and to this Honourable Chamber to correct some misinformation and the misconception of this project. There is a tendency for people to criticize projects initiated or conceptualized by the Barbados Labour Party Government but this is a classic example as to how people mislead the public of Barbados. I refer to the Democratic Labour Party. This project, Mr. Chairman was...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Can we have some order?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: ... conceptualised by the Barbados Labour Party Government and five years ago in 1985 an agreement was signed with the Chinese Government to build this gymnasium. I had the honour of signing on behalf of the Government and people of Barbados as the then Minister of Sports and I would have thought that the project by now would have been completed and the various disciplines taking place at that site.

I remember a couple months after the victory of the Democratic Labour Party, the Minister was on record as saying that very shortly, within two weeks, this gymnasium would have got off the ground. It was said at the beginning of the basketball season in that year and one wonders why the taxpayers of Barbados have got to pay an increased cost which goes along with this project. The point is because of the delay in starting this project we are now faced with additional funds. We have to find the additional funds to complete it.
1.40 p.m.

I think it is fair that it should go on record today that it is not a project conceived by the Democratic Labour Party though it is a very good project. I am sure that all sportsmen in Barbados laud it but it is a project misimplemented by the other side.

One of the things I would like also to mention is the fact that there is no truth whatsoever in saying that the Barbados Labour Party Government did not consider the site at Wildey. The present Minister responsible for Sports has the files. One would hope that he desists, or his party desists, from repeating what is now an untruth.

Two sites were looked at, one at Passage Road as well as one at Wildey. It was felt that in order to speed up the signing of the loan that the then Government should identify a site. The Vice Minister from China came to Barbados and toured the site. It was he who recommended that site be included in the recommendation. At no time was the site at Wildey ruled out.

The site at Wildey which now houses the Swimming Association as well as the Barbados Lawn Tennis Association was earmarked by the Barbados Labour Party Government for these sporting disciplines. The Barbados Lawn Tennis Association was encouraged to go there. A site was provided. Money which was supposed to go to the then Government was given to the Barbados Lawn Tennis Association to enable it to build courts at Wildey. In other words, we looked at that overall area to have a sporting complex.

I have already taken this matter up with the Minister of Sports. I reminded him that he should no longer state when he is at public functions that it is a project of the Democratic Labour Party but that he must give credit where credit is due and it is due to the Barbados Labour Party. The Honourable Member has assured me that he will be more careful in his perusal of files in future.

I just want to let him know that we on this side welcome and support the Subhead. We look forward to seeing the completion. I am sure the Honourable Minister would not deny me my rightful place when it is officially opened and the other Members of this side. Not at Sherbourne but at Wildey.

Thank you.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I have no difficulty in telling the Honourable Member that he will be invited at the opening but his name is not to go near that plaque. I just wish to tell him that. He used to be my neighbour so I wish to be very generous to him. It is true that it was not conceived by the Democratic Labour Party. Nowhere have we ever said that the gymnasium was conceived by the Democratic Labour Party. No one has ever said that.

What has happened is that when I assumed the office of Minister responsible for Tourism and Sports I found out, having perused the files, quite a few things. I found out that they were going to put it down at the top of Baxters Road. To me that would be the quintessence of ignorance. I could not believe that you could put something like a gymnasium there where you are going to cater for 12 disciplines with the parking that would be required.

I am going to give credit where credit is due. I am going to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's but I will render under me the things that are mine too. I wish to say that the ex- Minister, since we were neighbours....

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Well,"former" but "ex" too. I wish to say that oftimes when we discussed things, since he

was my neighbour, he had told me in confidence that the site at Passage Road was not really the intended site but he had to put down the name of a site while the contract was...

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: That is true. I never tell lies. Sir, one thing I do not do is tell lies. The Honourable Member will know that is true. When I said to him how could you put a gymnasium at the top of Passage Road he said, "Wes, that is not so. You know how it is with the Chinese. They are very meticulous people. They were pushing me for a site. There were two sites so I put down one. That could have been changed." I said "True. No problem."

The delay was not only occasioned by that. It was also because of the fact that I believe that a gymnasium with a capacity of 2 500 would be useless into the 21st Century. You can see now that I have illuminated the dark corners of your mind. I am saying that we moved the capacity from 2 500 to 4 000. That was the reason for the delay. You never thought of that, Sir. That necessitated the Barbados Government putting in an additional $5 million. We had to renegotiate the contract. Now, that the former Minister knows that he will understand the reason why we had this delay. Also, there was, should I say a civil war, in China. Do you remember when there was the insurrection in China when everything went dead stop here while the Chinese straightened their own affairs out?

The question of the capacity is this. The Chinese had just done one in Suriname, of which we are aware, with a population of about the same 250 000; they felt the ratio was that you should have a gymnasium for 250 000. When we really looked at the amount of sports that we play in Barbados, and the amount of young people we would be catering for going into the 2lst Century and beyond, I felt that it would have been necessary to increase it. I told the Chinese delegation that. They said we would have to renegotiate the entire contract. It meant their coming back to us and saying it would cost X amount of dollars more. That is the reason why it has cost us more money. The Government is now putting up about $5 million. It is a new contract.

Furthermore, Sir, we had to come to this Honourable House under Cap. 105, the Special Loans Act, because in their haste to sign the contract it appeared to me as if we were not really able to do the transaction. This Government came to this Parliament about three or four years ago to amend the Special Loans Act to facilitate this entire arrangement. These are things that happened.
1.50 p.m.

The other thing is the Chinese are very brilliant people. If you look at the quality of their work, you would see that there are few Barbadians that could muster that type of work and dedication to work that we see exhibited by these people.

But I would say this, they are very meticulous. For instance, when I told them that all the paper for the design work was through, they said to me, after about two words, "Well it looks so. You agreed but you did not approve." I can understand that. Another time, I spoke to the Chinese Ambassador here and he said to me, "There is a little problem with the contract." To show you how meticulous they are, he said to me that there was no full stop after the last word in the paragraph and we had to put in a full stop.

Laughter.

Hon. W. W. HALL: You may laugh and think that that is jocular. But they are very meticulous and everything had to be right.

If the Honourable Member is asking a question, I will quite seriously tell him why there was a delay.

I will close by saying that I do agree that the Honourable Member, in his capacity as the Minister responsible for Sports, was the one who signed the contract, was the one who had probably done all the initial work in an effort to get the Chinese here and things like that. I do agree.

I can only say this: I could do no more having assumed the mantle of Minister responsible for Sports on June 2, 1986, than take over the job from you and do it better. This does not mean that you did not do a good job. You did a very good job. As my friend, one friend I can say for truth, the former Minster, I can say that he understood, quite clearly, what the sportsmen of this country might need. He had got good advice. One or two of my friends told me that they had discussed it with you and you agreed with them.

But now, coming from a real sportsman, a true true sportsman, a red-blooded sportsman who really understands not only the rudiments of all of the games that we will attempt to play but who can play them and who understand what the children of this country will need.

It is not my fault, therefore, that the delay has been two or three years. It was simply a case of the Chinese side making sure that everything was alright. It was simply a case of the Barbados Government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, insisting that there would be an increase in the capacity to the tune of 4 000 people in that gymnasium. I think it was a great decision. I am not going to refer to the top of Baxters Road being the site because I know for sure that the former Minister had conceded that that was not a great spot and that Wildey would have been the spot.

What I should like to say is, that having decided that Passage Road would have been the site for the gymnasium and having moved it now from Passage Road to Wildey, the greatest decision of all was to put a miniature stadium at Passage Road. This is something you did not think about. That is what has happened.

In Passage Road, we still have what is called a miniature stadium where football, cricket, basketball, volleyball and all those games will be played in a year or two when we put in the hard court facilities.

I just wish to say that in reply to the Member so that he would know. Had I known that he did not really know what the true facts were, I would have told him as a friend and it would not be a case of my having to reply on the Floor of the House.

I now look forward, at some other time, for him to secretly come and congratulate me.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I heard a lot about Wildey, Baxters Road, Passage Road and so on.

Up in St. George there is a lot of youth unemployment. I should like to know.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would the Honourable Member recognize that we are dealing with the gymnasium.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And it is nowhere in St. George.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I understand what you are telling me. But I am talking about young people working in building the gymnasium. There are a lot of young people in St. George who are not working. I should like to know from the Honourable Minister of Sports, how many Chinese workers are employed on the project of building the gymnasium and in what capacity? I really want to know this because it is very easy for us to get in here and talk about....

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: No. I hear it is a new contract negotiated *ab initio* by the Minister who just got up and boasted about it. The Minister said that he negotiated it *ab initio*, a new contract.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: No. He would not know those words. I am interpreting to you what he said and putting it in my own language.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. L. R. TULL: It is a new contract. I have heard him say it is a new contract. I want to know how many Chinese are working on the project, because we have to be very careful about some of the arrangements we are getting into with foreign governments and with foreign companies.

I have seen from a distance, Sir, a lot of problems involved in these foreign contracts. I have seen it with the Venezuelan contract for houses to be built in St. James. We have to be careful. When we are getting into the kind of contract that we are talking about we have to look at both primary and secondary benefits. If we are going to spend all this money building a gymnasium, and I have no quarrel with it, I think it is important that the Government while it is planning for the gymnasium look at the question of the provision of jobs.

I drive through the area of Two Mile Hill and I see a large number of Chinese people living in that area and walking around that area. I want to know, and I believe I am entitled to know, from the contract signed by the Minister, the same contract he is boasting about, what provision has been made for the non-technical employment of Barbadians on a particular contract we are dealing with. I want to hear how many are working and in what category of work are the Chinese working in Barbados?

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, as far as the workers are concerned, there was no change in the contract that I was talking about to the original contract. You would know. There was no change, in terms of the workers.

When I said a new contract I meant in terms of the seating capacity. In that contract, as indeed the same contract negotiated by the Barbados Labour Party, it was said that you would have Chinese labour. I can tell you that at the beginning about 50 Chinese came here and when they were finished with the foundation, they went back and another set came in. I am not hiding anything.

The contract also called for some Barbadian labour to be involved. That labour will be at the stage it is supposed to come in. I think it is from February, March and April. Those are the times the Barbadian labour would be taken on.

I do not profess, Sir, to know anything about Latin or French or Greek. I am not a member, and I have always said this, of the intelligentsia – another Barbados Scholar is coming in here – and therefore I do not wish to get into that league, to say perhaps that I would not know that.

But I would say this, that the Democratic Labour Party will obviously do some things that would do justice to

Horace when he said, "exegi monumentum aere perennius" which means "We have built monuments greater than brass." I would know what my Latin quotations are and you would know yours. I did not go to university but I went to the university of life. I do not have to speak a dead language like Greek and all that. I can speak Bajan and English. That is all I have to say, Sir. I hope that is answering him, Sir. He is my good friend. No problem..

The question that Head 85 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
2.00 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. Taitt, Mr. Chairman reported the passing of one money Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the resolution was read a first time, a second time and agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move that this sitting be now suspended until 3 p.m. this day.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CLUFFS, ST. LUCY

Order No. 6 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to provide for the compulsory acquisition of land at Cluffs, St. Lucy for housing development.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: This is a simple resolution which seeks to acquire 1.965 hectares of land at Cluffs, St. Lucy for the purposes of housing development. The issue relating to this matter Sir, is that when the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act came into being the persons who lived in this district, Greenidges, who live on the left hand side of the Crab Hill side of the district benefitted from the arrangement which was made under that legislation and the persons living on the right hand side of the road who were tenants of Cluffs Plantation did not benefit in a similar manner. This matter was drawn to the attention of the Government and the point was taken and we are therefore at this stage where the Government after going through the necessary advertisements, is seeking now to acquire this area of land from the owner, Mr. Rommel Sobers.

The purpose, as I said, of the acquisition is for housing development. The persons who are living on the land will benefit from this acquisition in the same way that the persons who benefitted under the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act have benefitted. They all live in the same district and the only difference really is that a road divided the two into two groups where the first one benefitted and we are now seeking to regularise that. I therefore move, Sir, that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands to try to regularise all the outstanding pieces of land in Barbados that are affected by the legislation he talked about. The one that he mentioned, Sir, is only one of several that have arisen and caused problems over a period of years. We had a difficulty, for instance, in Bulkeley Tenantry in St. George. We had a problem in Walkers' Tenantry, St. George; in Belair in St. George, where people ....

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, they say they have not heard anybody say a word for St. George in five years, you are going to hear a lot this five years. Mr. Speaker, seriously Sir, there are a number of people who bought land prior to the passing of the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act and they bought the land for $1.00 and $2.00 and so on per square foot. Then the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act was passed and people who lived adjacent to them were able to buy their land for 10 cents per square foot. It has worked a tremendous hardship on those who had bought a few months earlier and it has caused a lot of tension and problems in many districts in Barbados. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am suggesting to the Honourable Minister that it would be useful, and I am supporting what he is doing with this particular Resolution, that he gets his Ministry to investigate all those outstanding areas, there can't be many, but investigate all the outstanding areas and bring the kind of measure before Parliament to minimise the kind of friction and bitterness that is felt in certain districts because of the apparent inequity between those who bought before and those who bought later.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have no quarrel with this acquisition, but I would like to know what is being done to a piece of land in Cutting Road, Haggatt Hall.
3.05 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know the Honourable Member might have been a bit behind some of the rulings of the

House. But I will give you the opportunity to make it in passing.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Yes, it is a similar situation here where there is an area of land which was earmarked for the Transport Board but it is now being subdivided and roads have started to go in. My understanding is, as the parliamentary representative, that the National Housing Corporation intended to put houses there or to create house spots for people in the area. I am just trying to inquire and seeking some light on the matter from the Minister if Government intends to use this particular area for housing purposes. I would ask that he considers seriously the plight of people living in the area since I am sure he will agree with me that the dislocation sometimes is a problem which causes Members of Parliament some concern, and whether he could make provision to allocate some of those spots to people living in the immediate area, not necessarily in Haggatt Hall, but in resiting some of the people from the Belle or in that area.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to respond to the request which the Honourable Member has raised nor to the point raised by the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Why would the Honourable Member seek to mislead me? Are you South or North? Sir, quite seriously, I think the point has to be made that this Administration recognizes the very serious problem that has existed in Barbados for a long time in the area of the provision of houses and certainly the Sites and Services Programme which has been accelerated by the predecessor and which there is a commitment from the Democratic Labour Party to further accelerate will see sites and services being provided in a number of areas across Barbados. This is in recognition of the very serious need because it is not only that people sometimes require houses to rent or purchase, but there are a number of people in Barbados who would prefer if they could have access to a spot of land on which they can construct their houses. You would appreciate, Sir, that this particular problem was accentuated by the decision of the Barbados Labour Party sometime in 1984 or 1985 to declare two houses on an area to be a tenantry. The result is that a number of private people who in the past who would provide spots for rental to a number of people now do not make that available. So the onus rests almost solely on the shoulders of the Government to provide this. But I would want to say quite seriously that we will further accelerate the programme which we put in place. Thank you.

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

CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND INTELLECTUAL OFFICE PROPERTY BILL, 1991

Order No. 3 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office Act, Cap. 21A.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a short Bill which is designed to provide the framework for the Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce who proposes to make regulations governing the registration of CARICOM enterprises.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: It fell under the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, the position is that the Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce proposes to make regulations governing the registration of CARICOM enterprises and the proposed regulations will provide that responsibility for registering CARICOM enterprises should be conferred upon the Registrar of Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property. Now there is presently in the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office Act no specific provision which empowers the Registrar of Corporate Affairs to perform the function of registering CARICOM enterprises. So that it is accordingly proposed in this Bill which amends the legislation to enable the Registrar to perform that function of registering CARICOM enterprises by the device of empowering the Registrar to perform any function assigned to the Registrar by any enactment specified in this Act.

So that this Act will specify the regulations which the Minister will make that adds the duty of the Registrar of Corporate Affairs to register CARICOM enterprises. The purpose of this Bill is to facilitate that procedure. The Amendments are designed to accomplish that result.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in 1982 substantial amendments were made to the then Companies Act and since then we have had the Act operating for some time and there are obviously other amendments that will be called for. The Act is administered, as you know, by the Registrar of Corporate and Intellectual Affairs and once again tremendous reform was carried out in the 1980s in the area of intellectual property. They were all based on the assumption that the office will be administered in a very businesslike fashion and that one would be able to register a company in 24 hours. At present, however, I regret to say that the administration of the office leaves a lot to be desired. The legal profession is crying out at the fact that it

is very difficult to get a name approved and sometimes tremendous problems occur for weeks and months before you can get an approval of a name from the Corporate Affairs Registry. In addition, it takes a long time because I believe an over legalistic view is being taken of what should be in many respects a business decision and it seems to me that one is going to have to get it quite clear that if Barbados is to attract, particularly international business and offshore business and if Barbados is also to attract companies that want to organize here for the purpose of selling or managing intellectual property the office must function with the sort of business efficiency that one would expect. I want seriously to say that whether training courses or whatever is required, I think it is necessary that the Government should do something about this. We are in serious competition with the British Virgin Islands, Bahamas and other jurisdictions now and in the developed countries as well for this type of business, and eventually where they go will be determined very much on how efficient the administration runs its business as well as on the cost factor involved.
3.15 p.m.

There are too many delays occurring. Let me say that when the office was administered from the Registrar's Office you got a higher standard of efficiency, as I could see it. Now that it has its own staff and is subject to its own jurisdiction, it will have to recognise that this is not merely a legalistic exercise but it is an exercise which has serious implications for the country's foreign reserves and for the country's employment position. I believe that enough time has now elapsed to have enabled proper training courses to be put in for this office so that it could function up to the standard that is required.

Also, Sir, I have detected in the last five years a hesitancy on the part of the Government to deal with the necessary legislation that should have been put in place to strengthen the type of legislation which would attract business in these two very important fields – corporate affairs and intellectual property. It is true that when the new legislation was passed in the area of intellectual property we were striking out in Barbados. We always anticipated that it would be necessary to monitor that legislation. I do not know how much Members on the other side follow what is happening at the intellectual level on the review of legislation dealing with intellectual property in the Caribbean. There is a Barbadian who has done extremely well, a very close friend of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, Lewis Hunte, who is now in the Virgin Islands and who has become a bit of an authority on this subject in the area. He was responsible for drafting a lot of the legislation under my direction back in the late '70s and the early '80s.

I believe that we should be having an ongoing monitoring of the area of intellectual property. There are too many of our young entertainers, musicians and various other people dealing with copyright, with trade marks, with designs, or designers, *et cetera*, who need to have legislation that is absolutely clear and can be administered very promptly and expeditiously.

I seriously ask the Minister if he would look at some of the statements I have made in relation to the administration of the office to see that the position improves to the benefit of business in this island.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, there are a few areas in the legislation which practical experience has shown clearly need to be dealt with. One is the area of regulations under the Companies Act dealing with the contents of a number of documents that the main body of the law stipulates that you have to have now in holding a meeting. I am dealing with the contents of management proxy circulars and matters of that kind. It was always envisaged that the regulations which were originally made when the Act came into operation were temporary, so to speak, and that in the light of experience further detailed refinements would have found their way into additional subsidiary legislation.

Part and parcel of the problems one has in the administration of the Act is that if one compares our detailed subsidiary legislation with comparable legislation in Canada, one sees that in the regulations in Canada, which our Act is based upon, there are detailed criteria which set out the wide jurisdiction that has been granted to the Registrar.

We also need to understand that it was always envisaged that, together with the modern companies legislation, there would be legislation dealing with bankruptcy and liquidation. We have not done that, we are really attempting to deal with an impossible situation, because we have a modern corporate law and we have no modern laws dealing with corporations when they have to be dissolved or when they become bankrupt. That is also a problem that is affecting Barbados as a jurisdiction which is competitive with Bermuda and other territories.

There are a few other areas, Sir, that can be improved. I hope that the Government will make up its mind which Ministry is going to deal with this matter. At one stage they followed the very wise decision of leaving it with Trade, Industry and Commerce, although I believe in the light of present events it may very well be a wise decision not to put it back there, but nevertheless, Sir, I understand it then went to the Attorney General's Office. It is important, because it is a whole new type of company that is now permitted, a non-profit company, and the Minister has an important role to play in giving permission to non-profit companies.

I have not yet seen the exact assignments in the Gazette so that we would know exactly where it is.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am told it has now gone to Justice, but somewhere along the lines one will find that a particular Ministry will not be able to deal with this subject without having some kind of good inter-ministerial contact, because the subject by its very nature lends itself to impinging on the subjects which a number of Ministries deal with as separate and distinct.

All in all, Sir, I do hope that now the attempt has been made to clarify some of the powers of the Registrar in this direction, that as the Leader of the Opposition has said, it will be remembered that this was such a major piece of legislation that one has to look at it from an ongoing point of view in the light of experience with its operation.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, the points which have been made by Honourable Members are well made. Clearly the legislation has to be continually reviewed, updated and supplemented. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has spoken about the need for updating the bankruptcy legislation. This is a comment which is recognised by us and we made the point that it is necessary to update it. In fact, there is an advisory committee, which the University of the West Indies is sponsoring, which is looking very seriously at all these areas of commercial law which need to be updated and modernised, and updating and modernising the bankruptcy law is one of the areas of law which is high on their list for modernisation, so that urgent attention is being paid to these matters.

I would just like to say that from the point of view of the work of the Government, irrespective of where the responsibility falls at the moment, we will have a kind of informal inter-ministerial committee which will collaborate in ensuring that all that needs to be done for the smooth and effective working of this area of the law is in fact done.

Thank you, Sir.

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

COMMITTEE

On the motion of Hon. M. A. KING seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 were called and passed.

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

On separate motions of Hon. M. A. KING, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ORDER NO. 7 – THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1991

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to remove any ambiguity about the question whether a company can be a director or a secretary of another company. In the business community there has been some concern about the decision of the Registrar of Companies who is of the view that under the existing law a company cannot be a director or secretary of another company.

This Bill, Mr Speaker, a very short Bill, will remove any doubts about that and would make it explicitly clear that companies may be directors or secretaries of other companies.

I move, Mr. Speaker that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative without division.

COMMITTEE

On the motion of Hon. M. A. KING, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 were called and passed.

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

On separate motions of Hon. M. A. KING seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am about to move the adjournment unless any other Members want to

raise any matters, but I think that is as much as we can take for the first time.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Gradualism. Gradualism is the answer. That's it.

I move Sir, that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday 19th February, 1991 at 12 o'clock noon.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
3.35 p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Mr. Speaker, 17.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER 17

Accounts and Statements for October and November, 1990.

Auditor General's Report, year ended 31st March, 1990.

MESSAGES FROM HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER 17

Absence of the Governor-General from 11th to 24th February, 1991. The Honourable Sir Denys Williams, GCM to act.

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD 18

The Representation of the People (Expenses) (Amendment) Regulations, 1991.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES 18

Resolution to guarantee loan not exceeding U.S. $3.9 million by Export Development Corporation to Barbados National Oil Company Limited.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. Greaves, 18.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1990-91 No. 12 – $4 336 717

Head 14 – Ministry of International Transport, Telecommunications and Immigration

Hon. P. M. Greaves, 18.
Capital – Head 70 – Ministry of International Transport, Telecommunications and Immigration Subhead 1: Construction

Hon. P. M. Greaves, 19; Hon. H. deB. Forde, 19; Rt. Hon. L. E. Sandiford, 19.

Head 19 – Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

Hon. H. A. Blackman, 20, 23; Mr. L. R. Tull, 20, 21, 22; Mr. H. B. St. John, 20; Hon. M. A. King, 20, 21, 22; Hon. B. M. Taitt, 22, 23.

Head 20 – Revenue Collection

Hon. H. A. Blackman, 23; Mr. O. S. Arthur, 23, 24, 25.

Head 73 – Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

Hon. H. A. Blackman, 26; Mr. O. S. Arthur, 26.

Head 85 – Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Subhead 5 – Gymnasium

Hon. W. W. Hall, 26, 27, 28, 29; Mr. DeL. O. Bradshaw, 27; Mr. L. R. Tull, 29.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CLUFFS, ST. LUCY

Hon. E. E. GREAVES, 30, 31; Mr. L. R. Tull, 30; Mr. DeL. O. Bradshaw, 30, 31.

CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1991

Hon. M. A. King, 31, 33; Hon. H. deB. Forde, 31; Mr. H. B. St. John, 32, 33.

COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1991

Hon. M. A. King, 33.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. Greaves, 33, 34.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

ARTHUR, Mr. O. S. (St. Peter)
BLACKMAN, Hon. H. A. (St. Philip South)
BRADSHAW, Mr. DeL. O. (St. Michael South East)
FORDE, Hon. H. deB. (Christ Church West)
FRANKLIN, Hon. W. O. (St. Philip North)
GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy)
GREAVES, Hon. P. M. (St. Michael North)
HALL, Hon. W. W. (St. Michael West Central)
KING, Hon. M. A. (Christ Church West Central)
ST. JOHN, Mr. H. B. (Christ Church South)
SANDIFORD, Rt. Hon. L. E. (St. Michael South)
TAITT, Hon. B. M. (St. Michael West)
TULL, Mr. L. R. (St. George South)