
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 19, 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. 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. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Community 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, B.A., LL.B.

Prayers were led by Father I. HAREWOOD.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of Wednesday, February 6, 1991 and Minutes of Tuesday, February 12, 1991.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move that those Minutes be taken as read.

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

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that those Minutes be taken as read and be confirmed.

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

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

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Customs Tariff Amendment Order 1991. I am also commanded to lay the Annual Report of the Barbados Export Promotion Corporation for the year ending 31st March 1990 and I am also commanded to lay the Annual Report of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation for the year 1988-1989.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church. West re appointment of Assistant to the General Manager and Secretary to the Board of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: To ask of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister:

1. Will the Minister state whether the post of Assistant to the General Manager and Secretary to the Board of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is a post to which a salary has been assigned by him under paragraph (c) of Section 20 of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation Act, Cap. 276?

2. If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Minister state:

- (a) the salary determined and notified by him to the Corporation as assigned to the post;
- (b) the actual salary assigned by the Corporation to the post and whether his approval was given for that salary;
- (c) whether the post and/or the appointment is permanent or temporary, and if it is temporary, what is its duration and what is the tenure of the holder;
- (d) the terms and conditions of service of the post, the qualifications prescribed for the post and the prescribed qualifications possessed by the incumbent;
- (e) the dates of creation of the post, of the last vacancy in the post, of any change in the terms of the conditions of service of the post between that vacancy and the appointment of the incumbent or since then;
- (f) whether it is the policy of the Government that a vacancy in such a post should be fully advertised in the media and, if so, when and where was the post so advertised and if it was not so advertised why was that not done;
- (g) if there was such advertisement, were only such persons as applied pursuant to an advertisement eligible for consideration for appointment by the Corporation and for the Minister's approval in terms of Section 20(d) of Chapter 276 and did the Corporation on that basis, or at all, submit the name of the incumbent for the Minister's approval;
- (h) if there was no advertisement for the post, what criteria or appointment policy did the Minister apply for his "prior approval" under Section 20(d) of Chapter 276 and in particular, did the Corporation make a specific or any recommendation of the holder which satisfied those criteria or any of them; and
- (i) the policy of Government in the matter of appointments, especially at the senior level, in Government-owned media and, in particular, whether the Minister will enunciate a policy which would exclude from consideration for such posts persons with a recent history of major partisan political activity, especially in view of the proximity of the appointment of the Assistant General Manager and Secretary to the Board of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to his recent tenure in a political office at the disposal of the Prime Minister, namely as his Personal Aide, and his candidature in the general election of January 22, 1991, in association with those Honourable Members who constitute the majority in this Honourable House?

Mr. SPEAKER: By the same Honourable Member – Provision of roadways, drainage etc. in Gospel Road, Worthing View and other parts of Christ Church.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, to ask from the appropriate Minister:

Will the Minister state how soon sufficient provision will be made for roadways, drainage and water supply for the areas of Gospel Road, Dayrells Road, Worthing View, and Pleasant Hall Tenantry, all in Christ Church, and Gunsite Road, Brittons Hill, St. Michael which are designated as "designated tenancies" under the Tenancies Development (Designation of Gospel Hall Road, Dayrells Road Tenantry, Christ Church) Order 1985, the Tenancies Development (Designation of Worthing View, Christ Church) Order 1986, The Tenancies Development (Designation of Pleasant Hall Tenantry, Christ Church) Order 1986 and the Tenancies Development (Designation of Gunsite and Taitt's Road Tenantry, St. Michael) Order 1986, respectively?

(2) Will the Minister state how soon sufficient provision will be made for roadways for the area in Fordes

Road, Christ Church which is a "designated tenantry" under the Tenancies Development (Designation of Fordes Road Tenantry, Christ Church) Order 1985?

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 5 - TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF A LOAN TO BE MADE BY THE EXPORT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO THE BARBADOS NATIONAL OIL COMPANY LIMITED TO FINANCE THE PURCHASING OF MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, this particular Resolution seeks the guarantee of this Honourable Chamber for a loan which the Barbados National Oil Company Limited is proposing to enter into with a Canadian corporation.

12.25 p.m.

That Corporation is the Export Development Corporation of Canada. The loan is in the sum of the equivalent of CAN. \$3.9 million not exceeding US \$3.9 million. It is for the purpose of financing the purchase of materials and equipment. The Government of Barbados agrees to guarantee the loan from the Export Development Corporation to the Barbados National Oil Company Limited.

This Resolution, as I have indicated, Sir, is to approve that guarantee in the sum which I have indicated. I do not think there would be any quarrel with the purposes of this loan. The Barbados National Oil Company Limited suspended its drilling programme for oil in June, I believe, 1986. That drilling programme was suspended because the price of oil had fallen from some \$31 approximately per barrel in 1983 to a low of some US \$10 per barrel by 1986. It was therefore more profitable to import the oil at that low price than to expend considerable sums of money in the drilling programme leading to recovery and the processing of the oil.

I need hardly say that oil is a very important commodity in our economy. It is certainly at the base of our entire transportation system whether we are talking about transportation by private motor car, commercial vehicles, buses or by other means of transport. It is very important for our industry and our agriculture. Altogether it is a very important commodity.

We are very fortunate that because of the structure of our soils that we have been able to locate proven and potential reserves of oil. We seek at all appropriate occasions and given the prevailing costs of a prospecting programme, a drilling programme, the recovery programme and the other related programmes for bringing the product from the earth's crust to the ultimate user, to make that provision either by way of our own resources or by way of an imported product or a blend of both of them.

Sir, the prospects for the price of oil, according to the best estimates, are that the price of oil in the medium term will tend to rise. This is based on the projection that the loan reserves on land are given and that the demand for oil continues to increase. Certainly that is the projection that over time the demand will increase but the reserves on land are more or less known, and that with the increasing demand and the more or less fixed reserves that this would tend to increase the price of oil.

There are also reserves, some proven and some potential in the seas and oceans of some countries but that is even more problematical and certainly will be more expensive to exploit. That would also point in the direction of an increase in the price of oil. It is against this background that the Barbados National Oil Company Limited is embarking on the second phase of the drilling programme. The purpose of this is to try to locate additional reserves of oil so that more oil from our domestic sources may be provided and that the oil can be produced at a reasonable price to the consumer, commercial, industrial or domestic, bearing in mind the price of the imported oil.

The Barbados National Oil Company is proposing to enter into an agreement with the Export Development Corporation of Canada to provide the funds to assist in this drilling programme. The total cost of the project is estimated to be about Bds. \$22.7 million of which approximately \$19.5 million will go for the drilling programme and about \$3.2 million would go towards the purchase of equipment.

12.35 p.m.

It is proposed that some 26 wells should be drilled and the overall objectives of the project are:

to reduce to the extent possible dependence on external supplies of crude oil and liquified petroleum through the expansion of the domestic oil and the natural gas output to optimize the use of

natural gas by minimizing the incidence of venting thereby increasing or maximizing the sales to the National Petroleum Corporation; and to seek to increase the known oil and gas reserves in Barbados.

The components of the programme may be broken down into three aspects, Sir. Firstly, there is the drilling aspect which, as I have indicated, will relate to some 26 wells. These are on land, and equipment such as well heads, tubulars, cementing equipment, valves, drill bits and so on would be required. Secondly, then there is the purchase of a compressor to increase the gas handling capacity of the plant. And thirdly, there would be the improvement of the production facilities which would include separators, tanks and other materials and equipment.

I think, as I said, no one would quarrel with the objective of this programme. It is a project that should support the economic efforts of the Government and it should tend to some additional security through the availability of domestic sources of oil for the people of Barbados and anything that would tend to improve our situation is to be welcomed.

I think that inasmuch as we have resource and inasmuch as the projections indicate that it would be an economic proposition to exploit that resource given the comparative price of the domestic oil, as well as, when compared with the imported oil, we think that it is an appropriate policy to pursue to resume that drilling programme.

Perhaps I should indicate that the prospecting for oil by itself does not guarantee that there would be oil found. One has actually to drill in order to tap into the resources and then one has to carry out the steps for the recovery of that particular oil. We are at this drilling stage and we are hopeful that, as a result of that programme, we will be able to find additional reserves of oil which will help to meet the needs of Barbados over the coming years.

Our objective in the medium term is to raise domestic production to just around 50% of our needs, if we can find the necessary reserves to do that. But that certainly is what we would be aiming at, in the medium and perhaps long-term. We hope that we can find the reserves in order to achieve that particular objective.

Sir, the guarantee that we are asking this Honourable Chamber to approve, as I have indicated, is in the sum equivalent to CAN \$ 3.9 million. It is to carry a rate of interest of 10.55% per annum repayable in semi-annual instalments in arrears of the amounts outstanding, from time to time. The principal repayments to be in 12 equal and consecutive semi-annual instalments. I believe that I have given enough information relating to this loan. I tried to give the purpose of the loan. I have indicated its importance to the economy. I have also indicated why the

drilling programme was suspended and why we believe that it is advisable to restart that programme at this particular time. I believe I have therefore given Honourable Members enough information, including details about the loan which should satisfy them that this is a worthwhile project. It is one in which we are continuing our co-operation with the Export Development Corporation of Canada.

Perhaps, before I close my introduction to this I should indicate that there were other contributors to this. I mentioned a figure of some \$22 million overall for the project. That funding is being put together through some BDS\$3 million from the Venezuelan Investment Fund.

Last week I participated in the signing of a loan of \$3.5 million from the Petro Canada International Assistance Corporation. I have given the contribution of the Export Development Corporation and the Barbados National Oil Company from its own resources will have contributed some BDS\$9.5 million to the entire project.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Barbados Labour Party Opposition naturally will not oppose the passage of this resolution. The Barbados National Oil Company was a creature of the enlightened policy of the Barbados Labour Party.

The oil resources of Barbados, we believed, were of sufficient importance to the economy of Barbados that when the occasion arose for a decision to be taken as to the exploitation on terms and conditions which, in our opinion, were best for the people of Barbados, we did not hesitate to take the decision to bring them under public ownership.
12.45 p.m.

I am a bit disappointed in the presentation of the Honourable Prime Minister because he has not given us enough information about the profitability of the Barbados National Oil Company for while we are being called upon here to approve the guarantee by the Government of the loan to the Barbados National Oil Company Limited I think it would have been an essential part of the background information, not for the benefit of us on this side because we have no doubt at all that the tax payers of Barbados will not be called upon to honour this guarantee. I hope that it is not because of the fact that this was one of the inheritances of the Democratic Labour Party from the Barbados Labour Party which the Honourable Prime Minister cannot legitimately say is one that he has been called upon to shoulder a financial burden. So there is no need to be shy in giving us this information. There is no need at all. This is something Barbadians can be proud about, the fact that the

Government of Barbados had courage at that particular period of time to say to all and sundry, including Mobil, that we were not going to allow the little oil resources that we had to be exploited. That is something we should be proud of, so that you must tell the public all about the Barbados National Oil Company, how profitable it is, the great contribution that it has made in saving foreign exchange. There is only one regret that we have Sir, the position is that all of this will be made known, because oil as the Honourable Prime Minister said is an important commodity in the economic well being, not only of Barbadians, but of the world.

Now he told us that the decision was taken in 1986, no doubt after May 28, to discontinue drilling. There has always been some controversy surrounding that decision because of the fact that knowledgeable people in the oil industry make a distinction between exploratory drilling, and development drilling. I can concede that many countries in the world took the decision to stop exploratory drilling but few countries took the decision not to continue with the development of proven areas.

Now in Barbados our effort so far has revealed that there are three types of wells one can find in Barbados. There are those which one would classify as exploratory wells in which when you are drilling in those areas there is grave uncertainty as to whether one would find oil or not. There are areas where other wells are drilled where it is known because of the history of the surrounding wells that in that area there is a great likelihood of existing wells being supplemented by that drilling activity.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker Sir, I don't think any Honourable Member would think that however persistent they are in the breach of the rules of the House that they will deter me from making the point.

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly not. They will not disturb you.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: The third category for the enlightenment of the Honourable Member, where drilling takes place in an area where you have a well already and the existing sands have been exhausted and you are going to perforate them and expand them so you know there are reserves there.

Now I would have thought from the presentation of the Honourable Prime Minister that he would have enlightened us as to which of the categories this expenditure was going to be indulged in so far as it relates to drilling.

The second point I think that should be made clear is, that since 1986 drilling has in fact been going on in Barbados. You only have to go around St. George Valley, the St. Philip area or parts of Christ Church to recognise that drilling in fact is going along. Drilling in fact is going along. I just wish to know where the new exploration drilling or the new drilling is going to take place and I also want to clarify the uncertainty which has arisen from the presentations because of the fact that in presenting this matter the Honourable Prime Minister said a decision was taken to cease drilling in 1986 and we are in 1991, so that what we must do is to get the facts surrounding the purpose of this loan clear. We must get the facts surrounding the purpose and the profitability of the National Oil Company clear. I do not believe also Sir that it is possible to discuss any matter to do with oil in Barbados today without the Government making it clear what is their policy about the Mobil Agreement in Barbados.

Oil that is produced in Barbados is marketed in Barbados. It is marketed by the National Oil Company by selling it to the Mobil Corporation, who in turn refine it here at the Refinery in Barbados. There is a considerable body of opinion to the effect that it would be more profitable for that oil to be refined having regard to its constituents by a larger refinery even though it be exported and there have been a number of prototype agreements which have been investigated and which would demonstrate that because of the particular characteristics of our oil that we would be able to get better value added by exporting it under any of the prototype agreements. This is an important fact because it goes also to the enhancement of the potential earnings that can be derived from the export of oil.

There is another factor, this is not 1962 when the Democratic Labour Party negotiated the Mobil Agreement. This is 1991. In 1962 I doubt the world market price of oil reached \$3.00 a barrel.
12.55 p.m.

In addition to that, the arrangements within the Caribbean Economic Community were not in existence and no question of oil and its production can be discussed today except within the context of how it relates to the arrangements for trade within the Caribbean. I would like the Honourable Prime Minister to enlighten us on that. I know that we cannot expect any enlightenment from the former person who was in charge of anything to do with trade in the Caribbean Economic Community.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: I think that the Honourable Prime Minister had indicated very clearly his view of his performance by what he did to him recently. Oil was excepted from the free trade arrangements for a long period of time. What is the position today under the new arrangements which I noticed so far have not been

honoured here in Barbados? A very unusual thing for Barbados. It is a very unusual thing because of the fact that the Barbados Labour Party...

Mr. SPEAKER: I would wish that Honourable Members observe the rule. If you are making an Aside, it has to be made very softly that one can hardly hear it. But you ought not to interrupt the Honourable Member to whom I have given the permission to speak.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: The Caribbean Economic Community arrangements have recently been revised and what we are trying to discover is whether the previous arrangements where oil was not the subject of any obligations for free trade is the position today. At the present moment most of our raw material comes from Venezuela. In addition to that, the Mobil agreement prescribes a regime which prevents free importation of oil. That was only permissible in so far as oil was excepted from the free trade arrangements. I know for some considerable period of time that there was a lot of study within the Caribbean Economic Community and a number of recommendations that all goods and services should be freely tradeable within the community. That is an important point because the Mobil agreement, as I said, must be considered in any discussion on oil and energy in Barbados. Mobil's profitability is utterly dependent upon the fact that a special surcharge is applied to imports irrespective of where those imports come, whether from CARICOM or not.

I have read some statements in some quarters of the other side stating that there is little that the Government can do about the Mobil agreement because of the fact that under the agreement they have a right to renew the agreement. Nothing can be further from the truth. I do not think that the public of Barbados should be misled. It is well within the power of the Government of Barbados in its pursuance of its obligations to renegotiate or to have discussions about the renewal of the Mobil agreement and to insist that no longer will the element of protection upon which the refinery is viable be continued. That is a fact. You are under no obligation when you are renewing an agreement to provide the same measure of protection as previously, absolutely none.

So that the truth of the matter is that a decision has to be taken about the refinery and the Mobil agreement. It is our belief after considering a considerable amount of advice that it is in the long term interest not only of the Barbadian economy but of the Caribbean economy upon which we are dependent for new arrangements to be made particularly in the Eastern Caribbean for the production, refining, and distribution of oil. There cannot be any doubt about that.

So that I am going to listen and hear from the Honourable Prime Minister what the position of the Government is with respect to this because we cannot

continue to duck it. We cannot continue to postpone it. Everyday that we are postponing this decision the consumers of Barbados are paying for Mobil's protection. There cannot be any doubt about it at all. Study after study has shown that a refinery of 3,000 or 4,000 barrels a day is totally uneconomic and the proof of that is very simple. Just remove the surcharge and Mobil will leave the next day from refining but not from distribution or marketing. What is more particularly galling to me is the fact that recent arrangements have been made whereby part of the surcharge is necessary for Mobil to continue as profitable has been placed upon fuel oil. That is a very serious thing. Fuel oil is fuel used by the electric company. Now if there was one thing we were always advised and we took that advice is that you should try with any measure of taxation that is introduced to place that taxation away from fuel oil, because fuel oil is important for production in Barbados for not only electricity but a lot of other primary sources of energy. It is used in the agricultural industry to drive the tractors. It is used in the construction industry and it is used in cement production and things of that kind. I do not know who could have advised the Prime Minister to put part of the surcharge on fuel oil. I really do not know. I really would like to hear the reason therefor and all of this is very important. It is very important.

Sir, there are a number of detailed matters that I am sure others on this side will be raising with respect to this. The National Oil Company employs a number of nationals in Barbados. One of the things we were equally proud of was the fact that we were able to attract a number of young people into the oil industry upon the fact that the Government of Barbados had faith in oil exploration and matters of that kind in Barbados. A number of people were granted scholarships in geology, petroleum engineering, and geo-physics and in the management of the oil industry. 1.05 p.m.

I have not seen a recent report from the National Oil Company, so that perhaps the Honourable Prime Minister can enlighten us on the number of people that they are employing, and matters of that kind.

I know too that there were a lot of industries associated with the production of oil that we were fostering. There were skills in relation to the perforation of wells and we had a definite and distinct policy that the Barbadian companies would have preference and after them the CARICOM companies. Indeed, the Caribbean Development Bank was induced to play a role in this area, because they helped to finance some drilling companies by lending them money within the Caribbean. Some of those companies were joint ventures between Barbadians and other CARICOM citizens so as to try to increase the value added here in Barbados.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to ask the Honourable Prime Minister to enlighten us on those matters, the employment policies there, because my understanding is that one of the tragedies of the decision of 1986 was that in the implementation of their efforts to contain the cost at the National Oil Company, indiscriminate decisions were taken and that it had a profound effect upon these people and companies that were fostered, and that subsequently when efforts were made to restart some of the programmes of the National Oil Company, it was additionally costly because of the fact that thoughtful decisions were not taken in 1986.

Of course, in those days the Democratic Labour Party made decisions based upon wild promises they had made and it appears that we cannot expect much difference today, because of the fact that we are still labouring under the misapprehension that our economic conditions in Barbados are good. The Central Bank statistics will show the great increase in oil production that took place and how we were able to produce 679,000 barrels of oil in 1985. That has dropped by almost 50%, because in 1989 it was 389,000, not unlike the export dip that took place under the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, where he dropped it successfully from over \$540 million to \$240 million. There would have been, of course, a tremendous saving in foreign exchange as a result of that production.

Bearing all these factors into account, I do not think that the importance of the National Oil Company can be gainsaid. I would hope that the Government recognises that it is under a duty, notwithstanding the fact that this is one of the corporations that the Barbados Labour Party founded – it is one of the success stories of the Barbados Labour Party, like the Natural Gas Corporation – so that we must do everything in our power to support and develop it. It is our view that part of its development is dependent upon important decisions being taken on a timely basis with respect to how we are going to refine the oil that we produce, how we are going to market it.

With respect to the gas, Sir, I am also very glad to see that the enlightened policy that we left of doing everything in our power to extract the maximum value from the associated gas which one gets with oil has been continued. The same Export Development Corporation of Canada was very helpful in our time, and subsequently too, in giving us technical assistance for the introduction of the LPG plant in Barbados, and we also received good technical advice from Canadians and Barbadians in Canada with respect to pipeline distribution the special methods of joining pipes other than by welding. All of those things took place.

We also, of course, have to have a policy with respect to the flaring of gas and we took the decision that in a small country like Barbados it was better to take that flaring of gas and pipe it to the electric company where everybody in

the community would benefit, who would use it particularly at night. We built a pipeline straight to the electric company and at that time I well remember the other side was opposed to it. They were saying we should distribute it to the households first.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am glad to see the continuation of the pipeline along the northern coast and I hope that the Government will be courageous enough to make the other decisions that are necessary for the support of the Barbados National Oil Company because of its importance to Barbados and the economy of Barbados.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, the support of this side for the Resolution before the Honourable House has already been indicated by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Besides, he made many points which represent the position of this side, but I think it would be necessary to revisit one or two of the points, not to bore the House, but simply to draw different implications which I think are relevant in relation to an energy policy in this country.

1.15 p.m.

..... I want at the outset to return to the decision that was made in 1986 by the Democratic Labour Party Government to terminate the drilling program. As has been said, it was a controversial decision, but I believe...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am having difficulty in hearing the Honourable Member.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: As has been said, Sir, it was a controversial decision, but I believe that it is possible to prove that it was also an unwise decision, because in a sense we have been at this point before. Today we are only producing some 35% of our – thirty percent, I have been corrected – of our oil needs locally and there was a time in 1985 when we were producing some 55% or thereabouts. So that it is possible to argue that the last five years represented a step backward as far as our domestic energy production is concerned, and I think that that step backward is directly traceable to the unwise decision which was made in 1986 to abandon the drilling program completely. It had several implications. It increased the unit cost of production. It was very costly. It caused us to lose our indigenous and experienced cadre of personnel in the industry that we had attracted and to those who remained, it destroyed their morale virtually completely.

Now, my immediate concern, Mr. Speaker, arises from the fact that quite unlike the projection given by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, the analyses that I have seen suggest that in the short run and in the medium term immediately after the Gulf War, the world is likely to be awash with cheap fuel, cheap oil once again; and whether

that is so or not, the price of energy is a matter completely outside of our control, and given the dynamic world in which we live, there will be times when the price of oil is low, much lower than the cost of our production locally, and there will be times when it will be high, much higher than our production locally.

The question therefore arises, what are we going to do by way of policy? Every time that the price of oil falls below the cost of our local production, are we going to stop drilling completely and then as soon as it goes up go again and stop again? Is that a wise and enlightened and sensible policy? We are on the verge of having to make that sort of decision again. It is my submission and I am sure it is the view of all of us on this side that we cannot have a stop go policy in relation to oil production in this country dependent on the cost of imported oil, whether it is cheaper than the cost of local production or more expensive.

On the last occasion, 1986, we argued on this side that the full costs, the full benefits of the reduced costs resulting from the lower prices of imports should not have been passed on to the consumer but that some part of that benefit should have been put into a fund and that we should have continued our production locally even if on a reduced basis and I still am of the view, Mr. Speaker, that that is the only wise course with respect to the future. It cannot make sense for us to stop production as soon as the cost of imports in oil falls below the cost of production and then go again with all the adverse implications of increased costs per unit of well, laying off of staff, losing staff and all the rest only to start again. So that I would hope that emerging from this debate, we will be able to have a statement from the Government with respect to its policy in relation to the future so that should the world be awash with cheap fuel again in a way that the situation was five years ago that this program which we started only a year or so ago, will not now have to come to a dramatic halt once again as a result of the unwise policy of the Democratic Labour Party.

Again, Sir, I must touch on an area that has already been touched upon by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and it relates to the continuing decision of the Government to have our crude processed here by MOBIL. My information and advice is that in Trinidad, a CARICOM country, there is a capacity to process that oil much cheaper than is currently done here by MOBIL and that the late Prime Minister, Mr. Barrow had, before he died, received a report which he had commissioned to that effect and that there is conclusive evidence that it is in the long term, in the short term, it is in the interest of Barbados that we should have the crude processed in Trinidad and reimported rather than continue the arrangement with MOBIL which is preventing us from developing the area of the Aquatic Gap right back to the Drill Hall as a Tourism Village. It is an eyesore: MOBIL, where it is located. Its operation is not in the best interest of Barbados and we are missing the opportunity to deepen the integration

movement in the Caribbean by not having our oil in Barbados processed in Trinidad and then brought back to Barbados at the cheaper costs which we are advised will result.

I thought that that particular point would particularly appeal to the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, who in the tradition of previous Prime Ministers emerged as a strong advocate of the integration process. It seems to me that if in his case it is to be more than words, that then he has to do something to demonstrate convincingly that he is a strong supporter of the integration process and the move that I am talking about will go a far way in ensuring that he will go down with some reputation as a strong integrationist, not only in words but in deed. It seems to me that this is one of still several areas available to us, short of a federation where we can deepen the integration process.

It ought to be said openly, Mr. Speaker, that Government's continued support for MOBIL is a matter that is filled with suspicion and is very difficult to defend and I think it is about time that the Government lay bare the facts and say openly to the public of Barbados why it is that we in Barbados must continue to support an agreement with MOBIL when all the arguments seem to be in favour of allowing MOBIL to go, as far as being a refinery, not a distributor, a refinery is concerned.

In the five years that I left here, I note that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West continues to be a crude heckler, Mr. Speaker.

1.25 p.m.

Nothing that the Chair has done he has been able....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I have not spoken in this debate. I think it is entirely unfair for the Honourable Member to be importing me and pulling me into his debate. I know that he can only speak for about 8 minutes at a time. His eight minutes might have run out and here he comes now pulling me in. I think the Honourable Member should withdraw those words.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I want to say is that I have never known hecklers to be in this Chamber. If they were, they would have to find somewhere else to sit. I can assure you that there will be no heckling or hecklers in this Chamber.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: They are very reassuring words from the Chair. I am much obliged, Sir.

I was about to make a further point, Mr. Speaker. It really has to do with the distribution of natural gas to the domestic consumer in Barbados. As you know, quite often in drilling for oil, you find no oil but find natural gas. Barbados has a large reserve of natural gas. In the last several years we have been speeding up this programme of

making the connections to the domestic consumers but like much else that might be regarded as development in Barbados, it is taking place in a certain part stretching from St. Philip Lighthouse, as it were, to St. Lucy Lighthouse.

There are many parts of rural Barbados that have not been feeling the impact of this so-called development. Even though for understandable reasons this arc has had the first thrust of the development I think it is about time that the people in St. Andrew, St. Joseph, St. George, St. John and other parts of Barbados – after all we are still part of one whole – feel the effect of these steerings of development.

It is particularly painful for them because they remember well, as they sometimes remind me, that one of the first wells in Barbados was the well in St. Andrew at Turner's Hall. They want to know why is it that this natural gas is so near and yet it is so far. They hear of a lot of places elsewhere getting this natural gas but they cannot get the natural gas. It is part of a wider point that we need to be making all the time that there is a need for balanced development. We have to make sure that we do not have two Barbadoses developing, a prosperous and well developed Barbados stretching from St. Philip Lighthouse along the coastal arc right down to St. Lucy Lighthouse and then you have the rest of Barbados that is at a much lower level and can even be regarded as neglected.

I am making the pleas, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the Government to recognise at every point in its programme that there is a rural Barbados that has not been fortunate to have had the same level of development as the rest of Barbados but that cries out. There are people out there too in St. Joseph, St. Andrew and the northern parts of St. Thomas, St. George and St. John. They too need their natural gas. I think it is important that there be a programme that attends to their needs as well as the needs of urban Barbados, Christ Church and St. Philip, St. Michael, St. James and St. Peter.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: My friend tells me quite privately that it is in good hands.

Now, the Right Honourable Prime Minister has alluded to the large extent of the drilling in Christ Church, St. Philip and St. George. I would like to know from him when he replies how far we are likely to go geographically with this drilling programme because if my memory serves me right, there is a feeling that there is potential stretching from Woodbourne right down to the Ministerial Building, if I may so put it. I want to know whether we are going, in the course of the development programme which he has indicated, to be drilling also in St. Michael right down to the Esplanade, as it were.

Now that we are dealing with energy generally, what about the non-renewable? There is the renewable and the non-renewable, Sir. I would want to enquire about the wind project. There was an experiment at Lamberts in St. Lucy. We are told it has come to an end. With any comprehensive policy on energy we have to talk not only of the non-renewable but also of the renewable sources. I would like to know what the Government is proposing to do with respect to speeding energy resulting from wind power into the national grid and whether this experiment at Lamberts suggests that these windmills ought to be multiplied across the country.

I think in any sensible policy we have not only to be consistent and wise but we have to be comprehensive. That is really the point of divide between this Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party with respect to energy in this country. It is not that we are not supporting this Resolution. It has our full support but we feel that the Government has not demonstrated over the last 6 years, and even before – the Democratic Labour Party Government, that it has a policy on energy that is wise, consistent and comprehensive and addresses both the short-term and the long-term interest of the country.

Hon. H. deB. ¹²ORDE: Mr. Speaker, this House has heard me enunciate as recently as about four or five months ago the Labour Party's position in relation to energy policy. I wish to compliment the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph for supporting with very cogent arguments the wisdom and farsightedness of the Barbados Labour Party Government in the 1970's and 1980's in pursuing a policy which has now been recognised as being beneficial not only to the incoming Government which succeeded us, but what is more important to Barbados as a whole.

I think that those of our consumers who benefitted from locally produced liquefied petroleum gas are happy that we brought the industry to the position that now we are supplying just under 30% of our LPG needs. I believe, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said, that we have the potential to more than double that figure. Certainly I look forward to the expansion of the LPG industry here in Barbados with the assistance from the Canadians, assistance for which we are most grateful and thankful.

We would recall in the 1980's that the then Prime Minister Adams negotiated with his counterpart in Canada for the type of support which was given us then. I am pleased to see that the Government has not abandoned one of his farsighted policies, and that they are now following up with getting the sort of assistance which he got at that time for the development of the oil industry.

The development of the LPG industry as a product also assisted in bringing back to Barbados some of the

training obtained by Barbadians overseas. Mr. John Belgrave from my constituency in Dayrells Road was one of the people who assisted tremendously in that development.

1.35 p.m.

I believe that his services are still available to the plant as well as to the Government of Barbados. We are seeing many of our younger people being attracted into the field of petroleum and petro chemicals and looking forward to a future within the oil industry here in Barbados.

But, Sir, this is not the only part of our policy that has paid off. I agree completely with the criticism made of the decision to discontinue exploratory drilling in 1986. It was not long after that the price of oil started to rise again. I believe that we could have saved much on foreign exchange if we had not, for short-term political reasons, abandoned that programme. The short-term political reasons were the then statement of this Government that it wanted to pass back to the taxpayers a proportion of money. Some taxpayers are still waiting for the \$36 million or whatever it is from the Barbados Light and Power Company that the Government has not given to them. They are still waiting for it. The criticism of our then policy on drilling and our then policy on using, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said, natural gas to benefit the widest number of people by making sure that it was available to the Barbados Light and Power Company; those are the areas, for the benefit of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. Those are the areas I am adverting to. That was, in my view, a mistake made. It was clearly enunciated by the incoming DLP Cabinet led by the then Minister of Finance and strongly seconded by the present Prime Minister, as well as, the Member for St. Michael West. Strongly articulated on the platform. Strongly articulated at that time.

However I think that the position has been shown, quite clearly, that the policy was a wrong one. I am not going to harp back on the past. I am going to look to the future and hope that the Government will, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph says, not now indulge in a stop go policy in relation to exploration and development of oil policies, that it must not be part of our looking towards the future.

What is more important for us is for us to see that we can use our indigenous natural resources such as oil and natural gas together with our CARICOM neighbours to develop a truly Caribbean policy in order to maximize for our Barbadian citizens and our CARICOM brothers and sisters, the benefits to be derived from the resources within the Caribbean.

I believe very strongly, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the Barbadian oil industry should be developed in conjunction with the oil industry in Trinidad and Tobago primarily,

where there are well-known and proven reserves. I believe that part of the resources of Caribbean neighbours such as Trinidad and Tobago and ourselves should be used for further exploration and development of the oil resources within the Grenada territorial and other waters surrounding that country where it is well-known, at the moment,....

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member only knows about the territorial sea. He does not know anything about maritime affairs, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wonder why the Honourable Member can hear asides. I am not hearing them. What I want to say is that all Honourable Members are provided, within the Standing Orders, at least a half hour to make their own contribution. It is not right and fair that a Member who has been given that right to speak should be interrupted unnecessarily.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I need no help. I am speaking to the House in general.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ... that there are reserves that are capable of being exploited.

I very well recall in the latter part of the 1970s when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South had responsibility for energy matters, his interest in obtaining assistance from various friendly countries for a proper survey to be made of the waters surrounding Barbados and of the area between ourselves Tobago and Grenada and the preliminary information which came to us of the type of deposits which existed within these maritime borders. I am satisfied in my mind that the preliminary information which was available to us seemed to show clearly that there is need for further surveys and exploration to be done, within that area.

I think that there must therefore be a clear policy for Barbados' oil industry of integrating our industry under a regional Caribbean energy policy. I believe that there is actually a regional energy action plan. I would wish that that plan would be made available for the benefit of the House and Members of the House so that we can not only be fully conscious of the thinking of the experts but, at the same time, add the political dimension to those thoughts and come up with an overall policy for the Caribbean, as a whole.

I wish, as well, within that context to speak of the MOBIL Agreement. The MOBIL Agreement came up for renewal in May last year and expired on May 16, 1990. We

have not had a statement from the Government as to what is its position on the continuing negotiations which it was having with MOBIL Oil since that time.

As a matter of fact, it is my information that the current status, certainly up to before the election, was that MOBIL was allowed to carry on on the same terms and conditions as existed under the 1961 Agreement, waiting for the outcome of the elections before a final decision is made.

I consider that the House and, what is more important, the country is entitled to hear from the Government the state of those negotiations and whether MOBIL is going to continue to benefit from an Agreement that has proven to be not overall beneficial to the interest of Barbados and to continue to make huge profits at the expense of the taxpayers and the consumers of Barbados.

The Government well knows that Prime Minister Barrow had a study commissioned on the MOBIL Agreement and he was told that on the 1986 prices that were prevailing that if MOBIL had been close then and the market was allowed to be free, there would have been in excess of \$10 million which it was possible to pass on to consumers and effect a saving. The Government has that study. On the 1986 figures, if MOBIL had been closed and we were allowed to import in our petroleum needs, from any sources, and encourage proper competition between the various distributors of petroleum products in Barbados, the consumer of Barbados could have benefitted to the extent of \$10 million. That is the position that was available to us.

I want to know whether the Government has updated that study. I realize that the then Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office had been having discussions with all of the other oil companies and put to them three scenarios: keep MOBIL as it is – What is its cost? Get rid of MOBIL or look at moving MOBIL to another location with a refinery with a bigger capacity.
1.45 p.m.

The Government has the benefit of that information. It has been made available in the Ministry of Finance. The country is entitled to have the information likewise, and the study shows that on the three scenarios the best of the three was to get rid of Mobil. The Government has that information made available to them. The best of the three was to get rid of Mobil. It would have been cheaper for the consumer without any detriment to the security of the supply of oil in Barbados to close down the Oil Refinery. And the Government further has the follow-up on it which said whether they have tested the study or not I can't tell you. The Government was told that the loss of the 77 jobs that Mobil provided directly would be compensated by the investment that could go in to the use of the Mobil site and other expansions by the creation of another 250 jobs. So there was no net job loss which would have come from

closing the Mobil Refinery and as a matter of fact in my conversations with several of the people who worked at Mobil they saw a bright future for an indigenous oil industry that was fully integrated into the Caribbean. And I believe that those decisions must be made and should be made in the long term interest of Barbados at this time if we are to face up to the questions that will arise for small developing island states such as our own who have to maximise our resources by proper integration and by proper cooperation between our neighbours.

Those are the considerations which have inspired the Labour Party in its approach on this matter. We have no personal vendetta with the Mobil Oil people. What we do have with them is a serious disagreement as to why they should be allowed to continue to use the resources of this country without seeing the corresponding benefit in the changed circumstances in the world which will accrue to Barbados. And the criticisms which I have made of Mobil have also been criticisms voiced from at least one Honourable Member who sat on that side of the House. Those were criticisms that came from the former Honourable Member for St. Michael East as to the shoddy products that Mobil was giving to the country in relation to reformat used in the road and getting a surcharge on it. Getting a surcharge on it in relation to asphalt and in it having no capacity to last for any length of time. So I must therefore ask what is the hesitancy of the Prime Minister who has responsibility for energy to make up his mind on this question. Why must it take so long when the position is absolutely clear that Mobil is not, contrary to what is thought by other people, making this tremendous contribution to security of oil supplies and saving Barbados.

The conditions of 1960 no longer exist in the oil industry and if you follow very carefully what is happening in the industry you will see that there is no case, no reasonable case for us to argue for continuing with such an agreement. A case for us, yes, to continue to look for oil resources; a case for us, yes, to continue with exploratory drilling and developmental drilling, a case for us, yes, to look to our Caricom neighbours to see how we can best integrate all of the Caricom supplies. When I speak of Caribbean neighbours I do not exclude from consideration Venezuela which has given us assistance with our supplies on concessional terms, another agreement that was negotiated during the Barbados Labour Party time, the benefits of which are now being seen and reaped by this country in many ways; benefits, not merely in the security of supplies, but also being reaped in relation to the benefits in housing, being able to use their money for the tenantry roads and for housing in other ways on concessional terms. So that was part of our long term far sighted policy, a proper integration of all aspects of the country's affairs in this respect. So I have to say to them, I want to hear definitely and we will continue to refer to it in this House and come back to the point until the Government gives the

House and the country satisfactory answers to the position as to Mobil.

Now Sir, I want to touch on the conservation measures. No sensible energy policy Sir can be pursued in this country without looking to proper conservation measures and we have of course to implement those measures in all aspects of our industry and in our living conditions and standards. We have to try to improve greater efficiency in the sugar industry and in our transportation sectors, and I want to compliment the sugar industry people for the manner in which they have used the excess bagasse which normally people burn and throw away and have been able as a result to feed electricity through the grid right into the electric company. That has helped to save foreign exchange, helped with the viability of the sugar industry and at the same time use in a much more beneficial manner part of our natural resources which would normally have been thrown aside, Sir.

Likewise Sir, I must ask the Government to re-introduce the energy audits in buildings which have excessive consumption patterns. That is necessary Sir. We have to begin in our building codes to make proper use of the type of trade wind conditions existing here and less dependence from time to time on the air conditioning. And even when we use it at times Mr. Speaker you would experience it sometimes, too cold, an excessive use, and at other times, too hot, not enough use. So we have to learn to deal with that type of programme as well and I would hope that the Ministry that has responsibility for building code when bringing out a building code Sir, will deal properly with that aspect of the matter.

Now, Sir, Honourable Members have spoken about alternative uses of energy and again one of the farsighted policies followed by the Barbados Labour Party was in relation to the Wind Project at Lamberts and elsewhere. I regretted when I saw that Energy Unit which used to be next to my Constituency Office in Hastings – in Balmoral Gap in Hastings House, I was in Hastings House No.1, the Energy Unit was upstairs of that building – I regretted when I saw that Energy Unit one morning packing up. The Consultant was going. And there was a period of time when no decisions were being made as to what to do with that Unit. The staff were uncertain about their position, the Honourable Member did not then have responsibility for it, he was in Education still, at that stage. It was under the control of the former Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central who is no longer in this House. He then could not make up his mind because he had come through hard with these various policies, adopted lock, stock and barrel by his colleagues who have since disowned him for the policies, but he then closed down, virtually closed down, the alternative energy unit which was operating from up there and some of the local Barbadians who had expertise in this field were made redundant.

Now I believe that if there is one thing Barbados should be looking at, is alternative energy sources. We are blessed Sir, in the Caribbean. We are blessed with an abundance of solar power. I believe, I may not be alive to see it, that the genuine alternative to oil is going to be solar energy in the future.

1.55 p.m.

Barbados made some strides and was ahead of several countries in this regard and once again under the much maligned former Prime Minister, Tom Adams, we had depressions.... You prefer that word. You do not like the other alternative of it ... which provided incentives for the development of solar. So much today that our solar industry is the net earner of foreign exchange by exporting our solar devices right through the islands, Sir. That is a fact. So I have to make the point. It is a very sensible point. Two more minutes.

So I am going to urge the Government not only to continue to encourage the solar heating industry but also to see that funds are available for adequate research in the solar field and that the Council of Science and Technology should be given additional resources. This is an area in which the private and public sector should be encouraged to work together and, instead of the private sector being told that the Prime Minister cannot talk to them, Sir, I will tell him to try and talk to them. Talk to them about these areas which can only in the long run be totally beneficial to the people of Barbados.

I would hope that Barbados can become a leader in solar energy, Sir. I believe my time has expired and I will have to leave the other Honourable Members to make their points relating to natural gas distribution.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West has risen.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is 2 o'clock and I believe that Honourable Members have had a surfeit of debate. I move that this House be suspended until 3:00 p.m. today, Sir.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 3.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
2.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for the City.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have no doubt that the Government is quite overwhelmed at the versatility of the Opposition on this very important matter of energy and there will be many more than four in a row. I want to address quite briefly, Sir, the question of environmental protection. I believe you know, Sir, from my speeches in other places that I have a particular concern. The Caribbean Sea is today, I believe, one of the most polluted if not the most polluted sea in the world. That used to be the case with the Mediterranean Sea and with much massive effort long before all the things we hear about environmental protection, the environment, and so on and so forth the European people cleaned up the Mediterranean Sea. Because the Mediterranean Sea was not only important to them in the way the sea is naturally important to people who live around it in particular, but it was particularly important to the tourist industry of the Mediterranean and still is.

I do not think that Honourable Members may be aware, Sir, of the incredible number of barrels of oil which are funnelled through what is known as the Caribbean corridor on a daily basis. More refining of oil is done within the Caribbean Basin than anywhere else in the world including the Gulf. Although we have seen the closure and the down-siting of some of the refineries of this region, we still somewhat enjoy that doubtful status. We have been lucky in the Caribbean and that goes both for the Northern and Southern Caribbean, Mr. Speaker, Sir, in that to date there has not been a major oil spill in these waters as the tankers tank these hundreds and thousands of barrels on a daily basis through the Caribbean corridor. We have refining facilities in St. Lucia and of some large quantity in Venezuela, Trinidad, and the Netherland Antilles. Even though there has been, as I said, some downturn in that particular jurisdiction, it is still a matter of grave concern. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the way the maritime economic zones work in a place like the Caribbean there is no hundred mile limit between, for instance, Barbados and perhaps its nearest neighbour. St. Vincent is some 99 miles away from us which means that the half way mark puts us at 50 miles. We have been exceedingly lucky. I am not meaning to tempt fate and I hope that we will never see a major spill of the order that we have seen in Alaska of the North Sea in recent times. But I am deeply concerned that the Government's lack of any discernible energy policy will also betray a lack of any policy on the part of the Government in respect of the protection of the environment from the oil industry.

Over the past 15 years or so we have seen quite dramatic fluctuations, mostly diminutions, in our flying fish harvest. There is a body of opinion and I belong to that body of opinion, Mr. Speaker, which believes that the oil which is disburst when they wash their bilges out to sea from many of these tankers goes into our economic zone which is an activity carried on mostly at night when it cannot be detected. Barbados Coast Guard is not equipped

to do that kind of surveillance. But that oil floats on the surface of the sea, Sir, and then wave action will cause the oil to formulate itself into little pellets which sink to the bottom. So that the damage of the oil spill...and I am not talking about a major spill now. I am talking about constant and deliberate gorging of oil into our waters...cannot be underestimated because I think every Barbadian should know or ought to know that flying fish spawn on the surface of the ocean.

3.05 p.m.

I believe, as many other people, some of whom are marine biologists, do too, that the oil which is disgorged in this way from the tankers destroys in an instant a lot of the result of that spawning and that this in no little measure has been responsible for the serious diminution in our flying fish harvest. Then it goes down to the bottom, and I believe that the oil pellets do even greater damage to the bottom life. It is on the bottom, for instance, where sea eggs spawn, and we know what had happened to the sea egg harvest. Marine biologists have put forward all kinds of theories. This is not a popular theory, but it is a theory which I believe has some merit in it. I believe that the damage that is done by the oil to the bottom life in Barbados, to our in-shore waters, to all that plankton life on which the fish in our reefs feed, not to mention the kind of damage that it does to the coral reefs at all – coral reefs are very special creatures, they are not fish, they tend more to be animals – and coral needs very special conditions in which to grow and thrive. The water in which coral will find itself growing has to be water of a certain warmth of temperature. It also requires light. I have seen photographs of the kind of damage that oil on the bottom does to the coral reefs of Barbados.

I am also deeply concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the appearance of these soft oil pellets on the beaches of Barbados. Particularly on the eastern coastline you will certainly find them and tourists certainly walk on them. At Sam Lords Castle for years now you will find something called a tar station, which is really a little box with a rag in it and a bottle of kerosene oil, because you have only got to walk a few yards at Sam Lords Castle on the beach and when you look at the bottom of the foot it is covered in this sticky, soft, tar-like substance, and these are oil deposits which are washing in to our beaches. It is true at Bathsheba and along the east coast, and I believe is now to be found at the Crane and other beaches creeping slowly along the south coast.

When you bear in mind, Sir, that in the Barbados Labour Party's time the entire east coast was designated a national park area, when you bear in mind the great damage that is done by washed off erosion on the east coast already, not to mention damage which is now being done by oil spillage, I think that the Government must be greatly concerned, and it must go beyond the point of concern. I am very wishful of discovering from the Prime Minister, in the

absence of a Minister of Energy, or any Minister who carries energy in his portfolio, what steps are being taken to minimise this oil spillage of which I speak.

It may seem like a slight thing and you may think that washing out the bilges of one tanker is no big thing, but when you consider the procession of tankers which move through our waters, and when you consider the fragility of the tourist industry in the best of times, we do not only need a hurricane or a downturn in the economy in the United Kingdom, or in Continental Europe or in North America to do extensive damage to our tourist industry. We should pray on a daily basis....

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: What we are suffering over here is lack of substance, Sir, yes.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, we are deeply concerned over here at the potential damage which a major oil spill could wreak in respect of the physical environment in Barbados and, more particularly, I am concerned about that constant and invidious daily damage which is done by this washing of the bilges of the oil tankers not only in Barbadian waters but in waters of the Caribbean.

I would like to hope, Sir, bearing in mind that a division of UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) is to be found located at Jamaica, that the Barbados Government, together with other CARICOM Governments, would be looking at this entire business of the damage to the marine environment that is done by the tankerage of oil through the Caribbean colonies.

That is one concern. There are other concerns which I will raise. I give way now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I did not consider that the debate necessitated this Honourable Member getting involved, but having heard the contribution of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, who went even further than the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, because the Member for Christ Church South said that the decision taken in 1986 around June or July to suspend the drilling operations was unwise, and in fact the Honourable Member for St. Joseph went further and said that in his view it was wrong.

I am reading, Mr. Speaker, from the debate on Wednesday, April 2, 1986 at page 3741. This is the same Honourable Member who now represents Christ Church

South, the Honourable H. B. St. John. This is what the Honourable Member for, at that time, Christ Church East Central said:

"The present volatility of the world oil situation has begun to impact on the Barbados economy. The effect on the local drilling operations carried out by the Barbados National Oil Company Ltd. has been negative, as the price of its crude, which is based on the Venezuela Tia Juana medium, has fallen, from US\$25.92 per barrel in January to US\$13.51 by March 6th. Quite obviously, therefore, this company, which has realized net profits of \$19.3 million during its period of operating so far, has had to review its operations in these changed circumstances."

The Member went on:

"Nevertheless, certain serious decisions regarding continuing exploration will have to be made as the profit margins of the operation are being eroded by the decline in prices."

3.15 p.m.

He says:

"Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Barbados is not alone in having to take such decisions as evidenced by the massive lay-offs and job losses occurring in Alaska, Texas, Oklahoma, the major oil states of the United States, in the North Sea operations of the United Kingdom and next door in Trinidad and Tobago."

How could the Honourable Member today make a statement that the decision taken two months after he made this statement was wrong?

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph...

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the point I am trying to make is that this was the Labour Party speaking here and the Honourable Member was then the Minister for Energy. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph at this time was then the representative for Christ Church East and had Natural Resources and Agriculture.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He is disassociating himself from this now, saying he never made this speech, which is true. So, I wanted to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that the decision that was taken in 1986 was not a decision that was taken lightly as was evidenced here by the speech

of the Honourable Member at the time for Christ Church East Central. It was based on proper advice and on the experience of what was happening at the time and he realises that. I don't think we need to go down through that.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South also mentioned that the Prime Minister should have mentioned the profitability and projections of profitability by the company and I have here a document by the Barbados National Oil Company Limited which projects its estimated profit over the coming years and they estimate that in 1991 they should make \$5.5. million in profit, in 1992 \$4.2 million, in 1993 \$4.8 million and in 1994 \$1.393 million and that is on what is existing at the moment. This can be made available, but this as I said, is a document by the Barbados National Oil Company which was provided and gives projections of the profits they expect to make in the coming years.

The Honourable Member as well mentioned the type of wells. First, Mr. Speaker, the objectives of the project as were outlined by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister was to reduce the dependence of Barbados on external supplies of crude oil and liquified petroleum. One of the objectives was also to optimise the use of the natural gas by minimising the incidence of flaring as was mentioned by the same Honourable Member for Christ Church South and also to increase the known oil and gas reserves of the island by 40%. So there were about three objectives for the project and I think that these three objectives were mentioned by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister when he began.

The project, I think, again was also mentioned by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister and I felt that the Prime Minister made a very good job in his introduction although Honourable Members on the other side are saying that he should have gone further and things like that but that is to be expected.

Now, the project is divided into three components, Mr. Speaker. There will be the drilling of 26 on-shore wells. This will entail the purchase of equipment and other material that the Prime Minister itemised. The project is also divided into optimisation of Natural Gas an LPG component and it is also the enhancement of the production facilities. This will entail the acquisition of certain production equipment such as separators and tanks which will then be required to handle the extra production and to allow greater flexibility as the work expands.

The drilling component of the project, as was alluded to by the Member for Christ Church South, and who stated there were three different types of wells. He was saying there was exploration and other things although the Honourable Member for St. Lucy told him that "regardless if you think oil is there, once you don't know you are exploring". That was pointed out to him by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. Now the drilling components of the

project will consist of a mixture of exploration, appraisal and development wells which will specifically focus on the finding of new reserves and the expansion of proven reserves. So the two main things they are looking at – They are trying to find new reserves of oil and they want to expand on the proven reserves that they already have.

The other component of the project: they have to set up things called satellite batteries in new areas and the piping of available natural gas back to the processing plant. Now, the objective by the Barbados National Oil Company is the full utilisation of its LPG plant. It wants to provide at least 50% of the local demand in natural gas and wants to increase the amount of sales that it does to the NPC. Now, one expects that after this increase in production that the Barbados Light & Power Company will be in a position and will have the necessary equipment to put this equipment in place in order to use more of this gas to operate the turbines and things like that. At the moment, the Barbados Light & Power is taking up to the maximum that it can use and therefore it is hoped that very shortly there will be additional equipment to take and to use more of this gas.

Now, the rationale behind this project as far as I can see is that it is estimated that the reserves of crude that we have in Barbados at the moment which is about 3.1 million barrels of crude oil will be used up in about four or five years and therefore it is necessary that you start looking for new reserves and also trying to expand the amount of reserves that we have. It is also felt, Mr. Speaker, that in the coming years the general trend of the prices of oil will go up. I know at the moment the feeling is that when the war in the Gulf is finished as was mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that one expects there to be a lot of oil available and at very low prices. I do not know whether there will be a lot of oil available. I know that the prices will go down. I cannot confirm that there will be a lot of oil floating around because no one knows what is going to happen. No doubt, the price will go down. The point is that the long term trend predicts that the price of oil will go up and therefore the Barbados National Oil Company wants to be in a position if that happens to take advantage of the increase in the oil prices.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that I have mentioned most of the points raised by the Honourable Members on the other side. I think the main point that I was trying to make here was that the decision to suspend oil drilling in 1986 was not a light decision because it was taken with full awareness of the fact of what was happening in other parts of the world and full awareness of the fall in oil prices that had come about around that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
3.25. p.m.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution. In so doing I would like to make a number of comments on the energy policy that we are discussing today. At the same time I would like to respond to some of

the points raised by the Members of the Opposition. I think that substantively one of the things that are coming through very strongly to me is that we are talking about decision-making and the entire thrust of the Opposition debate has been on the question of how decisions are conceived and made.

In fact, the thrust of that Opposition debate has been to question decision-making on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party. I think that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South has made it a very easy task to show that when decisions are based on emotion rather than full considerations or decision-making theory, we as legislators can find ourselves in difficulty by sometimes contradicting ourselves because if you come with certain pre-conceived ideas without looking at the reality of decision-making theory, sometimes we can say things that we would live to regret.

It seems to me that the questions that have been raised by the Opposition, questions about whether or not the Government should discontinue the exploratory drilling policy at the time which it did and whether or not it should pursue a stop/go policy, -- all of that relates to decision-making theory. All of that must presume that the Government and the technocrats are not people who are going to make *ad hoc* decisions on matters of national importance.

I would suggest that, in fact, in a debate of this nature, neither side can presume negative perceptions about the others in terms of how they reach conclusions. There is abundant evidence to suggest that the Government will make the kinds of decisions that are relevant at a particular point in time in any area of national economic policy.

If the Honourable Member for St. Joseph can ask whether we will have a stop/go policy in terms of production -- I think he meant at the time exploratory drilling but he said production in gas -- the question could be asked if I may use an analogy in terms of agriculture, are we always going to have 40 000 hectares involved in planting sugar canes or sometimes would we have to allow that to diminish to 30 000 hectares depending on the economic circumstances in sugar at a particular time? Or are we always going to have large acres of land in cotton production? Are we sometimes going to have to ease off and allow cotton production to shrink or to become less important in a particular time of our development?

It is the same thing when you relate basically to oil. Oil or any other industry must be subject to decision-making theory that is based on a number of things, opinions and facts. Anybody who tells me that fact is the only criterion for making decisions would have to be wrong. Sometimes we need to have very strong opinions in terms of where we want a particular industry to go. Then we have to look at that in relation to the facts that are available.

Even then we may not be persuaded by the facts at the time to make certain decisions. I am suggesting that anybody who comes with preconceived ideas saying that you can have stop/go policies would have to run into difficulties at some time because in fact stop/go might be the best policy under certain circumstances.

I wish to suggest too that when we are looking at the whole issue of Mobil, to address Mobil as some single or unique circumstance, is to pull Mobil out of the concept that we have trans-national or multi-national corporations. I have never heard the kind of strictures that are being addressed today and before addressed to the Royal Bank of Canada, or other financial companies in the same way.

I have heard the Leader of the Opposition say today that he had no personal vendetta by the Barbados Labour Party against Mobil. I wonder why he had to say that. Me thinks he is reflecting that protest too much. I do not know why he put that in the records of this House. I know he had the same position as a former Leader of the Opposition. There might be something in common between these Leaders of the Opposition when it comes to motive.

If I may go back, Mr. Speaker, when we are looking at these matters, the vendetta word will determine a person's or a party's position is the fact that there are a number of different interests and that some interests will be represented. I am not proxy to the interest that is being stated right now by the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party. I will ask him when he is here to give us a full explanation of his position on the issues in this particular matter. I know when a particular position is taken on a particular institution because Mobil is just another multi-national or another trans-national. I want to know why he has taken a particular position in this particular situation where there are other multi-nationals in Barbados that do not have the same reputation of Barbados but that he does not go on and say that they leave Barbados tomorrow. I ask why is this particular position being taken about Mobil? I have no particular brief about Mobil. I am saying you need to look at these things not as individual circumstances but look in the context in which they operate. Mobil is a multi-national oil company in the area of energy. We are dealing with energy -- oil. I believe there is something a bit more than we know about in this debate about Mobil.

The other matter, Mr. Speaker, is that I wish to be very clear where the Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph will be taking us on the Mobil matter because if this debate goes further and I hear the same kind of support coming from the other Members of the Opposition we are supposed to pick up Mobil and send it down to Trinidad and become totally dependent on Trinidad in matters in terms of oil refining and so on, I am wondering where is this new-found generosity coming from the Barbados Labour Party that we are going to derogate our position in certain areas to Trinidad. I have not heard

that same charity in terms of Trinidad relationship before. What I am hearing here seems strange to me that we are hearing that we should get rid of Mobil, locate these areas of the industry in Trinidad, integrate our energy industry throughout so that you have a CARICOM structure in the industry.

I have never heard this said about sugar. I have never heard it said about any of the other industries that we have in Barbados like the tourism industry. You scarcely ever hear it in terms of the airline industry, BWIA and all of them coming from the same Barbados Labour Party. What is happening all of a sudden is that only one industry, the oil industry, has to be virtually integrated between Barbados and Trinidad. I get very concerned because these lines of debate vary significantly from positions that are taken on broad principles. Therefore I have to ask why is this particular position being taken with Mobil and with the oil industry?

I just wanted to make those very broad points because quite clearly I am still to hear from the Opposition a serious suggestion about what they want to do in terms of refining the oil. I have heard them say get rid of Mobil...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. The Opposition is not the Government.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: And will not be for a very long time. I am suggesting that perhaps when we hear these kites being flown that, in fact, they are more supportive of Government policy than they would suggest and that much of the opposition might only be rhetoric. Therefore we allow them to exercise themselves in that rhetorical situation. Let them have their rhetorical flourishes. But in fact, they cannot come up with a serious alternative to the Mobil situation because I refuse to believe that the kite that is being flown about an integrated industry with Trinidad and Tobago is being put as a positive and a serious suggestion by the Opposition.
3.35 p.m.

We have heard that coming from the former Minister of Energy and partly from the Leader of the Opposition but not from the spokesman on energy. I have not heard the Opposition spokesman on energy put that suggestion. He raised the question about MOBIL and he asked for Government's policy on MOBIL and a clarification. But he has been superseded by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and the Leader of the Opposition telling us that we should allow MOBIL to be taken up from Barbados and that Trinidad should take on those responsibilities for Barbados. I would really like to know what is the Opposition's position on MOBIL. Who speaks for the Opposition? I am not sure because I am getting fairly contradictory comments and at the same time, too, comments that....

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: You are going to speak next. I am assured by the Honourable Member that he is speaking next.

Mr. SPEAKER: No one can speak at any time unless I give him permission to do so. The Chair will maintain that position.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, if I may now move to my own contribution to this debate. I would want, I would think when we are talking about the oil industry in Barbados from reaching flights of the imagination where we are almost conceiving this oil industry as some serious petro chemical industry based in the United States of America or something like that. We are talking about the oil industry in Barbados. That is what we are talking about. We are talking of the reality of oil in Barbados.

When we get comments about how a drilling policy will be determined and about the types of exploratory drilling that has been done, whether or not there is one well that has been explored and has been found to be empty and therefore if we drill near that, the chances are that they would be empty also. And one that has been explored and been found to have oil and if we drill, there is a certainty. We are talking about a three-pronged kind of well, the three-pronged approach. But that is not for Barbados. You are talking about massive countries where there is geographical diversity and space between wells. If you are drilling in St. Philip, St. George and Christ Church and you are talking about those three characteristics existing in any serious way between the few square hectares you are talking about, you cannot talk about the logic that is applied and the kind of analysis that is applied to an oil well in Texas or in the Middle East or something like that.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But seriously, if you are going to bring any kind of analytical and intellectual rhythm to debates in this House you cannot borrow criteria from another country and another circumstance and bring it to Barbados. There is no span between the wells in this country. What is the room for diversity between a well in St. Philip, St. George and Christ Church that you are talking about? What is the oil flow or the oil distribution in there that you can get these three characteristics that you are talking about seriously, within Barbados? You must understand that.

A decision that is made about wells in Barbados is one where the limits of chance are not that wide, as is being posited to us by this theory about well development in this country. We need to look at these things. Because

sometimes you hear things put down in here like Gospel when in fact they are just taken from another circumstance and applied to a place like Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Somebody writes out a position paper and sets out a preamble....

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I have allowed each Member an opportunity to be heard in silence. I am appealing to Honourable Members to afford other Members that courtesy, so that the records can be clearly written. Continue.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I hope the Honourable Member for St. Peter will not always be caught up by preambles in a paper, where sometimes, the limits of possibility are set out in a very wide and theoretical way and then you get into the substance. Do not waste papers unless you want to get into a serious debate.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados National Oil Company is in my constituency. It is a corporate constituent. It is located in Woodbourne and therefore it is a matter of some interest to me what happens in the area of oil, drilling and so on. Of course, some of the land in my constituency is gone also in that direction. In fact the areas where the wells are are well known to any of us who have been raised in that part of the constituency.

One of the matters I have always had an interest in is the whole question of whether or not the oil industry is environment friendly. Whether or not we continue drilling for oil wells in that part of the country will have any negative effects on the environment in the future.

The Honourable Member for the City raised the question in terms of oil spills, *et cetera* which I think perhaps are generated more by the transport of oil across the seas and so on than from the local drilling for oil, the local exploration for oil. Still, her point is taken that we have to be concerned about the effect of oil on the environment.

I would just want an assurance and I am sure that, certainly the technocrats would be looking at this all the time, that the exploration for oil wells and the laying down of natural gas mains, as they are now, networking across the country will be given the greatest protection, in terms of ensuring that our environment will not suffer any degradation as a result of this kind of development. Because I have a concern that the more miles of natural gas lines that are laid, the greater the possibility of spills from natural gas will be.

In fact, I think we have a domestic situation where fires can result as a result of the use of the bottle gas and so

on. I always have this fear, Sir, that with the lines criss-crossing the country that we have to be extremely careful, as we become a country where natural gas is carried more and more into the households, where we are going to be positing that natural gas will be used for industrial purposes.

I just want the assurance that all is being done to make sure that this kind of development is sustainable development and that it is environment friendly. As I said, I have no doubt that the technocrats are looking in this direction, but certainly it would be our policy, as an Administration, to make sure that this is so. In terms of the same natural gas development, I have a concern that, in terms of our planning for housing development – and I have a classical example for instance in my own constituency – I believe that planners should now ensure that, as far as possible, when new housing developments are being located, at the same time when the roads and the other facilities are being placed that natural gas should be located. I had a situation in Plumgrove where there were over 250 houses being put down at a particular time. It was very easy to get in your water, your light and your telephones. But then you have to come some years after, dig up those roads and put in natural gas. It seems to me that there should be a close correlation between the various facilities and that this should be a requirement of the planners that they should seek to find out from the residents, up front, before those lots are sold and so on whether in fact they need the natural gas. Perhaps it should be some constraint on the planners to ensure that the natural gas is put in. Then we can always pay the requisite corporations and authority, at a later date.

But to me, it is faulty at this stage in time, when we have the natural gas resources to see massive housing development going on and that this is not done until later on, at a tremendous cost to the country and to the householders. That is one of my concerns in the area of natural gas.

Another area that I have concern for – I should like to know in terms of the outlets for selling liquid gas at gas stations, what policies we will have for development, in the future. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that there is a request to have another gas station in Christ Church in the area that used to be my constituency but it is now the constituency of the Member for Christ Church South. I have been informed that there has been a longstanding request to have a gas station somewhere in the area of Southern Plaza. As far as I know, there are quite a few gas stations in the area.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: In Kendall Hill too? There is a request to have one in Kendall Hill.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thanks for the information. I was assured that there was a request to have one in Oistin, in the area of Southern Plaza or Welches, whatever you want to call it. Now I hear Kendall Hill.

I believe we have to look at what is likely to happen, in terms of the policy of locating gas stations. I can certainly think of several gas stations, Pilgrim Road, Oistin, Top Rock and so on. I believe that we have to thread carefully, in terms of giving permission for the location of these gas stations, all over the place. That is certainly one area of concern that I would have. I would certainly like to know about the policy, in this respect.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, if this money is going to be spent in the area of Christ Church East Central, in terms of continued drilling, I hope that there will be a spill-off in employment. Clearly, Sir, if there is that spill-off in employment, I have no doubt that we can speak to the relevant authorities to see what benefits will accrue to the people of Christ Church East Central.
3.45 p.m.

I think I am bordering with St. Philip South and therefore I believe some discussions can go on in this direction. But if there are jobs being created in that area and I hope there will be some jobs created in this area, that in fact, the benefits will come to the constituency where the National Oil Company is already a corporate resident and a corporate constituent. I thank you.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter before the House has to do with the approval of the House to guarantee a loan by Government and while it admits of a debate on energy and the debate Sir from this side has been rich and very constructive, one also is very mindful of the implications that this debate could also raise regarding Government's debt management. So at the start of the last session I was very careful speaking in my capacity as the shadow Minister of Finance, to state a position on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party that we were prepared to support Government, Sir, where it was borrowing for productive purposes and we were not going to be niggardly Mr. Speaker, in saying that Barbados should not raise loans just as we have heard from time to time from the benches of the Democratic Labour Party. We said in the last term Sir that where loans were being raised for productive purposes, Sir, that we were going to be supporting them and this side has supported this loan guarantee on the basis of the conviction that it is being raised, Sir, for a productive purpose.

But one cannot, Sir, enter this debate without being very mindful of the very low remarks that are very often being raised by the Minister of Finance in this country. Very low, uncalled for remarks, Sir. Remarks, Sir, that are not befitting the office of the Minister of Finance. From

time to time, Sir, remarks, Sir, that do not fall properly from the mouth of Minister of Finance.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would just like to caution the Honourable Member, there is only one Prime Minister in the country and he sits in the House, and one has to be very careful in the remarks one makes in respect of an Honourable Member in the House.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Yes Sir, we are prepared to support the Government when Government borrows for productive purposes Sir, but we also expect that the Government will also not make statements to discredit the Opposition after we come to this House, Sir and support them in loans. For example Sir, the Minister of Finance of this country has now been given to making a set of statements when it suits his purpose abroad that Barbados' debt service is manageable, that he has inherited a debt service position that is manageable. When, however, he comes to this country and is speaking before his party faithfuls Sir, we hear a different situation – that he has been left with an unmanageable debt burden caused by the Barbados Labour Party, the wicked Barbados Labour Party, Sir, and all we are saying in this debate, Sir, as we set about to establish parameters is that we will be prepared, Mr. Speaker, to support those. We also expect the Minister of Finance to be consistent in the statements that he makes both at home and abroad in relation to the debt service of this country Sir, and the obligations of the House in this matter.

We are tired from this side, hearing the people of this country being led to believe that we mismanaged the affairs of this country by leaving the Democratic Labour Party with too large a debt burden, then to hear the same Minister of Finance go abroad and say that the debt situation of Barbados is manageable. We are also tired of hearing the Minister of Finance giving the impression that he is paying back loans. This Parliament and only this Parliament raises loans and pays them back. The Minister of Finance does not raise loans and pay them back, but there is an impression abroad in Barbados that the Minister of Finance is struggling under the burden of having to pay back loans that we have left Sir. And it has even now gone to the stage where a loan that was raised by his Government in June 1986, approved by a Cabinet of which he was a member, suddenly does not become a DLP loan but is a loan of a former Minister of Finance and he now Sir is to stand in splendid isolation.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like you to desist from saying he.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am sorry Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the Honourable Minister of Finance. We have to get this straight. We had this situation recently where the Honourable Minister of Finance is seeking to disassociate himself from a loan raised by the

Democratic Labour Party Government in July of 1986, approved by a Cabinet of which he was a member, approved by this House Sir without his dissenting vote, but he will want to create the impression Sir now that it was a loan raised by a Minister of Finance.

The Honourable Member has to start telling the people of Barbados if we are not always to be divided on this issue that Cabinet approve loans, Parliament approves loans and that no Minister of Finance raises any loans and that no Minister of Finance is responsible for the repayment of loans either.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Those points have to come across very clearly if this Government is to expect our cooperation in these matters.

We are also being told Sir, that he is having to raise taxes to repay IMF Loans when the country should be told that the loans being repaid to the IMF are not a charge on the Consolidated Fund, they are being repaid by the Central Bank. These things Sir, are rancorous and a stop must be put to them Sir. But above all we are prepared to support these loans, provided that it is also the understanding that there is but one Government in Barbados. A Government borrows and another Government has the responsibility from time to time to have to repay. A Government borrows, it leaves assets; another Government will have to repay. In the same breath that he is telling the people of Barbados from time to time that he has to repay Barbados Labour Party loans he should also, the Member for St. Michael South, be telling the people of Barbados that one of the biggest loans that has to be repaid by children yet unborn is that loan to be paid in 2015 that he the Member for St. Michael South raised last December. That is the context, Sir, within which we must deal with debt management in this country, Sir.

There is one Government, one Government that raises loans. The nonsense about this Minister who has raised a loan and this other Minister has to repay it, that is foolishness and it must stop if this country is not to be divided on a debt situation which we too, like that other side in its more sober moments, feel is manageable.

So within that broad context Sir, we can again commit ourselves to supporting loans raised in the name of the people of Barbados, approved by the Parliament of Barbados to be repaid by the people of Barbados, to undertake productive activity on behalf of the people of this country. But the kind of lack of leadership that the Minister of Finance is presenting in the discussion of debt management in this country is only dividing the country and causing rancour. We on this side have been made to appear as if we have wasted the loans that we have borrowed and that we have left them with some impossible

task of management when the bankers abroad are telling him something else. I thought, Sir, that I would preface my remarks on this first occasion that we are discussing a loan that we must establish that he, the Minister of Finance, must speak with one voice and consistency in this matter. For three and a half years the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and the former Member for St. Michael South Central did a dog dance in this Honourable House; one frighten and the next 'fraid as my friend would say.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order Sir. At least we used to belong to the same party, but those over there Sir, the three of them had a coalition with the

Mr. SPEAKER: No point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question of Government's energy policy has been the subject of much of the comment so far raised during this debate, and I think what is coming across very clearly is that Government has really lacked an energy policy and as a result the people of Barbados have been forced to pay a very substantial price.

The House may be interested Sir in hearing the extent of this price. Again I am sorry the Member for St. John is not here, because he does not believe that one should cite numbers nor that one should use the Central Bank's statistics, Sir: but the relevance of the point I am about to make Sir is that the Barbados Labour Party in 1981/82 was forced, as a result of Mobil walking out, to take over the development of our energy resources in this country, to borrow money to develop the energy resources of Barbados and in that context it was part and parcel of the policy of the Barbados Labour Party then to expand energy production in Barbados with a view to the saving of foreign exchange. We on this side stand on the strength of our ability to have taken over our energy resources from Mobil, borrow productively to develop them, and succeed in saving foreign exchange.
3.55 p.m.

The House, Sir, should be told that in 1981 Barbados was importing \$143 million in fuel products, Sir, and we brought that down in 1982 to \$84 million, 1983 to \$59 million, Sir, and by 1985 to \$53 million and 1986 to \$25 million at a time when the price of energy products, Sir, were high. Under the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, oil production almost doubled, reaching a level of 679,000 barrels by 1985. As we were increasing energy production, Sir, we were saving foreign exchange and the numbers are there to establish that record. The record now, Sir. The Democratic Labour Party found the energy production at 679,000 barrels. By 1989 it had fallen to 389,000 barrels, Sir, and the opposite trend established itself that whereas Barbados was previously incrementally saving on the use of scarce foreign exchange by cutting down on its imports of energy products, under the Democratic Labour Party we found a situation where \$25 million was being spent on

imported fuels. Despite the fall in the price of energy products the foreign exchange payments for importing fuels doubled between 1986 and 1987 moving from \$25 million, Sir, to \$53 million and by the end of 1989 had risen to \$70 million. When we speak, therefore, about your lack of an energy policy, it is borne out in these numbers.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We knew what we wanted to do with the energy resources of this country and it was in that context in 1982 over the protest by Members on the other side particularly, Sir, the Member for St. Michael West, that the Barbados Labour Party took a decisive decision when Mobil said that they had had enough, to make the investment towards exploration to build our reserves of the existing wells and so on to put Barbados in a position, Sir, where we would not have to use scarce foreign exchange and we would be utilizing an indigenous resource. There is now the potential notion for a supply of domestic natural gas for constituencies like mine which could become a reality before the end of the twentieth century. That was our energy policy.

Now I am hearing a lot of talk in this House, Mr. Speaker, about why we are opposed to Mobil. I say, Sir, that we are opposed to Mobil because Mobil has been a bad corporate citizen in Barbados. It has been a bad corporate citizen in Barbados and let us read, Sir, the litany of woes that we have against Mobil. Barbados, Sir, is one of the few countries in the world where one cannot get unleaded gas and where the driving public has to pay for a product that is inferior to what the rest of the world has become accustomed to, Sir. Consider, Sir, what remains as a refinery at Graves End, an environmental and ecological disaster in my view. Mobil, as a monopoly, operating behind the barriers of protection from imports and operating, Sir, on the basis of a surcharge, and a surcharge alone would not spend a penny to put the refinery in Barbados in a position where it would not be a threat to our environment – a bad corporate citizen. On March 16, 1989 the former Minister of Transport and Works of the Democratic Labour Party should have brought to the attention of this House that far more work could have been done and at better quality if Mobil had not been gouging out the eyes of the people of this country, Sir, by charging higher than free market prices for an inferior asphalt product – a bad corporate citizen, Sir.

We are saying, Sir, that in relation to the whole pricing arrangement that has been put in place to guarantee the existence of a Mobil that that whole pricing arrangement, Sir, is working to the disadvantage of the Barbadian consumer and that the whole supply pricing arrangement has outlived its usefulness where we are concerned. We have now a transnational company existing in Barbados whose rate of return is based not upon its efficiency or its technological innovations, but it is based

purely on a deliberate action taken by a Government of Barbados to guarantee its viability and profitability on the basis of a surcharge. Even the Government of Barbados has come to recognize that it cannot ensure its own viability by charging the people of this country a surcharge. But Mobil's viability as an enterprise is justified and rested only on the basis of the surcharge that the Government has to put in there to give it a fair rate of return.

I am saying, Sir, that the days of any Government of Barbados protecting the profitability or guaranteeing the profitability of any transnational company in Barbados whether it be Mobil or Royal Bank or any other company, Sir, must be behind us. I am of the strongest view that no Government in this country, Sir, should see it as its responsibility to protect the monopoly position of any transnational company in this country. My strongest view is that no Government in this country, Sir, in the year 1990 should see it as a responsibility of the state to protect the monopoly interest of any transnational company in this country particularly by the recourse to a pricing arrangement that bears heavily on the backs of the consumers and the poor people of this country, Sir. That is our case against Mobil. It was our case in last year's Budget when the Government of this country found it necessary to increase the surcharge of fuel oil, a burden on the poor people of this country, to please Mobil and to increase its profitability. That is our case against Mobil.

We are saying from the benches of the Barbados Labour Party that alternatives can be put in place to safeguard all of the supplies of energy products of Barbadians and the security of those supplies. In fact, that arrangement has been placed in relation to aviation fuel since 19"when". There is no monopoly situation in relation to the supply of aviation fuel to Barbados. The country has never been exposed to any crisis in the area. But we are now being led to believe that we must be so blinkered to imagine that some insurmountable problem will arise in relation to other energy products if we were now to put them in the same position where supply arrangements are concerned as those that exist in relation to aviation fuel. I am saying, Sir, that is foolishness. We cannot accept that conventional wisdom. The Democratic Labour Party, Sir, has locked itself by way of policy into accepting conventional wisdom where its relationship with Mobil is concerned, Sir.

4.05 p.m.

The relationship has been in place for more than twenty years and therefore you do not feel that you can change it. We are saying that the mind of the people of Barbados must open to something new.

As regards the Barbados Labour Party position, Sir, Members on the other side will see our position stated as regards how we would source our energy supplies in the absence of MOBIL, in our contributions to the discussion

on a regional energy action program. The Barbados Labour Party, Sir, is not now just taking a position about sourcing our energy supplies on the basis of a rationalised use of regional refining capacity. That position was taken by the Barbados Labour Party as far back as the Third Meeting of the Heads of Government of the CARICOM Community in Ocho Rios in Jamaica in November 1982 and it has been consistent, and if the other side want to see the documents, Sir, they are welcome to see them. We are not now just saying that we can do something else where the supply of energy resources are concerned. A long-standing, well thought out Barbados Labour Party position – and we will stand by it because MOBIL has been a bad corporate citizen in every facet of its operation in this country, Sir.

I am disgusted that Members on the other side cannot understand what this particular loan guarantee is about, that MOBIL, Sir, had it all. It had a monopoly. It succeeded General Crude in enjoying a monopoly where production and exploration for oil in Barbados was concerned. It enjoyed a monopoly where processing was concerned. Then it suited MOBIL's purposes in 1982 to say "Let us continue to hold on to the monopoly for processing energy products in Barbados but let us take a walk on risk involved in exploring for oil in this country, in helping Barbados to build its oil reserves and its gas reserves". We are saying Sir, that if it wants to go on having the monopoly it must take the risks associated with the others, that in the same breath that a Government of Barbados can give MOBIL a surcharge to maintain its profitability where processing is concerned, Sir, MOBIL should have acknowledged that it had a responsibility to the people of this country to take the risks in helping us prove our reserves.

We know what our reserves are now and we have increased the reserves of natural gas in this country only because a Government of this country had the courage to go and borrow money to do what MOBIL did not do. That is our case against MOBIL, Sir, and I am saying that we can support this measure because it is part of a continuing series of actions taken independently by the Government of Barbados since 1982 to do what MOBIL refused to do, to help us to build our energy resources in this country to the point where a constituency like mine can look forward in the near future to having access to Barbadian natural gas too. The bottom line, as far as I am concerned, is that I know that if MOBIL was still in operation of that aspect of our energy resources, Sir, the people of St. Peter would never be in a position to enjoy access to natural gas because they were not interested in development of our energy resources; they are interested in a high rate of return on processing. Sir, we are supporting this, because this is a continuation of an enlightened policy, but, we, again, from this side, must ask the Government of Barbados, where is the new MOBIL agreement and do you really intend to inflict a continuing monopoly on the people of this country based only on a surcharge? Are you going to expose the people of Barbados to that situation in perpetuity?

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have not wanted to join in this debate because, Sir....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not know what it is I have for you. Leave me alone *pro tem*.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I really do not understand why this simple Resolution that seeks to establish a guarantee by this House for a simple loan which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South says is unlikely to become a liability based on enlightened policy can generate as much heat as it has generated, where MOBIL is becoming an issue and is now the central point of this debate.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Your Honour as a good Barbadian knows that hog is pork and I am never going to get involved in any discussion.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He knows that hog is pork. He understands and you understand. The Honourable Member for the City understands that hog is pork and that a debate about MOBIL to replace MOBIL by Shell or Texaco or by anybody else is really an exercise in words.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You don't know that that is what you are saying. The problem is that they don't. Leave them, Sir, please don't interrupt them.

Mr. SPEAKER: No. I need to give each Member the opportunity to speak in peace.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I love them when they are like that, Sir. I love when they are like a chorus. They are the chorus but they do not know that that is what they are saying. Now, here is what I have listened to today. The impression is being given.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, don't protect me from them, Sir. Leave me. The fact is that I listened in here today and heard them talking and any person who descended in this Honourable place for the first time and heard these distinguished, senior, well-seasoned parliamentarians discussing these matters, would think that they were merely saying that all the Government had to do is to send MOBIL on its way and put us in a position where we will start to import our fuel needs and the people of Barbados will be better off.

Mr. Speaker, as the person who sat in the Ministry responsible for Energy when MOBIL and Texaco and all of them had the opportunity during the first fuel crisis to demonstrate their interest I can say to you...

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is not here to defend himself now. There is probably no energy crisis where he is but I am still here and even if I were made to look like a boy there could be no question that I am a man.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the impression which is being given is that somehow we are going to be saved once MOBIL is gone and I am saying, Sir, that I had the opportunity to recognise, as did the people of Barbados, that in the final analysis the way how trading is done in fuel in the world that if MOBIL exists where Texaco does not exist or where Shell does not exist or B.P. or one of the giants that an arrangement is made for them to have, what can be called, a kind of noblesse oblige. So, I want to say that I will never be party to any policy which puts us into the same position that many of the Caribbean countries are in now where their dependence on any kind of fuel oil whatsoever is at the mercies of some third-rate decision-maker in some office somewhere far removed from the Caribbean. I will never be party to any policy which would put us in that position and I am saying that any of the new-found relationships with regard to Trinidad and Tobago, so far as energy is concerned, must first become steeped in the attitude of the same Trinidad & Tobago when the late Eric Williams was in charge on this whole issue of energy. This is not a question of deepening of Caribbean integration. This is not a question of widening of Caribbean integration. This is a question of looking at first and foremost the requirements of Barbados. Those requirements require us to examine any policy with regard to energy very carefully and very meticulously. It is not a simplistic matter of sending MOBIL out and bringing some one else in. Any terms and conditions which we are going to discuss for a Caribbean energy relationship must be steeped in a much more fundamental understanding of the Caribbean relationship. It is not a simple matter.

Now, Sir, they are discussing....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Same thing that all of that meant. If you cannot understand I cannot help you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member is addressing the Chair so if the Chair understands I hope the others understand as well.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Sir. Their problem is that when they hear the kind of things that they're hearing, now, they don't like it. The fact is, Sir....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I know you don't understand. You don't understand anything.
4.15 p.m.

The Honourable Member has a problem. The Honourable Member has been sent back into this Chamber....

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like the Honourable Member to move away from that and stay with the Resolution.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: As Your Honour wishes. The fact is that this business of an energy policy for Barbados – they are talking about the Mobil agreement which one of the Honourable Members over there has already confirmed that the agreement has come to an end. Anyone hearing them discussing Mobil would believe that we are still locked in the 1962 agreement which this country needs to know was necessary at the time. They talk about the 1962 agreement as if the Democratic Labour Party went into that agreement and the Barbados Labour Party never had an opportunity to pronounce on it.

I wish to remind the Honourable Members on that side that for 10 years they had the opportunity to revoke the said same very agreement. For 10 years you were the Government. You were not out of office. Your heads might have been out of office but you were the Government.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not speaking any law. I am speaking as a representative. We are in the process of negotiating an agreement. They are discussing it as though it is still in force and as though we have had an opportunity to revoke it or to get rid of it and we have not done anything about it.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But you have asked us in terms. You are saying that you asked now. You have asked us in terms which would mislead the uninitiated into believing that the wicked Democratic Labour Party has put Mobil on the backs of the people instead of recognising that the Barbados Labour Party – and it is only because the Leader of the Opposition apparently does not number Mobil among his long list of corporate citizens that he loves....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of explanation. The Honourable Member could be as nasty as he chooses. He was nasty on the platform so he can continue it now.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Honourable Member made that statement, are you asking the Honourable Member to withdraw it?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No. I do not wish him to withdraw anything, Sir. The point of explanation that I am making is this. The point I made is that although under the agreement it would have expired in May, the present arrangement continues on the same basis as the old agreement is continuing. The Honourable Member knows that. That is what we have been saying.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I recognise no such thing, Sir. Their entire thrust was to give the impression that the Democratic Labour Party will have the people locked in the same vortex that it was in between 1962 and 1990. The impression has been given. What I am saying is if we are in the process of negotiating an agreement, it is their duty to raise questions about it but not in such terms as to suggest that what has occurred between 1962 and the present is continuing in a manner that is going to put the people of Barbados at a disadvantage for the next 20 years when they had 10 years as the Government.

I am saying, Sir, the Barbados Labour Party had 10 years in which they could have renegotiated the same Mobil Agreement. The Honourable Member for St. Peter has just said what a magnificent policy position they had articulated a substantially long time ago. They had every opportunity when they were the Government, notwithstanding the date in which this agreement could have come to an end. There is nothing which says that an agreement that is scheduled to come to an end in 1991 cannot be negotiated in 1985. If the Barbados Labour Party had such a wonderful policy for Mobil how come they went out of office? You mean they intended and expected to be in office for so long that they put away the question of negotiation? They could have negotiated it but the fact is....

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am asking Honourable Members not to shout across the Chamber to each other like that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, they are bound to behave that way because what I am saying is common, ordinary garden variety sense that they are trying to give the impression about the Mobil agreement as though the Mobil agreement is like the law of the Medes and the Persians, like if it is the Bible. The fact is it is being negotiated and they know that this is being negotiated but they have an underlying implication which they have been very subtly trying to suggest.

They are trying to suggest – and they did on the platforms, Sir. What they have not recognised is that they canvassed this and campaigned it and the people have made a decision. The people of Barbados have decided that they

will go along with the Democratic Labour Party negotiating the Mobil agreement and the people of Barbados are prepared to accept when the time comes or reject what we put to the people.

The Barbados Labour Party has no moral position in this that they can come in here and try to give the impression that we ought to have done this and we are to do that, and they want to know what the agreement is on a simple, ordinary measure to do what they say that they wanted to bring an energy policy.

I want to say something else. I think the Honourable Member for St. Joseph said that if we move the refinery from where it is, that it will give us the opportunity to put a tourism village there. I am not going to use this opportunity to describe their experience in innovative matters of tourism. I would say that the refinery which now exists at Gravesend was given the capacity to refine Barbados crude on a directive from the Democratic Labour Party.

In 1974 the policy positions with regard to exploration in Barbados were laid out in a definitive document. The zones and the methodology for exploration were established by the Democratic Labour Party in 1974. There is no new policy which the Barbados Labour Party could come in here today or any time and articulate in relation to exploration and give the impression that the Democratic Labour Party had done nothing.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I do not now have the document in my possession but the document is a document which is in the files of the Ministry. There is no pretence. The Honourable Member, the former Prime Minister, will not utter the foolishness that one might hear coming from certain other parts of this Chamber. The Honourable Member is aware that there is a document in which the country was divided up into areas and in which it was agreed that exploration licences would have to be granted. Let the Honourable Member get up and tell you.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member now says he cannot recall it. The last time we spoke he could remember it. The point I am making is that the Democratic Labour Party set out the parameters for an energy policy in Barbados in the 1970's.
4.25 p.m.

And indeed, Sir, the question has been raised here about why we reduce the amount of exploratory drilling because there is a difference between exploratory – the word is ex-plor-atory not ex-plo-ratory – drilling....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Dr. Haynes was the Minister of Finance and Dr. Haynes said at page 2 of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals and I quote him. Here is what he said, Sir. Here is what the Minister of Finance of the day on July 15, 1986 following what the Honourable Member for St. Philip South said about the pattern that had been established in the thought process for decision-making in the National Oil Company, as outlined by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member who is now the Member for Christ Church South. That pattern obviously had been thrust upon or brought upon the political decision-makers by those who were advising. The language which was quoted by the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, as coming from the mouth of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, at that time is consistent with the pattern that would have been urged upon the decision-makers based on the policy. Here is what the then Minister of Finance said and I quote:

"The Barbados National Oil Company has always been a problem. From its inception to the end of the fiscal year 1985-86, BNOCL has experienced a cash flow deficit of \$20.2 million. The company has been projecting substantial losses for 1986-87. I have already taken steps to reduce these losses."

That was the basis of the policy-decision to reduce drilling exploration, in the context of the price of oil. You may argue now with hindsight that it was not a good decision. But it was consistent with decisions being made across the world for countries that had drilling of any kind.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said it when he quoted Alaskan Company.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Exploratory drilling. The fact is that – and this is the point I am coming to, Sir – in Barbados, when one examines the field, the area in which there could be drilling... I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church South agreeing with me when he pointed out that one of the reasons why, especially in the St. Philip area, we have to be extremely careful not to drill too many wells too soon was because of the very nature of the structure of the soils in the entire area; that while it was true that there may be a substantial field of natural gas in the general area of St. Philip that it was very important, because of the nature of our soil and the nature of the structure of our country, that we be extremely careful to listen to the experts, as they advise us not to proceed with increased drilling, whether for exploratory or for production purposes because of the nature of the country. Either one.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South joined in saying that, in this Honourable Chamber, when we were discussing the large field that may have been discovered in the St. Philip area, around Woodbourne.

The point I am making, Sir, is that the advice....There is no Honourable Member in here who is an expert in the field of oil exploration. Not one. All Honourable Members, whatever else might be said when all is said and done will follow, if they have the interest of the country at heart the advice that is given, in what they believe to be good faith, by the officials, the experts who advise them.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We are not discussing him now. He is gone.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I cited him as the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George South is nothing, if persistent, in his deliberate attempt to misunderstand. I cited Dr. Haynes, the Minister of Finance to explain a point to demonstrate the consistency of relationship between Dr. Haynes and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, that they were consistent. Nothing by the Honourable Member for St. George South will divert me from my course of action.

The point I am making, Sir, is that all of them would have depended on advice, before making a decision.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He was Prime Minister. And when you were Minister is the same as when he was Minister. You had the portfolio but he made the decisions.

The point is that it seems to me a little unfair when we move away from the MOBIL discussion which is obviously generated by other factors, some of which we are not aware obviously.

When it comes to the energy policy, pure and simple, it seems to me to be somewhat unfair to attempt to throw on the present Minister responsible for Energy any blame for the decision to reduce the amount of activity which was obviously non-productive, in terms of our foreign exchange when the advice clearly would have been not to proceed in a certain direction.

I want to make one other point, Sir. If you go from \$36 a barrel to \$13 a barrel you are required, if your economy is so precariously perched and so dependent on the fluctuations in the international community and on your capacity to sustain an ability to import total goods and service. This is not a community that is producing all of its needs. This is a community that is dependent on its ability to earn foreign exchange to survive. Therefore, if it is going to be expending serious foreign exchange, in a particular capacity because oil drilling in Barbados, even though it is a local activity is an activity that would be generating the

reduction of foreign exchange.... I do not have enough time to explain that to anybody who does not understand it. Enough time will elapse and they will understand in due course. But the fact is that the decision to reduce the amount of activity in the oil field was a decision to balance the capacity to have foreign exchange for import purposes.

I am going to make the final point, Sir. The decision to do refining in Barbados was a decision which I made.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes. Refining of our oil. The crude that comes out of the soil in Barbados has a very high dieselene content. It was agreed, in the early stages, that Barbados did not have the capacity – or so MOBIL used to tell us – to refine the crude. As a result we were selling the crude, exporting the crude, as is now being recommended, while we were importing the cocktail mix from Venezuela.

It was after a very careful analysis of how much of the dollar we were expending, in foreign exchange, that we said to MOBIL, "Whatever is necessary to do the conversion at the plant in Barbados, you do it." We have no brief, I certainly have no brief for MOBIL. I have no brief for any multi-national corporation because there is hardly any multi-national corporation that will look on Barbados with other than the same eyes and the same mentality. It is matter for the people of Barbados, through their Government, to determine that it will not allow the multi-national corporations to exploit the country. But they are all the same, as far as I am concerned. I am not going to get here and defend MOBIL. I will defend the Government of the Democratic Labour Party.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Who is McDonald?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Burgee Bee? Yes. Local company. I do not know about any McDonald. McDonald is a matter for you all. I do not get into that.

The point I am making is that we had to direct MOBIL convert what was only something to separate the cocktail mix when it came in and to give us some refining capacity. That is how we were able to start the steady movement up towards the point where, in 1976 when we demitted office, we were producing one third of our energy needs.

I remember discussing, with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South – he had then become the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Trade and Energy in 1976 and, as is customary in this system that we have, there was a discussion in the context of handing over certain aspects of the portfolio – the necessity for us to increase the capacity of Barbados to produce a certain quantity of its own domestic needs in energy.

Sir, there is a point at which it is not economic for Barbados to be producing its own crude. There is a point, apart from the actual cost. If Barbados attempted to produce 100% of its own needs in this country.... In any case we could not do it. We would not be able to do it because the nature of the crude which we get out of the ground in Barbados does not allow us to do that.
4.35 p.m.

It becomes important that we have the right mix and therefore it would – as I have said, it is unfair for anyone to attempt to allocate responsibility for the decision or give blame for the decision to reduce the activity when in fact that operated to the benefit of the country as a whole.

I want to say something finally Sir, about the Honourable Member for St. Peter. The Honourable Member for St. Peter in his contribution said that Mobil is a bad corporate citizen, but Sir he must know why he said that. I have no particular evidence that any corporate citizen in Barbados is any better than any other corporate citizen. Some might be worse than others but I do not know that we are in any position to make that kind of judgment. Sometimes you go along believing that there is a corporate citizen that is a good corporate citizen and then there are revelations about that corporate citizen which cause the hair to grow. I am sure all of us in the last few days would have been surprised at what we would have thought would be a good corporate citizen. Well if you do your professional job well all we are saying is that when it comes to making judgment about who is a good corporate citizen I think we have a duty of care to the society not to seek to make one seem worse than the other.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I did not say you compare, but this is my position. I am only saying that if you are going to say that Mobil must go because it is a bad citizen you have to be careful that you don't have to empty the whole country.

The inflexible monopoly is a matter that is being negotiated, it is not a matter that is now a fact, it is a matter that is being negotiated and in keeping with all agreements. You may reach an interim agreement to continue. This is precisely the case that is being argued in another place, that if the contracts, specific performance, unless there is a specific agreement that can be identified, once you agreed

to let the person continue the way they have been continuing, they have a contract. I do not now seek to make any statement but this is a matter of trite fundamental contract law which does not require any high degree of thought. All I am saying therefore is that if as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has said, that we have entered an interim agreement with Mobil to let them continue in certain circumstances, this country has a duty to protect its own corporate image in the international community. This country cannot be seen to be a country where the Government will from time to time abrogate....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: This country cannot, and any Government cannot, when an agreement has come to an end and it is negotiating the agreement, not continue the arrangement. We will tell you in due course. We are saying to you that we are the Government and we will tell you in due course, but you can't come and bully us and then try to get the jury to go with you.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for the City is trying her best to see if she could persuade me that there is something wrong with what I am doing, but I know Sir that what I am saying is valid. The fact is, that we have an understanding with Mobil, we are negotiating with Mobil and while we are negotiating we have a right to continue an arrangement that has been in existence for 20 or 30 years and anyone who suggests that continuing that is somehow contrary to the best interest of this country cannot be said to be other than misleading or trying to mislead the country.

I will say further Sir, I have myself seen recommendations made by other oil companies for how we may proceed. One of them came to me and showed me how we would save \$2,000,000.00. I told them at that time, this is not a negotiation. As soon as you reach an agreement with one of them for the importation of crude, or the importation of a finished product in this country and you have no capacity to refine your own product it will be back to the same old khaki pants, you will have the same monopoly, this time not by agreement but by actual fact. Let no one get up and deny that when it comes to the supply of energy that all of the major companies, all of the major oil companies understand one another and agree to share monopoly in the respective small territories. And so, if it is not Mobil Sir, it will be Shell, if it is not Shell, it will be Texaco, if it is not Texaco it is BP, but it has to be one of them who is involved.

If you go to Trinidad and Tobago which the Honourable Members are trotting out you will find that in Trinidad and Tobago it is Tesoro and it is somebody else with whom the Trinidad and Tobago Government has its

agreement. The Trinidad and Tobago Government does not by itself claim to be a major authority in the exploration and development of its own resources. It has gone into agreement with other companies outside of the Caribbean. Guyana is now seeking to develop its own resources and it has gone into agreement for exploration purposes with a French Company. There are only five or six major exploration companies in the world, there may be about twenty altogether, but there are no wild catters in Barbados and therefore when we come to processing they have to wait.

You know what is important, it is important that they understand that they lost the Government. We had the debate out there and the people made a decision and now they come in here and want to start to talk as if the Government is on that side and the Opposition is on this side. It is the other way around, so you will have to wait until we tell you, you can't come and bully us now and tell us that we are doing the people a disservice when you told the people so just January 21st, especially the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition should be the last person to come in here trying to tell everybody, especially when his moment in time has long gone. He comes in here now, trying to give the impression....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mine may never come but I did not tell anybody anything about my moment in time. Yours gone through the eddoes. I am obliged to you Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Two years ago Mr. Speaker, out of a then deep respect for the intellectual capacity of the Honourable Minister of Health and his great interest in the law, particularly Administrative Law I donated to him one of two volumes of a book which I had with a suitable notation. I don't want it back at all. Two years later I have just learnt for the first time in my life, Sir, that in certain areas of law, particularly the law of Contract, the Honourable Member is but a neophyte. I have also learnt something else, that loquaciousness and verbosity are not in respect of that Honourable Member synonymous with commonsense or the hitherto assumed intellectual power, a belief in which, that rested in me two years ago. He was urging that if the Opposition is complaining about the inequalities, or the unfairness in the agreement signed with Mobil, that as the Government of Barbados, as we were between 1976 and 1986, we should have, I think he used the word "abrogated" the agreement.
4.45 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I did not say abrogated. I never said it, Sir. You cannot put that on me.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What you said was that we should have broken the agreement. If we did not like it, break it. I will use a simple word. Get out of it. Break it. Explain yourself.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. I indicated and I remember the Honourable Member looking very carefully and saying that there was nothing which precluded their renegotiating the agreement before it came to an end.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He said there was nothing which precluded our renegotiating the agreement before it came to an end. Now he is a Member of Cabinet. The agreement went to Cabinet. He knows about the agreement. He knows that the agreement is for a fixed term of 25 years. It had not come to an end during our tenure 1976 to 1986 nor were we in a position to renegotiate it without having to pay heavy damages for the unexpired portion of the agreement.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of explanation because the Honourable Member obviously does not understand or does not wish to understand what I said. I indicated to him that in the context of what they were now saying that they had formulated such a wonderful energy policy that they had an obligation during the time they were the Government to renegotiate the agreement with Mobil, especially if they knew that Mobil was such a bad corporate citizen. That is what I said, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, the agreement was for 25 years and to renegotiate the agreement at anytime prior to the expiration of the 25 years would have amounted to a breach of contract. You know, Sir, that the Government agreed....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading this House. The Honourable Member has just stated what purports to be a principle of law which is not a principle of law. The Honourable Member knows, Sir, or ought to know better than what he said, Sir. I am not going to explain it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, let me read Article 9, Sir:

"The term of this agreement shall be for an initial period of 25 years provided however that at anytime prior to 12 months before the termination of such agreement the company shall have the right to apply to the Government to renew this agreement for an additional period of not less than 10 years."

The only time you can start to negotiate is the 24th year. Okay, it is in the contract. This is the contract.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member will give way. On a point of explanation, Sir. I apologize to the Honourable Members over there for having assumed as lawyers that I could make certain assumptions. I did not know that I would have to say that in a situation like this that the other fellow would have to renegotiate. I am sorry for not saying so. It was so fundamental that I did not think that I had to say it but I say it now, Sir. Good God!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But Sir, it was worse than that because the DLP Government in 1962 which signed this agreement had agreed....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If you keep quiet – your mouth is becoming wider than a street. Keep quiet. The Government agreed that the company shall for the life of this agreement of 25 years have the right to repatriate to its stock holders any and all profits after income taxes realized from its operations under this agreement. Well, let us break the agreement then and see if you would not be liable for all of those profits too based on the historic record of the profitability of the company. You better read the contract again. Now what the Honourable Minister of Health is now trying to say is that it is possible for two parties notwithstanding an agreement in writing to say consensually that they both agree. But suppose the other side says that we are standing on that. What happens? All right.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Did you try? Did the Government of Barbados between 1986 and 1991 try? No, Sir. I know him good. He gave some figures about the production of oil in 1976 when they went out of Government, Sir. He said that we were producing then, one-third, I think. You did not say that? What did you say at all? That is the point. He said nothing for a half an hour. They were producing one-third.

Sir, the Central Bank will show that at 1976 the oil production in Barbados was 120,000 barrels out of a total consumption of 1.1 million barrels. Now if that is one-third....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House because the Honourable Member knows that the amount of fuel that is imported for use at the airport is included in the global statistics. The Honourable Member cannot tell me that what I said is incorrect and what I said was absolutely correct in terms of our domestic use excluding airport. Nobody in Barbados uses 1.2 million barrels of oil. Geez, man!

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is in the blue book, Sir, the Annual Statistical Digest. I will give him the page, Sir.

It is 180. You can have a look at it. But there is a lot of misleading information being given to the House, Sir, similarly quoted from a Budget speech of Dr. Haynes. Well, I know that with the passage of time he will no longer wish to rely on statements made by that honourable gentleman when he used to be in here, Sir. Because BNOC's total revenue increased, Sir, from \$25.3 million in 1983/84 to \$36.6 million in 1984/85 while the net earnings increased by 98.2% from \$5.6 million in 1983/84 to \$11.1 million the following year. What Dr. Haynes would have had to be speaking about was cash flow.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Here it is now. If he was speaking about cash flow, the honourable doctor was confusing himself. There was a significant increase in the cash flow from operations which increased from \$10.2 million to \$19.7 million.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. It is a breach, Sir. I will let the Honourable Member see it, Sir.
4.55 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, I do not know what the Honourable Member is saying, since he is attributing to me something. I quoted from a document of this House: Statement and Budgetary Proposals made to the House of Assembly by the Hon. Dr. R.C. Haynes, Minister of Finance, on July 15 of 1986 at page 2, from the last paragraph on that page to the next paragraph on page 3. That is all I did, and therefore the Honourable Member cannot now be heard to be ascribing unto me all kinds of things when he is in fact quoting from a brief. I do not know what he is saying. I can only quote from the official documents of this Parliament.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I understand the point. He is quoting from a document of this House. I am quoting from a document in this House for the purpose of refreshing my memory and I will let him have sight of it at an appropriate time later today.

No, Sir, I am not accusing. I am accusing him of being misled by something from which he quoted that was attributable to a former Minister of Finance, who was not a Labour Party Minister.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: "Coalition" is a musical band, Sir. It has nothing to do with political parties in Barbados as the present configuration will show.

Now, Sir, this Resolution, I think, has ranged far and wide in areas of debt, in areas of energy policy, and

between the two great parties of state, Sir, but I think that I must draw to the House's attention and make certain pleas in regard to the bread and butter issues. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph adverted to them in his speech and I wish to say on behalf of the constituents of St. Thomas and, in particular, the people in the Welches, Warrens, Redman's Village, Melrose and Arthur Seat areas that we are at a complete loss as to why it is easy for other parts of Barbados to have access to natural gas where, indeed, the pipelines are not as close to the districts as any of those which I have outlined.

Now, if you go to Welches Terrace and Warrens Terrace, there is a pipeline which passes within a hundred yards wherever you stand. A large, silver-painted pipeline and the residents in that area are very perturbed that they have never had access to that gas. Now, in 1985, down in Rock Hall, in a place called the Fire Hill where a line passes fairly close by, I was able to get natural gas installed in the Fire Hill. However, particularly in those heavily built areas that I have mentioned, particularly for the residents of those areas, I am making a strong plea for the provision of natural gas and I would wish to hear from the Minister, when he is replying, what are Government's plans.

Now, this is a continuing Government and when the Prime Minister spoke since elections he took comfort in reminding people that they have a development plan 1989-1993 or some such thing, Sir, and they are operating on the basis of a plan. They are not new Members of Government so I would expect that in the scheme of things and in their planning they would have some idea as to how they intend to disseminate natural gas to more people in Barbados than they presently have over the next five years. There should be some kind of blueprint or plan that would guide that policy.

This is important, Sir, because we feel very strongly in the Labour Party that the day has come when Barbados should no longer be divided along lines of discriminatory provision of services. Let me explain that, Sir. Between 1986 and elections 1991, the whole country knows that in the provision of roadworks, services, repair of road, St. Michael and Christ Church were dealt with in priority to other parishes. During the campaign, I read a memorandum written by the Chief Technical Officer of MTW to a number of members of his department, setting out the road program for 1988, 1989 and 1990, and I will bring it in here for the Estimates, in which he said that the Minister of Transport and Works at the time, Don Blackman, had set out the following program of works for the financial years 1988-1989, 1989-1990.

Warwick, you weren't in it. You were like me. You didn't get any. It went like this, Sir:

(1) all roads in St. Michael.

Mr. SPEAKER: Did you see my name as well?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I don't remember seeing anything for you.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But (1) said all roads lead to St. Michael. Since you represent a St. Michael constituency, Sir, they should have come to you at some point. I hope they reached before the Elections – but the result would have suggested that.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And then (2) was defined in constituencies. It had like Christ Church East and Christ Church West and so on. But I couldn't believe that that went to Cabinet and Members of Cabinet supported that, but it was a directive from the then Minister. The result of that, I think, was unconstitutional, but I saw it at a time when it would have been too late to challenge it. I think it was unconstitutional, because it would have offended the anti-discrimination provision of Chapter 3 of the Constitution.

For two financial years, the people in the country which I represent, my friend from St. Peter, the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Members for St. Joseph, St. Andrew and St. James North, all of us, all of our constituencies, were deprived of Government's financial assistance in those areas. No wonder they would lose St. Andrew and you would hear the word "neglect" being used in different connotations, because it was a deliberate policy to neglect rural areas and denude them of facilities to which rural dwellers contributed as taxpayers.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No I am not beating. I am about to beat the desk, Sir. I am pointing down for emphasis.

Sir, I am only asking the Government now that it is in the open and now that they have seen the folly of the neglect of rural Barbados reflected in the return of five out of seven on this side, Sir...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I brought in five here. We five came in. I hope that in future there would be a more equitable distribution of Government's resources so that gradually the whole island would be the recipient of a better split and division of Government's finances.

5.05 p.m.

Now, Sir, the Honourable Minister of Health was wondering how Mobil got into this thing, why we are talking about Mobil so much and how it became mobile, what is the big problem with Mobil? On March 16, 1989, the Honourable Minister of Health's colleague and friend, Don Blackman, in the Estimates Debates in this House of Assembly had these words to say at page 3488 of the Debates for 1989. I will read them again into the Estimates. He said it without objection and without demur on the part of the Honourable Minister of Health. Starting at page 3488 he said:-

"As a result of material from Mobil, I am not excluding those multi-nationals – I will say more about Mobil later – and from the producers of limestone, marl and the like who have in the past sold the Ministry substandard material because nobody in the Ministry was trained to detect the defects in the quality of the material submitted."

There was something left out there, Sir, because there was no verb. He might have been speaking like how Tacitus used to write.

"Even so, we still have problems in acquiring the ideal mix for our asphalt with which we barbergreen our roads in many cases because of the nature of the emulsion sold to us by Mobil."

He then went on in the second column at page 3488:-

"The Ministry of Transport and Works has carefully planned its paving programme in St. Michael to be completed at the end of this month. We have now lost three weeks because Mobil has claimed that it did not have enough bitumen. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that the Government should look into a situation where a company like Mobil enjoys a monopoly over the importation of certain products, a shortage of which could seriously disrupt the social programme of this Government. I do not care who is offended."

My unofficial investigation revealed that it is possible to get bitumen on the world market at a substantially lower price than that at which Mobil sells it to the Government. To the extent that we can do this, we can pave many more roads than are now paved. I believe that Government should seriously look at bringing this monopolistic situation enjoyed by Mobil to an end. And that is a classic case, in my view, of a company being successful at the expense of the Ministry of Transport and Works."

Now, do you know the implication of that, Sir? The implication in that is two years before the Mobil agreement came to an end, one of your colleagues and friend, and a Minister who had relations with Mobil was warning his own Government, when this contract comes to an end, look

carefully at dealing with these people again. That is what he was telling them because he found them to be rip off artists. That is my conclusion from what Don Blackman said here. It is up to you all if you want to go and deal with that type of corporate citizen again.

All this Opposition has been concerned to do today is to warn the Government the contract is coming to an end. It was a contract on gravely unequal terms when it existed. You had the experience and all of you must have known of that experience. You knew the capacity of these people not to deliver, to hold up Government's work, to hold you to ransom because there was a monopoly, to affect prices and so on, be careful. That is all our constitutional principles require us to do, to offer constructive criticism to the Government and in some cases advice.

It is essential, therefore, that when we are dealing with a Resolution which bears on oil production, which consequentially will raise by implication the existence of the refinery in Barbados, for us to take the opportunity to tell the Government to treat the matter with care. That is all we are doing. If we have done it with vehemence, that is our style. I think they will know that I am not apologising. What I am doing is setting the parameters within which the Opposition conducted this debate today. The Minister of Health who was recently nodding agreement with what I was saying, when he was speaking on the other hand tried to deny us the right to set the parameters for the debate.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister of Health is asking who? Yes, because he was saying I thought this was a very simple thing. I did not see the need to draw Mobil into this and the public has voted. No, Sir. He did not want us to have a long debate on it. But energy is critical. The Prime Minister began with the very simplistic and trite statement that oil is an important commodity. He said it twice. We all know that and we know that it is especially critical now. It is playing a major part in the lead-up to and the cause of the War in the Gulf. We are speculating as to what could happen after the War comes to a conclusion. But we are certain of one thing, that the management of our energy resources in Barbados is critical to the survival of Barbados because the management of those energy resources impacts particularly on the outflow of foreign exchange. We therefore have to ensure that there are proper policies in place that will not result in the further depletion of the very scarce foreign reserves which we have. I know that there is going to be some temporary injection when they draw down the second part of the Barclay's loan next month but that money is spent again. Do not worry about that.

I think that having regard to the War in the Gulf it is indeed also opportune for the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister, who I believe was moved to make a

statement last week a little ahead of the President of the United States when it was thought that there was going to be some proposal for settlement or a cessation of hostilities, that the Prime Minister was quoted earlier during the day when Bush was saying: we do not take that one seriously at all, too many conditions: but he was jumping in. Well, if he was jumping in last week Thursday or Friday, I want him to jump in now and tell Barbados what plans Government has by way of contingencies to deal with the effects of the crisis in the Gulf. It is a matter about which a lot of people have speculated.

5.15 p.m.

So far as I am aware, I do not believe the Prime Minister has shared any of his thoughts on what is a very serious matter with the Leader of the Opposition.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, no. I am assured that he has not taken the Leader of the Opposition into his confidence, on this matter. But I believe that the public of Barbados is entitled to know what are the contingency plans that Government has to deal with the effects of the Gulf crisis.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, naturally I join this debate to support the resolution before the House, but mainly to spend a few minutes to address the topic raised by the Honourable Member for the City which I do not believe should remain on the record of Parliament. I particularly refer to the statement made by the Honourable Member for the City in which she said that the Caribbean Sea is one of the most polluted seas in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this is an outrageous statement. The Honourable Member for the City sought to support the argument and the statement by going on to say that the Caribbean Sea is in the area where there is one of the sea routes, particularly the oil sea route. You have millions of gallons of oil going through that area and you have the situation of the tankers cleaning out their bilge at sea. This in turn comes on to our coast, by way of small tar bubbles.

To support this, she went on to contend that her argument that the sea is the most polluted in the world was based on the fact that, over the last couple of years, our catches of flying fish have been reduced and this has been as a result of the contamination due to oil, *et cetera*.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is an unfortunate statement. I just want, before I get into the reasoning to read from a report that was just published: "Visitors Satisfaction Survey", provided for the tourism sector. It says on beaches:

"In terms of Environmental affairs"...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just give me the page, *et cetera*.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Page 55. It is Chapter 5 of the report, page 55 and the heading is "Beaches".

"The vast majority of visitors, 94% polled, said the beaches were spacious, clean and pleasant while only a small group 3% said they were littered, crowded and limited or polluted."

Let me spend a little time, on the premise, as seen by the Honourable Member for the City and, that is, the low catch in the flying fish. First of all, the Member has to understand that the flying fish has a 7-year cycle. She has taken her point of reference from the low point of the cycle around 1985-86. The researches have pointed out that that low point in the cycle was not an extraordinary low point since it compared with the low point in numerous cycles taken in the year before and went on to make the point that the low catch in the 1985-86 year was due to two points:

- "1. It was at the low point of the cycle; and
2. The Bellairs Research Institute researchers showed that, for some reason, the ocean temperatures in and around the Tobago banks where the flying fish is caught most was 2% higher than it has been on an average, over the last 15 years."

The marine biologists would tell you that any time you have an increase of a 2% Fahrenheit in water temperature, this is a tremendous difference in water temperature which naturally has an effect on the marine life. As a result, the spawning of the flying fish, at that time, suffered from the increased temperature and you have a higher percentage of the spawn dying off.

Secondly, what also was true about that time was that, for some reason, the migratory route of the flying fish in those two years did not take in Barbados for any prolonged period. They passed through the Barbados waters very, very quickly and therefore they moved out and our people were not able to catch them.

But what I must also correct as a fallacy is the statement that our fish catches have been going down. It is not true. One has to remember that when you go back and say that the fellows used to catch a lot of fish before, if you take 1980, you are talking of a situation where you had a few day boats. If the few day boats go out and come back full with fish, everybody said, "This is a lot of fish."

But from 1980 to now, you have something like 79 what we call ice boats. They have a capacity of 35 000 to 40 000 flying fish per boat. Therefore if you go out and you

get this kind of situation going, the day boats obviously might be complaining. But when you look at the total catch in Barbados, it is a lot higher than it has been. It is not fair to say or tie any premises on the waters being polluted as a result of a low catch in flying fish.

When she compared it to the Mediterranean Sea those of us who read will realize that there was a time when the Mediterranean Sea was so polluted that the energy in the sea could not support the marine life and they literally floated ashore and died. All around that Mediterranean coast, thousands upon thousands of tons of fish just floated ashore and died because the oxygen in the Mediterranean Sea, because of the pollution, was so low that it was not enough for the survival of the marine life at the site. To make that statement, I think, is unfortunate because when a parliamentarian in the Legislature makes statements like these, they are taken seriously. These reports are naturally reported all over. We depend quite heavily and part of our tourism stock is our seas and our shores. Therefore I think it is unfortunate to make that statement. I just wanted to correct it.

I want to spend a couple of minutes talking about our energy conservation because the Member for Christ Church West raised this point. I want to raise a few points that are very interesting and that we have to look at in Barbados. Between 1986 and 1990 one of the main areas in the use of energy has been the Barbados Light and Power for generating of electricity. The Barbados Light and Power generated 200 million kilowatt hours of electricity in 1986. In 1989, they generated 450 million kilowatt hours of electricity. Of importance to us here is that because of the policy of the Barbados Light and Power in which they have been replacing their turbines by low speed turbines that use the cheapest residue oil, they have been able in 1990 to generate 450 million kilowatt hours of energy for \$43 million in oil which is the same thing they paid in 1986 to generate 200 million kilowatt hours. This was due to the efficiency of the new plants they have.

The main conservation area in Barbados comes through that area from the Barbados Light and Power. Out of that 450 million kilowatt hours, residential users in Barbados have been using 235 million kilowatt hours. The main area of conservation which we can get from that is the proper use of refrigerators. Even with that, the conservation savings are very small because most of the appliances are not very energy conscious.

I agree with the Member who said that the main area in which we could do some conservation was in the area of transportation. I want to tell him about a little exercise I did recently.
5.25 p.m.

One morning I got to the Gym early about 7 o'clock and between 7 o'clock and 8 o'clock I carried out a little

exercise. 145 vehicles drove past Bay Street and of those 145 vehicles, 92 of those vehicles had one single person in it going to work. If you go through this you would see that in the area of use of energy you understand what the life style of the Barbadian is, because the remainder of the cost of energy, outside what Light and Power buys for generating, goes towards the transportation industry mainly; and not too much commerce, because most commerce take their energy from Light and Power. So anytime we are looking at a possible conservation of energy we have to look at a policy to see how we can reduce the use of motor vehicles in Barbados in that kind of way and you are running into a very ticklish problem where you are going to restrict and tell the consumer how he or she should use that. It is not going to be easy. In places they have car pooling and I know there are certain cities that you cannot come into town with less than three people in a motor car.

I would like our researchers to look and tell me what kind of savings that we can have in Barbados if we can get a better use of our motor cars, if we can get a better habit of driving of motor cars, if our transportation system like the diesel units etc. could be better tuned and therefore cut down on their use, and if, as a matter of challenge, we could condition our people where we can have, for argument sake outside of the city limit, a group of car parks for private cars and then an internal system by a bus system travelling in and around the city at convenient hours and restrict the entry into the inner Bridgetown by motor cars wherever it is possible. When you look at it, it is not going to be an easy way, so therefore, as I was saying, when you talk about conservation of energy it is not going to be easy to cut down because the use of household energy for lighting etc. is not a big area. The main residential use is refrigeration, so these are the only two areas I want to contribute to this part of the debate and naturally to point out my support for the Resolution at this time.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; I believe we can bring this debate to a close Sir. It has been a wide ranging debate and at the end of it I am particularly pleased to note that the Opposition is supporting this particular measure. It leaves us to wonder if they were opposing it how long this debate would last, but it is very good to know that they are in support of this particular measure with whatever reservations, or whatever tangents, or whatever conditions they wish to apply to the debate. I think there are just a few issues I would like to reply to. One relates to the statement made by almost all of the Members of the Opposition Sir, that the Government has no energy policy and I suppose it is illustrative of a kind of mood that if you want to believe something you can say it and you can repeat it and the repetition itself establishes the verity or validity of that statement.

Member after Member got up and said the Government has no energy policy. Sir, we have just gone through the Opening of Parliament and in the Throne

Speech the policy of the Government was set out in broad terms and I am quoting from that document Sir, the Speech by Her Excellency the Governor-General at the Opening of Parliament on Wednesday February 6, 1991 and at pages 5 and 6 this is what is said:

"Energy Policy:

My Government will seek to make maximum use of domestic energy resources; and in view of the likely impact of the Gulf crisis,...."

I pause here, Sir, because one of the Members who spoke almost last during the debate, he is so very conscious of who the person is, that he is raising his hand, wants me to say what is Government's policy in respect of the Gulf crisis. And I continue the quotation:

"and in view of the likely impact of the Gulf Crisis, it will place great emphasis on the following:

a sustained exploration and drilling programme by the Barbados National Oil Company...."

And, Sir, this is exactly what we are doing. We are seeking the approval and the guarantee so that there can be a sustained exploration and drilling programme by the Barbados National Oil Company. We are seeking to implement our policies which is "go", if we have to stop at any time we will stop. Whether it is sustained or not, if the policies dictate that we should stop, if it is in the interest of the economy of Barbados to stop I will have no hesitation at all to say that we should stop. I am not too concerned about the Wilsonian or other kinds of statements about stop/go during the late 1960's and 1970's of British economic policy. And so Sir, I contend that exactly what we said we would do we are doing, increase production and use of natural gas. I believe you will all agree with that.

Energy conservation in the public and private sectors. The Opposition is saying that we should have a conservation policy, we should pursue it. This is what we said would be our policy – Incentives to encourage the use of alternative energy sources such as solar and wind power.

Sir, I think in very concise terms we have set out the policy that we would follow. If the Opposition wishes a more elaborate statement of Government's policy let them turn to the Development Plan, the Government of Barbados Development Plan 1988-1993. We are within this particular period, 1988-1993 a share for all.

I really do not know what the Opposition expects of me. You see I have said what the policy is, we have laid it out, the Development Plan is a document of this Honourable Chamber and that is the document I have in my hand and it goes from pages 173 to 177 and the policy is set out in there relating to energy Chapter 17. It has an

introduction, it has a review of the 1983-88 Sector Plan, it has a sectoral plan for 1988-1993 objectives, and because I do not wish to prolong the House on this matter I will not read it, it is a document of the House. It goes on to speak about energy demand and supply, it speaks about sectoral strategies, domestic oil and natural gas, natural gas distribution, energy pricing, the production of electricity, oil refinery, non conventional energy equipment and services, wind and wave power bio-energy and energy productivity. 5.35 p.m.

Once again, Sir, the Opposition finds itself making charges....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I was right on that on the last day we sat in the House and the Prime Minister shook my hand downstairs and he knew why he shook my hand and I understood. On December 24, 1990 by the bar, Sir, he came up to me and he shook my hand and he understood why because I had just told him that the best thing he could do is to call it during the week of Errol Barrow's death.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the point of order I was making is this. What that Development Plan does not address and I did speak of the Development Plan, and anticipated the Prime Minister when I spoke, is the obvious changed situation that has come about or will come about as a result of the Gulf crisis. Therefore, I would ask him to what extent you will have to divert or change the emphasis in the Development Plan given the current situation.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not know, Sir. They can make all kinds of adjustments, twists, and turns, Sir. I am not really dealing with that. What we said was that we set out our energy policy and it calls for increased production and it calls for conservation and all of the areas that we have mentioned. Sir, I have indicated the projections. A large number of analysts have projected that there would be a gradual rise in the price of oil over the medium term. There are others who would say that the price would remain low. We believe that over time there will be an increase in the price of oil. I think the Honourable Member for St. Joseph – Sir, I am not really accustomed calling him St. Joseph. That sounds a bit strange, Sir. I will get accustomed to that.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, we all know there has been some talk about benefits of the economic policies benefiting people throughout Barbados including people from St. Joseph. The development policy benefits people throughout Barbados and it benefits individuals. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph knows that well. Our development policies have benefited him. He has grown

into a Q.C. He has benefited from the overall policies of the Government and I have not had the opportunity before, Sir – sorry, I think that I did privately congratulate him on his attainment of I believe they call it "silk" in the language.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The individuals know. He has not bought anything. I am sorry the Member has not produced anything.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I think as the Member for St. Michael West has been saying the elections are over. There is no point trying to make any cheap political points at this stage. To say that we have no energy policy, that is really so trite a statement that it is really not worth making at this particular time. There are no political points to be gained from that, Sir.

A number of issues were raised. I will try to respond to some of them very briefly. There was a question of employment policies and whether Barbadians had been displaced or something like that. I believe the Member for Christ Church South raised this particular issue. Sir, the position is, as I understand it, that the company which prepares the drilling pad is from Barbados. The company that is responsible for preparation is from Barbados. The drilling company is from Trinidad. The logging company is from Trinidad and the cementing company is from Trinidad. I do not think inasmuch as the Opposition wishes us to integrate or if they were the Government they would integrate the energy policy or energy sector with the Trinidad sector, that the Opposition would have any particular quarrel with that. But most of the other jobs are carried out by Barbadian operatives and with the support of those of whom we cooperate whether they are from Canada, Venezuela, or wherever.

As far as training is concerned, as far as I can recall, Sir, under the National Development Scholarship Plan petroleum engineering and/or related fields were identified as priority areas for the award of National Development Scholarships. The Barbados National Oil Company cooperates with other training agencies in Barbados including the National Training Board in terms of its hiring of employees and also of providing opportunities for training attachments and things like that.

The Member for St. Philip South gave some information relating to the projections for the Barbados National Oil Company. I believe that they have produced the last Annual Report 1989/90 and in it is indicated that there are some 94 persons, I believe, who were employed by that company towards the end of March 1990. As far as future drilling programmes are concerned, this was raised by the Member for St. Joseph. I do not see any reference to

the Esplanade. I believe that the Esplanade is still on the minds of those who camped out there during the election and had a lot of fun out there, I understand, but the reality is now. The fun is all over. I do not see anything about the Esplanade in this, Sir, but I see reference to drilling at Constant, Brighton, and Congo Road and a shallow drilling programme is being considered for places like Edgecumbe and Lower Greys and so on.
5.45 p.m.

We have the Woodbourne oil fields. We have the Boarded Hall area and the Lower Greys. We are looking wherever it is indicated that there is a possibility that oil may be discovered that drilling operations would be carried out.

I am not sure, Sir, what else I am expected to respond to. I will ignore the comments of the Member for St. Peter. He has made two contributions at two sittings. He has gone out of his way to be, I can't say offensive, Sir, but he has gone out of his way to be highly critical, but he should know by now that my back is very broad and I can take those kinds of criticisms. I have never said anything very offensive about him. This is not the time for counter-punching. This is statesmanlike approach to the matters of Government. So, he can have his say now. He knows that when I am ready I will reply in my own way but the Honourable Member for St. Peter must be worried that there were so many votes against him in St. Peter. I believe that that is probably what has offended him.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I am the captain of the northern team; so let me say that the Honourable Member for St. Peter got more votes than any Labour Party candidate ever in St. Peter and after they had contrived to take away some of his strong areas. He increased. He got a better majority than any other, including Burton Hinds.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thanks for that explanation, Sir. But, I have tried to find some explanation for the conduct of the Honourable Member. He seems to be a changed person now. The point is, Sir, and for purposes of the record I have to say, I have not made any comment about the purposes for which loans were raised adversely or otherwise. My Government and myself have been accused of just borrowing money and borrowing more and more money and if I have to explain the reasons why we have to borrow it, I will do that whether the Member for St. Peter gets annoyed or not. That is of little concern to me.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We haven't got to go yet. That will be for me to deal with later on.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Not you. You wouldn't be in it. Your time has already passed.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I think that we have really replied to most of the points raised during the Debate. If there are other issues to be raised, I will be happy to supply the information if I am reminded in due course.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Order No. 6 was called.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1990-91, No. 13

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Head 28, subhead 1. We are seeking a supplementary for \$58,118.57. The original vote was for \$159,068 and by 31st October just over \$135,000 was spent which left \$24,000 plus. Since then there has been an increase in the salaries of various persons working in the Ministry occasioned by the recent regrading exercise so that there is now a short fall of \$58,118.57.

Under Subheads 4, 5 and 6, which includes Registration Services, Travel – \$5,508, Supreme Court Library – \$15,500, Operating Expenses – \$26,747 and Travel for Magistrates Courts an additional \$23,313. We are seeking approval for a supplementary of \$71,068.

Under Object No. 6 – Travel. A sum of \$6,600 was provided and it is seen that this is now inadequate to cover the total amount and we are asking for an additional \$5,508.

Likewise under the Library Services, an amount of \$30,000 was provided under the current estimates but at the 19th September, \$29,502 was spent and \$15,500 more is required in order to purchase books and pay for the Times Publications.

Under the Operating Expenses, the Supreme Court, I think that Members will recall that there is now a fifth judge and that there are three juries in panel at any one time and therefore this has caused an increase in expenditure and we are asking for a sum of \$26,747 to complete the expenditure for this year. The Magistrates Court likewise: under Object No. 6, there was an amount of \$34,908 in the current estimates but during the year 1989-1990 employees had reduced travel allowances and this is to make up for those allowances for last year plus the fact that the clerks also had a shortfall and there is now one senior legal assistant so that we are asking \$26,740 to make up this.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking that Head 28, subhead 1, subheads 4, 5 and 6 stand part.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let me first declare an interest so that it is properly recorded because one of these, Subhead 4, Object 6 – Travel, Registration Services, relates to my wife who is Registrar and who has not received any travelling allowance since September last year from this wicked Government, Sir. I have had to be carrying her. I have had to supplement her. A terrible thing, that this country that was doing so well, all things were so good and a simple little travelling allowance... Couldn't even buy a ham for Christmas, Sir! And we have some pensioners on this side, Sir, who have not even received their pensions.
5.55 p.m.

Now we know who is in penury.

Having declared my interest, Sir, I also would wish to assure the Minister that it is certainly not my intention at this stage when we are so close to Estimates, the week of March 18 or some time around there, to engage in contentious matters now, or even prolonged debates on these matters when we have five days set aside within a month.

The other point is I know that the Minister of Justice has just had the present Attorney General unloaded, off-loaded and unburdened of a vast number of departments which formerly came within his purview and the new Minister would need some time to catch up. I am giving him a month. I am giving him until when we come back in here for Estimates to get familiar.

Bearing all that in mind, under the Addendum and the Explanatory Notes, there are some matters of public accounting which arise and for which I would require an explanation. In relation to Supreme Court Object No. 9 – Library, we are told that bills for certain publications ordered in previous financial years and only recently delivered were settled from this year's provision. I find this a very odd explanation.

As one who receives publications on a weekly basis from Butterworth, an All England Report, as one who receives *The Times* from London on a daily basis – but I receive it like three days after publication – I subscribe to the *London Times* for the court reports etc. I find that these are regular, both the Butterworth publication and *The Times*. I find that they are also very careful about running you down to settle the bills. The lady from Sussex for Butterworth writes ever so often if I do not pay for three months or sometimes if I have to go through the Central Bank and have not got around to it. They write and remind me threatening that if I do not pay they are going to discontinue the service.

I do not understand how publications could have been ordered – we are into 1991 – in 1989/90 and you are only now receiving them and settling them out of current provisions. I would be grateful if the Minister would condescend upon some particulars and some information as to these previous financial years, what publications are involved, why they have only been recently delivered and what responses the Government has made in regard to the late delivery of the publications because it is implied here.

While I am on it, Sir, if he could explain in relation to Object No. 6 – Travel in the Magistrates Court. The payment of arrears of travel allowance from the previous financial year from this year's provision has created a shortfall. What is the extent of the shortfall? What you are saying is that in relation to financial year 1989/90 there were arrears of travel allowance due. You paid them in financial year 1991. You would still be behind. This would be owed to the officers. I would like to know the extent of the shortfall and how Government intends to catch up and become current in relation to these arrears of travel allowances?

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I think the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was a former Minister of Government. He knows that sometimes when you are getting the supplementaries from the various departments it takes a very long time. You notice in the note it says that the travel for the Registration Department was paid up to 1990 and the money more or less ran out at that point in time. When you are dealing with a number of departments you know what happens. You have to try to get them to put in the supplementaries and it takes some time. That could be an explanation for the delay. Then, of course, elections came by which wiped out about two months of that.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: The first thing you said was that the Registrar did not receive travel.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: That was not serious?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was not a point of levity.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Secondly, on the question of the publications, I would have to investigate that because I just do not know. On the Magistrates travel, I have here that there were 8 magistrates at \$320 per month which is \$17 920; 16 clerks at \$60 per month which is \$720; legal assistants \$300 per month. Obviously that was for 7 months.

Asides.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I said to you that I would have to investigate it because I just do not know. It just says that they only got the bills to date and they are now paying them so I accepted that. I hope that answers the question.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, just one short question. I notice here in this supplementary under Ministry of Legal Affairs no provision is made for money for the purchase of a cat-o-nine-tails. I am interested in knowing whether that is a deliberate act of policy to deny the system a cat-o-nine-tails or is it an omission on the part of the Ministry.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. TULL: Do not play around with me about it does not come under this Head. I have been in this business as long as you have been. Do not get on as if I am some raw recruit. I just want to know whether this is a deliberate policy on the part of the Government not to provide funds for the purchase of a cat-o-nine-tails and whether it is an act of omission.
6.05 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, let me say this. As I understand it, it was last used in 1969. I do not know if for the last 21 years it has not been found which means that it would have gone through 2 or 3 administrations. I am not sure therefore if it is the policy of the last administration not to have it. What I can say to you is that we are trying to get one.

The question that Head 28 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 36 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Subhead 16 – Drug Service

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the sum of \$13 096 700 was provided in the 1990-91 Estimates to meet the cost of drugs, claims by the private sector, under the Special Benefit Service, office supplies, toiletries, printing and other miscellaneous expenses. As at February 15, 1991,

expenditure was \$13 097 743.47. Commitments as at February 15 were \$3 110 027.95. We had approval of six new Pharmacists II which were added to the establishment during the time and they had not been estimated for. We also have a sum of \$2.6 million outstanding to persons in the Special Benefit Service now who have finally paid and we now have a clean slate. So that we have need for the additional money to meet the financial obligations. When we get this supplementary, if the Committee agrees, we would have spent for 1990-91, in the total Estimates \$16 839 923. After settlement of the outstanding claims the total expenditure will in fact be \$16 207 771.42, leaving a balance available to us of \$632 151.58. We expect to pay for the Special Benefit Service and the cost of drugs for the month of February.

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe there is anything controversial about this sum and I beg to move that Head 36 stand part.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question. The Honourable Member for the City.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to differ with the Honourable Minister that there may not be anything controversial about this.

In respect of the personal emoluments, the Explanatory Note tells us that there are six posts of Pharmacist II added to the establishment of the Barbados Drug Service but we are still no wiser. We do not know if these Pharmacists are to be found in the polyclinics, if they are to be found at the Drug Service Headquarters on Jemmotts Lane or where or where not. It does not help us any further forward.

I want to know, apart from where these six Pharmacists have been placed, how is it that the Minister did not know, at the time of the last Estimates, that he was going to be in need of six additional Pharmacists. You do not just pull six additional Pharmacists out of the atmosphere like that. It is not as though a host of clinics has gone down on the ground and suddenly posts have been needed. If there is a plan, and there certainly was a plan, you would know. If there were a plan for any expansion in the drug service, I would expect that the Minister would know that and it would have been reflected in the Estimates. I do not understand why, suddenly, there is this need at this stage for these six additional Pharmacists. I do not know where they are going to be placed and I think we would all in here, on both sides, like to know.

We also want to know, on this side, Mr. Chairman, why there was no provision made, in previous years, so that these large sums are now outstanding. All we are told is that no provision was made. Why was no provision made? Is it

that there is no policy now? We do not know which are these previous years.

I heard some mumbling in respect of private pharmacies but no explanation. My question is, is this a reflection of the Government's policy of understating the Estimates, well knowing that only a certain amount from a previous year can be carried forward and is this now the hour of reckoning? How many years? What is this? This is bad accounting. This is bad business in the Ministry of Health, in a service which was well founded and whose accounts were well audited in the time of the Barbados Labour Party. How is it that suddenly now we are hearing that there is this shortfall? That is in respect of the personal emoluments.

In respect of the supplies and materials – and that is where the greater sum of money lies – we are deeply concerned on this side as well. We want to know if that is not also another reflection on the way in which the DLP Government is doing its business. Is this a reflection of a movement away from the generic drugs listed in the Drug Formulary of Barbados to the substitution of more expensive brand name drugs prescribed by a person or persons who might have an interest in promoting and selling brand name drugs? We really need to know.

Barbados is a model in the entire world – and I say that without fear of any contradiction – in respect of the establishment of a National Drug Formulary and the way in which we have used generic drugs. I would want to know why, in the course of one financial year, because I do not suspect any carrying forward in respect of the supplies and materials, a sum of money in this order – this is a lot of money, this is nearly \$4 million – is being sought to supplement supplies and materials.

I do not believe either by an expansion in the categories of illnesses which will attract the use of....

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, 13 was voted. certain drugs. I do not believe that, by expanding the drug service, for instance, to make it available now to asthmatics and other such illnesses that it could have occasioned this kind of increase. This is a great deal of money. I think that we are entitled to know.

I am not one who is concerned about the gradually escalating cost of the drug service. I do not think we pay much more for the drug service than we do for the School Meals Service in Barbados. This is a service which was designed for, and I still hope services, all those who have certain kinds of illnesses in particular the big killer diseases in Barbados and certainly all children below a certain age and all those over the age of 65. As I said, it is a model everywhere in the world and even some developed

countries are now looking at the Barbados Drug Service as a model to follow. But we would not want to recommend to them a drug service which could, at this stage, in the course of a financial year be coming to Parliament for what is going to be a \$4 million supplement – and it is all very vague – to meet commitments to the end of the financial year. Again, outstanding from previous years are a number of claims. If these are claims coming predominantly from the private pharmacists then we really want to know about this question of substitution of generic for brand name drugs. This is an old time trick. There is nothing new in this. I really would like to feel that the Minister...

Aside.

Miss. B. A. MILLER: You are going to tell us now, why it is that you are coming to the House, as the Minister of Health of five years standing to ask us, as a supplement in February of the financial year, for \$4 million.
6.15 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not know about any old time tricks. The Honourable Member will have to deal with the old time tricks. I know nothing about old time tricks. Let me explain to the Honourable Member who got up and started to talk with the knowledge about how it was well founded. One of the first problems in the Drug Service was that it was not well founded in relation to its administration. It did not have an accountant, it had a clerical officer in the office of accountant. The Ministry of Health is not the Drug Service and that is precisely the problem, it is the same You can't holler at me. You have to listen.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Minister give way? Let me again remind Honourable Members that I will not tolerate shouting across the table. It is unnecessary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member started off in the wrong vein. First of all if she had read the Objects and Reasons she would not perhaps have taken that attitude and I accept that she is entitled to the explanation.

The answer with regard to the six Pharmacists is that they are deployed throughout the Polyclinic system, they have helped to provide a pharmacist in each one of the eight Polyclinics across the country. As a matter of fact my memorandum dated the 8th March 1990 from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Civil Service reads, "Six Temporary Posts of Pharmacist II," that is March 1990. Now the Honourable Member will appreciate that if six posts are approved in March of a financial year that it is unlikely that there would have been included in the estimates for that year.

No one over there Sir, unless they are a bunch of jokers, unless they are, I am not saying they are, unless they

are a bunch of jokers they know that you cannot plan ahead for a post that has not been approved in the Establishments. They have forgotten. You cannot. This lady Sir, this Honourable Member, has been away for a long time and does not know and cannot remember.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I said some things before Sir and I am not going to say them again, but she has been away a long time. Any one who has been a Minister will know that if posts are approved in March of a given year they are unlikely to have been planned for in the Estimates.

I will go further Sir, the Honourable Member who talks about how well the Drug Service was established must know, if she would consult with one of her three colleagues who were in here that we had to come for an amendment Act, The Drug Service (Amendment) Act 1990-16 to ratify all of the illegal activity that had gone on in this well founded drug service, because.....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are having too many interruptions when an Honourable Member is on his feet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: This Honourable Member and the Barbados Labour Party set up a Drug Service that did not have a proper footing and all of the action by the Formulary Committee, the Honourable Member should be ashamed to talk about generic drugs. The Honourable Member, you talked about generic drugs, you wanted to know if this was an attitude of moving generic drugs for brand name drugs. Every single decision made by the Formulary Committee was illegal because the Formulary Committee itself was not properly established, that is why we have been cleaning up the entire Drug Service for you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Minister just give me a minute. I am finding difficulty in following what the Honourable Minister was saying because of the interruptions. Let me reiterate that interruptions are not going to be recorded so it is senseless to shout across the table. They will not form part of the debate so let's cease that kind of action. Thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, nothing that was done by the Drug Service as formulated by the Honourable Member when she was responsible for it was valid and we had to pass legislation in here which has as one section, the Minister shall call the formulary to be known as the Barbados National Drug Formulary to be prepared because after the first year all that followed was null and void. We have had to pass legislation. So that now there is a proper Formulary Committee constituted in the kind of way that

would allow for a proper formulary to be made the Minister does not determine what the formulary is and so if you ask a foolish question you will get answers to it.

The question of generic drugs versus the patented drugs and the brand name drugs is an issue which has been discussed on an on-going basis in Barbados with the doctors, where the doctors were in fact taking the position that we had been giving the people cheap drugs precisely because we have been careful in how many brand name drugs were introduced. We have a proper formulary committee now that is well constituted and I am satisfied that the formulary is well constituted.

So far as the amount of money is concerned, as I said, there had not been a qualified trained accountant in the Drug Service before and it proved extremely difficult for the clerical staff to maintain and keep up to date with outstanding bills. We discovered sums up to \$2,000,000.00 that were outstanding for persons in a backlog and we paid it during this year, because the post of accountant became available during this year.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, I did not take five years. A good accountant is hard to find. You did not have one, you had a clerical officer. A good accountant is very difficult, as anybody will tell you, you can't find an accountant. We have been searching for accountants left, right and centre because what we are doing is bringing a measure of efficiency to the administration which was not there. I don't know what you hear, but I can tell you that you would be the only person, you and the Honourable Member for the City, who is not aware of the magnificent work that is happening in Health. You should check. I recommend that you go yourself and ask.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon. I am not boasting, I am just telling the Member who has been away for a long time and who has not been following these matters that since she has gone there have been a lot of magnificent things happening in Health. Anyone could tell the Honourable Members, both of them, that the kind of old time approach is no longer relevant. Anyhow Sir, the answer to the question is that we had outstanding sums of money for a large number of people in the special benefit services, large numbers of companies, all the companies for supplying drugs, also for the benefit services we had outstanding claims from as little as \$2.25 up to \$800,000.00 in one case. We had a substantial number of companies to be paid and what we did was ensure that once and for all, all the persons who had money outstanding have in fact been paid. So this supplementary coming as it does now, even though it comes at the end of the year is to ensure that the funds that are paid out during the rest of this year are

legitimately paid out. The people have already received their money, those moneys that were outstanding.

I hope that answers the former Minister's question. I want to confirm for her that the generic drugs that are being used in the formulary....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I should not have forgotten that because I recall almost in the same seat the Honourable Member having to give an account of her stewardship....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: They interested in the answer Sir? Mr. Chairman I am willing to give answers but only in circumstances....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think if you address the Chair then you will ignore what is happening out there and I will take care of that. Don't bother about the asides I will take care.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: So I have answered Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister of Health was I think rather insensitive having regard to the speech he gave in this House on the 17th January 1989, it was very uncharitable to my colleague, the Honourable Member for the City, when he said then that the Drug Service after eight or nine years of operation was functioning in a manner that was acceptable and could even be described as good, which is consistent with the argument that my colleague put that the drug service was well founded and anchored in good administration.
6.25 p.m.

But if it is one thing, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Health is consistent because we went through this exact debate on January 17, 1989. I have, Sir, to remind the House and the Minister that on January 17, 1989 the very same thing the Minister is doing today he did then. He came back to the House and asked for a supplementary, Sir, amounting to 33% of its original. I had to tell the House, Sir, and I am quoting from Hansard Page 3078 of January 17, 1989. I want, Sir, to address a few concerns of Subhead 16 Drug Service and the increase being sought of \$2.83 million. I think the Minister would agree that when a supplementary as extensive and as large as 33% increase is being sought in the course of a financial year a full explanation is warranted to be sure that there is nothing in the Consumer Price Index which would suggest that a 33% increase can be warranted on the basis of an increase in prices. Indeed, the Consumer Price Index is simply telling us that prices for medical care, drugs, and so on increased by only 6%. The Minister has not said that it is an expansion of the Drug Service. Sir, I then shall have to

conclude that the Government would have to be involved in some false budgeting year by year, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We are now being presented with a situation of some very creative accounting and false economy in the Ministry of Health where it is coming at the last minute each year and asking for supplementaries that amount to some 33% of original votes. We have already from this side, Sir, in the last Session paid out over 25%.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: But 25% is large. It is large, Sir. We have already, Sir, in the previous Session stated our position from this side that the Barbados Labour Party will not be supporting these supplementaries where the supplementaries are in large proportion to the initial vote because there has to be something wrong with the process of budgeting. In this particular case, Sir, the House is being invited to approve a supplementary, not to settle for the same in the previous year, but to settle outstanding claims for previous years. In those previous years the House has already been called upon to supplement original votes by an amount of something, Sir, as large as 33%.

The case that my honourable colleague, Sir, is putting therefore is so well founded that there obviously has to be a deep chaos despite the accountant in the administration of the drugs, Sir. In fact, Sir, I will go so far to say this. It would appear that the Drug Service was functioning better when you had a clerk in charge of its accounting system than now that you have an accountant. How can the Minister justify his year by year coming for these supplementaries, Sir, but yet ask the House this afternoon to justify a supplementary which in my judgment is in breach of the spirit of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

That Act, Sir, requires a Ministry to try and bring its accounts up to date by the end of the financial year. The Ministry must do these things, Sir, and this House must stop supporting Ministries and poor administration. It is bad enough for this House to have in the course of one financial year to pay bills that ought to have been paid in the previous financial year.

Indeed, you will recall that in 1987 I charged that the former Minister of Health was indulging in creative accounting by not showing his bills in the financial year in which they fell due and we had to wait until that former Minister left the Democratic Labour Party to know that that was true. We really cannot this evening accept the very facile way in which the Minister has sought to dispense with the information that is stated here, Sir, that you are not just paying outstanding bills but you are paying outstanding bills, Sir, for previous years. I think the House deserves a fuller explanation than that which had been so far offered,

Sir, by the Minister. We really need to be told how far back in the past these bills, Sir, have accumulated. We really need to be told this, Sir. Why is it that the Ministry of Health no longer feels that it has to abide by a financial practice which requires it to bring its accounts up to date by the end of the financial year as prescribed by law. That is I think the gravamen of my colleague's contribution. We want to see the Minister of Health cease being embarrassed every year from the strictures of the Opposition which must draw to his attention that it must be bad budgeting. It really must be bad budgeting to come with this size of a supplementary of 33%. Let your Ministry for the purposes of good budgeting this year ensure that the amount being sought for the next financial year includes not only what was voted for originally but what was sought by way of supplementary, as the House should know, Sir.

The Health Levy is now raising \$35 million. The only part of the programme that Health Levy was intended to finance is the Drug Service. If the Health Levy is raising \$35 million, Sir, then at least the Government should ensure that the only part of the National Health Service, Sir, that is non-existent that commands the support of that institution should always be in funds. It has to be a bad policy. But the Government is drawing \$35 million from the taxpayers from the Health Levy and having the Minister scrambling for funds and having the pharmacists in this country protesting about the inability to meet their own expenses and destroying the small black businessman.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This House is not going to be miserly if the Minister of Health asks for an amount that will allow us to be satisfied that this country has a National Drug Service that is satisfactorily run to the benefit of all persons, Sir, who need the assistance of it. We are asking therefore, Sir, the Minister to give us a proper explanation of this situation. We are asking him as well, having regard to the Estimates that will come, to make sure that the budgeting or the lack of character that has exemplified this Administration since 1989 does not find its way in this House in the next round of budgeting.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I fully appreciate the Honourable Member. I had asked. It is courtesy to send me the debate from which I quoted. It is reasonable for the Honourable Member to take the position that he has taken except that I am surprised that he would lay a charge of not being interested in the Financial Administration and Audit Act at the foot of this Honourable Member. I really am disappointed that he would raise that question. I want to assure him that I am one of the champions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and that I believe that it

should be updated and amended. I firmly believe that the Financial Administration and Audit Act should be brought within the purview of this House to the extent that the activities of Government have advanced and that the Act and activities of Government should coincide. I hope that we will see a reform of that Act.

I think that my Ministry is no different from all of the other Ministries and in this respect the Drug Service. The Drug Service is exemplary in its capacity to be able to say to the exact cent how much money is owed to whom. I think that rather than attacking the Drug Service that Honourable Members should be proud there is some agency somewhere which can, in fact, determine who has to be paid how much and pay them. I am saying that the Drug Service is able and has been able to reconcile its accounts to the point where we have to come for the \$2 million.
6.35 p.m.

Now, what the Honourable Member does not say about the last occasion is that it was not for the same identical reason, but even if it were, I don't believe that, except for the Honourable Member for St. Peter, that there is any other experienced person having held a ministerial position who does not understand the principle of supplementary budgeting. The Honourable Member has sought to impose some new regime on the people of this country via their distinguished and properly elected representatives that somehow supplementary budgeting is something beyond the pale. The fact is, that in the context of budgeting for a year or for a period, a country or a group or an organisation can budget for its year and at that time project a certain expenditure. There is nothing certain about estimates. That is why they are called estimates.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes. But we would not have known, for example, that the six persons were going to come out exactly when they came out. We had to rush and grab them. I don't like saying this, but we had to rush and get perhaps the fastest approval of six temporary posts ever in the history of the Government. I am explaining the inability to plan.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: First of all, the Honourable Member is saying it is only \$89 thousand. It is not \$4 million. It is \$3 point something million, of which \$89 thousand is not insignificant.

Furthermore, Sir, I am not going to apologise because we have expanded the Drug Service in such a way as to require an additional \$2 million as we come towards the end of February. We are making sure that we do not have to

carry over – which has been a feature of previous years from time immemorial, to carry over two or three or four months, which the Honourable Member might say, brings a day of reckoning. What this Minister has said is that we will avoid, if we can....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We have from 1985 through 1989. What has happened is that we have been able to computerise the accounts and instead of their being a long, slow process, we were able during this year to come up with the exact figure. Now, at the end of the financial year coming and it is only one supplementary... What the Honourable Member seems to wish us to do, is to come for four supplementaries during the course of the year. We are saying that if we come here for a supplementary of \$3 million for a Drug Service which has spent \$13.8 million, or approximately \$14 million, that that is not unreasonable or unconscionable, given the fact that we are discussing a commodity that we have two cycles of bidding. We can predict with certainty what the price of drugs will be for the first part of a financial year, because the financial year and the calendar year do not coincide. But the second round of bidding, no one can predict. We can do estimates.

I consider that this is not unreasonable in the context of proper accounting and proper management; and I come to this Honourable Committee to draw to their attention the necessity for us to continue the high standard of service which we are now providing by adding an additional \$3.7 million to the account. If the Honourable Members feel that they are unable to satisfy that requirement for their constituents who are now having a higher quality of health care than they have ever had, then I would say that they are entitled to say so. But as for the Honourable Member for St. Peter, a major beneficiary of the Drug Service, talking about the health levy, the health levy was long ago put into the Consolidated Fund. The health levy long ago ceased to be allocated to a specific aspect of Government expenditure, and the Government so stated. So that the health levy only now forms part of the mechanisms used to collect revenue for the proper running of the country. So, anyone who attempts to bring back some kind of local government system, which this amount of money is collected from that source or this expenditure, is really spitting into the air, because, truly, that is a period that is long past. The health levy, like other areas of taxation, forms a part of the methodology for collecting revenue. Do not now take the \$35 million collected from the health levy unto the Drug Service and suggest that because we collected \$35 million the Drug Service should not be out of funds. The Drug Service like every other service is required to cut its cloth to fit what it has.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We did. You could organise something? All right.

When we therefore fit it into \$16 million... We fit it into \$13 million and they tried very hard to see if they could fit in there, but you could only have kept it at \$13 million if you cut the services.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is possible, but one is not here to predict but to deal with the reality as it is. What I would promise the Honourable Member is that next year at the next estimates when we come down if we have to come for supplementary I will discuss it with the Honourable Member prior to coming to the House, so....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, then, I was hoping that the Public Accounts Committee would examine the issues and see for themselves. What I am saying is that all of this is above board. We have situations where there are accounts in the public sector where things are outstanding, as the Public Accounts Committee knows, for a substantially long time.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He probably knows; he is an economist like you from Cave Hill, so he knows these things. I don't know. All I am saying is: Do not attack the Drug Service, because it is one of the most efficient organisations in the public sector. So, if you have somewhere to attack, try another cherry tree. It is a functionally efficient organisation and I am prepared to say so on the floor of this Committee as I have said before. Don't attack the Drug Service with any cheap politics.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If you want to attack me, wait until you have an issue that is worthwhile. Don't attack the Drug Service when we are discussing.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have to put it in small doses to the Honourable Member. He can't deal with more than one issue at a time. I want to raise the question now of the opening hours of the polyclinics, in which are to be found the pharmacies from which these drugs are dispensed.

The polyclinics used to be open to the public up to eight o'clock at night. I can speak to this of my own knowledge and experience, and then the Honourable Member for St. James South – I know you are very unhappy about this. Yes. Oh, dear – became the Minister of Health. People forget that. It is something that the Prime Minister did something about very quickly. He too wanted

to put that one behind him. The Honourable Member for St. James South cut back the polyclinic services including the services offered by the pharmacists. You couldn't take a sick child or a sick, old lady to the polyclinic at eight o'clock at night anymore and find a doctor there to offer care. Yes, this is the caring and sharing society.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: That's right, throw it right back into the Casualty. Then the Honourable Member for... Yes. That is where that journalist died the first week it opened.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West became the Minister of Health and from the time he became the Minister of Health some four years ago, every year we hear about these new and improved polyclinic services. This is the service that they cut back on in the first place. This is becoming now like the St. Joseph Hospital, and every year we are hearing about the new and improved services, the polyclinics. I am looking anxiously for the return of these services instituted by the Barbados Labour Party, because our constituents, every one of us, including those over there, those Honourable Members over there, must be getting the complaints that we are getting over here about the lack and the cutback of services at the polyclinics. Not only of services but of supplies and materials for the said polyclinics. The question I want to ask is this: Now, that we have these six new Pharmacists II in the polyclinics, according to the Minister, are we going to find that we can go to the polyclinics now after the hour of four o'clock and have these services available to us, man, woman and child? Will a mother be able to go home from work and not have to take time off from work knowing that everybody else is competing for her job which is in jeopardy to take her child to the polyclinic?
6.45 p.m.

Can we get this assurance from the Minister now as to what date this can happen? I am not going to embarrass the Honourable Minister by asking him what has not happened up to now because these pharmacists are in place. We are voting this money to pay them.

Aside.

Miss. B. A. MILLER: This is now a matter for levity. You are not a Minister of sport. This is now a matter for levity, Mr. Chairman that we are now in here being asked by the Honourable Minister of Health, \$89 000 we are told to pay for salaries for additional staff and we are hearing now as a matter of mock sport that two of them have gone already. If we are being asked to vote this money the least we can expect, Mr. Chairman, is that the Honourable Minister would enlighten us as to how the services may be improved. I am particularly interested to hear about the polyclinic opening hours.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is talking about levity. I cannot stop the person on the other side from laughing so if every time she gets up they laugh that is a matter for them. If they are laughing at her I am not getting involved in that. What I will explain to the Honourable Member is that if the Barbados Labour Party did not have the silly policies which put us in a position where for the next two years there will not be a single pharmacist graduating from the Community College, if the Barbados Labour Party Government under the distinguished Minister when she was Minister, the same Honourable Member who is now asking questions had not implemented policies which have put us in a position where we have to go around looking to see if we can find pharmacists...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Minister is deliberately and willfully misleading this House. There was no such policy. It was the Barbados Labour Party Government that developed the Health Sciences Division of the Community College and put the training of pharmacists within it. He does not have to stoop to that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member cannot deny the facts that the whole system which the Honourable Member set up has put this country in a position where now there will not be a pharmacist graduating from the Community College....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is reducing the Committee to a farce in my opinion because the Honourable Member believes that she can sit from her Chair and ask silly questions and expect that will carry debate. The facts are there.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: As for the nurses, you talk about servicing the polyclinics? The Honourable Member stopped training in this country and for two years....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The facts are that for 1983, 1984 and 1985 not a single nurse graduated from this country because of the policies of this person.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: An Honourable Member is on a point of order. Just before you proceed with the point of order, I think we are getting out of hand because of the cross conversations.

Miss. B. A. MILLER: I am on a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand that but I want to curtail that kind of activity because it is really generating debate that is unnecessary.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The point of order is meant to assist the Chair in doing this. The Honourable Member is in breach of divers Standing Orders.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Diverse, several, copious Standing Orders. He is in breach of many Standing Orders.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. Let me make this point straight because I have heard a false accusation made....

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is a matter of fact that for two years during the Barbados Labour Party....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Minister....

Aside.

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

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am speaking, Sir, in Committee. He said he was finished. He sat down.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am on a point of order.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sorry.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for the City talked about the services in the polyclinic and I said she should be ashamed to raise that question because she presided over a policy as Minister of Health, she and a colleague who followed her when they and the Barbados Labour Party systematically cut back training in every department but in particular in the area of nursing. There was no graduation of a nurse for two years during their regime. I stand by that, Sir. The record is there. It is not a matter of speculation. I am not going to resile from that because it is a fact.

Mr. Chairman, I go further. The Honourable Member wants to know when the polyclinics will be opened until 8 o'clock. I gave her the assurance that it is the policy of the

Government to open the polyclinics. We said it in the Throne Speech. I repeat it.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When? Whenever we have all the things in place to do it. You think you can come in here and ask me when? You must be crazy. Sometime during the next five years. The Honourable Member is not in a position to raise the question of quality of ministerial performance in the Ministry of Health? We will get back to that. But the Honourable Member should be the last person to be raising questions about performance in the Ministry of Health. When we come to the Estimates, we will remind the Honourable Member that we spent two days in this Honourable Chamber in this same Committee of Supply trying to probe the Honourable Member about the Ministry of Health. Do not come about that. The point is, Mr. Chairman, that the Government made a statement. It says that the primary health care services will be upgraded. The hours of operation of the polyclinics will be examined with a view to providing better service to the communities.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You have to hear it for some more time. The polyclinics are not now closed at 4 o'clock as the Honourable Member said. There are polyclinics that open until 6 o'clock.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir Winston Scott.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: May I remind Honourable Members of Standing Order 33(6).

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member must know that the reason why the polyclinics were closed at the time they were closed had to do with the utilisation programme and survey which was done. In the opinion of the Ministry at that time there were not being utilised. It was determined they would change the hours. Ever since I have been Minister I have been having discussions with all of the parties concerned with a view to ensuring that the polyclinics can serve the community at hours that are satisfactory to the community. We cannot do it by imposing it. This is a Government that seeks to do things that are acceptable to all the parties concerned. We are not going to impose anything on anybody. We are going to see that the polyclinics are open but I would say that the polyclinics at the moment are open and staggered in the areas where it is convenient and where we have enough staff.

On the question of the pharmacists who have left, the private sector is now inducing them because the demand for pharmacists is higher than the suppliers of pharmacists in this country. The private sector is now inducing the young

pharmacists away from the Service by offering them such things as a free motor car, by doubling the salaries and by providing other perks. Therefore, it is difficult for us to compete. That is the reason why I was able to say that even since those six pharmacists were recruited, one has resigned and gone to do a Masters Degree and the second one has resigned indicating that he or she will be going to the private sector shortly. In the meantime we have been able to recruit replacements from outside of the country. We are not short. We have been able to recruit replacements who were themselves trained in Barbados and who have indicated that they wish to come back to work in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, it is important that we cannot extend the services unless the professionals who man the services are available. The quantity and quality of services will be determined to a large extent by the availability of professional staff.
6.55 p.m.

To the extent that we can find such staff, we will extend the hours of the polyclinics. We are in discussions with the unions and the relevant people at this point.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the Minister did not say it but I would like him to tell me how long is the pharmacy course at the Community College. Because...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have not finished. I have not set down yet, I have the Annual Report of the Community College for the Academic Year 1987-88. At page 37, under Division of Health Sciences, it is recorded that:

"Second year Pharmacy students mounted a display in Norman Centre during Pharmacy Week, held from June 12-18. The theme was "Grow old with your Pharmacist".

At page 99, I see:

"ANDREWS-WINCHESTER, Karlene
CHASE, Wanda
GOODING, Marina
GRIFFITH, Grell
LAWRENCE, Maria
MEDFORD, Roger
PARRIS, Alfred
PUCHI, Angel
ROWE, Sandra"

all qualified in Pharmacy in July 1988. This spoke of second year. I am sure it was a three year course. Therefore it is a gross misrepresentation and a distortion of the truth to say that this Party stopped training in relation to

Pharmacy. Page 99. You paraded that all about the country and had people believing foolishness. It is not true.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am going to respond. The Pharmacy course has changed with effect from last year.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I was talking about during our time. We went out in 1986. He has told this House, I heard him. That is why I left here.

The Honourable Member said that he was sure the Pharmacy course was three years. I am saying to him that the Pharmacy course was not three years in 1988. The new Pharmacy course started – they would be graduating in 1993 – from 1990 for the first time.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Would you listen, please. Mr. Chairman, for the first time it is a three year course for Pharmacy from 1990. Up until that point, the course was, as I understand it, two years. Then there is a six months internship.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, the course for Pharmacists allows people to come in from outside of the system. I am not going to go into great detail about that, except to say that the Pharmacists who graduate are not bound to go into the public sector or go anywhere.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The point I was making, the gravamen and burden of my interjection...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ... was to say that during our time, people were being trained at the Community College in Pharmacy and that it is not true to say that we discontinued training in Pharmacy.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, it seems as though we are going to have a debate, so let us have it. First of all, the Honourable Member said that she started the Health Sciences Division. I have here, Sir, the Annual Report for the 1st September 1976.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I heard that.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What did she say?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: "The Division of Health Sciences conducted its first major examination of students taking two-year certificate programmes in December 1976."

That is what it says here. So the Honourable Member should not start talking about she started this.

Secondly, when I spoke about the absence of training I specifically addressed the issue of nurses.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I said, you cut back on all training and stand by that. The Barbados Labour Party cut back on all training for all sectors. It is true! Ask the people. Do not ask us. The Barbados Labour Party, as a matter of policy, cut back on all training for all sectors during the period 1981-86. Get up and deny that.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Cut back on training.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are having unnecessary interruptions. Just one minute.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is talking about training the lawyers. They cut back on the lawyers. Do you think you can fool me? I am not finished.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is not finished but I have to repeat that we are having far too many interruptions from Honourable Members in their seats. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West may continue.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Quite seriously, Mr. Chairman, I do not know what is the purpose of the Honourable Members. But so far as this supplementary is concerned and so far as the Pharmacists are concerned, we created the posts of Pharmacists in order to grab the 6 who were graduating at that time. Because the next set of graduates that will come out of the Community College will be in 1993. The programme has been changed to 3 years and six months internship.

I have not done anything. We do not do anything. This is a matter of policy within the Community College. What I am saying in regard to that is that we had to grab these six. I was explaining why we got six posts created in short time because it was recognized that we needed to have six Pharmacists. We will be unable, no one in Barbados will be able to recruit a trained Pharmacist out of the Community College before 1993 because they have changed the method to allow for the Pharmacy course to be equal to the Pharmacy course given in other institutions around the world. And so it has gone from, what in essence was a tailor

made Pharmacy course for Barbados, to a Pharmacy course that is now acceptable and reciprocal around the world. That is a matter of policy in the Community College which I am not competent to speak on, at this point.

The point I was making about the six posts, the response to the Member is that the six posts were created in a hurry so that we could induce the six persons who graduated. There were more than six who graduated. Two of them, I think, went out into the private sector. These six said they were prepared to come and to work unsociable hours, that is, after 4.00 o'clock. 7.05 p.m.

Because when you were talking about the Honourable Member for St. James being the Minister of Health the Honourable Member will confirm that the method that existed was that pharmacists used to work until 4 o'clock and although the Polyclinics are open beyond 4 o'clock it was not possible to get a prescription filled and so what would happen is that although the Polyclinic would be open a person could go to the Polyclinic but would still have to come back the next day for the medication. It has changed in that the Pharmacies are now open up to the point where the Polyclinics are open. If the Honourable Member would go to any Polyclinic if it is open until six a pharmacist is there. If you go to one that opens until eight a Pharmacist is there. There is a Pharmacist at each Polyclinic available to give prescriptions at the same time they are given.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to speak on this matter before you put the vote.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think the Honourable Minister could have very early in this debate admitted he was wrong about a number of things and moved on. One of the things that troubled me and I find very disturbing is his admission in a very glib way that money that is paid into the Health Levy goes into the Consolidated Fund and it goes in there and you spend what you like out of it and when it gets in the Consolidated Fund, then it can go anywhere. I think that strikes at a certain level of morality. You can't ask people to pay money as a health levy and then hear the kind of explanation you hear from the Minister of Health, that it is a methodology of revenue collection. Those are his words Sir. Something is wrong with that and then when we have, Mr. Chairman, to come and see the kind of supplementary provision being made today and again to hear the glib reply from the Minister that has absolutely nothing to do with good public accounting. It has something to do with everything except proper accounting. Now I have sat in this Chamber and I have heard the Honourable Minister on numerous occasions make the kind of charge that is being made against him today, when the shoe was on the other foot. So there is no point telling us that and saying, well, it has nothing to do with public accounting, and that is the end of it. We certainly need to tighten up on these things but I want more particularly to deal with a number of inaccurate

statements made by the Minister in relation to this Pharmacy business. Pharmacy started in the Division of Health Sciences at the Community College in the period when I was Minister of Education and not only were Pharmacists trained on a consistent basis from then up to now, including the period in which the Minister was Minister of Health, up to now, with graduates ranging from between eight to twelve per year, but there are also other persons who were given National Development Scholarships who studied as far afield as India in Pharmacy and a number of them are in Barbados today.

In addition to that there was also the provision made for loans under the Student Revolving Loan Fund for Barbadians to study with 90% loans overseas, and if you would check with the Minister of Education, he should be able to tell him that a number of persons were trained overseas in pharmacy with loans from the Student Revolving Loan Fund, but I won't spend time debating that. Mr. Chairman it is remarkable that something is wrong with heckling on one side but not on the other. I can't hear myself for the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, but I am re-learning the Rules Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let's have some order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I have here before me, Mr. Chairman, the Annual Report of the Community College for the Academic Year of 1983-84 and here I have ten graduates that were graduated. There was 100% passes in the final year for the people in Pharmacy.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Report of 1983-84, and they were being trained at that time for two years and this is the final year - 100% passes, ten people graduated in 1984. If the Honourable Member would look at the Report for 1985 he would see also that there were between eight and twelve people who graduated in that year. You may get the Report from the Clerk of the House.

When the Honourable Member therefore gets in here and says that the period before 1986 that there was a cut back in all training in Barbados it is the kind of statement that does very little credit to the Honourable Member or indeed to the Party for which he speaks.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: He would have to deal with truth to his own conscience. I would not get into that. We are not interested in dealing with the conscience of the Minister in here, but we really expect that in the business before this Chamber that there should be some serious consideration given to the facts.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: He says he is surprised. I am surprised too that the Honourable Member despite all his years in this Chamber finds it extremely difficult to behave in a manner that is commensurate with the length of service he has given in here.

Now I want to make one other comment about the contribution of the Minister. There is a Polyclinic in St. George and what the Honourable Minister has said does not square with what happens in that particular Polyclinic. It is usually closed by three, sometimes by four, but sometimes by three, most of the time there is no Pharmacist.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You had better check it out if you think so. Usually in the afternoon hours there is no Doctor, there is a shortage of supplies, and make a note of them, and in addition to that the point made by the Honourable Member for the City the hours of the opening of the Glebe Polyclinic in St. George are not suitable for the working hours of the people in that area. You can't ask a man to go out and cut canes from six in the morning and by the time he gets home in the afternoon the Polyclinic is closed. I don't think that this merits any argument, we don't have to quarrel about this, this is a fact and a number of people in St. George are complaining that the Polyclinic hours are not suitable for their working hours.

We also have a problem with the people who are suffering from chronic diseases and for whom provision is made under the law for them to get free drugs, whatever age - hypertension, diabetes and so on, and there are reports that there are persons who go to the Glebe Polyclinic and do not get the drugs that are required for their chronic diseases simply because the drugs are not available. So rather than the Minister of Health getting up and quarrelling with everybody it is important that he looks into these things, because if he wants to say, as he is saying at certain times, that this is a good service and all of us want it to be a good service, then it is important that he checks into things and do something to rectify them rather than have on going battle, verbal battle, with people on this side.

I want to mention one other thing in relation to the Glebe Polyclinic. The representative for St. George North, the Honourable Minister of Education did say at one point that the opening of the Glebe was put off for several months for a side walk to be built. Well a side walk has been built. I did not think that was much of an argument. I think the Government was not ready to open the Polyclinic because they did not have the facilities, the staff or whatever established and it would have been better in the circumstances to tell the people that you are not ready to open because the facilities were not quite ready, but to tell

them that a side walk had to be built before you could open the Polyclinic was making sport at the people.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Don't worry I will take part in the other part of St. George in due course as I have done in the past.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.
7.15 p.m

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

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member stated that I said that the polyclinic will not be opened. I, first of all, had no control over the opening of the polyclinic No. 1. No. 2, Sir, I stated that the Honourable Member who made the statement said that as far as he was concerned, and he was living in St. George, nobody had died so he saw no need for a sidewalk and I, on the other hand, said that I saw the need for the sidewalk. That is where we differed, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I was wondering, Mr. Chairman, what it took to draw out the Honourable Member. It certainly did not take much to draw him out, Sir, and having come out I like what he said, Sir. I thought perhaps the Honourable Member would have done a little bit more and he would have backed me up since the polyclinic is in his constituency and since he has the honour of representing the constituency in which I live and I stress the honour, Sir. I thought that he would have got up in here and lent some support to the complaints being made by his constituents, including myself, about the way in which the polyclinic in the Glebe is operating, but instead he chooses to bring up some foolishness about "nobody is dead so there is no need for any sidewalk".

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: If he talks foolishness, he talks foolishness. If he does not make sense....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have not told you any such thing. Please address the Chair.

Mr. L. R. TULL: But if something is not sensible, it is foolish. I do not see why it is unparliamentary about saying something is foolish.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am just saying to you to address the Chair.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I cannot hear you, Sir. There is too much noise coming from over there, Sir. I cannot hear you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am just saying that if you are addressing the Chair it is unlikely that you would be paying any attention to the Asides. The Asides are not recorded and, therefore, they do not form part of the debate. That is the point I was making ever since.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I do not have to pay attention to them. They are so loud that I cannot miss them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The only problem is that if you are attending to the Asides then it forms part of the debate which it should not. Please address the Chair and stick to the matter.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I was talking about the Honourable Member for St. George North on what he said, but in regards to the Asides, Sir, you are there to protect me. The Asides are so loud that I have to hear them. If you will protect me from them, Sir, then I will not make any comment on them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have been making every effort to and, therefore, ask you to help me.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Now I just want to make one final point. This thing is getting more ragged than intended. Well, I will make it five, Sir, because....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am going to make it a little longer, Sir. We have an additional problem with the Glebe Polyclinic in St. George. The problem is that there is not a bus service that is sufficiently efficient to meet the needs of the older people and the disabled people in St. George to get to the polyclinic at the time required for them to be there. They are quite often given specific hours to be at the polyclinic, usually in the morning, and in most cases people from far flung areas of the parish of St. George cannot get to the polyclinic, in time as the Honourable Member for St. George North should know because of the inadequacy of the bus service. Often when they do appear late for their appointment they are chased out of the place by people working in the clinic and, if I am pushed, I will call names. They tell them that they had an appointment for 10 o'clock and it is now 10.30 a.m. Come back some other time. I am talking about old people.

I would like the Honourable Minister of Health instead of us quarrelling all of the time to look into these things and see whether he can coordinate his clinic service at the Glebe Polyclinic. I believe by extension this happens

to polyclinics all across Barbados. But I speak with authority on the one in the Glebe because I have constant complaints. I would not say daily but I am pretty sure weekly complaints from the people up there in relation to it. If there can be some coordination between the Ministry of Health and the Glebe Polyclinic and the Ministry of Transport and Works to make sure that there is proper transportation for the old people, the ones who have to go and get dressings who walk with crutches up the hill, I think the Minister will do himself, the Ministry, and Barbados a powerful service.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one brief point. The Honourable Member for St. George South, although he has made some valid points about some complaints we hear from time to time, should recognise the fact that when he speaks of the question of transportation that the design of the polyclinic was not done during the Democratic Labour Party's regime. So the one problem that I addressed earlier about the sidewalk was only one of the problems that we saw related to the building of the polyclinic and that is the bus service. The serious problem about the bus service, Sir, is that in the design there was no bus lay-by or bus stop in front of the polyclinic.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Anyhow, Mr. Chairman, I would only say that is the reason why there has been a problem with the bus service. Now the Honourable Member for St. George South has a point because the people from St. George South do have to come down and then come up the hill unlike the people from the other part of St. George North. But the requirement basically is for a bus stop or bus lay-by in front of the Glebe Polyclinic.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I just want to finish this debate. At least I am going to respond finally on the drug thing. When the quotation was being made about the Pharmacy, July 1988, and the names were read out, I was not myself seized of the information. The fact is that that July 1988 class would have been a 1986 class because the pharmacy was two years up until then. The pharmacy course was always two years. So the 1988 group would have been people who came in during our time in 1986. I am just clarifying for the records because I was not seized of the information.

The point is, however, that when one makes the reference to training and the stopping of training it is well accepted that one is discussing training in the context of public sector. One is not discussing shutting down the Community College. The Community College is continuing. But when one says that training was stopped, what one is discussing is training in the public sector. That

is all I am saying. Whether it is fact or fiction, I am saying that the training was severely cut back during the 1980's.

I want to respond to the Honourable Member on Pharmacy. In spite of all that has happened, the number of pharmacists available is still so low that we cannot provide service for pharmacy. Here is what happens. The pharmacy services all close at 4:30 p.m. It is not a question of staggering. It is a question of how the pharmacists will work. That is why we are negotiating. You cannot depute pharmacists to work beyond 4:30 p.m. because that is what their terms of reference are. The only ones who, in fact, have agreed to work beyond 4:30 p.m. so far were the six we had recruited that we seek the money for.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon. Well, for what it is worth, the proposal for extending the pharmacy service at four polyclinics is now having consideration and I hope to be able to extend it to hours.
7.25 p.m.

I want to say, as a matter of policy, what we have been saying for the last four years is, and I do not believe, that the polyclinics are serving their full purpose if they are not available for those persons who come home at five o'clock. So, if we are *ad idem* on this, I have no difficulty. The polyclinic service is not as useful as a community service as it should be and I am on record as saying that the polyclinic service must become available to the population at hours that are convenient for them. It must be user-friendly.

The Honourable Member raised the question about there being no doctors in the afternoon. I give the Honourable Member the assurance that I will investigate that, but there is no reason that I know of, except the occasional situation during the summer of vacation leave etc., why there should be no doctor in a polyclinic in the afternoon.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sometimes. It is entirely possible because we do not have enough clinical medical officers. All of the ones we have now have been recruited from overseas and we are trying to recruit as many as possible.

The Honourable Member said for chronic diseases, free drugs were not available. I have no report. I have never had any report of their being a shortage of drugs *per se* and I will investigate this.

The reports that persons who go to the Glebe have not been able to get their drugs is something which I will investigate. Occasionally, you may find that a person went to the polyclinic and did not have his or her I.D. card. This

has been a problem; but if it is a case of drugs not being available, we will investigate this, because we have no record of any report coming from any polyclinic of this. I give the Honourable Member the assurance that I will have an answer for him.

So far as the coordination of bus services is concerned, this continues to be a difficulty which everybody tries to solve and I hope that during this period of government we will be able to see an even better coordination. The buses have been coming at a greater clip and so we hope that this will be all right.

Mr. L. R. TULL: In 1976, Sir, the Democratic Labour Party candidate in St. George North promised that, if elected or when elected, he would provide, he, meaning he as a representative of the Democratic Labour Party, not he *per se*, would provide an ambulance service in St. George as the Honourable Member for St. George well knows. He would provide an ambulance service to pick up all the old people in St. George and drive them to a clinic... I am talking about the Democratic Labour Party's candidate.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I don't remember. This is another one of the examples of the Democratic Labour Party making a lot of promises to the people and then laughing them away when they hear about them some time in the future.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir, because in 1976 no Member of the Democratic Labour Party was elected for St. George North.

The question that Head 36 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked his leave to sit again.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is still too much noise in the Chamber. Can we have some order.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 8:15 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it should revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. CHAIRMAN resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed.

HEAD 84 – MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Transport and Works require the sum of \$3 million to supplement its capital expenditure under the Tenantry and Subsidiary Roads programme during this fiscal year. There is a certain escapable expenditure in respect of the programme which is financed by a loan from the Government of Venezuela and funds provided by the Government of Barbados.

The existing provision will be inadequate to provide the financing required up to the end of the financial year. The supplementary breakdown will be as follows: Subhead 8 – Private Tenantry and Subsidiary Roads under Item No. 23 – Structures, they need \$2 million. Under Item 26 – Professional Services which is a new item, \$1 million is required.

Mr. Chairman, I think Honourable Members are entitled to some information on the programme. I might point out that there were 84 roads to be constructed by Inversiones ABA of Venezuela. Nine roads have been completed. These are Long Gap No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, Nos. 4 and 5. Is Long Gap familiar to you, Mr. Chairman? There is Wakefield, Hannays in St. Lucy, Richmond Avenue – at last, after 40 years and Field Tenantry. Those have been completed.

There are 25 roads in progress. These are at Castle in St. Lucy, Gays in St. Peter, Indian Ground, St. Peter, Taylor's Gap, St. Alban's, Lower Carlton off 3rd Avenue, Hackleton Cliff, Lemon Arbor, Cliff Tenantry, Redland, Boarded Hall No. 1, Boarded Hall No. 2, Drax Hall Jump, Drax Hall Woods, Drax Hall Hope, Drax Hall Greens, Lion Castle, Dukes, Lowthers, Fortesque, Thicketts, Highlands No. 1, Train Line Road, Colleton, Easy Hall and Ginger Works in St. Joseph. Those are road works in progress.

The roads that have been surveyed are as set out. There are 8 of them, Rockfield, St. Lucy, Thornbury Hill, Carters, St. Martin's No. 1, St. Martin's No. 2, Highland No. 2, Ruby and Clifton Hall.

There are 42 roads to be allocated. Those are Harmony Hall, St. Lucy, Alleyndale, Date Tree Hill, Pleasant Hall, St. Peter, Waterhall, Claybury, Society, Guinea, Clifton, College Bottom and Easy Hall in St. John, College Savannah, Fairy Valley, Evelyn Gap, Forde's Road No. 1, Forde's Road No. 2, Amity Lodge No. 1, Amity Lodge No. 2, Amity Lodge No. 3, Windy Ridge, St. Lawrence, Dayrells, Harper's Land, Frere Pilgrim, Blades Hill, Lynch's No. 1 and Lynch's No. 2, Pollard, Cole Road, Highland No. 3, Drakes Land, Browne's Gap No. 1, Small Land, Clarke's Land, Hinckson Land, Bedford Land, Perkin's Land, Chapman Land, Simmons Land, and Bequest Nos. 1 and 2.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Drax Hall Jump is not in St. George?

Now we have a number of subsidiary tenantry roads to be constructed by the Ministry of Public Works, Communications and Transportation – Well Gap, St. Michael North, Thompson Land – I could give you the sums of money. I do not know if Honourable Members are interested. I doubt it.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Then there is Flagstaff – St. Michael South, Rick's Land – St. James South, Durant's Village and Bats Rock – St. James South.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No. I see here Flagstaff in St. Michael South. There is Charnocks in Christ Church East, Sargeant's Village and Briar Hall – Christ Church West Central, Glebe – St. George and then Phase No. 1 and 2 – St. George South, Lower Estate – St. George North, Dash Valley – St. George South, Neils – St. Michael East, the road at Blenheim off Mayor's Road – St. Michael East, Licorish Village near Thompson Land between tenants George King and Daisy Pilgrim; Turner's Hall in St. Andrew, Thompson Land – St. Michael West, Sunbury – St. Philip North, St. Barnabas Tenantry – St. Michael East, Applewaihe's No. 2 – St. George North and Walker's in St. Andrew.

This is not the road programme for the coming year. This is the road programme that falls within the ambit of this financial year. No doubt when the Minister is here he will be able to outline by the Estimates what the road programme will be for the rest of the country. I recall that we have discussed in great detail that there will be an attempt further to provide an equitable distribution across the country. We have all concluded, I think, that we want to put the question of road construction, road repair and road building beyond the issue where persons are still walking

on roads that are not acceptable. I think that this attempt is going to continue.

I myself look forward to the day when it is unnecessary for a constituency representative to have to come to the House of Assembly and have to ask for a road somewhere to be fixed.

8.25 p.m.

I believe that a preventive road programme and a scheduling of the road programme, over a period of time, will allow this country, within a relatively short time – we will have to expend some money but I think this is infrastructural expenditure and expenditure which contributes to the development of the country. I think once it is equitably distributed across the country that no one will begrudge the expenditure. And hence, this supplementary we have to ask of \$3 million.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

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

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to stand in this Honourable Chamber to speak on this item of expenditure for the first time. I had hoped that I would have been able to follow the advice given to me by the Members on the other side, in that I would not be called upon to speak in the first year while I happen to be in this Chamber and secondly, not to slander anyone. I breached the first and I hope that I would not happen to breach the second.

But coming from the constituency of St. Andrew, I find it difficult, so to speak, to sit in my tracks on an item of expenditure relating to private tenantry and subsidiary roads and say nothing. I do not think that many people in this country, I do not think that many people in this Honourable Chamber really realize the problem with the roads in St. Andrew.

I believe that I am here as the representative for St. Andrew because of the neglect of this constituency by the Democratic Labour Party. Very little had been said during the past five years by the representative who happened to be a member of that side and, as a result, very little was done for the people in St. Andrew in connection with the roads in St. Andrew. In this connection, I will confine myself to the failure of this administration, the Democratic Labour Party administration to address itself to the problems of road maintenance in the constituency of St. Andrew. This is no joking matter.

The Barbados Labour Party between 1981 and 1986 was able to effect the repairs to over 110 subsidiary

tenantry roads. It is a shame that, during the five years between 1986 and 1991 not a single tenantry road in St. Andrew, I say not a single tenantry road in St. Andrew, has been repaired by the Democratic Labour Party. I hasten to say that the situation in St. Andrew relative to the road maintenance programme is in a chaotic state.

We should not see the problems in St. Andrew as a parochial problem. We should see it as a national problem. When one looks at the tenantry roads in St. Andrew and the state of disrepair, if you look at the Belleplaine area, and I want to call these roads in Belleplaine. I think in terms of Farrow's Road, Lakes Road, Jordan's Road, Belmont Road, Franklin Douglin Tenantry Road, Alleyne School Road, Boys' School Road, Belmont Road. Further down in Shorey Village Savannah Road. When you look further afield, at the tenantry roads in Chalky Mount, the tenantry roads in St. Simons, Rock Hall, a major link out of St. Andrew and Orange Hill. The Honourable Member for St. James South who I assisted in gaining certain routes in Orange Hill would know what I am talking about. No repairs whatsoever in Orange Hill. We have had nothing done to the roads in the constituency of St. Andrew.

It would be interesting to note, if the Honourable Minister could tell us exactly what is the extent of the repairs to the subsidiary road in Turner's Hall, under this Head. Because when one looks at the failure of the Democratic Labour Party administration during the last four and a half years to effect meaningful repairs in St. Andrew, I think that Turner's Hall Road is a crying shame. There is a road which links Turner's Hall to Belleplaine. That road was allowed to crumble. It was replaced by a marl track. For three years, the Democratic Labour Party administration did absolutely nothing. But they had a lot of fanfare when they opened this marl track. No heavy duty vehicles were supposed to go on it. As a result, the farmers to the bottom of Turner's Hall in the Bawden's area had to abandon their sugar crop. As a result, this year, those farmers are not producing any canes any more. They could have gone just to the left of this marl track and effected repairs to an existing track just about 40 feet. I would not venture to say, in this Honourable Chamber, why they persisted with this marl track.

Further afield the Walker's area; I notice that in this item of expenditure that some reference is made to Walker's. There are a number of areas in Walker's which are in need of substantial repair. I would hope that the Walker's bridge is included. The Walker's bridge is a bridge which was in existence for a number of years, from time immemorial, as we say in the courts. What has happened is that because of the failure of this administration to deal with the problems of drainage, the road was allowed to crumble. In true style reflective of the name of that bridge and as an insult to the people of Walker's, they replaced the bridge with a boardwalk.

I should like to know from the Honourable Minister whether or not the items of expenditure referred to includes the reparation of the Walker's bridge. I should like to know what areas are covered in this item of expenditure relative to the areas of disrepair which I have just mentioned.

We have had nothing, in the Estimates. It would be very sad if we in St. Andrew have nothing in the Supplementary Estimates as outlined here. We in St. Andrew pay taxes like anybody else. We are people too. We want to be part of the cake that the Honourable Minister alluded to a little earlier. I say we pay taxes. When you look at the level of unemployment in St. Andrew, one would think that, by extension, the Members of that side are ensuring that even in that area, we are neglected.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there would, I feel sure, be many opportunities for Honourable Members to address the issue of tenantry roads. So on this occasion, I propose to be very brief.

I should mention, Sir, that two roads long overdue were commenced in the constituency of St. Joseph just two weeks before the last election. I am not sure that they had any than an adverse impact on the Democratic Labour Party's candidate. But the two roads I refer to are Walkes Spring in St. Thomas and Easy Hall in St. John. When I had a close look at these roads, I was satisfied that the Easy Hall road was being very carefully done with a deep foundation, with slipper drains, with curbs.

8.35 p.m.

To the best of my knowledge that road continues in that way, but the Walkes Spring Road, which, interestingly enough, has not been mentioned here in either of the programmes was very hastily done, as was clear from the fact that there was no foundation dug, no slipper drains, no wells, and that the programme set out by the Barbados Labour Party some six years ago which called for the resiting of two or three houses so as to make sure that the road goes right into the tenantry and benefits the entire Walkes Spring Tenantry, that no attention was paid to that. One got the impression that it was only an electoral device.

Asides.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: No it was part of the planning then, but you never got around to it. It was very careful planning but on this occasion there was very shabby implementation, and I believe the technical officer who is with us in the gallery will pay some attention to this, that the Walkes Spring road has not been properly done. I don't think any work is continuing presently and I would wish to

urge that even though it might have been an electoral device, a gimmick, which backfired, that didn't pay off, that the people of Walkes Spring are well entitled to have a road. It is long overdue, and they would pay some careful attention to making sure that the road is properly done, good foundation laid, slipper drains, wells, and above all that the houses that are in the way be resited so the road can go right through and benefit the entire tenantry. A road was started in Claybury and some many weeks before election that road came to an end with half of the Claybury Tenantry not benefitting, I don't think it was identified as a road which was planned but I would certainly like to urge that it be continued so that the entire Claybury tenantry can benefit and while I do not want to make a case here for all the roads in the constituency of St. Joseph which cuts across 4 parishes which are in bad need of repair I ought to mention that south of Walkes Spring there is a tenantry which very few people know about, Clifton Tenantry, about 300 yards off the main road where about twelve people live. It is really virtually inaccessible and I would urge the Chief Technical Officer to pay some attention to the Clifton Tenantry to the south of Walkes Spring where the people could do with a third grade road at least, they need to have some means of access.

In addition, Sir, I would like to mention a road in the St. Andrew, part of the constituency, which has fallen in disrepair for the last three years and which is virtually impassable. It is a road called the Boarded Hall Road. You did mention Boarded Hall but I am satisfied that referred to Boarded Hall in St. George, but there is a road called the Boarded Hall Road in St. Andrew. That has fallen into disrepair, has got no attention in the last three years and I don't think it is fair to the people who live there, and there are not one or two, there are dozens of homes there and I would urge that some immediate attention be given to that area.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that on the occasion of a parliamentarian's maiden speech in a House of Assembly like this, that one ought to be non-controversial, in fact I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, and Prime Minister urging my colleague on my right to be as non-controversial as possible. I do not intend to depart from the tradition which has arisen under the Westminster System, that new comers, that neophytes, should not dare authority, or do not incur the wrath of other Honourable Members by being too presumptuous.

However, Sir, in relation to the business before this Committee I would like to caution this Honourable Committee, that over the years through an anxiety on the part of MTW perhaps to pave a number of tenantry roads, a situation has arisen where sometimes one gets the impression that the paving is done in such a way as not to accommodate proper drainage, as not to accommodate the digging out and preparing of a proper foundation under the tenantry roads, so that it has often happened, and the

Member for St. Michael West made oblique reference to it when he said that preventative maintenance ought to be the norm in these matters. And we have seen a situation develop Sir, in several roads in this country where sometimes MTW would be guilty of merely laying barber green on the top surface of the road without adequate infrastructure and then requiring shortly thereafter more money to expend on fixing roads after moneys have been originally spent on them.

I notice Sir, that in the constituency of St. Andrew which I cannot help but see, there is a place called Gilkes Village where the worst and most rudimentary paving was done to such a degree that that road is a national disgrace. It was just paved and nothing else. It is rocky, it is bumpy and after a deluge of rain it is highly probable that we will have to come back here on some occasion and ask for moneys to fix that road again.

However, I take note that much as my friend the Member for St. Michael West was interested in telling us that some 84 roads are to be done, but just that one road in the constituency which I have the honour to represent will be done in this financial year and that is the road at Taylor's Gap, Weston. I would like this Honourable Committee to note, Sir, the condition of roads such as Upper Carlton No. 1, Upper Carlton No. 2, Sion Hill Tenantry Road. It might interest the Honourable Member for St. Michael West to note that road is named Sodom. These roads are in dire need of repair along with Halls Road and I think that on occasions like these Sir, when we come to this Honourable Committee to ask for funds to be raised to do business such as what we are discussing, we need not just isolate a number of roads in the country and give them our attention, but, prior to coming to vote moneys for these roads we should actually carry out some survey of all the tenantry roads in the country which are in need of urgent attention and actually do something about them because it seems as though sometimes in our desire to please our constituents, that particular constituencies, especially in areas that don't form part of the rural areas get more attention, especially in the last four or five years. There are other areas in this country, Sir, which still cry out for attention and even though as I indicated earlier I do not intend to be controversial, I would like the Honourable Member for St. Michael South who earlier today said he intends to be statesman-like to recognise the needs of the rural areas of St. Peter, St. James North, St. Thomas, St. Andrew, St. Joseph and St. George South too Sir. I had the opportunity to go through St. George South....

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, my concern is that for the future the Ministry of Transport and Works should be encouraged to ensure that the tenantry roads are well looked after, that there are proper culverts, proper drainage, so that we can invest in these tenantry roads over a long period and

not necessarily be guilty of incurring wastage where we part do them and then subsequently have to come back and impose a strain on the taxpayers by seeking additional funds.

Thank you Sir.

Applause.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this sum of money that is required to carry on the programme, Private Tenantry Roads and Subsidiary Roads Programme, but I also wish to make a few comments which I hope would go a long way towards improving the programme. The programme is a programme which is partly financed by the Government of Venezuela and the Venezuelan part of it, I think they have got Inversiones that is carrying out some of the work.

8.45 p.m.

They also offer some managerial services. Some of the work is contracted to our local contractors. But there are some problems that need to be highlighted with the hope of letting the Minister find some ways and means or the Ministry make some attempt to resolve some of the problems. The professionals which include the engineers, as I understand it, are involved in the programme after the Ministry identify the roads and hand them over to the professionals. The professionals then offer a service that I am happy with. Although some members have expressed their concern they have been carrying out those functions, that is to straighten up some roads and take out some of the bends wherever possible in these tenantry roads and to provide curbs and adequate drainage because that has always been a problem. I am satisfied that the professionals and those who offer their services have been doing a very good job.

There is one in Long Gap which is a very good project. I had the opportunity to see that and I hope that all of the tenantry road programmes will be brought up to that standard. But what concerns me is that the funds asked for here are totally inadequate to do this work. Although there were lots of names being mentioned, I would not want my colleagues to feel, and certainly Members of this Chamber to feel, that you can accomplish all these roads. There are still a number of other roads yet to be mentioned. For instance, there are some agents or landlords who put people on land and have now developed a tenantry. In some cases there are forty or fifty houses. Some of those tenancies are not listed. They have not been surveyed and I am hoping that the Government finds some ways or means of tackling that particular situation. It is causing a problem. It is okay to go into a plantation tenantry or one that is well established over the years, but we are seeing a situation in Barbados where people are renting out house spots thereby

creating a new tenantry. It is this sort of tenantry that the Ministry must look at or the Government with a view to either acquiring the area of land to provide proper roads and to give those people proper access to their homes. If this is done, I think that we would be going in the right direction. To list a number of tenancies does not say much because I would want to ask the question: How many tenancies are in Barbados, how many have been done, and how many yet to be done? That is the sort of thing that must be done if we have to tackle this programme successfully.

Another thing that concerns me too is that the work is progressing slowly. I think the former Minister expressed concern and his disgust with the slowness in which the funds were coming. I do not know at the Venezuelan end of it if the money is going in as fast as it should. Certainly, there is some problem in the cash flow and that would hold up the programme. I would hope that something is done. I understand that there are conditions that the Venezuelans have placed on this loan and that is something which I hope the Government or the Minister would pay some attention to with a view to having that particular bottleneck smoothened out. Without that being ironed out, we are going to continue to have this stop and go situation. I know that there are some tenantry roads that have started but had to stop because of inadequate funds. I have good reason to believe that it is because of certain conditions that have prevented the flow of funds to carry on this programme.

I would hope that we could address this programme because time and time again we hear the same debate in here about the conditions that are placed on loans. If you want a loan from a foreign Government or some other foreign institution, they place certain conditions. We go on and we start the programme only to find somewhere along the line that we have to stop and address that particular problem. As I understand it, it is a question of the Venezuelans requiring that from their end of it, the conditions must be met with some aggregate or whatever have you coming from that country.

I think that we need to look at these things. Unless we address them urgently, we are not going to progress as rapidly because I feel that every house holder has a right to a proper road but not only a proper road but a road that is not prone to flooding. As in the past, you have roads where after you throw whatever have you on them and when the rain falls then it kicks up and we are back at it again. I am satisfied that the Ministry has built in something to protect this sort of occurrence and I am very happy. But as I said, it is too slow and I would hope that we can iron out these problems so that we can place more money at the disposal of the Ministry so that it can go on to accelerate the tenantry road programme.

As I said, Mr. Chairman, that is all I want to say on this. There are other things which I would need to address but under other appropriate Heads I will address them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 84 stand part. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I would begin by saying to the Honourable Member who just sat down that this Supplementary for \$3 million is not the sum total of the amount to be spent on the roads. The road building programme with the Venezuelans is anticipated to cost \$28 million and a lot of what he has recommended has already been in progress. This project with the Venezuelans was estimated in October of Phase I to cost \$19 million but the overall cost is going to be in the vicinity of \$53 million but the phases which are considered durable is \$28 million.

I want to respond to the Honourable Member for St. Andrew. Yes, just let me complete what I was saying. There are over 500 roads that have been identified by the Ministry of Transport and Works to be completed over the next 4 to 5 years. There are a number of roads identified by the Honourable Member for St. Andrew which do not fall within the description in this particular Head of Private Tenantry and Subsidiary Roads. Many of the roads listed by the Honourable Member in his presentation would not fall into the category and hence would not have been mentioned in this particular presentation. There is a distinct difference between the private tenantry and subsidiary roads and some other roads and the roads described by you are not considered as subsidiary roads under MTW's definition.

The Errol Clarke Associates Study, a study which was a comprehensive geotechnical engineering and drainage study of the Scotland District, has been completed and submitted.
8.55 p.m.

The study estimates that it will take over BDS\$200 million to fix the roads in the Scotland District. Special funding has been included or will be included in the 1991-92 estimates to begin this work. The capital expenditure is to continue road reconstruction, bridge reconstruction and drainage work in the Scotland District.

The road chosen by MTW. The Honourable Member said that if we had gone 40 yards in another direction we might have had a different outcome. The road chosen by MTW was based on a private engineering consultant's advice and that was based on the geology of the area. The Ministry deliberately decided to test the road during a rainy season and a dry season to see how it would stand up. So, that accounts for the time it took, and the route proposed by the Honourable Member is close to the road which originally collapsed and is on the same type of geological foundation as the one which had collapsed. The advice of the Ministry is that it would be geologically unwise to build in that area and that is the reason why they have not in fact done what the Honourable Member suggested. I might also

say that paving of the new route will start early in the 1991-92 estimates.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East - I don't think it would be necessary to deal with some of the other aspects which will fall properly in the 1991-92 estimates.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph - The questions raised by him would more properly be dealt with in the 1991-92 estimates.

I think that it is necessary for information to point out that, in fact, this program has been done under the aegis of a comprehensive approach to the construction and rebuilding of tenantry roads and, indeed, the design of the various roads are being done by various local consultants who have been contracted for the purpose and they have been allocated as follows:

In zone 1, St. Lucy, St. Peter and St. James, the consultants are Mahy, Chatterton and Ridley. In zone 2, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and St. John, the consultants are Errol Clarke Associates. In zone 3, St. George and St. Thomas, the consultants are Charles Alleyne. In zone 4, St. Philip, Christ Church, Consulting Engineers Partnership Ltd. are the consultants and in zone 5, St. Michael, Professional Engineers Limited are the consultants. So that these professionals have been employed to do the actual design of the road.

The whole question of slipper drains, etc. The idea is that once these roads have been constructed, it should be from, an engineering and other point of view, sound, and from a design point of view, they should be roads to last forever. In other words, bearing in mind, that since 1967, MTW has completed some 400 roads, what we want to be certain of, is that roads that are constructed in these circumstances and in this program are lasting roads, unlike the ones described by some Honourable Members, where, in fact, it appears that the Barber Green has been laid on ground that cannot be described as solid.

I hope that by the time the substantive Minister is in his place that we will be in a position to discuss the 500 roads that would be built four to five years from now. But, I wanted to give this Committee the assurance that the criteria which have been used in the selection of the roads, and you can tell from their description, that they had very little political colouration when one considers the makeup, but, on the advice of officials of the Ministry of Housing, It should be noted that the Ministry of Housing administers the Tenantry Freehold Act and therefore liaises with landowners about the utilisation of their land. We look at the condition of the roads, the number of houses along the road, objections or otherwise of landowners or the houseowner, whether or not the roads had in water mains,

and the Ministry consulted all of the 27 Honourable Members of the last House in the question of the zones and the specific roads. So that it would appear... and one other thing. We said 84 roads under the Inversiones Project but there was an additional 23 roads being handled by the Ministry itself. It is really 84 plus 23. I believe, that in the circumstances, that is as much information and detail as I can give.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT seconded by Hon. M. A. KING Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. B. M. TAITT seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that brings us to the end of Government's Business for the day and I think that Honourable Members have acquitted themselves well today, with the possible exception of the Leader of the Opposition as he has reminded me, Sir.

I beg to move Sir, that this House do now adjourn until 5th March 1991 at 12 o'clock noon.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
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CHELTENHAM, Dr. R. L. (St. Joseph)
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