THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, March 18, 1991

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

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

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

MINUTES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes and proceedings of this Honourable Chamber of a meeting held March 12th, 1991 be taken as read and confirmed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no other observations or corrections let these minutes stand confirmed.

PAPERS

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I beg to lay the following document: Against Drug Abuse – A National Approach.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am moving, Sir, suspension of Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of the day's sitting. While I am on my feet, Sir, I would like Honourable Members to know that I am aiming for a suspension of

sitting about 1:00 p.m. today and on every day that we sit at ten o'clock in the morning. That will be the usual luncheon break.

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

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

ORDER NO. 10 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES (REMUNERATION AND ALLOWANCES) ORDER, 1991

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to be very long on this particular matter that is before the House. The Resolution relates to the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (Remuneration and Allowances) Order, 1991 and it is seeking, that is the Resolution, is seeking the approval of this Honourable Chamber for that particular order. It has been accepted for a very long time that public servants in whatever capacity who devote a considerable amount of their time to public service should be remunerated appropriately. In this country, some 18,000 public servants work for the Crown in various capacities as public officials and civil servants. A further 6,000 or so work in the statutory corporations and related bodies also in terms of the implementation of the program and policies of the Government. Without those public officials, Sir, it would be impossible for the political party which happens to constitute the government of the day to keep its promises to the people of Barbados and to ensure that there is appropriate provision made for the various services and the various goods which are a requirement of modern day government. No one queries, Sir, that those public officials should be paid in accordance with the resources determined to be available to the government of the day. Those 18,000 public officials were granted increases in salaries by this Honourable Chamber last year and they took effect from April 1st, 1990. In addition to that, Sir, those public officers were also granted a regrading of salaries as had been promised by this Government.
10.25 a.m.

There are other public servants who work in the interest of the people of this country and who either through work in this Chamber as Members of Parliament, or as Members of the Government, whether as Parliamentary Secretaries, or as Ministers, who also devote a considerable amount of their time to public service, albeit in a political capacity. We have two categories of workers, at least, both categories working as public servants and both categories devoting their time, energy and talents to public service.

There are also officials of this House who serve the public interest through their dedicated service to the interest of Parliament itself which is given the responsibility for framing and making the laws of this country, indeed, Sir, for carrying out the very onerous responsibility of being the guardians of aid and supplies in the service of the Crown. It is these public officials who have not been granted so far any increase in salaries. They have not been granted any regrading of salaries as the 18 000 other public servants have been granted.

I think, Sir, no one would query that these public officers deserve an increase just as the 18 000 plus 6 000 other public officials deserve their increase in salaries. I am not going to spend too much time trying to build up a justification of that. The workman, we are told, Sir, is worthy of his hire. Twenty-four thousand public officers have been granted their increases. It remains now for the remainder of us who work in the public service to be granted their increase as well.

I believe, Sir, like anyone else, that if sacrifices are to be made in this country sacrifices must be made by all of us. All of us make sacrifices. In this particular Resolution, Sir, there is no provision for any pay going back to April 1, 1990 as was the case in the regrading of the other public officers. In this case too, Sir, I think one factor should be borne in mind. I do not think that there is anyone who would seriously challenge the position that the head of an administration, the head of a business, the head of an organisation, should be paid more than the officers who are responsible to him. As the saying goes, the boss in our system is entitled and merits a higher pay than the officers who work with that boss. These are all principles which are accepted and which, I submit, are acceptable.

The public servant who is responsible for the administration of a Government Ministry is the Permanent Secretary. The Minister is head of the administration of that Ministry. The principle underlying the increased remuneration and allowances is that there should be an increment or a number of increments for the Minister as political head of the Ministry at a level some 3% higher than the salary of the Permanent Secretary. We have built up from there. Just as the Permanent Secretary has a salary that is incrementally higher, or there is a differential between the Permanent Secretary and the Deputy Permanent Secretary, and between the Deputy Permanent Secretary and the other officers in their various gradations, so too there is a differential between the Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and the Prime Minister. It has all been studied very carefully, Sir.
10.35 a.m.

The Minister in these new arrangements will be put at a level sum of 75% of the Prime Minister's salary. The Deputy Prime Minister at 85% of the Prime Minister's salary. The Parliamentary Secretary will be at a level of

70% of the Minister's salary. The Speaker of the House will be at 85% of the Minister's salary. And the Leader of the Opposition will be at 85% of the Minister's salary. The Chairman of Committees is 75% of the Speaker's salary. The salaries of the Deputy Speaker, President of the Senate and other Parliamentarians will continue to be increased by the percentage granted to similar levels in the Public Service.

We are operating also, Sir, on the principle that the practice should be continued to accord Ministers and other Parliamentarians a review of pay and allowances at the same time and at the percentage levels approved for public officers and employees.

Basically, Sir, this is what is before us. As I indicated there are no outstanding principles to be determined. Perhaps there may be some queries as to the methodology of approaching these matters but I do not expect that there would be any great divide on this matter in this Chamber. I myself staked out my position long ago on the question of salaries and remuneration for the holders of political office so there is no point going over these particular matters.

The cost of these proposals, Sir, which will take effect from April 1, 1991, that is the proposed increases in salaries and related matters for Ministers and Parliamentarians is approximately $2.1 million per annum.

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

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the Right Honourable Prime Minister said that he staked out his position on this matter a long time ago. I believe that a record of his contribution in the House of Assembly would corroborate that statement.

What, however, he did not say is that his Party's position on this matter was staked out a long time ago. Because a review of the attitude of the Democratic Labour Party to Parliamentary and Ministerial salaries has shown a twisting of the principles involved in this exercise.

I well recall during my 20 years in this House listening to all sorts of manoeuvrings on the part of the Democratic Labour Party when it came to remunerating Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Members of Parliament for their work and contribution in public office. In fact, the most recent manoeuvring that I recall was at the end of the last General Election but one, the 1986 General Election. At the beginning of the Session in 1986 the then Right Honourable Member leading the Democratic Labour Party Government made the public believe, in those days, that the Barbados Labour Party's Ministers were so rapacious that they were raping the Treasury and that they were a set of men venal in their attitude, interested only in filthy lucre, a mercenary group of people in their approach to the Treasury. Indeed the Democratic Labour Party came in as the arch angels of change riding on chariots of fire, clean in all respects. They were going to set the outstanding example to the country and were going to forego any increase whatsoever; they would give up part of their salary. They gave up part of their salary. As a matter of fact, Sir, you will remember it was not long after they had been in office that the gentlemen concerned felt the penurious touch of affairs and they came for what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, as he then was, described as a "technical adjustment" at that time. We really are accustomed to the Democratic Labour Party when it is approaching these matters not putting principle. I am at pains to make the distinction because it is a fact that the Prime Minister has always, as a matter of principle, expressed the view that Members of Parliament should be properly rewarded, and particularly people in ministerial office. His Party has now accepted the principle which we enunciated and for which we were castigated in this House that a review of pay and allowances for Parliamentarians should be done at the same time and at the same level as approved for the Public Service and should be linked, and that the allowances that we had voted for ourselves at the time were such that they had a relativity between the various offices, responsibilities and duties.

I well recall a former Member of this House, a former Member for St. Lucy writing the most vitriolic articles about the Barbados Labour Party's position and stance on this matter.

Sir, I do not know how much longer I will remain in public life, whether another 20 years or not, but I will hazard a guess that you will see more twistings and turnings on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party on this matter. When the Right Honourable Member is no longer at its helm, you will see a lot of that because they have never been able, until now, to separate matters that should genuinely be non-partisan in many respects from those which should be matters of genuine political differences. What really has often informed their attitudes on these matters was political expediency.
10.45 a.m.

I really wish that I could completely excuse the Government on this occasion from that accusation, but I honestly cannot. The civil servant increases that took place were given last year, just prior to the Right Honourable Member making up his mind as to when to go to the country.

The Right Honourable Member was perhaps looking at the politics of the situation, and I am sure that what inspired him then was the pure politics of the situation, and that is one of the reasons why he cannot get 100% from this

side on a measure such as this, because we honestly believe that if Government had dealt with all of the matters at the time, then they would show that they have the strength of their conviction. However, as I said, a little bit of politics creeps into these matters. The Government had to wait to see what would be the outcome of the elections before they could have the courage to come and say to the country what the Right Honourable Member has just said. This is a fact. To say what the Right Honourable Member has just said, it has taken them that time in order to come. I wonder what has become of the chariots of fire of '86 on riding into this House, aren't the same circumstances present any longer? I must ask the Honourable Members on the other side. Aren't we cutting and contriving again? Isn't there the same case for sending an example to the country that the Democratic Labour Party thought it had to send in 1986? I really must ask the Government that, Sir.

I said, Sir, I am glad to see the principle is now accepted by the Democratic Labour Party and we must therefore continue to emphasise that that principle is one for which we were castigated and I am saying, Sir, that I am surprised that the Government had to play politics on this measure at the end of the last session and because of that it will not get the support of the Opposition on it. Sir, the Honourable junior Minister of Finance as he is wont to do *sotto voce* while sitting down, Sir, across the House, is making reference to a former Minister of Finance and of course trying to divert me in this House by blaming everything on a former Minister of Finance of the Democratic Labour Party Government, but where I differ from the Democratic Labour Party Government is that I accept the principle of collective responsibility and that therefore anything that was done when the former Member of St. Michael South Central was a member of this House, anything that was done then, was done in the name of the Democratic Labour Party and not in the name of that Honourable Member alone, Sir.

So that Sir, I want to make the position absolutely clear, so far as the principle is concerned, of linking Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, as well as Parliamentarians pay to that of the Civil Service, that the Government has now accepted the Barbados Labour Party position. It has taken them many years to reach that stage. But the manner in which they have implemented that principle clearly satisfies us on this side that they did not face the principle square on but they had to play a little politics still in the last resort. And thirdly I want to restate the point: I consider that in the circumstances, if they are being consistent, that they would do exactly what they did in 1986. Or have things changed so much for them in so short a time, Sir?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I want from the outset to make a position which I have taken and have already indicated to my Party that I am not voting for this measure. I am not voting for it. I am going to give some reasons why. At this time I am voting against it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to remind Honourable Members that the sensitivity of the microphones are of such that when an Honourable Member is speaking, even a low tone of voice is likely to disturb the Chamber and I am therefore asking Honourable Members to desist from making the noises that loud, to distract any Member from speaking.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been told not so long ago by the Right Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, to cut and contrive. The credit squeeze, Mr. Speaker, is still on and things are tight in this community of ours.

At a time when money is hard to come by, when people can hardly get loans, for personal or domestic use and for mortgages, I feel that I should empathise or sympathise with those persons. The timing of this measure is something that bothers me. Not two months after a general election, a measure like this comes before this Honourable Chamber. The message abroad is... The Honourable Members from that side, I used to hear them say their ears were near to the ground, they were in touch with the average man in the street. Well let me tell them, if, because they have now been elevated to ministerial position and they are not in touch with people, I want them to understand that the public out there with whom I have been in touch, have said that they are concerned about salaries upping, while people out there can't get work and can't get money.

I would like to know if Members could feel comfortable, I mean on that side, coming in here just immediately after an election and passing measures for increase in salaries. I am not saying that Parliamentarians are not entitled to an increase. I am taking issue with the timing of this measure.

At the same time the Right Honourable Prime Minister has reminded us about the increases on the regrading exercise carried out last year in respect of the Civil Service. I want to make this abundantly clear, I also hold the view that persons at the very bottom rung of the ladder, the watchmen and the maids were disadvantaged and they did not get enough. If the Honourable Member from that side does not understand what is meant by the words, they did not get enough and I feel that they were entitled to a larger increase and the regrading exercise did not provide for that. Therefore I am in sympathy with them and if the Government, as the Barbados Labour Party has promised in its Manifesto to look at or to revise that regrading exercise with a view to giving those people increased salaries or wages, if the Government can give that undertaking, then it will have my support. As I said, my

case is simple, until I have the assurance that those persons at the bottom rung of the ladder are taken care of, I cannot, I will not, give my support. I am voting against it as I said before.
10.55 a.m.

Now I have heard Members talk about hypocrisy on this matter. There is no hypocrisy here involved. I am not going to say to Honourable Members on that side or mention anything about hypocrisy, but I want to remind them. I would not say that Mr. Speaker. Oh, no! What I want to remind some of those Honourable Members who were Members of this Honourable Chamber at the time when the Barbados Labour Party introduced salary increases of is that they were critical of the Government. I remember the then Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party, the late Errol Barrow, said that he was not taking it and he advised his colleagues to give the money to charity. I have not heard about any charitable organization that the Honourable Members donated their salaries to.

Now I am saying that you have to be consistent. If you want to take these measures out of the political domain, then you are going to have to set some examples. I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, if we were on that side, that that side would have supported this measure. One thing I can say for the Right Honourable Prime Minister is that he is consistent. I can say that for him because he has always supported measures as far as increases for Parliamentarians are concerned and his stance has always been a consistent one. But I cannot say this for other Honourable Members on that side especially those who were in here before.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I never heard that you voted for it yet. What I am saying is that I do agree that it is time that we remove the politics from these increases of salaries for Parliamentarians. It is not all going well for the country. While I do agree that a workman is worthy of his hire, there is something called "timing" or the relevance of a situation. This is a serious matter. I want the Honourable Members to understand this, Mr. Speaker. I have already indicated that I know whatever the Opposition does or says today, this is still going to be passed. I know that you have the numbers, but the other side will have to pass this measure on their own steam and with their own support.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: What I am going to say is that it is time that the public understand that Parliamentarians deserve a proper salary so as to prevent them from delving or getting into...

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I do agree. As I said, I support the whole theory about a workman is worthy of his hire. That is why I take issue with some people whether they are really working for their money. That is it. I will support the Prime Minister on his salary and some other Honourable Members. But I know that with some of his colleagues out there I am beginning to wonder like the public. As they have said to me only yesterday, "Do they really worth $8 000 or so a month?" They cannot see it. They have not been working. They are not producing. I think that the Right Honourable Prime Minister should have a sort of graduated scheme whereby some of them who do not work...

You see I want to see that. It is not fair even to some of their colleagues out there and they know what I am saying. Some of them have a half-day Ministry, no Ministry at all and have a Permanent Secretary but say they are the Minister for the same pay. That is what I am talking about – equal work for equal pay. That is what I am talking about.

So do not expect my support. I would have liked to have seen – and I am serious about this – the people at the bottom of the ladder looked after. Have a look, Mr. Prime Minister. It is not too late for you to have a review. I know that you will give some consideration to those persons now. I think that it is time that we really understand what is going on. There are people out there who come to some of us. They want a few dollars to help. They cannot make it. Jobs are hard to come by. I am not saying that you can create miracles. I am not saying that the Government can do this. But please understand that it is not for us to sit down in here and think that we are passing salaries that all is well in this country. I am not coming home until I make this point abundantly clear to Honourable Members on that side. You see it is all right for us to get up in here and talk. All of us are going to be met with the sort of criticism that you went in there and looked after yourself. Some of them know that this is not the case. Let us once and for all understand what is going on. Do not let us close an eye to it. We are going to hear all sorts of things about the Opposition failing to do but yet they are going to draw.

The late Errol Barrow was never in here when it was being passed. He got up and talked and walked out, but he drew. If I followed him, I would be in good company too. At one stage, he was drawing two salaries, a salary and a pension. But I do not think that that is fair.

I am saying that the timing is wrong. I would have preferred that this could have been done last session, not two months later. We have been told on this side that you just have gone in there and you are looking to vote yourselves salaries. You are driving a new car. The Honourable Members on that side will give the impression – I know the Honourable Member for St. John will. He is good at creating an impression – that we forced this measure. They are not going to say that this was a matter

brought by the Government. I know that. While I agree with the principle that Parliamentarians should be adequately paid so as to avoid some of the things like corruption charges and so forth that are levied against them, I do not like it. I have heard some charges levied against some Ministers in the present Administration. I do not like to hear them. I do not even give an ear to those kinds of allegations. It is not fair and here is an opportunity today for us to face up to this particular question and let Barbadians know the true position surrounding salaries for Parliamentarians.

It is true, as the Honourable Prime Minister said that there was a linkage. The BLP Administration thought about removing the politics from salaries and hence a system was introduced whereby we linked the salaries to the civil servants. But if the Honourable Members are not aware of what is being said...

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Look, during the election campaign, Mr. Speaker, it was said in the public and I want to remind them what was said if they were not aware of it. People were saying that the reason for reclassification or regrading is to carry up the top, the Permanent Secretaries and people like that to the top of the ladder so that the Minister's salary will automatically follow, and that they were going into retirement in any case and they would have a good pension and gratuity to carry home. That is what was said.
11.05 a.m.

It is not what I am saying today, it is what was said out there. The Honourable Members knew that and that is why I have every suspicion that is why this measure was not brought before now.

I have already stated I am voting against it, no abstention, I am voting "NO" on this particular measure.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would have come back into this House to hear Parliamentarians discussed in this vein, salary wise. I think it was the Member for St. Thomas who once said that we are cheapening ourselves. The elections have passed two months ago, so it is pointless coming in here with an election speech hoping we will vote for you five years from now. The people have spoken. All the points which were raised just now would have been raised, so it is pointless coming here two months after deciding that the people will speak five years from now.

The raises for the civil servants must have cost us something like $30 million, and the Member is quibbling about approximately $30,000 all told. I am getting $240 a week more, $720 a month more. That is what you are quarrelling about. The Permanent Secretary in my Ministry was getting more money than me for about five or six years.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not permitting any shouting.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am not worried about that...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just hold on one minute. We cannot debate in circumstances where we cannot hear each other. Proceed.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, the Permanent Secretary in my Ministry was getting more money for me for about five years. There is no place in Barbados where the boss gets less than an employee and I do not see why it should happen in Government.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I am going to talk about myself. They will not tell you, but Ministers do not get vacation. I have had about ten days in five years, because in Barbados, or in any small country, the fact is that any time you hold a Ministry, invariably you are holding what would be tantamount to four or five Ministries in a big country. Therefore you do not have the time to get vacation. Even if you go overseas and decide, while you are there, to take four or five days, if you are conscionable, you visit places of interest connected with your Ministry. We, as Ministers, work seven days a week, 15 or 16 hours a day. Those are the facts. Our life span is very short. These are the facts we have to deal with. Some of them over there will tell you that when they lost the Government it was the best thing to happen to them, they could not cope for another five years. Some were not working, so therefore they could not care less.

I do not understand what this argument is about. Tell me of anybody in Bridgetown of managerial status who does not get twice as much as a Minister gets. There are beach vendors who get U.S. $600 a day for four or five hours. The women who sell fish in Baxters Road earn $600 a night for four hours. They do not pay tax or national insurance. We have to be realistic.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I am not joking about it. Some of you might be joking, but I am not joking. Today we are 3% above a Permanent Secretary. I am not quite sure what we are talking about. The timing? The time is never right. It is only when you are a fool the time is not right. We have to be careful what sort of messages we send. The time has come when we have to put our heads together and

decide where we are going. The risk is very high. There are some people who leave their professions, come in here for ten years, then lose a seat or lose a Ministry and have to go and start from scratch. The older you get, the more difficult it is to start up a profession again. Then you get a pension based on ten years before that. Let us be realistic. We are not joking around about anything.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt whatsoever in supporting this measure and I hope that Members of this Chamber will use their good sense, not sensationalism or emotion, in order to achieve what we want.

With those few remarks, I want to thank you, Sir.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Member for St. James South has spoken with a high measure of candour. I believe he has expressed his mind and his emotion the way he thought best. What we on this side would have wanted was that the same candour that informed the speech of the Honourable Member for St. James should have informed the approach of that side on this whole question.

It is an established principle that the moment when the salaries of civil servants are increased Parliamentarians automatically get an increase reflective of the increases the civil servants have got. What we on this side are saying is that the Honourable Members on that side did not display the type of courage that Barbadians have come to expect of politicians, and for fear of the possible consequences of an election, when they ought to have increased those salaries in 1990, they now wait until after an election and increased them. This is one of the difficulties which we over here have.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: We on this side recognise that the office of Prime Minister is burdensome, the office of Minister carries heavy responsibilities and that the expectations of the people in Barbados are indeed great, as the people expect a particular level of performance from all Parliamentarians. What we are saying is that in the interest of a measure of political candour we are exposing ourselves to a situation where those who know would not try to deny Parliamentarians an increase. We are looking at the method by which the Government have brought the thing and we disagree with it.

The Honourable Member for St. James South is by no means inaccurate when he suggests that the strain on a Parliamentarian is great, but I am reminded that very often the Members on that side permit a measure of strategy, political expediency, to govern their approach to salary increases.
11.15 a.m.

Do not forget, Sir, the total decrease that they voted for in 1986 in a situation where they had handed out to the public that Parliamentarians were overpaid, that Government Ministers were overpaid and as a token measure shortly after the 1986 election, the Democratic Labour Party decreased parliamentarian salaries and when shortly after, the former Member for St. John, the late E. W. Barrow, died, then they came on that side and increased them over and above what they were before.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House and is stating an untruth. The Honourable Member may be suffering from the fact that he is new, but if he is going to make statements they have to be true...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have ruled already. I am not accepting any introductions as lengthy as to preclude the reason for standing for a point of order. The rule simply says: State your point of order for my decision. I am not accepting any preamble or whatever.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member stated that the Democratic Labour Party Government made a token reduction and subsequently came back and approved over and above. The facts are that it was a five percent reduction which is still inherent in what is going on now. It was never restored.

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I fear, Sir, that the Honourable Member has not shed any further light on this matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want Honourable Members, whether new or old, and Honourable Members who should know better by their experience, not to create the kind of disturbance that we get. Shouting across is not mannerly. It is discourteous. It is bad for people who hear these debates. I am asking Honourable Members to continue in a proper vein.

It has been drawn to my attention that asides are also being published. I want to issue a warning to members of the Press. Asides are not part of the official debate. It is not recorded and no one has any right to report them.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, we, in Barbados, always see whenever salaries of Parliamentarians are increased some public reaction and one reason why

there has been this public reaction, Sir, is that some segments within the community feel uncomfortable that Parliamentarians should be in a position to vote their own increases. There is a body of opinion at large in the community, Sir, that feels that where a person is a servant and then can abrogate to himself the right of master and turn around and dictate the level of his salary that all sorts of unfortunate episodes should flow and perhaps, Sir, the time has come when we as a parliament may very well as Parliamentarians have to look at some commission or some committee which will give evidence on our office to see if a better system can be worked out.

Before I close, Sir, we on this side, are reiterating that we are most unhappy with the timing of this particular thing. Two months after an election, we leave a lot of people out there to say:"The election has come. Now that it is out of the way. Look what they have done." For this reason, we on this side find it impossible to go along with the Government. Thank you very much.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have listened to the two Honourable Members who have spoken from the other side and...

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: There were three. Well, that was the only sensible speech over there, to be honest. So the three Honourable Members, Mr. Speaker, but I was speaking about the last two who spoke, apart from the first statement by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. His entire speech was a justification for the increase in salaries. Very consistent with how he operates anyhow.

Mr. Speaker, there was one point that was made by that Honourable Member for St. Michael South East which was very interesting because he started by saying that there is a credit squeeze on and that people at the bottom don't have any money and therefore it was not right for Parliamentarians to give themselves or to get increases. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that any of us have forgotten that for 7 years, the past administration, the Barbados Labour Party had on a credit squeeze and every two years or so, they came to increase parliamentarian salaries. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with that. I am saying that for a Member out there to say that there is a credit squeeze on now and therefore there is no justification for you to increase yours, he has to remember that under the Barbados Labour Party a credit squeeze was on for seven years. There was credit control, credit squeeze whatever you want to call it. The people could not get money. They could not get fridges or anything. The point I am making is that you cannot make that statement forgetting that they increased the salaries as well. The other point, Mr. Speaker, is that the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party made out a case for the justification of the stand taken by his Administration at that time. Surprisingly, the Honourable Member got up and tried to make out a case for not justifying it, so I do not understand where they are coming from. It is either a policy of the administration over there that it seems justified that every two years when the civil servants' salaries are increased that Ministers and Parliamentarians' salaries should be increased as well or it is not a policy of the Barbados Labour Party. You cannot have it both ways.

The Honourable Member for St. James North who just spoke said it was an established principle that increases for Parliamentarians should take place at the same time as increases for the civil servants. I just want to remind him that it was not an established principle. It was a principle that was followed by the late Tom Adams and you can't call that established; whether it was right or wrong, is besides the point. It was a principle that the late Honourable Tom Adams brought in. He felt that that was the right way.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, as well, that you keep hearing from Honourable Members that the people out there are concerned about Parliamentarians being able to set their own salaries. What happens with the directors in Bridgetown and other places? You see, Parliamentarians keep selling themselves short. The point I am trying to make is that we cannot encourage people to believe that Parliamentarians are a bunch of dishonest people and therefore other people in Bridgetown can set their own salaries but Parliamentarians can't do it.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: It's a bit too noisy.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The point I am trying to make is that we cannot encourage people.
11.25 a.m.

We have to let people know that we are people just like them just like the business people in Bridgetown or anywhere. We have to take it that Parliamentarians are honest people and would not give themselves exorbitant salaries.

The whole point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is this. If Parliamentarians were given salaries of a certain level, there may come a time when they may not have to increase their salaries every two years because if you are getting a certain salary where there is a differential between yourself and the person who is next to you, say, the Permanent Secretary, it may not be necessary then to give yourself an increase each time he gets an increase. Until we have reached that time the policy that you were speaking about may be the best policy to follow. It is a policy as stated by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that this Administration seems to be taking on at this time and that we will follow for the time being and until any other system...

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: It is true. It is better if you do it that way as the Honourable Member for St. George North said because for National Insurance purposes, you change up everything at the same time instead of changing some now and changing some another time.

There is one other point I would like to say about the speech of the Honourable Member for St. James North. He was saying that we did not have the courage to increase the salaries when the civil servants salaries were increased because an election was coming up and it was political maneuvering. The fundamental thing we have to understand is the fact that we did not increase our salaries when the civil servants salaries were increased. That has saved the country some money.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: It is a fact. Mr. Speaker, suppose all of us were thrown out what would have happened? We are not giving ourselves any back pay to last April. The point that we did not increase it then has actually saved the country some money. I do not understand how some people are going down that road, that is because of politics.

All decisions that are being made, one has to look at all the parameters and all the positions that you have to take into account before you can make decisions. I just thought I would mention those points. I am supporting this measure wholeheartedly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, in my 10 years and now more in this Parliament, it has always been at its worst when it comes to the debate on parliamentary increases. The debate has been characterised by a short-term political advantage on the part of some members, large scale hypocrisy, a lot of inconsistency and even contradictions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is hypocrisy in relation to the Members here?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Not the present. I was going back. I seem to remember that the Right Honourable Prime Minister has not always been in that position but he has always insisted on the whip being off, as it were, and he has taken a consistent position in relation to this matter. He was bound to speak with great restraint and timidity today because as much as he is aware of his own position, he is equally aware of the heavy inconsistency on the part of his own party and their sorry record in relation to these matters. Now, I think we have had opportunities in the past to arrive at a formula with which we could all have lived. I think we need to take the opportunity to return to some mechanism as a result of what we are witnessing today which can in the future be avoided. I think there are issues of principle which we have to identify and address.

The first is should Parliamentarians determine their own increase? I think we must agree, Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat invidious to have to determine how much increase you should get. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South says that directors do it for themselves and no one denies that. Even though everyone does not agree that it is, perhaps, invidious, I think a lot of us can agree that it is. To the extent that we have the last word on virtually everything in the country, it might very well be that for the future we will have to have the last word in relation to this matter. There is no other way.

An attempt was made to set up an independent review tribunal here headed by Nicholls. In the end, whether that committee was informed by jealousy or by pure massive innocence, they gave a report which did no credit to themselves or to us. The Nicholls Committee really thought that the only time Parliamentarians worked was when they came here. He recommended very strongly that we be given a *per diem* allowance, only be paid when we came here. Such a colossal misunderstanding of the role and purpose of a Member of Parliament! That attempt at an independent tribunal really failed. I do not think it would make any sense returning to that approach. What I am proposing hereafter is that we really constitute ourselves into a joint committee and that salaries in future for Parliamentarians be the result of a recommendation of a joint committee of Parliament.

The second issue of principle is this, Mr. Speaker: Should there be a linkage between the public servant and Parliamentarians? The late Tom Adams insisted on the linkage between the Cabinet Members and the top civil servants, the Permanent Secretaries. We went along with that in this country for 10 years, perhaps, a little more. I have always taken the view, however, that it is wrong for the civil servants to believe or for the country to be made to believe that a Minister of Government is on the same level and should be rewarded at the same level. The differential should be in favour of the Cabinet Minister. It represents his position, reflects his position as the one who is in charge and is finally responsible to the country and answerable to the country. The idea, therefore, that there should be a linkage between the top civil servants and the Cabinet Minister is, in my view, wrong.
11.35 a.m.

I do not agree with any continuation of the linkage principle, except that when there was a departure from the linkage, a departure which the Honourable Member for St. James South seems to be complaining of, he must remember that that departure was done for short-term political advantage. That must be made clear.

But it must not be forgotten, Mr. Speaker, that the backbencher never enjoyed that linkage. Because even though the Cabinet member's salary was set in relation to the top Permanent Secretary because I think they have two categories in them PSA, PSB – PS1, PS2, there has never been any determination of where the ordinary Member of Parliament stands in relation to the civil servants. We have never decided whether he is at the level of the head of security or Chief Executive Officer or where.

I think that Parliament in future must determine what is the adequate level of compensation for an ordinary Member of Parliament. The idea, for example, Mr. Speaker, just to elaborate on that, that the Personal Aide to the Prime Minister should get now almost as much as a Minister and certainly much more than an ordinary Member of Parliament, I think is thoroughly wrong. But that is only by way of illustrating that we have never really given any serious thought as to what is an adequate level of compensation and remuneration for an ordinary Member of Parliament.

The other question that arises is this. What is an appropriate package of perquisites for the office of Minister and the office of Member of Parliament? One of the things that this joint committee will have to determine is what happens in other jurisdictions. I was recently a guest of my good friend the Minister of Transport and Public Utilities in Jamaica and I had the opportunity to discuss with him what happens in that jurisdiction. You would be surprised, Mr. Speaker, to learn that a Minister in Jamaica gets a house, a car, a chauffeur, a guard; in addition to that a level of furniture they are apt to get even though that has given rise to tremendous scandals in Jamaica at this time. In addition they are given 3, 4 aides in their Ministry not to mention a constituency allowance. They are not alone.

In other jurisdictions in the Caribbean, in St. Lucia, in Trinidad and Tobago and I am told in several other Caribbean countries the package of prerequisites happens to be much higher, much bigger than what we enjoy here in Barbados.

I need to make one or two other additional points. The Honourable Member for St. James South made mention of the fact that Ministers do not get vacation. That is very unfortunate but it was also my experience. It really arises from the fact that we as Parliamentarians use Ministers in a very anomalous position. You get no holidays with pay. You do not get it because if you were to go on holiday and the Prime Minister asks someone to act, your salary comes to an end. You do not get any holidays with pay. That is one of the anomalies which we have to straighten out. The other anomaly which we have to straighten out is that Cabinet Members and Parliamentarians do not qualify for Unemployment Benefit, although you contribute. As self-employed persons you contribute but the regulations exclude you from benefitting. That is a very serious anomaly. A lot found after the 1986 election that they needed some time to adjust not only to repair their finances but to adjust to the work place and to find employment. When they thought that they could go to the National Insurance to get unemployment for which they had paid, they found that the regulations excluded Parliamentarians. The regulations specifically exclude Parliamentarians.

The point that I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a considerable number of anomalies which need to be ironed out. The matter deserves some study and that supports the case which I am trying to make for the establishment of a joint committee that would look at all of these matters and that would, hopefully, take away from these occasions the acrimony, the contradictions and the emptiness which seem to characterize these debates.

I am really hoping that we will move with despatch to ensure that that committee is established and that we get to work at a soon date in addressing the many points of principle and the many anomalies to which I have referred.

Thank you.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I was not really minded to speak on this resolution until the Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke, even though I was to some extent quite concerned by the line taken by the Member for St. Michael South East and the Member for St. James North. Concerned not because of any criticism of the fact that we are increasing or we are about to increase salaries for Members of Parliament but certainly because in my view that trend of discussion gives rise in the public domain for persons out there to be critical of Parliamentarians at a level at which they need to have greater understanding of what the office of Member of Parliament means.

I think that the Member for St. Joseph, to a large extent, puts it in proper perspective because when you go out there – especially after the media of this country highlights what seems to be the whopping increases that Members of Parliament are supposed to be getting – and people start being critical of Members of Parliament as to what kind of remuneration they are going to be getting and what they are going to be doing with the money and all of this kind of foolishness...

I believe that the time has come when Members of Parliament should recognize the importance of the office in carrying out the business of the people of this country and therefore they should not assist stupid idle talk in the public domain in relation to the importance of the facility of Parliament.

I said that I did not intend to make any contribution but then I want to support the line that has been taken by the Member for St. Joseph that we have to look at finding

some means of arriving at a proper method in which all parties in Parliament and persons in the public domain would recognize that a workman is worthy of his hire and if they expect a high quality of service from the people that they have elected as representatives then they must be prepared to see it in that light.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on the facts of the resolution. I am not going to provide grist for anybody's mill. I am going to state very clearly what my views are.
11.45 a.m.

I would therefore like to make it lucidly clear, Sir, that I am in agreement with the increases for all Parliamentarians. Indeed I feel that Parliamentarians should be well paid, whether they be Ministers or back-benchers. I also wish to say, Sir, that I do not mind any of them who are qualified, setting the Parliamentarians and Ministers salaries, as long as they look at the job description, as long as they see the work load, and they look at the comparisons of people working around, Sir, and they set the salaries. No problem with me.

I had the dubious distinction, Sir, when I left school, of working in Cable and Wireless. It was about three or four years after black people could work there and so, Sir, the salaries were okay, $88 a month for an 18 year old was quite good, because the people who taught you at Combermere were making $55 and the civil servants were making $48, so it was pretty good.

After that, Sir, having ventured into the cricketing world, I also had the distinction of working for one pound a day for six months, and grossly underpaid, not paid commensurate with your ability at all. And so, Sir, even when I went into personnel management it was at a time when you had the oil crisis and the directors and the officials were asked to hold strain until later on.

Now, Sir, I am saying that I believe that the Ministers should be properly paid. I have to say so, because I honestly believe that is true. I am not really interested in what went before, I was not involved in any of the arguments. I thought it was clear, that Ministers should be well paid. In 1986 the Ministers salaries were decreased by five per cent. Whether voluntary or otherwise, I say it was decreased by five per cent. If you are talking about cutting and contriving, Sir, we have done so for five years and therefore, Sir, I feel the time has come, that we should all cut and contrive, but there is, Sir, a time in the affairs of men, Sir, where you could cut and contrive and the others might not be knowing that you are cutting and contriving. It does not seem to me that people recognise that we have been cutting and contriving for the last five years, Sir, and so, I think I should set the record straight and let us get the money that we deserve. That is the way I feel about it, Sir. I have not consulted with anybody on it, I am just telling you how I feel and that is the position.

I also wish to say, Sir, that the Democratic Labour Party has a formula, if the Opposition does not agree with the formula, they are quite entitled to disagree with it. I like to be fair. If the Opposition is saying that they do not like the methodology, they do not like the timing, fair enough, if that is their feeling. My feeling, Sir, is that we should not try, Sir, to spit in the soup, because we have all got to drink it. That is a fact, and therefore I am warning you that what you say now, you could be held up to it, Sir, ten years from now.

This formula, Sir, is one that we are committed to, and any administration, Sir, in ten years time, twenty years time, or whenever, they are quite entitled to do it their way. I feel, Sir, that a Minister, if he convenes a meeting with other people, take for instance, the Minister of Tourism, if the Minister of Tourism convenes a meeting with the leading hotel managers in Barbados, he will find himself, Sir, sitting down with people who earn, twice as much, three times as much, four times as much and five times as much. If he sits down with the sous chef he will find himself with people who are earning three or four times as much as he and he has to adjudicate in these matters where people are coming to say, yes sir, no sir, may I do this sir, and all of that.

I am only saying that if you look at the Government-owned hotels, for instance, at Heywoods you will find that a resident manager two years ago was working for $96,000 and by the fact that he is resident manager means that he is living there. He does not have to look for anywhere to live, Sir. The fact that he is resident Manager, means that he is eating there, he does not have to look for anything to eat, Sir. I am not devaluing these people to value myself, all I am saying, Sir, is this, that I feel that Ministers of Government should be well paid.

We have read, Sir, what has happened recently in Trinidad. Ministers are given houses, the lot. We have read Sir, what has happened in Jamaica, we have gone further afield and we have often heard about Ministers, Sir, in some developed countries. I can only say, Sir, that I believe that we have to be very honest and any political rhetoric, as I saw the other day when the then Leader of the Opposition, said that he does not need any pension, not an able bodied man. The member of the City said that he is drawing it already. Sir, we have to look at the stark reality of the situation.

Miss. B. A. MILLER: I have not yet spoken.

Mr. SPEAKER: You see, the problem has always been that I am not so sure when people are referring to speeches made outside of Parliament, or in Parliament, we

have had this problem all the time when people make speeches and then come to Parliament and repeat them. What the Honourable Member could do, is if you object to the statement as being untrue, I will listen to the point and I will ask the Honourable Member not to repeat it, or probably have it taken from the record.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, bearing in mind that you said that asides are not reported and that you have seen them in the Press I can concede then that anyone that says anything in an aside, I should not perhaps take it up, but Sir, this has happened from time immemorial, where one reacted to an aside, but Sir, if the Honourable Member would not like to be quoted as having said so, let me make it very clear, Sir, I Wesley Winfield Hall, say so, that I heard her say so. So that is the position. I have read it in the Press that able bodied people should not get pension, Sir. We will get to that another time Sir. It has been murmured in here, Sir, today. I have heard murmurs that he has been for it. I am saying that type of political rhetoric – where it is good for political platforms, and where it is good for the Press, Sir – when you look at the stark reality of the situation, Sir, is not really fair game. I must say this to you, Sir, and to all Honourable Members, and to anyone under the sound of my voice, that I did not put a gun at anyone's head, no one put a gun at my head to become a politician. I voluntarily decided to do so, Sir, I wanted to serve faithfully. Conversely, I did not put a gun at the head of the former Prime Minister, nor the present Prime Minister to become a Minister. I did not Sir. It was their prerogative to choose as they wish, and they did choose, and, Sir, all I can say is, that having chosen, I believe the people who have been chosen have the right to determine or to say, at least, what is their position on the question of salaries.
11.55 a.m.

I, therefore, feel that we have to look at other countries. For instance, in Australia we find that Parliamentarians are given two offices by the Government. They are given an office in their constituency and they are given an office in the city. Sir, one has to look at what obtains in England and other countries. I agree with the speaker who alluded to the fact that sometimes we cut ourselves short in Barbados, indeed the Caribbean, when we feel that we have to be excused to discuss our own salaries. Sir, I do not feel so. As Ministers, we have to pay our own National Insurance. We are self employed. Sir, this is something that many people do not know. I think that this should be brought out into the open and I agree with the Opposition when they said that perhaps a Joint Committee should be set up whereby all and sundry can participate and give their views.

I do not think it is right, Sir, for Parliamentarians to jump on one side when it is politically expedient and then jump on another side. I am not going for that. It does not matter if it is the Opposition who has done it or the Government who has done it. I am saying, Sir, that Parliamentarians should be well paid. I believe that Ministers should be well paid. As the Prime Minister said in his speech, Sir, he has used as the criteria that the Ministers in Barbados will get 3% more than the Permanent Secretaries. Therefore, I have no quarrel whatsoever with the Permanent Secretaries salary. They are hard working public officers, Sir, and they deserve the money they get. I have a problem, however, with the salaries that the Ministers get, Sir. Therefore, I have risen to my feet to give support to this Resolution which says that the Ministers in this Government will receive 3% more than the Permanent Secretaries. No one is knocking the PS, Sir. What we are saying is that a Minister who is in charge of the policy and who is the boss of the Permanent Secretary should get more money to take home than the Permanent Secretary. I think that is fair. I think it is just and I have absolutely no difficulty to agree with this situation.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, Sir, I would just like to congratulate the Prime Minister on the very clear way that he has enunciated all of his plans in this Resolution. I can only say that I personally, Sir, believe the Ministers deserve the money they are getting and I have no difficulty whatsoever in aligning myself with this Resolution.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Today I heard the Honourable Member for St. James South calling my name, but I was walking to my seat. I believe it was to say that my position on remuneration for Parliamentarians is well known and well documented and I believe has been one that has been consistent and full of candour. I have spoken in here several times about hyprocrisy in some of these debates in the past, Sir, and I am glad that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has endorsed that.

I just want to say a few words today, Sir. I am not going to make any long speech on it. I do not think that anybody can agree that the salary of the Prime Minister's Personal Assistant should be twice as much as the salary for ordinary MPs. He has obvious duties to perform to ensure that the Prime Minister functions to maximum efficiency, but he does not have the kinds of responsibilities that ordinary MPs have. The time will come when we need to do something about the level of ordinary MPs and I am going to speak about ordinary MPs now, Sir. Our maximum in this Order is $30 252.00 a year from April 1st.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am illustrating the point that that maximum seems to be $30 252.00 a year – the basic salary. That happily puts us in the category of Z16–11. We are the equivalent of Foreman/Binder or Mechanic. The Member for the City would qualify to be a Hostess, Library Assistant I or Maintenance Supervisor II.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is all here. It just has Hostess. That is what it is. That is the closest point. Z16–11 goes from $25 331.68 to $29 477.68. That is where we are. I do not agree with the Honourable Member for St. Joseph talking about linkages. We used to talk at one time about relativities not linkages. But I am dealing with relativities. We are relative to Foreman/Binder and the Hostess, Hospital Supplies Officer, Immigration I and so on.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, they do not have to take any night air, no abuse, no demands on their time, or on their pockets, or on their family's time. If Members feel that this is not sad, then their sense of financial arrangements leaves much to be desired. I have talked in here already about how we get calls around half pass five on a morning to say that a dog is dead up by a light post and it is stinking up the place. You had better try and get up there. If you do not come, you are not going to get any votes. You might be in the biggest matter in Court when you get a message that a house has burned down. You got to run and get up there because the message came through that Mr. So and So from the NDP or the DLP is there before you. Try and get there. Then the whole of that day is taken up making arrangements for the rehabilitation of the distressed family.

Your Forman/Binder does not have those problems. The Mechanic nor the Library Assistant does not have this problem.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is terrible. You all had better try and see what you are relative to. We are Library Assistants.

Now Sir, in June 1986 Mr. Barrow said then that the practice of the DLP was of a joint consultative body. We have him reported at Page 25 of the debates of 1986. I believe that it has probably escaped the Government that that is what their former and founding member had said was their practice. I think the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has drawn a number of anomalies to the House's attention that merit the establishment of a committee.
12.05 p.m.

So as to preclude this kind of debate in the future, let us commit ourselves – unless you want somebody to bring a Private Member's Resolution, if you want a Private Member's Resolution we will do that – but we should have a committee established soon so that by the next time this exercise comes around we have a system in place that takes all of this out of the debate.

Now, Sir, an area that has always caused disquiet – and indeed an attempt was made towards the end of last year by the NDP to create an issue – is the question of pensions and entitlement to pensions. I think the NDP said you should not be able to draw a pension until 65. I do not know if anybody in there has qualified and has applied for a pension, but I will find out in the course of this week. The Accountant General must give me, as a Member of Parliament, the information if I ask him for it. I will ask him who are receiving pensions and who have applied for pensions.

The present basis for receiving pensions seems to merit a second look, Sir. It is not, as I understand it, based on length of service, so that you will find that the former Member for St. Michael East, Don Blackman, did not contribute as many years' service to public life as, for example, the Leader of the Opposition, but he will have got, and is probably receiving now, a pension far in excess of anything that the Leader of the Opposition, if he were to retire today, would receive.

The other thing is that these pensions are tied to your highest salary when you were serving. Certain Members on this side who were Ministers in the Government of 1976 to 1986 – excluding the former Prime Minister, now Member for Christ Church South, because of his salary as Prime Minister – would be getting a pension based on their 1986 ministerial salaries and it is conceivable that you could serve for a period of time when salaries for Ministers could have gone up substantially, taking into account inflation and so on, and when you retire, say in 1998, your pension is based on your 1986 salary. I think we need to look at that, because if you have been contributing then you should be able to get a pension based on what salary the office was carrying at the time you retired. That is something I think we need to look at.

As I say, Sir, if the Government is not going to do the committee, then perhaps one of us on this side will bring a Private Member's Resolution asking that we set up a joint consultative committee to look into these things. Mr. Barrow had talked of it in 1986 and we have done nothing about it. I think the time has come when we must put these things in proper perspective. The system has hurt a number of persons like, say, old Mr. Weekes. I remember him writing me a letter way back in 1979 to ask the then Prime Minister to do something because of the salary he was getting. Mr. Boxill is another person who was badly affected in that way, so we need to look at that.

Sir, I am not happy that the Government has brought this Order now, it should have come when the civil servants were getting theirs. If we were treating the public with openness, frankness and candour, then it should have been brought at that time, but the Government was obviously afraid to incur criticism. I do not think they were too worried about us, because we have been pretty consistent in our positions, they were worried about the capital the NDP would have made. That was a political tactic, but I fear that

coming now will only serve to increase the level of cynicism that there is in the community about politicians. I am concerned about it. It would be in the Press tomorrow and the man in the street is going to say that we are wheeling and dealing, we are hiding and look at the big salaries we are getting and so on. That is why I want the man in the street to know that my salary is that of the Foreman Binder at the Government Printing Office or a Library Assistant. The Press must carry that. I beg them. They have a duty. That is where we ordinary fellows are, in the salary scale Z.16-11.

I think we have to stop this charade now, Sir. Perhaps during this week, when we deal with Parliament or with Electoral and Boundaries Commission, we are going to have to ventilate some of our ideas as to why nationally there was a massive rejection of the political system in the last elections, why it would appear that only hard core supporters on both sides turned out. I can tell you from a study that some of us have been doing that the vast majority of people born after 1963 did not want to have anything to do with the voting system last January. We, as leaders in the political life of this community, have to examine those issues. We may get a chance this week, but this kind of thing, Sir, bringing it now, is only going to lend further credence to the widespread view that all politicians are the same thing, we hassle each other in here but when we go downstairs we have a drink and we have lunch together and we gang up and do things in our own interest and not in the public interest. That has to stop, not the camaraderie, but the perception that the public has of politicians who are just in politics for their own personal aggrandisement and gratification.

We have to pull the country back from this state of apathy and cynicism with the political process and I am appealing to the Government, as far as possible, to let us bring to an end these kinds of measures which only serve to mobilise public opinion against people in public life.
12.15 p.m.

I really believe that for as much as we will quarrel with each other in here and attack each other verbally, deep down each of us has one commitment and that commitment is to the further growth and development of Barbados and the provision of a better quality of life for all of the people in Barbados. I really feel that each one of us knows that that is why we go into politics, because we feel we want to do something for people and we are sincere and genuine in that commitment. But as much as we proffer it as an ideal so often we do damage and violence to that ideal by the shenanigans and manoeuvrings. I want the Prime Minister, when he replies to explain to the public of Barbados why this measure could not have been brought last year when the civil servants got, in December... In November, he said that the pensioners were to get their five dollars by the 6th or 7th of December. Why all of this didn't come at the same time? I really am asking for a definitive statement on that so that it will clarify in the public mind that there may have been good reason. I don't like the methodology and I am going to take the stand adopted by my party on this because of the methodology. As Chief of the Foremen Binders, Sir, I am obliged to you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I am joining this Debate, not to make a case for the parliamentary salaries because I don't believe that a case has to be made. I want to deal with this question of inconsistency.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East spoke this morning very strongly and said that he would not be supporting the measure, he will not be voting for it, he cannot vote for it and he made a statement which my time does not permit me to repeat but I would like, Sir, to look at page 1722 of the Debate of the House of Assembly and this one I believe took place in 1984 and I am going to quote from page 1722. I quote:

> "We believe that the country regards us as honest politicians and honest Ministers, and we believe that we should be paid proper and decent salaries so as to deter us from falling prey to bribes and corruption. We know that the public feels..."

That is what he said:

> "that this Government is a model of honesty, and nothing Honourable Members on that side say will change the view of the public."

The salaries increase are not going to cause any howl in the society. It has never been an issue on the political platforms. If Honourable Members on that side want to make it an issue now or at any time on the platform, they should go to the public and put it in their manifesto that whenever they get into power, they are going to return to the level of salary in 1976. But they come in here and they vote "no", but when the time comes for drawing you see them out there asking the gentleman in charge of the salaries how soon they are going to get the piece of change, and how much it is. I heard them today. I was speaking to the gentleman and I could not get in a word because the Honourable Members were butting him down. They wanted to know how soon they would get the piece of change, because "they have it owed out already. So, I do not..." Sir, I am still quoting:

> "So, I do not understand this sort of hypocritical stance by Honourable Members. Let us face up to it."

I am still quoting, Sir.

> "The increase falls a little short for backbenchers, but I want Honourable Members, like my colleague from St. George North ... to get up and say that and do not

be carried along by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. He is just taking you for a ride. Leave him out. Let him stay there."

Sir, I am now on page 1723.

"Let us understand that this debate is not about salaries, because the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is not interested in that. If you get him in close conversation, he will tell you that the salaries are genuine and that is what he feels that the Ministers and parliamentarians should be paid, if not more. But jealousy is behind the whole background of his contribution.

I support this Resolution, and I hope that, in due course, the debate on salaries and matters pertaining to salaries will not be a separate debate but rather linked to a complete and comprehensive Resolution that will take into consideration the increases of all persons to be paid out of the Treasury." – Unquote.

"I think that would settle once and for all this debate on Public Service salaries, and not when it comes to parliamentarians, use us as whipping boys. It is not fair to the electorate."

You know, Sir... I unquote. The same Honourable Member, Sir, who spoke, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East was at that time the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East but he was the Honourable Member, Sir. He was the Minister Hon. DeLisle O. Bradshaw said all of that I just quoted. Now, Sir, what that does... It has confirmed what my friend the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central said. That is, that you have to be very careful with your tongue when you are making these statements with regard to these particular issues because the written word will come back to haunt you. You cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time. You cannot talk on one side that you don't want people to run down politicians and then when one of the Honourable Members is not in his place you get up and ask a question about if a person has a back problem, how come they have a policeman driving them. That is the kind of statement, if it is made that will bring politicians into disrepute.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question of the salaries increase will always be an issue of political discussion. It does not matter which country, which party is the Government. In the United Kingdom, they have a system where when the election is declared all those sitting Members who lose their seats get severance pay.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is so in the United Kingdom, Sir, they get severance pay.
12.25 p.m.

If you are in the United States, the President of the United States is still getting the same $200 000 a year in 1991 as the President was getting in 1891. No one seriously accepts and believes that is what the President of the United States exists on because every single thing that needs to be done for the President is done by the taxpayers.

In the United States again, Sir, as I argued in one of these debates, there is a principle, the only principle which exists, that the outgoing Parliament will vote the salary of the incoming Parliament. I argued that in here before. I was trained in Political Science in the Unites States. I tend to have a lot of views which fall within the ambit of the American system.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is talking about having someone who now writes under a pseudonym called Ezra Alleyne about the Westminster system and who distorts it regularly. His understanding of the Westminster system – that is why I say it is a pseudonym because the person whom I know to bear that name understands the Westminster system. What is written in the paper from time to time is a distortion. In due course, so that I would not be unfair. I will discuss that outside of the House with that person.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is as irrelevant as the question of the policeman.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Member proceed?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not paying any attention to the asides, Sir. The Honourable Member whom I am told qualifies to be a social hostess under the circumstances, is constantly from time to time taking the opportunity to make cheap shots, then, subsequently, climbing up on a high horse and claiming all the rights and privileges. I will go on to another point. In time we will deal with that.

The point I am making is that in New Zealand they have a different system to salaries. In India they have a different system to salaries. Therefore, whether we set up a joint committee of Parliament because setting up a joint committee of Parliament does not bind the other Members of Parliament when it comes before the House if they disagree with it. As a matter of fact, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Prime Minister might recall – I think they were in the House in the days when, in fact, salaries used to be agreed upon between the Leader of the House...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sorry. It was the Debates Committee. I recall, Sir, that one of the most acrimonious debates that occurred in this House, according to the record, arose out of the misunderstanding and/or disagreement when the then Leader of the Opposition purported to have agreed to a salary increase. The Speaker of the House, Burton Hinds, made a statement on the Floor of this House that is probably the most devastating statement made by one Member about another at any time. That is the time when Burton Hinds indicated that there was no way Tom Adams could lead him into anything. I do not speak now, Sir, to regurgitate that. It makes the point that whenever you come to discuss the salaries, so long as we have a democratic system there is going to be much debate about it. There is not likely to be a satisfactory solution.

There are Honourable Members on that side today, with the possible exception of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, whose position has always been consistent. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has always been consistent on the question of salaries. Practising as he does as a high level attorney-at-law he is accustomed to large sums of money. He speaks on these matters with a certain consistency. He has always contended that the Parliamentarians and the Ministers ought not to be linked. I share that view. I think that once you have linkages, then you have expectations.

A Government has to be able to make decisions based on what is happening in the circumstances at the time. A Government should not be bound by any particular formula. If the formula is going to be successful and satisfactory for a period of time, so be it. Hence, this Government after having advice is linking 3% above the Permanent Secretary's considered efficacious at this time. I have no quarrel with that.

I am saying that some Government in the future will have a different reason for making changes. When the Prime Minister of the day reduced the salaries of Ministers by 5% which is continuous – by virtue of the multiplier effect it is continuous. Once it is not restored in real terms, the 5% reduction in terms of where salaries would have gone, will be continuous and has been continuous for this administration because those persons who have remained in the Cabinet have retained that 5% cut as they have gone on.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: A formula could be devised, I do not wish to go into contention, by which the relativity could be restored. The point I am making is that Honourable Members who were Ministers in 1986 when the Barrow Government came in have continued to be disadvantaged by the 5% reduction which occurred at that time. No Honourable Member on this side is saying that they must be restored to the relativity. Let it not be misunderstood.

When they put out, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East attempted to put out, that we must cut and contrive, when as one said at that time the small increase which came subsequently was a technical adjustment, there was a lot of laughter throughout the country. Indeed, there were some commentators who sought to ridicule the point. In actual fact, Mr. Speaker, what are we doing today? We are re-adjusting the situation where the Minister who is the only constitutionally responsible agency in the administrative system we have called the Westminster model, is responsible for the policy, therefore, must be the one seen to be in charge when we are discussing salaries. Hence, the Minister is going to be put to be paid more than his assistant. That is what a Permanent Secretary is to a Minister. That is the theory of the system we have that the Permanent Secretary is an assistant to a Minister. It would be inconsistent if the assistant to the Minister was being paid more than the Minister. That is what, in fact, has been happening since the last adjustments. This is an adjustment to make sure that the Minister who is allocated under the Constitution the responsibility for decision making in some aspects of the collective responsibility of the whole Cabinet is restored to his unique position in the hierarchy. That is all that is happening today.

The Honourable Members are asking why was this matter not brought before? Let us, for argument sake, Sir, say it was political strategy. Are they saying to have political strategy is criminal? Are they saying if they were the Government in the circumstances that they would have brought it?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am saying that even if it were strategy I am not going to stand up here and resile from the possibility that it was strategy.
12.35 p.m.

Why should the Democratic Labour Party not be able to have any strategy? No one has asked you to vote for it. This is not a Cabinet position. Each of us in here has a position on this to vote how we wish. I certainly am not asking or trying to persuade anybody on that side to vote for it. I am saying what my position is. If they say it is strategy and this will be the next issue for the next 6 weeks that it was strategy, it was not a foolish strategy. It was strategy at cost. It must be at some cost to somebody. Certainly there are costs to those Honourable Members who managed to come back.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sooner or later. But according to the Honourable Members, this matter should be retroactive. The Honourable Member is arguing as though we have asked for the salaries to be made, whatever they would be, retroactive to that time. That is not the case. They become

effective from the 1st of April. The two Honourable Members who are new to the Chamber are going to be paid at a level which is new to them. There is no retroactivity. Therein the Government of the day can claim some kudos for not having brought this salary review earlier.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Precisely. Sir, I am obviously not as clear as I thought I was because the Honourable Member seems to feel now that I am saying that somebody should get a salary when he was not a Member. What the Honourable Members on that side have said is that the matter should have been brought before. The matter was not brought before.

If I may take the other side of the argument, there are some persons who were in the House of Assembly at that time who will not be beneficiaries of this particular salaries increase and therefore whose pensions will be affected by the fact that it was not brought at that time. If it had been brought at that time and those Members had ceased to be Members of the House of Assembly their pensions would have been higher because their pensions would have been on the new salary brought at that time. The salary is not a matter that was brought for those persons who are returning, because if the Government was interested in discussing it in terms of the individuals, they would have brought it. According to all the predictions from the Barbados Labour Party, the NDP and all who would listen to them, this Government was in its last days. The Honourable Member for St. James North even now speaks as though this Government was in its last days. We were not supposed to see the light of day, as far as they were concerned. If we had listened to the rhetoric, that was a reason for bringing it because that would have ensured that we would get a half way decent pension at that level.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying we did not have the courage. But that is what they were telling us. It would not have been courage, Sir. It would have been prudence because they had told us....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure it is not accepted that Members of the House should be seen as cowards.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is not on his feet, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope you would not use that in your debate.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I take Your Honour's ruling, Sir. But even so, I do not think that he is saying that we are cowards. He was saying that we were not courageous. I suppose that if you are courageous you are not a coward. But the point is we would have been looking after our own pockets and our own pensions. Looking after yours too. If we are looking after pockets, we are looking after all the pockets at least. But we were not invidious in looking after our own pockets and making sure that we get a pension. Even now we can take the abuse and get the money retroactively. You get the same abuse for it retroactively as you are getting for it from the 1st April.

Mr. SPEAKER: You had better phrase that a little better.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am talking about...

Mr. SPEAKER: We are in the Chamber.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, Sir. I am speaking globally about that, that abuse which necessarily flows as a consequence of this action, Sir, apparently or as adumbrated by the Honourable Members on that side.

But what we are saying, Sir, is that we are cognizant of the reality. The position is this. We did not bring it at that time.

We cannot go on not bringing it because the relativity between the Minister and Permanent Secretary and other officials is inconsistent with the constitutional position which we hold. It has to be brought in such a manner as not to impact negatively on the Treasury or if it does impact, impact as lightly as possible. Therefore the whole question of back pay has been eliminated from the decision. The numbers are those which are consistently within what can be considered reasonable parameters. What more can a Government be asked to do? Are they saying that we should never bring it at all? Will some Honourable Member on that side get up and say that we should not bring it at all? That would be contrary to the logic of the existence of the Parliament and the system because you can go back to the time when there were no salaries at all and note that there has been a gradual rise in salaries for all parties in all endeavours. It had to be brought at some time. It is convenient since the financial year begins on the 1st April to bring it with effect from April, 1991.

I challenge anyone who is not seeking to be mischievous to argue with the logic of our bringing it to coincide with the 1st April, 1991. When all is said and done, Sir.....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member says that there is nothing logical about All Fools' Day. But the financial year has started on All Fools' Day every year from the time we had a financial year. So I am not going to touch that.

Let us be satisfied that we have brought a salary increase. We have tried within what is humanly reasonable to make it as efficacious as possible. We have sought in terms of the numbers... I do not think anyone is going to say that the Prime Minister's salary is too big. I do not think anyone is going to say that. I think the demonstration about the chief foreman is sufficient to satisfy the country that the numbers....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the argument for the foreman is sufficient to demonstrate that so far as relativity with the rest of the community then there is no real problem. We are not grossing up any allowances as occurred in the past. And there is no one who is about to say that the Minister's salary in the context of what exists in Barbados today is too big. The Honourable Member for the City who does not like to be quoted will no doubt get up and say what she has to say.

But when all is said and done, Mr. Speaker, the people of Barbados have had an opportunity to judge the consistency of all the political parties. The people of Barbados only two months ago were given a golden opportunity to examine in great detail the Democratic Labour Party's performance and its projections for its performance in the next 5 years. I am saying that the people of Barbados have made a resounding statement which appears not yet to be accepted by a large cadre of persons in this country. If the Barbados Labour Party falls in that category of persons who have not accepted what the people say, let them, with the NDP, rest wherever they are. There are people out there who are still attacking the people of this country for their votes. I read the newspapers every day and I see that there is some young woman who really ought to practise law and let people see her in the law courts so that people would understand that she is really a lawyer and not a journalist. I think she would be much better off if she would practise law.
12.45 p.m.

Those who wish to demonstrate that they know what they are doing, should demonstrate it in a field in which they know they are proficient. She is a qualified lawyer, according to the law, and therefore she should go and practise law. Since she is neither stupid .....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Honourable Members understand, Sir, of what I speak and therefore I need not make any further points. But, Sir, they will not accept that the people of Barbados have spoken. The people of Barbados have made their decision and let it rest for the next four years or so.

The Opposition has a duty to raise questions in this House. They are going to raise questions, some of which will be intelligent, some of which will be expedient, and many of which will, you know, Sir, not be at the level that a student of logic would accept. But that is part of the course in this system we have. I have no quarrel with any Honourable Member over there who raises questions about the technical aspects of this salary increase, like one Honourable Member says that he really is not against it, he is against the timing. I don't know if he is a mechanic, he is against the timing. Alright, that is possible, if you are over there and you want to agree with it, but you don't know what to say to show that you are not in full agreement with it, you can check the timing. You can check the inconsistency, but I have demonstrated that those who accuse us of inconsistency are themselves the most inconsistent.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East should not speak again in another debate about salaries for as long as he is in here, because he has taken both positions now, Sir. He has no other position now to take. I am told Sir, that I do not know his versatility in these matters. Let is rest, Sir, but I am not going to sit down without saying that I should support this Resolution. I support it Sir.

Well, I have not had the benefit Sir, of the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, who on the occasion when the salary was not sufficient for him, was able to, and did, go off to greener pastures. I withdraw that Sir. I withdraw the statement, the Honourable Member says he does not want me to say that of him and I will withdraw it. I have no difficulty withdrawing the statement, Sir, because I want to engage him in much more contentious matters at a different level, Sir. I withdraw the statement. But, Sir, the other thing is, every now and again – I might as well say it Sir, we are discussing emoluments – every now and again they are always talking about who is a lawyer and who is not a lawyer. You see what I mean, Sir. You would not have heard it Sir, but you can hear a voice, saying you are not one. They have a lot of people Sir, who have been called to the Bar and that is all you can say of them, when you are discussing the law. All you can say of them when you are discussing the law, is that they have been called to the Bar. There are a lot of them Sir. A time will come, Sir, when those who have a budding acquaintance with legal principles and who are able to pass the odd exams, here and there, and finally be called to the Bar, will leave those who understand the law alone. The Honourable Member for the City is not one of those lawyers who has merely been called to the Bar. The Honourable Member for the City is one of those lawyers who does not like to practise law, or so she says.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, this is the second time in this debate that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has sought to put words in my mouth. I

said no such thing. I am proud of my profession. I am proud to be a practitioner at the Bar which is more than can be said of the Honourable Member.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was not aware that I had tried to put anything in her mouth at all Sir. Sir, I just want to say that I support this Resolution, I am going to support it and I know the constituents of St. Michael West with whom I have discussions from time to time will support it, because many of them have wondered when we were going to bring it, Sir, and so I have no problem supporting this, Sir.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I would not have taken part in this debate, Sir, but I cannot allow this occasion to pass because I have really been drawn into this debate by the remarkable speeches that I have heard on this matter, Sir. The position of the Government, obviously is a difficult one, because they have up to now been unable to provide any answer to the very legitimate charge that has been made that this revision of salaries was deliberately delayed by the Government in order to gain maximum political advantage. There is no question about that. The Honourable Member who just sat down said so on at least three occasions. That is not remarkable because the position of the Government ...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I have not said what he says that I said. I don't know if Your Honour heard me saying that. I do not recall saying what he said.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, my distinct understanding from the particular words used by the Honourable Member on at least three occasions is that was the effect of what he was saying. And he crystallised it very clearly because he said he was going to support it because the people of St. Michael West were wondering when this Resolution would come.

Now, Sir, the Honourable Member has read from the Debates a speech made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East in 1984. I listened very carefully to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East on this occasion and he reiterated on this occasion many of the points that he made in that speech. In particular, dealing with the question of principle, which has been advanced by the Barbados Labour Party, consistently, and that is that the salary increases for Members of Parliament should bear some relationship to the salaries that are paid to the civil servants in Barbados. That has been our position. We have been bitterly criticised on the other side for that. I have been in here long enough and on a number of occasions when this matter was debated and we have always said that in the context of Barbados, as a country that has become independent, which had to take into account, in establishing our practices, our own traditions and not necessarily follow slavishly the traditions of other countries, that we always felt that Members of Parliament salaries should bear a relationship to the Civil Service, and that, Ministers and others who had to assume the responsibility for the political overall direction should be better paid.

Now, Sir, bearing that in mind, if the other side were of that opinion, as they are claiming now, why is it that they delayed this matter. Why is it that, to the man, they sat and accepted a situation in 1986 when the late Prime Minister had this to say – Page 25, Sir, of the Debates of the House of Assembly 1986. It was the first session of the 1986-91. 12.55 p.m.

This is the second debate, Sir, quoting from the then Right Honourable Member for St. John:

> "This is the second debate on salaries and allowances which I now say that I have the greatest pleasure in introducing and taking part in. Because this is a debate which brings about a reduction in the salaries of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. I do not think that it was even promised in our Manifesto. But one of the first things that we decided as a Cabinet was that in order to bring home to the people in authority, Members of Parliament, and the political directorate of this country that we should not march too far ahead of the people who put us in office. We should demonstrate our dedication to the principle by introducing a measure which would bring about a reduction in our salaries."

That is it, Sir. Not one Member of the other side who was a Member of that Cabinet and now a Member of Cabinet dared to question that position. Why are you acting differently today? Because in 1986 at the time when that was done the gross national product of Barbados was increasing at 5% per annum. Today on your own record and on your own confessions it reduced last year and it is reducing at a faster rate now. That is the position.

When you stay in here and you make the point that you are behaving in a consistent manner, the evidence is clear that you are blatantly inconsistent. Now that conduct, Sir, is the kind of conduct that brings politicians into disrepute. As a person who has spent a lot of time in politics and who has tried along with many others to raise the reputation of politicians, I feel very strongly, Sir, that a stance should be taken on these occasions as we have to take today to demonstrate very clearly to the public that when there is this kind of political inconsistency, which informs the measure of Government's action, that we should vote against it. That is the rationale of all the speeches on this side. We are not going to treat the public with contempt by coming in here and admitting that it should have come before, that the public voted for us, and therefore we can do as we like. The public voted for you but they did not give you the licence to raid the public Treasury as you like. The people did not do that. So do not say that you can come in here and raise the salaries and that

the public has given you that authority by voting back the Democratic Labour Party. Therefore, because they voted back the Democratic Labour Party, you can do as you like. Do not say that. That is the effect of what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has said.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. Not a single word or sentence I said could possibly be even remotely interpreted in the manner in which the Honourable Member is seeking to interpret it. He completely misunderstood my entire speech, Sir, and it would take too much time to repeat it. He is misrepresenting what I said, Sir.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, the Honourable Member again said that the people of St. Michael West voted for him and the people of St. Michael West expected that they would do it. The Honourable Member for St. James South, Sir, was even more explicit. He said that there should not be any argument at all about this. Politicians have to be paid. He believes in it and, therefore, the politicians should vote themselves the money and nobody should question it. That is the effect of what he said, Sir. That is the distinct logical consequence of the words used. That is the position the other side is adopting. We are forced now into a position in which there is a massive demonstration of arrogance arising from the fact that the people have endorsed the Honourable Members on the other side. They now believe that that endorsement entitles them to do as they like in Barbados. That is not so here. I want the Honourable Members on the other side to believe that however long it takes you still have to account for it. You will still have to account for it. The Honourable Members must not think because they have an endorsement that they are entitled or have a blank cheque to do as they like with the Treasury's money. Well, that is the kind of standard that we get, Sir. That is what we will be accustomed to in here, Sir.

So that, Sir, I think that it must be recognized that the manner in which this matter has been brought to the House is fully deserving of that criticism which has emanated from this side. There is absolutely no doubt and I regret very much, Sir, as one who has consistently fought to try and educate the public of Barbados towards the viewpoint that politicians make a tremendous contribution to the development of this country by offering themselves and by running.

I have heard speeches in here which set out very clearly the philosophy of the Barbados Labour Party in respect to politicians. The Barbados Labour Party was the first group of people who had the courage to defy everyone and come in here and say that politicians should be paid. The Barbados Labour Party did that. We also were the first to come in here and change the system of determining the remuneration, first of all by seeking to insulate this matter having appointed a special independent committee headed by an eminent Barbadian to give their views on the relative position of Ministers, Members of Parliament, and others. Having had the benefit of that exercise, Honourable Members of the Barbados Labour Party decided that there was to be a relationship between civil servants salaries and Ministers salaries, not any question of any automatic linkage. It was a relative position and that stood us in good stead right through our period of time despite all of those efforts by the Honourable Members on the other side who were in here at that time who used to criticise us, with one exception. That is the Honourable Prime Minister. All of the others used to make their accustomed political capital. My only regret is that the Honourable Prime Minister was persuaded no doubt by others to depart from that very consistent position on this occasion and tried to extract the political advantage that could be derived from keeping it back until a little later. I mean he has now joined the ranks of the inconsistent. That is the position, Sir. His unblemished record of consistency has now been breached, Sir. This is the position.

Sir, I trust that in the future this matter will be dealt with in a very consistent manner and that all of us, since we subscribe to the view that politicians when they are in office must be remunerated on a reasonable basis, should be men enough to remove this matter...

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member does not know that the male includes the female. If he had any acquaintance with the law, he would remember that singular includes plural and men include women.
1.05 p.m.

We would therefore be men enough and women enough to stand up and lead our people on these matters. You are supposed to be the governors of the country, you are supposed to help people towards an understanding of the reality of life in any country, that there must be governors and that the governors have to be paid.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, if there are no other Members speaking in this debate, I believe we can wind it up before we go to lunch. I will be very brief in the reply.

Sir, I wish to state that sometimes I despair that we will ever get this issue of the remuneration of Members of Parliament out of the political fray and out of political partisanship. What we have had is a situation in which I do not think I have heard any Member – with the possible exception of the last speaker, the Member for Christ Church South, and I am not even sure that I understood the drift of what he was saying – who was speaking against the principle of the increase in the remuneration for Members of Parliament, including Ministers.

I believe, because of our political moorings and our political proclivities, we have to find some kind of reason, some kind of pretext to vote against a measure which perhaps in other circumstances we would tend to support. I hear the call that this should have been brought at the time of the salaries revision and that this is therefore the reason why some Members will not support this measure. If today when we are outside of the heightened tensions, the political rancour and the strong emotions of a political situation leading up to a general election and we could hear some of the arguments that have been advanced, I well imagine what would have been the arguments if this measure had been brought last year.

If there is one thing I have learnt in politics, Sir, it is that one must always have political savvy in what one sets out to do. I have always tried to stick to principle, Sir, and I think on the other side they must realise by now that this is the Democratic Labour Party Government, led by the Member for St. Michael South and by no other Member. I would not like all kinds of reaching back into other places for the principles of other persons; we are dealing now with this current situation. We determine as a Cabinet that this particular matter will be brought at this particular time. We were not dealing with something going back to April 1, 1990.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You see, Sir, that is how it goes during this debate. I have always maintained that there is no whip on this side when we are debating these matters. Members express their particular views. This is a matter, therefore, which will be applicable from April 1, 1991.

As far as the position of the backbenchers is concerned, and those who are acquainted with Library Assistants and others, I do admit that there is a case for a review of the position and that perhaps the position of the backbenchers might be regraded, but that and other matters can be the subject of further examination at some other time when it may be expedient so to do. For the time being, the matter rests at that particular point.

I believe I have taken most of the matters that have been raised in my very short intervention. Thank you very much.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

AYES: Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Hon. B. M. TAITT, Hon. M. A. KING, Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, Hon. W. W. HALL, Hon. C. V. WALKER, Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, Mr. R. L. MORRIS, Mr. J. O. TUDOR and Mr. T. C. ESTWICK – 15

NOES: Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. H. B. St. JOHN, Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. G. W. PAYNE and Mr. R. C. EASTMOND – 8

1.15 p.m.

ORDER NO. 11 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY (REMUNERATION AND ALLOWANCES) ORDER, 1991

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: In a sense, Sir, we have debated the issues already which relate to the remuneration of the Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances) Order and the arguments that pertain in respect of the Resolution in respect of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries would in large measure apply also in respect of this particular Resolution.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: A division has been called for?

For the benefit of the Chamber, I was trying to ascertain the position in respect of what happened after I called the motion and it does appear to me then, that when the motion was called there were ayes but no noes, but a division was heard to be called for on this side and therefore, the position would be that if I had heard that, I would then take it that noes have been said and that there was a division; but I will say this, if the Honourable Leader of the House wants to clarify the position then I will give him that opportunity to do so.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, my understanding when the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister said that they were reiterating the same position was that the position was clearly understood that the two parties disagreed on the timing and the method of bringing the position and that was absolutely clear.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I don't believe Sir, in wasting the House's time. I don't believe it was necessary to vote again. The position and principle was taken on this measure. The parties have spoken.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the House can settle the matter that the position has been taken and therefore....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The position as we have said over here before, I believe that is clearly understood, was certainly understood on all sides....

Mr. SPEAKER: So therefore the Resolution is now passed.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: ... as we voted earlier.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That's the quibbling I am hearing about now, because you don't want to vote on it. All kinds of quibbling I am hearing now.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am moving that this sitting be suspended until 2.30 p.m. this day.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. This morning under the item Messages, it was a bit late, so I am asking that it be recommitted at this point in time for me to read the message from the Honourable the Senate to the Honourable House of Assembly:

> "This House concurs in the Message received today from your Honourable House and agrees to establish and constitute a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament to consider and report on a Bill entitled the Domestic Violence (Protection Orders) Bill, 1991, to which Committee other Bills presently before the Honourable the House of Assembly may be sent for consideration and report without further reference to this House.
>
> This House has appointed the following Senators to sit on the Joint Committee:
>
> Senator A. Morrison, Senator Mrs. V. C. Fraser, BSS, JP, Senator Mrs. A. Straughn, GCM, Senator W. L. Inniss and Senator Miss M. A. Mottley."

End of message. Signed by the President.

ORDER NO. 1 – THE APPROPRIATION BILL, 1991

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, Chapter 9 of the Constitution of Barbados stipulates *inter alia* that "there shall be in and for Barbados a Consolidated Fund, into which, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force in Barbados, shall be paid all revenues of Barbados."

I am required, as Minister responsible for Finance, to have prepared Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for public services during the succeeding financial year. Those estimates must be prepared and laid in the House of Assembly before the end of each financial year, that is, before March 31st in each year inasmuch as the financial year begins on April 1st. The Estimates must show separately the sums required to meet statutory expenditure and the sums required to meet other expenditure which it is proposed should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. I am also required as Minister responsible for Finance before the beginning of each financial year to introduce in the House of Assembly an Appropriation Bill setting out under appropriate heads for the several services required the estimated aggregate sums which are proposed to be expended other than by way of statutory expenditure during the financial year. Those estimated sums voted on by this Honourable Chamber shall represent the limit and extent of public expenditure for the year unless supplementary estimates of expenditure are also voted on by the House.

The foregoing obligations have been met, Mr. Speaker, and this is therefore now a convenient time when this Honourable Chamber should proceed on the Debate of the general principles of Government policy and administration as indicated by this year's Appropriation Bill and Estimates.
2.35 p.m.

I therefore move that the Appropriation Bill, 1991, be read a second time. Before we move on to the vote, Mr. Speaker, there are some observations I wish to make which will be pertinent to the Appropriation Bill and to the Estimates, particularly to the latter.

First of all, this Appropriation Bill and the accompanying Estimates represent a most important phase in my Government's policies and plans for the coming financial year. Together they seek to detail what the Government's spending is projected to be over the period April 1, 1991 to March 31, 1992 and to identify the resources from existing and already approved sources which will be used to support the determined level of spending. The Appropriation Bill and the Estimates therefore constitute a focal phase in the management, planning and control of the business of Government and in the allocation of available resources for the accomplishment of my Government's goals in as an efficient and effective a manner as possible. Having said all of that, let me give a word of caution, however.

Let us recognise that the Estimates are no more than what the word indicates. There are just estimates. Over the period of a day or a week far less than over the period of a year, the course of events may not go as planned or estimated. Conditions may vary. The unforeseen may occur. The planning process itself may have been inadequate in some way or there may have been a weak information base.

Let no one speak as if with the predestined inevitability of the pagan gods on Mount Olympus, or with the unerring infallibility of the one Christian God, let no one seek to give the impression that we are dealing with exactitudes and with scientific precision. We are, in fact, using imperfect instruments in a variable and varying environment. We may, therefore, over-shoot the mark leading to expenditure over-runs. We may undershoot the mark leading to revenue shortfalls.

Let me turn, Mr. Speaker, to a review of the financial year 1990/91 which, of course, is not yet ended, which, of course, will also be updated in my Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals which I hope to deliver within the first quarter of the new financial year. I am speaking against a background in which there has been a significant down-turn in the pace of economic activity in Barbados resulting from a combination of factors, some of domestic and others of external origin.

The major foreign exchange earning sectors did not provide a sufficient thrust to sustain a level of real economic activity such as we have been experiencing in recent times. Negative growth was, in fact, recorded. I did intimate to this Honourable Chamber during the debate on the Appropriation Bill, 1990, that the overall economic setting suggested that a slowdown in real output performance could be expected during the earlier part of the financial year but that the situation could improve later in the year resulting, hopefully, in some growth in the economy. That was not to be.

The economic down-turn has persisted. Recessionary conditions and uncertainties in the economies of our major trading partners have not helped matters. Yet, Mr. Speaker, agriculture grew by 10.3% but manufacturing and tourism declined by 3%, and 10.3% respectively. Sugar production rose 4.8% and non-sugar agriculture output was up by 15%. Meat production was higher. There was a creditable performance in the fishing industry. The tourism sector was adversely affected by a number of factors including a slow-down in some of the major tourist markets, a cutback in the charter traffic from the United Kingdom in the summer, and the effects of the Gulf crisis. However, cruise ship passenger arrivals increased during the year. Tourism expenditure accordingly fell by 2.9% to $980 million.

Turning to current revenue for the financial year 1990/91, this is projected to be $960.7 million which will be $32.1 million or 3.2% less than for the financial year 1989/90. Among the major revenue items, taxes on income and profits should yield a revised figure of $252.1 million which is $25.7 million more than the estimated yield. This is mainly the result of the regrading of a number of posts in the public sector and the various wages settlements in the private and public sectors.

Taxes on property is expected to net $58.6 million, some $6.5 million more than the approved amount for financial year 1990/91. The adjustment in the rates in December is expected to yield a better return on this revenue Head for 1990/91. Taxes on goods and services can be expected to provide $284 million during the financial year 1990-1991.

Consumption tax is revised to yield $188 million instead of the $209.5 million approved. Taxes on international trade are expected to yield $118 million or $26 million less than the original estimate. The decline in consumption taxes and taxes on international trade is due to the decline in retained imports as steps were taken to reduce the pressure on the balance of payments. For example, consumer goods imported declined by $93.6 million with consequential decline in indirect taxes.

Hotel and Restaurant Sales Tax is estimated now to yield $16.2 million, which is lower than the original figure of $18.5 million. The levies should remain buoyant during 1990-1991 because as payroll items these should align with the higher incomes of 1990.

2.45 p.m.

The revised current expenditure for 1990-91, Mr. Speaker, is about $1 050.5 million or $50.5 million more than the actual figure for the financial year 1989-90.

The major components of the increase in current expenditure so far for the financial year 1990-91 are an increase in personal emoluments and higher subsidies and transfers. It should be noted that the Approved Estimates for the current fiscal year had not provided for the wage increases nor the cost of regrading in the Public Service, inasmuch as the amounts involved could not have been known at the time of the preparation of the Estimates. The revised projected capital expenditure for the financial year 1990-91 is $231 million.

I next turn, Mr. Speaker, to the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1991-92. It is estimated that current revenue will be $977 570 543, that total expenditure is estimated to be $1 350 318 441 and that the estimated excess of total expenditure over current revenue will be $372 747 898. The fiscal deficit less amortization payments and not including any new resources which may be provided through the 1991 Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals is estimated at 6% of gross domestic product.

I wish to underline that for this coming financial year 1991-92 as in previous years, the resource allocation decision made by my Government is being determined by the prevailing economic and financial environment. The resources available to Government are derived from its revenues and from borrowing. The Government is determined to use its resources most carefully in the manner which provides maximum returns and efficiency at a given cost.

I must reiterate that spending by the Government in certain areas is not only desirable but necessary. Such spending cannot be neglected since the services provided are indispensable to the existence of an organized state and cannot be assigned to any particular group of beneficiaries. Law and Order, Defence and Security and External Affairs are examples of such services.

Furthermore the Government provides vital services to the population in the areas of education, health, housing and welfare. The Government also provides economic services and incurs expenditure associated with the conduct of business in such areas as trade, industry, transport and agriculture.

Finally, interest payments and the redemption of the national debt and associated expenses are all part of the expenditure obligations of the Government. Against that background, Mr. Speaker, there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that very firm measures must be taken and taken now to ensure greater efficiency in the delivery of public goods and services bearing in mind the cost of such goods and services.

The Government will therefore put in place measures to improve the efficiency of its operations including the enhancement of its existing revenue collecting operations while not imposing undue strain on the economy or people of this country. Measures to improve expenditure control in the public service will be implemented as part of the general financial reform being undertaken. To this end I have already taken steps to merge all of the contingency votes under the Ministry of Finance to take account of all contingent liabilities of the Government during the year 1991-92. These contingency votes were previously under separate heads of expenditure and approval to use the new vote must now be sought from the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs. In addition, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs will deepen its monitoring of expenditure patterns in all Ministries and departments. It is absolutely imperative that deviations from the Approved Estimates should be detected very early so that the necessary corrective measures may be taken. In this regard, the Estimates will be used as a major control instrument for achieving budgetary goals.

I will be taking steps to provide additional staff at the level of Professional Accountant, Financial Controller and at other levels to assist in the control process and to assist Ministries and Departments to keep within agreed limits of expenditure. Steps will also be taken to tighten the regime for collections at such revenue collecting agencies as the Customs Department and Inland Revenue Department.

It is perhaps for me, Mr. Speaker, at this stage to say something about the changed format for the presentation of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1991-92. I am a reform-minded person and just as Jean Baptiste Colbert in the Seventeenth Century sought ever to reconstruct and reform French finances, under King Louis XIV, so too will I and my administration seek to reform the finances of this country.

The last occasion on which there was any major change in the published format of the Estimates was in 1980-81 when the structure was simplified by reducing from 50 to 31 the number of items under which expenditure was classified. Since that time, there have been significant and at times turbulent changes in the economic climate. It is therefore timely that there should be changes to reflect changing requirements.

This new format for the Estimates seeks to strengthen the Government's effort to improved expenditure management and is part of a general process of financial reform. The old format of the Estimates provided information on cost but little or no information on the purposes and effectiveness of the expenditure. The cost information, while necessary for accounting and auditing, is of limited use in understanding and determining the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of public expenditure. It is important for the Estimates to set out public expenditure policies and to be useful as a management information system for spending Ministries.

The programme budgeting format now being adopted retains the former cost information type format but in addition provides a mechanism for the evaluation of performance and reflects the Government's concern for more effective use of resources to improve public services while minimizing the tax burden.

2.55 p.m.

It provides additional information which should be useful in determining objectives, targets and levels of expenditure against the constraints of available resources.

Expenditure, Mr. Speaker, is set out on a programme basis, while retaining all of the key accounting elements of the line item format. Each Ministry or Department is given a single head of expenditure, and current and capital expenditure, both appear under this single head. However, the distinction between current and capital spending still exists. Current Expenditure is identified by Codes 1 to 4 and Capital Expenditure by Codes 5 to 8.

Part 1, sets out the total amount of non-statutory expenditure under each Head, and this amount will be voted in the Appropriation Bill. The objectives of the expenditure are also set out in Part 1.

Part 2, which is spread over two pages and which comes immediately after Part 1, summarises the expenditure by economic classification, while Part 3 shows the full details of spending as would normally appear in the format previously used but now organised under Programme, Sub-Programme and Object. It is expected that a new Part 4 will be added at a later date and that this new Part will provide for an evaluation of spending programmes.

As I have already stated, Mr. Speaker, the current revenue for the coming financial year is estimated at $977.6 million some $25.1 million less than that approved for 1990/1991. Taxes on income and profits may be expected to yield $259.2 million, taxes on goods and services should provide $291.1 million, while taxes on international trade can be expected to contribute $111 million. The remainder will come from taxes on property, other taxes, non tax revenue, special receipts and loans and advances.

On the expenditure side, wages and salaries are expected to absorb $475.8 million of the total government bill of $1,347.6 million. The debt servicing of $281 million in Financial Year 1991/1992 will be substantially larger than the $191 million for the Financial Year 1990/1991. It should be particularly noted that there will be a one shot payment of a Japanese Loan estimated at $65 million which is due during the coming Financial Year. Interest payments for the coming fiscal year are estimated at $98.7 million while amortisation is set at $182.1 million, subject to exchange rate variations. Capital spending is expected to be $218.4 million of which capital formation should be $158.2 million.

In terms of a functional classification, Mr. Speaker, Education will be allocated the largest single share of total spending in the amount of $246.3 million during the coming financial year, while health care will receive $175 million.

Mr. Speaker, I will now list some of the main projects and spending areas in terms of total expenditure, by economic classification, scheduled for the coming financial year. I should state that some $56.9 million in project funds have so far been identified for these projects.

Education: The Ministry of Education has been allocated the sum of $245.2 million or 18.2 per cent of the Government's total expenditure. Provision is made for the construction and works in connection with several primary schools, maintenance of existing schools, renovation of some secondary schools, and for other educational purposes.

Health: The Ministry of Health will be given provision totalling $193.5 million. This is 14.4 per cent of the total expenditure and represents an increase of $15.1 million over spending on Health during the current financial year.

In the health sector, construction of the Accident and Emergency Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is completed and opened to the general public. The refurbishing of all operating theatres has also been completed. Construction work has commenced on the final phase of this project, namely the refurbishing of the Obstetrics and Gynecological Department, and this is expected to be completed during the 1991/1992 Financial Year. Works will also continue at the St. Joseph Hospital.

Public Works and Transportation: Infrastructural development will continue to be given priority by my Government for it is upon the base of a sound infrastructure that economic and social development can be further advanced. In the Financial Year 1991 to 1992 the sum of $125.1 million is allocated to the Ministry of Public Works, Communications and Transportation for the execution of its programmes. Provision is made for the continuation of work on Highway 2A Phase 2 and for on-going improvement to tenantries and subsidiary roads throughout the Island. Drainage, and the upkeep of bridges, sea defences and gabions will benefit from the allocation of $4.5 million on such a programme.

Agriculture: Government's primary objective is the revitalisation of the agricultural sector. As indicated in the Government's development plan 1988 to 1993, the principal objectives of Government's development strategy will be to:

(1) effect the optimal utilization of land,

(2) enable the sector to meet a greater share of domestic demand for food,

(3) increase the volume of non-sugar produce exported, and

(4) promote the rationalisation of the sugar sub-sector.

I must also add, that while due attention will be given to stimulating non sugar agriculture, fishing and agro-industrial development, the strategy for sugar will be based on the rationalization of the sugar industry and the stabilization of production at the optimum level of between 80 000 and 100 000 tons of sugar.

The implementation of the national fruit orchard project is well advanced and an agreement will shortly be signed between the Barbados National Bank and the

European Community with a view to facilitating the disbursement of funds, $0.5 million Barbados currency, to eligible tree crop farmers in Barbados.
3.05 p.m.

In respect to the fishing sector, the Government has made an application to the European Community for financial assistance for Bds. $5.5 million to assist with the improvement of fishing facilities at Consett Bay and Skeetes Bay. The agricultural census which should be completed by July 1991 will provide Government with the requisite quantitative and qualitative data on agricultural resources, crop, and livestock production to plan the overall development of the agricultural sector in Barbados. The sum of $42.8 million is allocated for the Ministry of Agriculture for the financial year 1991-92, and this is $14.9 million more than that provided in 1990-91.

Trade and Industry – In the trade and industry sectors, the Government's primary objective is to improve the competitiveness of the export subsectors and the mitigation of those factors which reduce competitiveness. Effort will continue to be focused on increasing the volume of domestic exports to CARICOM, in securing markets in the non-Caribbean countries, and in making better use of facilities for enhancing trade under the LOME Convention and CBI Schemes. A programme of progressive export promotion will be carried out.

Mr. Speaker, the Government will soon be in receipt of two studies to assist it in formulating additional strategies for the development of the industrial sector in Barbados. These studies are the Export Competitiveness and Marketing Study which is with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development Assistance and the Barbados Manufacturing Sector Survey and Recommendations. There is a Bds. $10 million loan with the European Investment Bank for use under the Industrial Credit Fund administered by the Central Bank. These funds will be used to provide loans to the manufacturing sector, and also a Bds. $10 million loan with the European Investment Bank for use by the Barbados Development Bank in providing loans to eligible small and medium sized businesses in the industrial, agro-industrial, tourism, and fisheries sectors in Barbados.

The Government is currently pursuing discussions with the World Bank with regards to the implementation of an export development project for Barbados. This project will have as its main objectives the following: (1) the promotion of export development in Barbados and (2) raising the level of productivity and efficiency in manufacturing and service activities in Barbados. The implementation of the industrial estates, both loan projects, is continuing apace. The aim of this project is to provide factory space for rental by both foreign and local enterprise in order to encourage and accelerate the industrial development in Barbados. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce has been allocated the sum of $14.6 million for the financial year 1991-1992.

Tourism – In the tourism and sports sectors, the sum of $38.3 million is being provided for the coming fiscal year. The Tourism Study which Government commissioned to assist in determining the necessary measures to enhance competitiveness with the assistance of the World Bank has now been completed. The Cabinet has noted and accepted the final report of this study and has designated the Ministry of Tourism and Sports as executing agency with responsibility for preparing an action plan for implementation of approved strategies for the tourism sector.

Environmental Infrastructure – The Government continues to pursue a balance approach to physical planning to ensure that urban expansion and rural development are environmentally sound and consistent with its economic and social strategy. Any further degradation of the environment must be halted before irreversible damage occurs. Priority attention will be given to, *inter alia*, coastal erosion, ground water pollution, marine pollution, and the storage, handling and disposal of solid waste and sewerage.

A feasibility and predesigned study for coastal conservation on the South and West Coast will commence early in the new financial year and is expected to last for a period of three years. This study is aimed at finding viable structural and non-structural solutions for the protection and enhancement of the South and West Coast. The total cost of this project is U.S. $7.3 million. The Inter-American Development Bank is providing a loan of U.S. $4.7 million and non-reimbursable technical cooperation in the amount of U.S. $0.5 million. The Government of Japan is providing non-reimbursable financing in the sum of U. S. $1.1 million equivalent via the Japanese Special Fund to assist in financing the project's implementation.

In summary, the total demands on the public purse when considered against the likely revenue available to Government during the financial year 1991-1992 indicate a gap of $370 million for which $56.9 million in project funding has been identified.

Mr. Speaker, I have set out in some detail the background against the Appropriation Bill 1991 and the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1991-1992 should be viewed. Let me set out the position in terms of a summary of Government operations.

Current Revenue of $977.6 million and Capital Revenue of $56.9 million should provide the Government with total identifiable receipts of $134 475 042 which must be offset against the stated total expenditure of $1 347 598 approximately. That leaves a financing gap of $303.1 million. It should be obvious that efforts to narrow that gap

between revenue and total expenditure cannot be based on any one source of in-flow but must be based on a combination of in-flows to the Consolidated Funds including in-flows from both domestic financing and foreign loans, in-flows from additional revenue measures and, indeed, further measures to control public expenditure. 3.15 p.m.

It is perhaps timely to point out that under the Financial Administration and Audit Act, the Minister responsible for Finance may in his discretion limit or suspend any expenditure charged under any Appropriation Act or under any Resolution of Parliament, if in his opinion the exigencies of the financial situation make such limitation or suspension necessary. In other words, Mr. Speaker, even though this Honourable House may authorise total expenditure of $1 348 million, that sum may in fact be reduced if the exigencies of the financial situation so dictate.

As public officials, serving the people of Barbados in a political capacity, let us all recognise our duty to the people of Barbados. We have been elected as the legislators for our country. The elections are done and over with until they are next called under our Constitution. The battle has been won and lost. The electorate has given a clear and unequivocal mandate to me and the Democratic Labour Party to deal with the pressing problems of adjustment and development facing this country. Within the framework of this Appropriation Bill and the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, we will seek to continue the work of Government as well as to begin implementing some of the promises solemnly made to the people in the General Elections just held.

Projects such as the New Enterprise Administration, the new Barbados Youth Service Program and the new police station and Magistrate's Court at Holetown will commence. There are some changes, Mr. Speaker, and I believe a few move-ins, which during the committee stage, I will be placing before the appropriate committee. That brings me to the end of this presentation on the estimates for the coming financial year.

Let us rise to the occasion for a great debate for now and for the future. Let this Parliament, this Assembly, gain renown as a great debating Chamber. We are capable of it, Mr. Speaker. There can be few parliaments anywhere, which can boast that its membership is as experienced as this Assembly. Almost two-thirds of this membership of this Assembly hold or have held ministerial office. Let us not squander our experience, our talents and our endowments, in petty political squabbles. Rather, let us work for the good of our country. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Appropriation Bill 1991 be now read a second time.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister pleaded for a very great debate on this occasion.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We had a speech from the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister which was basically a recitation of most of the summaries that are already contained in the estimates, without any attempt whatsoever to enlighten the House as to some of the implications of the numbers that were being trotted out, what they mean in terms of contents and the future direction of Government policy, and the implications of the financial problem that faces the country. Indeed, Sir, the point I want to make is that the debate really may have to start in the absence of a substantial contribution from the Minister of Finance.

Before I get into the substance of my contribution, I want to touch on some of the peripherals that have been raised by the Minister. It is a fact, Sir, that the House this year is to evaluate a set of estimates which incorporate somewhat of a new programming approach to budgeting. The approach, Sir, is not entirely new insofar as certain parts of the Ministry of Education's budgets and estimates have always been based upon the use of the programme approach rather than a departmental approach and if I may dilate on the point particularly for the Members of the House who have never yet participated in a budget or estimates debate, there has been a tendency before to provide the estimates on a department basis. For example, one would see in the estimates that the money voted for each polyclinic was provided separately, each polyclinic qualifying for a separate head. What one will now see in the estimates is a consolidation of all those separate votes of money for polyclinics and you therefore have one vote for polyclinics as a programme.

Similarly in the Ministry of Agriculture there were a lot of votes for research work being undertaken by separate departments and that has been consolidated now and what you will have now is not a department vote but a consolidated vote for research. There are obvious benefits, Sir, from the use of the programme approach. It will allow for optimal use of resources of scarce human personnel if those services can be seen as being deployed on a programme basis rather than on a departmental basis. For example, in the area of education there are certain skilled persons who are perhaps better deployed throughout the secondary education system rather than earmarked to work at one school. In addition, Sir, the use of the programme approach can assist in rationalising work by research

programs, and in reducing duplication of efforts, if the effort is seen as a whole rather than if the effort is seen on a department by department basis.

One of the common problems in the administration of public bureaucracy, Sir, is the struggle for turf. Each person wants to have his own little kingdom and the problem with the departmental approach to budgeting obviously is that it can allow a person to have each his own kingdom, whereas the programme approach, if properly applied, will sort out all of those forms of duplications and allow for programs to be conceived as a whole. Having said that Sir, I must make the point that the Minister of Finance must not oversell what has this year been set out as a programme approach. In most instances, what the Government has done, is that it has brought together expenditure that was traditionally allocated for respective departments and put them together as a program. I do not know, Sir, that the effort has yet been made to rationalise or to streamline any of the departmental efforts. Also, when the Minister of Finance said that the statement of objectives and the statement of tariffs were part of the programme, I do not know if we have been assisted this year at all. These estimates are written in the most appalling language and, if the House will bear with me, you would understand the difficulty reading these estimates would present in terms of following of the language. In former years it was necessary only to say that the Governor-General's Head provides for the cost of administering the office of the Governor General as established by Section 28 of the Barbados Constitution. The programmed approach gives rise to this account, Sir:
3.25 p.m.

> "Objectives of the Department are to provide the necessary administrative and accounting functions which in turn facilitate all other needed services such as domestic services, the running and upkeep of Government House which includes payment of utility bills, upkeep of two (2) State Cars; upkeep of gardens, purchase and repair of household and office equipment and such other goods and services as are required to keep Government House in a manner fit for the Head of State to carry out the many social and official functions which that office entails and also to be comfortable and suitable as a residence befitting the one holding that status."

This is one long sentence, Sir, that really does not add to our understanding of public finance. We had the same difficulty in the attempt made, for example, to defend the vote for the Prime Minister's Office, where we are told that the function of this programme is to provide for the service of initiation and review of policy affecting subjects of the Prime Minister's portfolio. I really believe this is not adding to public finance or public administration in this country.

If one of the objectives of the programming approach to public finance is to be able to state objectives and state targets carefully then I submit to the House that particular objective has yet to be met. This is written in an appalling manner. I would really urge on the Minister of Finance the value of simplicity in the statement of these terms.

I suspect these statements are written by the person who has demonstrated the most before the House from his seat. I suspect that these things were not written by the substantive Minister who is a specialist in English, but were written by the junior Minister of Finance himself. He is anxious from his seat to want to defend a bad practice which is to state things very badly and in a way that they are not to be followed by the general public.

Mr. Speaker, as regards the more substantive matters, it would have been useful if the Minister could have said what these Estimates so obviously tell us, that the country really is facing a very serious financial problem. There are now no excuses. There can be no scapegoats found by the Government. This very serious financial problem that the Government is facing, that it has faced last year and will continue to face next year is due to a combination of very atrocious financial planning and management as well as the undertaking of electoral works.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the extent of the problem facing Government could be borne out if one goes back to the words of the Prime Minister himself as set out in last year's Budget where he went on record as saying that the management of the fiscal deficit – I am reading, Sir, from the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, Wednesday May 2, 1990, a document of the House, at page 8:–

> "The management of the fiscal deficit is one of the standard indicators by which the quality of economic management is judged."

The Prime Minister set that as a standard. He went on to compare himself with previous Ministers of Finance and castigated them by implication for having run large deficits. He said, for example, by way of criticism of the Minister of Finance in 1982/83 that the fiscal deficit of 1982/83 was 8.4% of GDP, that in 1987/88 condemning another Minister of Finance, that the fiscal deficit was 9% of GDP. Then he went on to say that his signal achievement has been in bringing down the deficit to between 3% and 5% of GDP, a level at which we can comfortably live.

The Minister of Finance as recent as last year's Budget, set the basic touchstone by which his financial management and Government's financial planning was to be judged, namely, the bringing of the deficit to a level – I must quote again – with which we can live, a level at which the deficit will be between no more than 3% and 5% of the GDP. That was intended to be his objective.

The House, Mr. Speaker, therefore needs from the Minister of Finance and Planning an accounting as to whether he has managed by the dint of financial planning and management to meet that important objective which he says is the touchstone that determines whether you have quality economic management or not. You must not therefore be surprised if he has danced a light fantastic round in these numbers because of the deficit realised this year is $320 million which raises two implications.

First of all, a deficit of $320 million – this is what was anticipated to be realised in the last financial year – is not 2%, 3% or 5% of GDP which he says is what the country can live with, but it is a deficit in the vicinity of 10% to 11% of GDP – higher, if I may say so, than the 8% deficits and the 9% deficits which he was so anxious to condemn last year.

More to the point, Sir, as well, we have also to ask ourselves, by what methods of financial planning did the Government, which at the start of the financial year set out to incur a deficit of only $229 million end up incurring a deficit of $320 million? That is the point. How is it that the Government could at the start of the financial year set itself on a financial course by which it will have a deficit of only $229 million because that was what was supposed to be manageable and the country could live with, and find itself in the position where the deficit is $320 million?

Having dealt with that issue, Sir, the additional issue that I want to go on to, that the Minister of Finance should have dealt with, is what did he have to do in terms of his financial manoeuvrings in 1990/91 to cope with a deficit of that order of magnitude of $320 million. How did he finance it? What were the implications of the ways in which he financed it? Leading from that, given that he is now projecting an even larger deficit of $370 million which is going to be at least 12% of GDP, and not the 3% or the 5% which he said in last year's Budget is what the country can live with, Sir, what are the broad overall implications for the country and for the management of the public purse for the Minister of Finance of this country to commit Barbados to that level of deficit which by his own standards of management are unsustainable? That is what, in a sense, these debates must first and foremost be about.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has started a process of restructuring. When you analyse these Estimates very carefully, there is a large amount of restructuring taking place whereby in restructuring or structural adjustment if you wish, there will be losers and winners in the society as a result of the way in which the Government of this country is going to react to the financial problems that exist but which it will not concede exist.

The Government has gone about restructuring its expenditure pattern in such a way that there will be winners and losers in this society. We in this House are to be told who those winners and losers will be, and to agree that in the process of our restructuring the composition of Government's expenditures that the people who the Prime Minister wants to set up as the winners and losers are who we, as a collective Parliament, agree to carry the burden of the adjustment. These Estimates are about adjustment in the Barbados economy, very serious adjustments that can have long-term implications for the way in which this society as a broad society and the economy function and operate.
3.35 p.m.

And the Prime Minister has been very polite in his dismissal of the broader implications of the of the adjustment process that he has started in train. I really believe that if we are going to have a great debate, as he wants to have a great debate, the House cannot be silent on the issue. We have to go into the implications of the adjustments that the Prime Minister has introduced virtually himself.

But I want to talk about why is it that you set out to incur a deficit that was manageable and you ended up with a situation that bears no relationship to anything that any other previous Minister of Finance has had to cope with. The answer is borne out in the Prime Minister's statement in the last Estimates Debate to be found at page 4988. Last year the Minister of Finance had a potential bonanza awaiting him. For the first time in a long time and certainly, Sir, for the first time in living memory, the Ministry of Finance was confronted with the situation where there was the prospect of a substantial reduction in Government expenditure purely because the debt service charges in that year would be substantially reduced. The Minister of Finance therefore, Sir, had options. He knew that he had to face regrading and increased wages. The cut in debt service was by as much as $60 million. What the Minister of Finance could have done is pursue one of two options. I am going to save $60 million from the fact that debt charges had been falling by that amount and I will use that $60 million to meet the cost of the regrading and the cost of the increased wages or alternatively he could have followed the alternative approach – I have $60 million savings in expenditure because debt charges have declined, let me reallocate that $60 million in expenditure to the NCC and to CBC and other places. And then having given it away, tangle up myself and the country with the question of "How then am I going to meet the additional cost of the wage bill ensuing from the regrading and the increased wages and pensions. He chose the second and he said it himself. Page 4988:

> "The reduction in the debt service charges in 1990-91 will permit Government to allocate higher sums to the tune of $60 million on the service it provided after debt payments had been made."

What did he do? The potential of $60 million savings in expenditure he allocated under the statutory institutions,

brought back Government expenditure before the wage increases and regrading to the same level as they were in the previous year, the year before, and then on top of that had to face the cost of the regrading, the increased pension and the increased wages. What are the implications, Sir, that as a result we went into an exercise where these Estimates did not provide for the increased wages, the regrading or the increased pensions. Rather than there being a 15% current account surplus as was anticipated, the bringing to book of these various items that could have been accommodated by his using the $60 million saving in debt for the bringing to book of the regrading, the increased pensions and the increased wages as well as the wage settlement, put the Government in a position where, rather than having a current account surplus the Government found itself in a current account deficit of $89 million.

I therefore say that the financial problem is due, in some respect, to bad financial planning. Because if you had that bonanza, and you know in advance as the former Prime Minister of this country in 1986 knew in advance, that you had to face the prospect of it without knowing the numbers, rather than allocate it out to the CBC and other places, he should have kept it in hand and met those costs rather than force this country to a position where you had that impossible current account deficit. I am therefore, Sir, not dealing with the propaganda when I say that the Government last year contrived to create part of its own financial difficulty.

There was also electoral work, the expansion of the vote to Government departments as part of the electoral process. Those things put the Government in a position where, rather than having the deficit of the $220 million, it had a deficit of $320 million. The important point is how did the Government finance that deficit? The second point is, are the financial instruments that were open to us last year open to us again this year? The answers, Sir, are set out in the Estimates, that last year the Government drew heavily on three main sources of finance to meet that very large deficit – I am citing page 2 of the Memorandum to the Estimates which showed how that gap was closed – Barclays loan of $119 million. The country knows, the House knows of the inordinate difficulty the Government of Barbados had raising a loan of that amount on the market. We know that foreign commercial loans will become more and more difficult for Barbados to raise given the declining foreign exchange earning capabilities of the country. The bankers see the same balance sheets and the same foreign exchange earning sheets that we see. Last year this country had to be put to the necessity of raising a very expensive loan after a long and inordinate delay, in the order of $119 million, to meet the contrivance of an excessive deficit.

Secondly, Sir, the Government of this country maintained tight credit squeezes on the private sector and utilized the largest portion of the credit available in the Barbados society to help finance its deficit, a large part of which and in fact, Sir, $104 000 000 worth of which was, financing from the Central Bank of Barbados.

I say to the House that the Government of Barbados does not, this year, have open to it the option of using $100 million of Central Bank financing to finance any deficit in this country any more. It has exhausted the use of that option last year to a point where it is not a financial instrument that can be used. Why do I say that, Sir? The Barbados Government, in the process of using Central Bank financing as excessively as it did last year, caused the reserves to drop from $275 million – the net reserves – I am citing from page 65 of the Economic and Financial Statistics of the Central Bank for February 1991 – from $275 million in January to $150 million by the end of December.

Mr. Speaker, we must understand the implications of Barbados' reserves being net $150 million. First of all you would have to go back to 1976 to find our reserves at such a low ebb at the end of the year. First point. Our reserves now have been brought to the lowest ebb since 1976. That is a fact. The lowest year-end foreign reserves since 1976.

Secondly, Sir, with reserves not $150 million, the Government of Barbados could not now simply draw another $100 million from the Central Bank to help carry the deficit. Central Bank financing this year is out. Last year the Government, as you will know from the Central Bank Report, page 37, caused a particular distribution of credit to emerge in this country.

At the end of December, 1989 net credit to the Government stood at $263.5 million. By December 1990 net domestic credit to Government had risen to $504 million. Over the course of the year, all domestic credit to Government last year rose by $241 million. By contrast domestic credit in the higher private sector of this country rose from $1.28 billion to $1.331 billion. Of the total pool of credit in the economy, the Government that only contributed 15% of activity, had access to $241 million of credit. The private sector that generates 85% of activity in this country had access to $50 million of that credit. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the Government by encouraging that process of credit distribution is in the process of killing the goose that lays the golden egg. There can be no wonder that the recession is going to be bleak in this country, that it is going to show itself as a reduction in Government's revenue so long as you have a situation obtaining in Barbados where Government is telling the private sector that you cannot have access to credit for expansion purposes, Government must have it. You have a situation where there is an allocation of credit in the Barbados economy that bears no relationship to the relative contribution of the two sectors in the economic activity of Barbados.

I am saying that if the Government hopes again this year to run large deficits of the order they had last year and finance it by recourse to the kind of credit allocation as was in existence this year, we are going to be back in grief.
3.45 p.m.

I must agree with the Minister of Finance, Sir, when he says as a principle, that Barbados must not look to run these inordinate deficits, not only because of the addition to spending power, but deficits that are as large as these create problems in their financing. And, given the difficulty last year experienced in financing a deficit of $320 million, I think that the Minister therefore has a responsibility to the House to understand the dangers this year of trying to incur a deficit of $370 million and he, therefore, must be more forthcoming, Mr. Speaker, in his economic analysis of the implications of that deficit in its total size and in terms of its financial implications for the functioning of the Barbados economy. But he was silent, Sir, on these matters, as if these are matters that the House should not be concerned with, as if, Sir, the notion that the deficit does not matter – that is such a popular refrain among laymen, is not an issue – that he, in establishing his own criteria for management, has dispensed with.

I am also saying Mr. Speaker, that these estimates, Sir, involve some very interesting restructuring. It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that Government's current expenditure this year will rise. The Government cannot be accused of trying to cut expenditure this year, Government's current expenditure, Sir, this year will rise. It will rise from $1,050 million in the last financial year to $1 129 million in the next, an estimated increase of $78.7 million, so there will be a total increase in Government total current expenditure by $78.7 million.

The repayment of debt is to rise for ever from $190 million to $280 million, that is by $89.97 million, so you can already begin to see, Sir, and I have not yet finished the analysis that the increase in debt will more than account for the increase in Government total expenditure, and Government's personal emoluments, Sir, are intended to rise from $416.7 million to $475 million. The increase in debt, plus the increase in Government personal emoluments brought about by the regrading and the wage increases and the increased pensions, the increase in debt and the increase in personal emoluments will together give rise to an increase in expenditure of $145 million.

So if those two items of expenditure are to rise by $145 million, but total expenditure on the current side is only to rise by $78 million, it means that Government would have had to make adjustments of $70.152 million in the rest of its current budget in order to accommodate those two changes. And, the question that the Committee must ask itself, where are those $70.152 million of adjustments that the Minister of Finance is making? Who will they affect in the Barbadian society? Which sectors will they affect? Is $70.15 million of adjustment, Sir, right now too large or too small? Are they being properly distributed? These are the issues, Sir, that these estimates raise.

I trust the House to understand the point that I am making, Sir, that, yes, Government expenditure on the current expenditure rises by $78.7 million but debt and personal emoluments rise in a combined way by $145.8 million, so it must mean that other part of the current expenditure would have to reduce by $70 million if you are going to have those numbers coming out in balance.

We can begin to tell you, Sir, where some of the adjustments will be made. Temporary staff is Head 16 under the auspices of the Ministry of the Civil Service and just as you have a central pool now by which Government meets contingency, you also have a central pool for the employment of temporary staff. Last year, Sir, $5.21 million was voted to the Ministry of the Civil Service to employ temporary staff. This year $3.96 million has been voted under that Head. Some temporary staff, Sir, to the extent of $1.2 million will have to be retrenched.

Training, Mr. Speaker, Sir, and the expenditure by Government on the development of human resources in general is one of the chief areas when one analyses these estimates in their entirety and see it as a total programme, because we must see it as a programme we are told, but if you analyse these estimates as a total programme and peruse them carefully, the expenditure by Government on the development of the human resources is carrying a substantial part of the adjustment as well.

Let me illustrate. Head 16 again. The expenditure, Sir, for the training in the public service is to be cut by 41.6 percent – from $630,000 last year to $367,000 this year. The Government made a big deal of providing training for computer in education. That is to carry a cut from $573,000 last year to $500,000 this year. The Government maintained a vote for technical training of specialists in the Ministry of Education and the Community College, Sir. That is to be cut from $5.2 million last year to $2.4 million this year. The Ministry of Education, Sir, used to grant to institutions, like the Barbados Workers'Union Labour College and so on and make a big deal out of it when they introduced it, a vote of $3.6 million to train people. That now, Sir, is to carry a cut whereby it is to drop from $3.6 million to $1 million this year.

Training in human resource development carries a substantial portion of Government adjustment in this matter. The Prime Minister spoke sweetly, the words rolled off his tongue, sweetly, about what he intended to do for the productive sectors and we heard about how Government will use these estimates here, Sir, to stimulate agricultural production, but what are the facts? Is it not true, Mr. Prime Minister, that the agricultural sector is also expected this year to carry a substantial part of your financial

restructuring? And, is it not true that last year $8 million was provided under a Head in the form subsidies and incentives for the agricultural sector, and is it not true that that $8.7 million is now to be cut to $2.6 million? Can the Minister, Sir, truly convince us in this House that his intention is to stimulate agricultural production in the context of a situation where he is reducing incentives in agriculture by as much as $6 million this year, Sir?

I have perused, Sir, the Ministry of Agriculture carefully and I see no provision for Spring Hall Land Lease Project, Sir, nor the R.D.P. Project. The provision, Sir, for the A.D.C. has been cut as well. I am only calling out, Sir. Who are carrying the brunt of the adjustment? The provision, Sir, for the remedial work by the Ministry of Agriculture in the Scotland District, has also been cut and Government's contribution, Sir, to the development of irrigation and water resources has been cut from $659,000 to $476,000.

In relation to Education, Mr. Speaker, the existing estimates that set Government deficit at $370 million, these estimates, as regards education do not include the long standing provision for the payment of the Transport Board for the transportation of pupils.
3.55 p.m.

That $3.6 million that the Government used to vote each year under the Ministry of Education to allow the Ministry of Education to pay the Transport Board for the transportation of the school children has been entirely removed.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Deputy Prime Minister said that it has always been a waste of time. But I know that there are persons in my constituency who are low income people with a lot of children to send to school who understand the value of that subsidy to them. It is a subsidy to the people and not a subsidy to the Transport Board. To the extent, Sir, that that $3.6 million has been part of the Government reaction to its financial difficulties, we can say immediately, Sir...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. Just hold on a minute until we get some silence. Carry on.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am obliged to you for your protection, Mr. Speaker. The $3.6 million has been moved out of the Estimates. But I am told, Sir, that it is to be moved back in. I will be gratified to hear if it will be moved back in at the same level or if there is still an implied cut. Mr. Speaker, I have not seen it moved back in, but I would be grateful if the Government will inform us what will be its level of contribution in this respect, Sir, to persons who need it very badly in this society.

I have already, Sir, drawn reference to the fact that Government's contribution to computer education in Barbados, Sir, has been reduced in spite of its record in this area as well as its grants to a wide range of non-public sector institutions ranging from the Barbados Workers Union Labour College to BIMAP has been reduced by $2 million, Sir. Technical education has been reduced by $3 million and implicitly, Sir, there is a reduction in Government's contribution to the University of the West Indies by an amount of $5 million as compared to its total contribution to that institution last year.

In relation to health, Sir, there is an important adjustment. The Drug Service on which $19 million was spent last year is now to attract $16 million. Every year, Sir, we hear about the efficiency from the Minister of Health and every year this House is called back at the last minute to grant an additional $3 million in supplementaries to the Ministry of Health. The Prime Minister has already warned his Cabinet colleagues that far from increasing expenditure, Sir, that he will be looking to reduce. He has just spoken forthcomingly in the matter. But we are to understand, Sir, that in the context of a deficit of $370 million the Drug Service is to be cut by $3 million.

In relation to housing, Sir, the National Low Income Housing Project Expenditure is to be cut from $799 000 to $429 000. In relation, Sir, to the Ministry of Youth and Community Development, the vote for Youth and Community Development Department is to be cut from $2 million, Sir, to $1.7 million. Welfare Department, Sir, and grants to individuals are to be cut from $9.4 million, Sir, to $8.5 million. Poor people are carrying the brunt of these adjustments and the Welfare Department as a whole will find its overall subvention cut from $12.8 million, Sir, to $11.6 million. The National Conservation Commission which last year received $17 million for its current operations, Sir, will this year only receive $12 million, a cut of $5 million. The Government can tell us the implications of this. The National Training Board, which was established to train young people to acquire skills to become employable and hence ought to be valued by any Minister of Finance as a serious priority, Sir, is to be cut. The subvention to the National Training Board is to be cut from $5.5 million to $4 million. These are the entities in the Barbados economy that will carry the burden of Government's cuts in expenditure notwithstanding the fact that Government's expenditure will increase.

In relation to the Ministry of Transport and Works, Sir, the Road Maintenance Programme is to be cut. The Subsidiary Road Programme is to be cut. The programme to produce roads in residential areas is to be cut and the subvention to the Transport Board cut from $12 million to $10 million. Mr. Speaker, even the Industrial Development

Corporation which the Minister has just assured is now to be in the forefront of Government's initiative to expand activity in this country is to face a cut in its capital programme, Sir, from $7.1 million to $3.1 million.

I say therefore, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has in these Estimates committed itself to a programme of maintaining its expenditure but reallocating its expenditure in a manner, Sir, that sometimes do not make sound economic sense. I cannot see, Mr. Speaker, the value at this juncture of the development of the Barbados economy of believing that you can effect an economy by reducing expenditure on areas such as training. I cannot see the value in that at all, particularly in the light of a situation, Sir, where there is a training vote that is dealing with as much as $12 million a year. How will we go and face the young people of this country, Sir, and tell them that the Government is taking over $12 million from their parents as a training levy but has decided this year to reduce the spending on the programmes developed and implemented by the National Training Board from $5.5 to $4 million? What are we telling the young people of Barbados?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in relation to debt, debt payments this year will account for the most important part of the total increase in Government expenditure. The Prime Minister has been very careful this year, Sir, not to tell the House that he will be paying the Barbados Labour Party's debts because he knows that there are two important foreign loans that have to be repaid this year, Sir. One was incurred in May 1987, the Barclays Loan, which I think an amount of $30 million is to be repaid this year incurred by the DLP Cabinet in May 1987 as well as a Japanese Loan in the amount of $68 million incurred in September. The Minister of Finance, as in the past, has sought to dissociate himself from the latter loan and has regaled the House and his audiences in the wider society with the argument that the loan is a loan of a former Minister of Finance who deserted. You and he did a dog dance for four years. It was the sweetest waltz I have ever seen. But I want to say that the records of this House will show that when the question of that $68 million came to this Honourable Assembly, the only member of the Democratic Labour Party who raised any objection to it then was the late former Member of St. John who was man enough to get to his feet to say, "I do not agree with this loan. I do not agree with my Minister of Finance going anywhere to Japan to borrow any money."
4.05 p.m.

The records of the House, Sir, are clear on this point. All of the other members of the Democratic Labour Party side, each and every one, supported it and voted for it and there is no record of any dissension within the ranks of the Democratic Labour Party to the former outstanding Minister of Finance between 1986 and 1987. I would be glad, Sir, if the Minister of Finance would be guided by the spirit and the principles of collective responsibility, recognise that that loan raised in the name of the people of Barbados by a Minister of Finance, surfaced in a DLP Cabinet with the full concurrence of all of his Cabinet colleagues, except one, is a debt that he should pay without a murmur, and I do not want to hear him this year, Sir, when the time comes to have to pay that debt, speaking disparagingly of the debt as if it was a debt raised wholly by that Minister of Finance without the collusion of his colleagues in Cabinet. But, the larger point I want to make, Sir, is that the debt burden that the Democratic Labour Party Administration faces this year, Sir, is a DLP debt burden. The Democratic Labour Party has used a lot of debentures since 1986, Sir, to help finance the operations, particularly in those immediate days after that supplementary of 1986 when they were scrambling for revenue. When you check the estimates you will see that the repayment of debentures is bulking as an area of debt service and those two large foreign loans, Mr. Speaker, DLP foreign loans, are what is causing Government's debt charges to rise by $86 million this year after falling by $60 million last year. I must make the point. I must stress the point because this Minister of Finance is going on record outside this Parliament too often with the assertion that he is a victim of circumstances, Sir, that he is a man more sinned against than sinning, that he is left to repay the debt of a wicked Barbados Labour Party Administration as if, Mr. Speaker, previous Ministers of Finance have not had to repay the $718,000 to the IDB each year for the debt that he signed, the Minister of Finance signed on April 3rd, 1976, that is now causing the water rates of old people in my constituency to rise in some instances by $80 including arrears back to July last year. Ministers of Finance in the past have repaid that $718,000 that he left the country responsible for.

I want, Mr. Speaker, if I may say so, for the Minister of Finance to live up to his responsibility this year in relation to the debt. I want, as part of this exercise, for us, at the end of the day, to agree as to what Government's borrowing requirements are. I have made this point repeatedly in debates relating to economic and financial matters in this country, that a lot of the rancour would go out of our discussion of debt if during the process of the estimates debate or the budget debate the Minister of Finance could state what Government's external borrowing requirements are and the House is advised as to why there are those borrowing requirements. Thereafter it would be just a simple question – once we agree on the need for them – for the Minister to source them at the best possible rates for Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister has not yet spoken to that particular issue and I am raising the point because it is a fact that the balance of the Barclays loan that was to be drawn down in March of this year has already been drawn down and is not now available for financing later in the year. I raise that point for this reason, Sir: On some day in October, I think October 31st, the Government of Barbados is going to have to find $68 million on one day to repay a

loan. $68 million to be found on one day, Sir, implies that before that day comes you have to have that foreign exchange set aside specifically for the purpose of debt servicing. Last year, and you will recall, when the Government went to the London Market, to borrow the $120 million, I, speaking on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, said then that we could agree with the loan if the Government was going to commit part of that loan to put it in a position to protect the credit worthiness of Barbados in international markets by having part of that foreign financing available when that bullet loan raised by the Democratic Labour Party falls due for redemption in October. Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that money will have to be repaid in one day.

I remember in 1988-89, when the Minister was repaying a bullet loan raised by the Barbados Labour Party he had the television and everybody in his room signing the cheque to send off to Japan but it falls now to him to repay that Japanese bullet loan in one day. Provision has not yet been made for it. If the Government intends to maintain Barbados' credit worthiness and I believe that the Government Sir, deserves all support in any sensible and reasonable efforts it will make to protect Barbados credit worthiness in the market, that it has to be more responsible in relation to meeting that obligation. We need therefore to know, Mr. Speaker, what is going to be Government's strategy in relation to the management of the debt this year. I am saying Sir that this is one of the key issues that these estimates raise because Government's amortisation, Sir, of the foreign debt amounts to $178 million. Now $178 million for the repayment of amortisation of a loan of foreign debt is a lot of money but even more so when you start the year with reserves of only $150 million.

It must be clear to somebody in the Government therefore, Sir, that a debt management strategy must be an absolutely vital component of Government resolving this financial difficulty that it has brought upon itself and therefore, we as a House, responsible for managing the public purse and the financial affairs of this country, need to hear our Minister of Finance speak in a very forthcoming way on this particular issue. I will not in the course of debate on the economy this year, Sir, allow this matter to rest and we cannot allow it to rest, Sir, because of factors that the House is already seised with. Barbados, Sir, is now in a position where we are financing less and less of our capital program with access to concessionary loans from the World Bank and the IADB and so on. There was a time throughout the seventies where as much as half of our total capital expenditure was financed by loans from the World Bank and IADB etc. but if you pick the trends it is now down to less than a quarter. The Minister has identified that financing from the World Bank, the IADB, the CDB, the Japanese and the Venezuelans amount to $55 million for the next financial year. His total capital program is $280 million, hence we are down to a situation where a quarter of the capital program of this country is being financed by concessional loans from those institutions. It means therefore that if we are going to be thinking in terms of having a capital program to expand the infrastructure and to provide creative opportunity for employment that our access to the capital markets must be assured, and to assure ourselves of that access to the capital market, you have to have a debt management policy in place that the market can recognise as being sensible. We really, Mr. Speaker, must hear the Minister of Finance speak to that issue.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to have additional opportunities...

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, we are anxious in this Debate, Sir, to go into the Heads. My colleagues tell me I must quickly touch on the revenue side from last year.

The projection of Government revenue has been a matter that has been treated lightly in the past, particularly by the Member for St. John, who always speaks disparagingly of numbers when one is talking about public finance. He is the one person in Barbados who believes that you can discuss public finance without reference to numbers and we have heard that we are talking about prophecies.

The relevance of the revenues obviously was borne out last year when the link between Government's overdraft and its estimated current revenue for the year became one of the central issues in financial management in this country. The law relates to the amount of money that Government can get from the Central Bank by way of overdraft to what we, in this House, agree is to be a realistic estimate of Government revenue and in a sense, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House sets a number of things in train when we approve these estimates including in them an estimate of Government revenue. First of all, we provide latitude, or we provide the basis on which the Minister of Finance will either tax or not tax. His estimate of revenue for the year to come is the basis for which he decides the sufficiency of resources as to whether he will tax or not tax and obviously, therefore, these estimates of revenue will also decide the amount of resources that he can get from the Central Bank by way of its overdraft.

The projection that the Government has given to the House, Sir, would indicate that between January of this year and for the first quarter of the calendar year, Government's revenues are to grow by 10% as compared to the first quarter of the calendar year 1990. But Government is in the face of a situation where it is estimated that its revenues will grow by 10% in the first three months of the calendar year, asking the House to agree with an estimate for revenue for the year as a whole that will grow by only 1.7%. Now, the previous spokesman and shadow Minister of Finance, Sir, used each year to make an issue of this, that

it does not make sense for the Government to bring to the House an estimate saying that revenue is going to grow by 10.3% in the first quarter of the year but yet then suddenly for the whole financial year as a whole that the revenue is to grow by only 1.7%. One of the two has to be wrong and we are urging upon Government that the Government takes its decision in relation to the level of taxes if it is going to tax at all this year upon the basis of the most recent available information rather than upon the basis of the information that is contained in these estimates. These estimates would tell us, Sir, that after revenue for almost all of the last financial year has fallen that revenues for February will be 20% greater in 1991 than for February in 1990. That's what the estimates are telling this House: that the Government is asking us to agree and that the revenue for March will be 6.3% greater than they were for March 1990 and for January 8.9%. Something, Sir, does not make sense.

In any event, I believe that the House must agree that in the final analysis Government's revenue out-turn for the last financial year that will end on March 31st is the clearest evidence possible of the sharp down-turn in the Barbados economy; that for the first time since 1959, have you ever seen a situation where Government's revenue in this country has dropped? It is significant, Mr. Speaker, that this country has gone through two recessions, one between 1972, 1973 and 1974 and one between 1981 and 1982 and in those recessions, Sir, there was no decrease in Government's revenues, but for the first time since 1959 Government's revenues in a financial year will be less than they were in the previous financial year and by as much Sir, as $32 million. Indeed, Sir, it is significant that Government's projected revenue for the financial year to come, of $977 million, is going to be less than Government's revenue realised two years ago and it must be telling the Government that the Barbados economy is not only weak, but is weakening at a ferocious pace. If an economy, which has always been able to show an increase in revenues despite recession, now finds itself in a position where revenues each year are declining at this serious rate, I believe, Sir, that when Government comes to contemplate its decision as to whether to tax or what to tax it must bear in mind the fact that without cutting the tax rate last year, because you had a no-tax budget, there was a substantial decline in Government's revenue. Merely, therefore, increasing the rate of taxes in this country will not be a sufficient condition to ensure that there will be an increase in the tax yield. The junior Minister of Finance tells me that the Minister knows that, and he obviously has spoken to him and has impressed this point upon him and I am pleased, Sir, that we now have this very strong ally in the Ministry of Finance who understands that merely increasing the tax rate will not give rise in itself to an increased tax yield. And as I said Sir, the increase in the tax rate year after year can now be cited as one of the factors responsible for the shrinkage in activities in the country leading to the reduction in the level of revenue.

The efficiency of Government using increased taxes to close this gap is a policy that is questioned both by the shadow Minister of Finance on this side as well as the real-real Minister of Finance on that side. I am saying therefore, Sir, that when one analyses the pattern of taxes that a very fine balance has to be created by Government if it is to get itself out of this hole. They obviously are in a deep bind if the revenues are falling but you are not cutting the tax rate. It means that your economic activity by tax base will shrink and any additional draconian increase in the level of tax rate will be dysfunctional. The Government will have to find other ways. The Government, Sir, cannot in this financial year look only to solve the problems of financing this year while leaving the problems of the general economy in the lurch. It must look this year for a financial solution that both addresses the narrow financial needs of Government as well as the broader economic needs of the society. It has to find that package of financial measures this year that allows increases in the tax yield in the future to come not from increases in the tax rate but from the real growth of the Barbados economy.

I want to impress that point, as I said, in support of my friend, the Honourable Member from St. Philip South. He stated, Sir, that the Minister of Finance seems anxious to solve the narrow problems of the Ministry of Finance and to leave the broader problems of the economy to sort themselves out by whatever magic, that he must now see that there is a relationship between the two and that the measure that was brought to the House one would hope, Sir, is a measure that does not sacrifice the interest of the Barbados economy on the altar of the narrow needs of a Minister. In the final analysis, Mr. Speaker, the fundamental issue that the Minister will have to grope with is very simple, that by his own definitions, by his own criteria, he has brought this country to a position where Government's resources in relation to Government's spending has now led to such a gap on the public account as to put Barbados in a position where, to use his words, it cannot be comfortable. He had a $320 million financial problem last year, Sir. He used expedients such as short-term foreign commercial loans and Central Bank accommodation to deal with that. We understand and can see the visible evidence of the damage that was done to the Barbados economy.

This year, Sir, speaking of a deficit of $370 million and I want to close, Sir, on this point... In 1988 when a deficit of $271 million was realised, a large part by the action of the other Minister of Finance, the present Minister of Finance in the face of that deficit of $271 million said that the Barbados economy had been driven to the rocks and that it was left to him now to pull it off the rocks.
4.25 p.m.

A deficit of $271 million then in his judgement forced the Barbados economy to the rocks this year. Last year the Minister of Finance had $320 million. He has on top of that, Sir, imposed an additional debt of $370 million. If it was on

the rocks as a result of a deficit of 8% of GDP or $270 million, where is it, if we are talking of deficits of this order of magnitude? I appeal to the judgement of the Minister that in 1989 when he realized a deficit net amortization of $26 million, he went to the country and said that Sandi is sound. If Sandi was sound with a deficit of $26 million, I submit respectfully to the House that he is very, very unsound with a deficit of $320 million plus, followed by one of $370 million. That is what this debate is about. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, those of us from this side who were fortunate enough to be returned after the last General Election are at least pleased about one thing. It is that we do not have to endure the former Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the present Honourable Member for St. Peter. We have heard the same speech for the past 4 years. In fact about three weeks ago, the Honourable Member for St. Peter made almost the identical speech. I mentioned on that occasion that it is going to be very unfortunate for us because we will have to listen to it in the Estimates, under the Appropriation Bill and no doubt those of us who are here then will have to listen to the same speech in the Budget Debate. But we are long suffering and we are going to continue to listen to him.

Mr. Speaker, it is a simple matter. If you have a deficit, there are two ways of going about clearing that deficit. You raise revenue and you cut expenditure. For the past two or three years...

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Yes you use a combination. You cut expenditure and you increase revenue. One or the other or both. For the past two or three years, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Peter and the other six persons who were over on that side were telling this administration that we need to cut expenditure, there is squandermania, too much expenditure, you need to cut it.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has come today with this Appropriation Bill which sets out that expenditure will be controlled. Mr. Speaker, what has happened...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Minister is misleading the House. Expenditure has increased.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I said controlled. Mr. Speaker, let me continue, Sir. I was specific in my words. Controlled.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: It does not mean it cannot be increased and you control it.

Mr. SPEAKER: No cross talk.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, let me proceed because people tend to think that if you are controlling something that you cannot increase. That is ridiculous.

Let me continue, Mr. Speaker. You have heard today, Mr. Speaker, about cuts in certain expenditures of Government and what it will lead to. You heard the Honourable Member for St. Peter saying it will lead to this and it will lead to that. He even asked who are going to be the winners and who are going to be the losers?

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: That the Minister of Finance should tell you who are going to be winners and who are going to be the losers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. We must have some consistency in the debate. I have not allowed Members to interrupt other Members. I wish that Honourable Members will continue in the path we have been going.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Thanks for the protection, Mr. Speaker. But they realize that heckling does not bother me.

Mr. SPEAKER: No one will heckle in the Chamber anyhow.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member said that the Minister of Finance did not say who are going to be the winners nor the losers in this exercise and that he should have.

In 1982 there were cuts left, right and centre. In 1983 with respect to 1982, left, right and centre. If you look at the Approved Estimates for 1983-84 you will see that Transport and Works cut, Education cut, Housing and Lands cut, Labour, Security and Sports cut. Nobody then said who were going to be the losers and who were going to be the winners which means that there are times that you are going to have to cut. Just as there are times that you are going to have to increase. No one came in 1983 and said this sector of the community is going to be the loser or that sector is going to be the winner. Why do you want it done now?

What I find very, very revealing, and the Honourable Member for St. Peter was the chief adviser to the Prime Minister, at that time, proposing these cuts.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Member is misleading the House, Sir. I was not an employee in the Ministry of Finance in 1983. I never held a post as a chief

adviser to any Minister of Finance in this country. There are posts in the Public Service to advise the Minister of Finance. He knows who they are and he should not try to mislead the House with these scurrilous attacks on me.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He was the adviser, Mr. Speaker. What is very interesting in this debate is this. I have listened to the Honourable Member's speech for roughly two hours. For three years he was saying that this administration should cut expenditure. He has not said at any time today in his entire speech, if he believes that expenditure should now be cut. He has not said that in his entire speech. He has not said if he believes that expenditure should be cut. He is not saying that any longer.

The question I should like to ask the Honourable Member is: Do you still believe now that the elections are over that expenditure should be cut and if so, in what areas do you recommend that the cut should be put? That is what I will ask you. That is what I would like you to do.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You cannot for three years....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You cannot for three years...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I have allowed each Member ample opportunity to make his point and I will continue under the Rules to allow all Members freedom of speech. But I will not allow interruptions. I have said before you may make asides quietly but not to interrupt another Member. It is not fair to that Member.

Hon. H. A. BlACKMAN: He has not said in his entire speech today whether he believes what he fervently believed before the elections that expenditure should be cut and if he does still believe it, he has not said in what areas he proposes that it should be cut.

Do not tell me about running the Government. You all will never run it. The people just put you all a little further back for another five years. We know you are not running it. If you were advocating cutting expenditure for three years before the elections because you felt that it was advantageous, come today and say again and say that we are right in trying to cut expenditure. That is what you should do.

Let me proceed, Mr. Speaker. He said that the Prime Minister has not spelt out any measures at all today. The words he used were that the Prime Minister was silent on the deficit. The Prime Minister was not silent on the deficit. 4.35 p.m.

The Prime Minister specifically said what the deficit was. He then set out certain measures that the Government proposes to take, and these measures were not touched on by the speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Peter. The Prime Minister said that measures will be taken to streamline and to make more efficient, the workings at the Port, as the former Minister for Finance for the Barbados Labour Party did in 1985. I know it because I got some complaints from down there, well, not complaints but they said that you were fairly good. The Prime Minister has said that he will streamline and make more efficient what is going on at the Port, what is going on at Customs, what is going on at the Airport, this is what the Prime Minister has said. Oh, you did not hear it? You did not hear the Customs? You did not hear the customs? Well you were not listening. Well you were sleeping, well not sleeping, your eyes were closed.

These are some of the things that the Honourable Prime Minister said. The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is this, you cannot say that the deficit is 3 per cent of GDP and the Prime Minister boasted about that years ago, and now the deficit is ten per cent of GDP.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member who is the spokesman for Finance on the other side knows that an economy is a dynamic thing, that there are times when the deficit will be three, there are times when it will be eight. There are times when it will be five and there are times when it will be seven. Do you agree? The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is for any person at all, whether it be the Honourable Member for St. Peter or the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to believe that you can keep a government deficit at 3.5 per cent of GDP every year in and out is nothing short of being ridiculous.

The Prime Minister stated what his policy was. He stated that what he would like to see is a deficit that is about 3.5 per cent of GDP which he considers workable. He did not say that he or you or me could keep the deficit at 3.5 per cent. He never said that and he will never say it. The point I am trying to make is this, because 3.5 per cent is manageable it does not mean that you don't go over 3.5. You are human beings just like he is, he has never pretended to be anything other than human, and you know that, and because it is at 10 per cent of GDP today it does not mean that in another year or two it will not be down to two per cent of GDP. It does not follow. It does not mean that. You see, the point has to be taken that every time the Prime Minister makes a statement, the statement is being taken and used as though he is saying that this is so and nothing will change it. This statement is put in concrete.

The Minister of Finance made a statement in the Budgetary Proposals last year when he said that the growth will be less than the year before but that he expects that there will be two per cent growth. And you, the Honourable Member for St. Peter made a big song and dance of that statement that the Prime Minister made in the budget debate. Taking all the facts into consideration, the statement the Prime Minister made at that time was a reasonable statement and this was confirmed by your statement in the debate here in the Budgetary Proposals and by the statement by the former Minister of....

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member, Sir, is misleading the House. The only thing that I have said, Sir, is that what was set out this year in the Throne Speech as a statement attributable to the Prime Minister a year ago was not true and that, Sir, is a fact, that in the Throne Speech it was alleged that the Prime Minister had said in the Budget a year ago that the economy was going to contract and the Prime Minister did not say that in the Budget a year ago, Sir. That is the only thing that I drew reference to. The Member, Sir, therefore must not misrepresent what I said.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister specifically said that the economy will not be as robust in 1990 as it was in 1989 but that it was expected to grow at about two per cent. That is what he said.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. The Honourable Member for St. Peter had an hour and according to the rules of this House he had unlimited speech. I do not think it is fair that a Member with half an hour speech should be interrupted so often when that Honourable Member had that opportunity and he has the rules of the House to rise on a point of order, a point of elucidation etc. I think we should stick to those rules and allow the debate to go on. I believe that. So, I think we should desist from this kind of trying to interrupt Members which is not really the rules of the House. Be a little quieter. That is all.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance in his effort, realising that the deficit will be brought under control by two measures, that is, increase in revenue and reduction in expenditure, has gone about tackling these two positions of attack. As far as the expenditure control is concerned the Prime Minister has put certain measures and certain statements in place here. They are being pooh-poohed by the spokesman for the Opposition, although he can see that an effort is being made to control the expenditure and let me explain what I mean, Mr. Speaker.

If you are going to control expenditure and controlling expenditure in Government is not a simple matter as the Honourable Member for St. Peter knows, and I am going to quote from part of a speech he made in the last Appropriation Bill debate. He said, this is the Honourable Member for St. Peter and I am quoting him correctly. Page 5007 of those debates – House of Assembly Debates Monday March 12, 1990. The Honourable Member for St. Peter said:

> "I am saying that the control of expenditure, Sir, is a very difficult thing."

He admits that the control of expenditure is very, very difficult. The Minister of Finance is making an effort and one of the ways that he is trying to make an effort is in the expanding of this programme oriented budget.

This programme oriented budget was started in 1980 but there are certain things about it that were not followed through with. The point here, Mr. Speaker, the programme was initiated in 1980, but there were certain deficiencies in the present classification that had to be corrected. Obviously, if you are going to bring your expenditure under control and it is not something that you can do overnight you have to start, and what is happening here, those areas that you can identify in the various Ministries, that you can bring under control, those are the first ones that you take control of. That is what this new format is doing.

There are certain expenditures that used to be free to different Ministries. What is happening now, is that those expenditures can be brought under central control and you start by bringing them under central control and that is what we are doing.
4.45 p.m.

You bring those under the control of the Central Government first because those are the easiest to control, not the Central Government but the Ministry of Finance. At least you can oversee those different spendings in different Ministries. There are other things you have to do. We realize that one of the things you may have to do is to look probably four or five years down the road and estimate how much expenditure you will spend for that length of time, and then you work according to that plan. There are many things that have to be put in place if expenditure is going to come under control.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter last week mentioned that one of those areas that may have to be looked at to bring expenditure under control will be parliamentary control. Did you not mention this last week as well? That is all I am saying. Mr. Speaker, the point I am getting at is this: that we have to start somewhere with controlling expenditure. We have to start somewhere in reducing the deficit and we think that we have made a start. It is okay to look throughout these Estimates and say well this has been cut from here or that has been cut from there. Throughout the years and as I have mentioned in these Estimates, in 1983 there were cuts throughout certain Ministries because the Government of the day felt that there was a need for greater control of the expenditure. As

adviser – well, he said that he was not an adviser... But the point is that he agrees that there are times when you have to take measures to control your expenditure and that is what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand something else. Mr. Speaker, I have always said that Opposition politics is the sweetest politics anywhere. All you have to do, Mr. Speaker, is that each time you get up you attact right down the line.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Well, it would not be easy for you in Opposition or Government. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that in Opposition politics we have to understand that is the nature of the beast. That is why you can get throughout three years a party telling you to cut your expenditure, you are spending too much money, and then immediately after the elections are over and you try to bring your expenditure under control, that party no longer believes that is the way to go. That is why I am saying that it is so easy over there. It is easy, Mr. Speaker, because everyone in the Opposition whether the Opposition is the Barbados Labour Party or any other Opposition like the one that just left can have all of the answers to all the troubles that a Government may from time to time come up against. They have all of the answers but the point is this. It is never as simple as that. It is never a simple matter that you can sit down and say do this or do that and it works. As the Honourable Member for St. Peter knows, if you try to correct one thing that thing impacts on another and, therefore, you may have to adjust again. It is not a simple matter of saying correct this or do that, or do not spend this or spend that.

I want to say this, Mr. Speaker. I am convinced that this Administration and the present Minister of Finance is on the right road. There are lots of things that were said today by the spokesman of the Barbados Labour Party on the economy of Barbados. My comment at the time when the statements were being made was that it is obvious to those of us here and it should be obvious to everyone that a lot of the strictures that the Honourable Member was putting forward and a lot of the things he was saying that are wrong with the economy and that he believes this should be done, must be obvious to the Honourable Minister of Finance and this Administration must be aware of those things as well. He has to be.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: If he did not ask for a debate, there would be no need for Parliament. This is the whole idea about Parliament. Parliament is to sit down and discuss, put forward views, criticize, and propose. That is the idea of Parliament, but the point is this. What I am saying is that most of the strictures or all of them that you are putting forward and your tale of gloom and doom, as is customary, we have heard them before. We know whether what you are saying is true or what you are saying is not true. Well, you have not proposed any measures. All you did was criticize. You have not propose any measure and you will always fall back on the one statement that you are not the Government. "You are to govern." We know that we are the Government. But it is okay, as I said, for you to get up and criticize all of the time without putting forward a single proposal as to how you would handle it. The reason for that is the position Oppositions take immediately before elections and what they do immediately after. I could not believe that having listened to the Opposition for three years in here and outside criticizing the Government for squandermania and everything that you are talking about that now the Government has come today to do something about its expenditure not a single word has emanated from the Honourable Member over there as to, okay, well you seem to be tackling the problem of expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not going to stay very long on this debate because we will get to some Heads and I believe then is the time when we can come back and rebut and put forward. I just thought that I would set the record straight on some things that were said today. Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I support this Appropriation Bill. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not surprised that the Government finds itself in a quandary today – hence, the gymnastics that the Honourable Member who just spoke had to indulge in. As long ago as 1986, the Democratic Labour Party's policy displayed a number of inconsistencies and today it is no different. Barbados, Sir, finds itself in the unfortunate position today of having to pay for the follies of the Democratic Labour Party.

These Estimates indicate very clearly that this country is going down hill at a fast rate. We are now being looked at by knowledgeable persons abroad as being a country in the Caribbean with its peoples' standard of living being in great danger of being drastically reduced. The economic indicators are not good. These Estimates of Expenditure disclose that. I think, Sir, that the debate should not be side-tracked. The facts of the matter are that last year this country faced a very serious position whereby instead of going forward we went back by the significant percentage of over 3 per cent. Sounds strange! Of course, part of the problem is that many of the people on the other side who should know what they are doing do not know. Because I find it very difficult for anybody in here to fail to appreciate the significance for Barbadians to know of the fact that this country in 1991 had a negative growth of minus 3 per cent and over.

4.55 p.m.

Now, Sir, we cannot hide from the public these matters any longer. In addition to that negative growth,

our fiscal deficit has deteriorated very significantly. We are now talking of an overall deficit of $300 million, a very high percentage of our GDP. We are talking of that having occurred last year. What we are talking of is the irresponsible conduct of the Government in bringing Estimates of Expenditure and revenue to this Parliament of an equal amount. That is what we say out here. It is as though the message of the irresponsibility last year has not registered.

I am shocked at the response of one of the Ministers in the Ministry of Finance because one of the significant points that was made by the chief spokesman for the Opposition was that as a result of the Government's deficit of $300 million in 1991, that the Government had pre-empted in order to finance that deficit, a very large proportion of the total credit that was available in Barbados. There is no use attacking the chief spokesman on Finance on this side when he makes such valid points.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I think it is good we observe the Rules in the House, for example, Behaviour of Members not speaking. That Rule is 33(5):–

> "Members must not read newspapers, books, letters or other documents, except such matters therein as may be directly connected with the business under debate".

I think we could observe those little courtesies from time to time. Continue.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: As I was saying, Sir, the impact of a fiscal deficit of the order of $300 million in Barbados was that the Government pre-empted an unreasonably large share of the credit available in Barbados with devastating consequences to the productive sector. Now, Sir, it goes further because at the same time the Government through its own policies over the course of the last four years, had also delivered to Barbadians another devastating blow, for it took, in its tax effort, a larger proportion of the GNP than had ever been taken before. That is the position we find ourselves in. You have borrowed more, you have taxed more and you have the worst deficit. That is what we are saying. The figures prove us right.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: It does not matter what the Honourable Member in an aside says. The figures have now proven that you have earned the distinction of being the biggest tax gatherers and the biggest spenders of money in Barbados. It may take a little time for that to be appreciated but the fact is you have brought Barbados' credit-worthiness down to a very low ebb. The figures are here.

The Government has also put Barbados in a very unenviable position in relation to its foreign reserves as a direct consequence of their policies. Today the position is that we have reserves that are reckoned in the minus number of weeks imports that they cover. Once upon a time we used to have a number of weeks cover even in 1981 when the price of oil was over $30 a barrel – never forget that – when the world was in a great recession. The recession we have now is not a world one. We have a DLP recession, a recession caused by the Democratic Labour Party in their irresponsibility in 1986 and its irresponsibility throughout the last period of time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He is accusing the Democratic Labour Party of causing the recession in Canada, the United States, Germany etc. Obviously he is misleading the House, Sir.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: These are the deficits the Democratic Labour Party ran. In 1986/87, $15 234 000 on current account. In 1987/88 it was $90 million after you were elected on a programme which you subsequently disowned, that it was possible to finance a country by tax cuts and cuts in expenditure. That is the programme that the Honourable Members on that side faithfully subscribed to. It had the consequence of $90 405 million, a deficit on current account. That was what the Honourable Member for St. Peter was referring to when he recalled the famous speech of the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance when he said that the country was on the rocks, not my words.

As a result of the beginning of the draconian taxation measures, the current account surplus in 1988/89 went from a deficit position of $90 million to a position of a surplus of $25 161 000. Sir, just look at page 13 of these Estimates because it sets out the ten-year history. Honourable Members by looking at that would see the unprecedented position that we are in.

In 1989/90 the deficit was $7 204 000 on current account. Last year, 1990/91 the Honourable Members on that side shoved this country's finances once again into a deficit on current account position to the tune of some $89 million. It seems as though Honourable Members on that side love deficits on current account of that magnitude.

The Honourable junior Minister of Finance is going to stay in here and say that we on this side are wrong, are irresponsible, are playing Opposition politics when we draw these simple facts to the attention of Honourable Members in this Chamber. This current year, the Government is projecting, not us – these are figures that are brought forward by the Government itself – that the current account deficit is going to be $151 million; financial irresponsibility, financial lunacy. That is after the efforts have been made to do the cutting.

We are talking about unprecedented deficits. We are talking about a situation which is only paralleled by the Governments of Burnham and Manley. This is what we are

talking about, fiscal irresponsibility that can only lead to Barbados being put in the same position as those countries. Is that what Honourable Members on the other side want to do? You have the mandate. Use it. If you want to use it and you continue in this line you will be using it in the same manner in which the overwhelming mandates were used by Burnham and by Manley. Continue in your present vein and this is the inevitable consequence.

Now, Sir, obviously as a Barbadian I must be concerned. Any Barbadian with any pride would have to be concerned. I want to repeat it because I do not think that many people are appreciating it that we had a deficit of $300 million in 1991. They are not budgeting after all of the cuts, no political considerations, we are now saying this year we are going to have $370 million.

Last year all the credit that was worthwhile was diverted to Government. Are we going to go back through the same position this time? Are we going to do that? This is a very serious matter. We are not making any fun. We are on the brink of some kind of disaster. Do not tell me about gloom and doom. The facts are that we are in a situation of doom. Do not let us fool ourselves about that. We are sitting down here making sport. People are making sport when this serious position is here.

We have always held the view that the Democratic Labour Party would land this country in serious financial trouble. The inconsistencies! The political philosophy and economic policies were always inconsistent. The proof is here now. They had one split before. I do not mind them splitting. What I am seriously concerned about is that they have wrecked Barbados because I do not have anywhere to go now, Sir. I am seriously concerned that they will wreck us. I am seriously concerned that if they do not mend their ways, we will be like Guyana and Jamaica. Do not let us fool ourselves. It was fiscal deficits that pushed them in that position.

A Government cannot continue to do what this Government is trying to do. You cannot continue to do it. When we get down to the Heads we will show where various items of expenditure contributed to this. I see Honourable Members over there smiling. It ought to be a matter of serious concern that our exports in this country have not risen since 1986, that we are exporting less. Do not tell me that you miss Intel, or Playtex. Do not tell me that. The point is they have not been replaced and the earnings that you derived from them have not been replaced. It is no wonder that everybody is under attack by a spokesman by the Government.

There is one lunatic that constantly makes statements that he could cut Government expenditure by 25%, that there is no faith in the figures of the Central Bank. I do not have to depend on the figures of the Central Bank. We have figures here produced by the Minister of Finance himself. He must have faith in these. They show the deficit.

I find it very difficult to follow the trend of argument which suggests a change in form of the presentation of Estimates as being a measure of great import that will in some way, like some magic wand, improve the position in the economy in Barbados as well as the revenue in the expenditure, hence a reduction in expenditure. This question of how you present the Estimates is a mere matter of form, not of any great substance except from an accounting point of view. What I would like is if as a result of this new method of presentation whether it does not in fact amount to more leeway being given for switching of Estimates, more virement being permitted and hence more control of the true cost of a particular service. There has not been any change in the Financial Administration and Audit Act. That Act and the Regulations made thereunder contain specific Rules which are designed to ensure that Parliament's vote as expressed in the Estimates are, in fact, carried out.
5.15 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is a great propounder of the theory that you must have laxity in this matter of Government presentation of figures and that you ought to be able to switch votes easily and that there is a lot of humbug having to come back to Parliament when you have an excess in one vote and a deficiency in the other, you ought to be able to switch around. Sometimes when you have that ability to switch it gets used in a little confused way for purposes other than for which Parliament votes it. These rules are designed to ensure that there is control, accounting control through the Auditor-General. That is why we have such relative precision and details with respect to Estimates.

I am not convinced yet that the new presentation of the Estimates is going to provide in any way greater control over expenditure. That is an important point. Because after all we are talking about the elimination of wastage. However you present the Estimates the capital expenditure on something like Sherbourne is a waste. However you present the Estimates, the expenditure on St. Joseph Hospital is nothing but a waste. You get what I mean? So however you present these things, the point of the matter is that in the context of Barbados, it is legitimate for people to hold the view that if you spend money in that direction this time that you are in fact contributing, by your own actions, to a deficit of $300 million. The presentation of the Estimates whether it is programme oriented or not, the point is that the underlying utilization of the money is the important thing.

I, Sir, look forward to the explanations that will be given to us by the Government as to how it is going to

implement a programme to stimulate the economy in Barbados. Because that is what is needed.

What is needed is a series of measures which will help to increase the gross national product. That is what we need. So that when we are talking about cutting expenditure and all of that, if there is one thing that is clear and a message that we have been sending repeatedly to the other side from as long ago as 1986 is that in an economy such as Barbados, Government has a role to play in helping to ensure that the economy goes forward. We are one of those kinds of societies....

I find it difficult to reconcile the Government's position with the fact that on page 14 of the Estimates I see the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce being the subject of a savage cut from $19 million to $14 million. That is savagery. I cannot understand it. There are others.

Whatever the Minister of Finance may think of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, because of the underlying importance of tourism today and the importance of sports too, Government could only have given an increase of under $1 million which, in my opinion, is an indication that the Government cannot be serious about wanting to help Barbados out of a recession.

Only this morning I was watching television and I saw the massive advertisements Jamaica had on television. I have to talk about this because I suspect we are not going to get down to this in the Estimates. We are in a position where somebody ought to tell the public why is it that for two years Barbados neglected the United States market to the extent of not having an advertising agency and no television advertising. These are facts. Facts of life. After the bankruptcy of Vanbrunt, carrying down US$1/2 million of our money which they say was already committed to newspapers and others, the successor to that firm was not appointed for at least a year.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, on a point of order. That is not true, Sir.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Tell us when he was. When he went bankrupt?

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, since I was appointed I think it was the 1st June. It was only a matter of six months. It was only a matter of six months. In that time they used the same buyers that they were using before. It is not a year. Do not mislead the House. That is a fact. I am telling the truth.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No wonder the Prime Minister cut you down to less than a million.

The basic position is that this economy started to recede....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN:...since the last quarter of 1989. That is a fact.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: For the Honourable Member's benefit, in 1985 the real growth rate was 1.1%, 3.6% in 1984, 5.1% in 1986. I left it growing at 5.1% in 1986. From then on you have never ever reached that 5% at all.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes. September 1986 Report of the Central Bank shows you that for the first six months of 1986 the economy was growing well up to 5%. So that is the position, Sir.

We must understand that you can only finance increased expenditure, you can only have good foreign reserves if this economy is firing in all its productive sectors. They have run down every one.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a contribution on this resolution on the Estimates before us. I think we all recognize that the economy of our country is at a state where all of us need to analyze the situation. I believe that when we remove a lot of the heat that we are hearing on the political issues and this heat is generally heat recognizably for political purposes, that we all here share a concern that we have to take stock of where we are and plan seriously about where we have to go. I do not share, quite frankly, in any kind of postulation that would want to suggest that the reason why we have to do that in our economy at this point in time is because of any financial mismanagement. We are dealing with a situation that is being faced by several developing countries at this time all through the Caribbean, all over the world. Small countries like Barbados will have from time to time to take stock of where we are going and look and see where we have to go.
5.25 p.m.

It is vitally important that public sector economics come under our scrutiny in this exercise. In fact, we live in a situation where the public sector economics is held up for total scrutiny when in fact it is only one part of another larger area of our economic life, but an area that is not subject to the same scrutiny. I am talking about the private sector. Every year we go through this exercise of excoriating and casting blame on politicians and giving the impression that they, and they alone, are responsible for all of the negative things that happen in our economic life.

It is a very false position quite frankly, and it is one that smacks of a lack of respect for ourselves the suggestion that the economic fortune of Barbados depends almost

totally on the collective wisdom of the people who sit here and make these decisions, when in fact they are actors in the scene who make decisions that can sometimes outweigh the things that we do inside here. But the fact is, under our system of Government, and under our system of governance, clearly the public sector comes in for a lot of scrutiny.

Sir, an examination of our performance in the public sector, looking at functional and economic classification of the way how we spend our money, suggests to me clearly that difficulties are coming up in two particular areas, in terms of the proportion of money spent on certain areas, and the two areas that continue to grow are the area of the general public service, and when we look at that we are really looking at salaries and wages – the growth of salaries and wages – and secondly the area of debt servicing. Those are the two problem areas in the public sector at this particular point in time.

If you look at the proportion of our expenditure going on those two areas as against the other areas, you will see that progressively we have to be cutting on things like education, things like health, community services, etc., and that in fact, these two areas, the areas of servicing debt, and the area of paying salaries in the public sector are the ones to which we have to pay a certain amount of attention.

I speak, Sir, as a trade unionist, and one who is therefore very, very cognizant of the importance of remuneration for labour. I would never take lightly the fact that the public sector plays a very important role in our economy and that they deserve the money that is spent on them. But I would also wish to indicate, Sir, that it seems to me that at this stage of our development as a country, when we are spending these large sums on public sector wages and salaries that there is a commensurate responsibility for us all to recognise that we expect that the public sector will play a very important role in generating the wealth of our country in producing the goods and services that will help us to go forward and experience the kind of growth that is very, very important.

It is clear to all of us looking at these statistics before us that the salaries increases over the last few years and the reclassification has meant that there has been a growth in public sector salaries and wages and if you look at comparative areas you will note that while in 1989 to 1990 these were about $408 million, in 1990/1991 they went up to $416 million and now we are looking at approximately $476 million in that same area. That has been a rapid and relatively massive increase.

I think we need to recognise that expenditure on salaries and wages will have an impact on the economics of the public sector and that in fact when this is happening, while at the same time revenues are not increasing significantly, then there must be a certain difficulty in our country. We can continue to pay high salaries and wages provided we have the revenue base to do that and therefore I think we all have to be very concerned that while we must adopt a policy of paying salaries and wages that are based on collective bargaining agreements, and that tend to be tied to all of those various factors in the economy that would suggest that salaries and wages should be increased, at the same time we have to be very careful, and to relate the salaries and wages to the total economic situation which faces the country at a particular point in time.

I believe we have to be very careful, like all other third world countries, at this point of our development in the way how we incur foreign debts even though we have not reached the crisis stage yet in terms of our debt service ratio. If you look at a comparison of debt servicing in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Barbados certainly cannot be considered to be one of the worst countries in this respect in terms of the quantum of our expenditure that goes on debt servicing. But it is a creeping situation where we have watched very carefully because at one time we can be within comfortable limits and then all of a sudden we find that we are really moving towards very uncomfortable positions in terms of debt service ratio.

I think therefore, right now at this point in time we, in Barbados, have to be very careful in terms of where we are treading and I believe this is a matter of national concern, and to me it is not a matter that calls for any particular political divide. We can compare Barbados in the early 1980's and the decline we experienced under the Barbados Labour Party to the situation we are in now under the Democratic Labour Party and we can if we want to, start casting blame, you were wrong then, we are wrong now, and that sort of thing, but basically that kind of discussion is irrelevant to a small third world developing country like ours, we are going to be buffeted by international considerations, we have to certainly use our experience so that we develop our own domestic programmes in order to nullify the worse effects that will come from that sort of situation, but I said, let us understand that we don't have total control over how our economy will perform at any particular point in time.

Now I share with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South the concern that we have to get our tradeable goods sector working. I can't say I agree with him that he can take all the blame for when he left, that the tradeable goods sector – I think he was Minister of Trade at the time and also Minister of Tourism – I don't think he can really take any particular credit for having left Barbados in a particularly rosy situation from which we fell in the years after. As a matter of fact the opposite might be the truth. I think we can easily say that perhaps he did not leave us in the best position. He might have been fortunate that his term ended before Intel left and Playtex left and so on, because then that would have to be factored into his total performance. But let us recognise that the fact that Intel left,

Playtex left and so on, and the suggestion is that we should have been able to get our trade of goods sector operating to that same level immediately after, that is a fallacious kind of statement. It is a statement that could only be made by an Opposition. The fact that Intel left is not to be taken to mean that one company left Barbados and we have not been able to attract similar companies. The fact is that Intel left because the area of economic activity that Intel represents was going into a very sharp decline. The micro chip industry, the area that Intel represented was contracting severely at that particular point in time.
5.35 p.m.

It was contracting severely at that particular point in time. Also, the Japanese were moving into serious competition with those United States companies. Because of the rapid change in the technology, Intel had to move out at that particular point in time. It was not a matter of Intel going out and easily after we could bring in somebody else. In fact, the point is that the successor companies to Intel and those kinds of companies are the data processing companies. In terms of the electronic change, anybody who understands how that industry is moving will know that you could not replace Intel with another Intel. The fact is that there has been a dramatic structural change in the industry and we have been making vast inroads into the data processing companies. We have been attracting them into Barbados. But it will be a matter of time quite frankly before we can attract that level of investment, especially bearing in mind the international competition for investment funds which relates not only to the old Third World but the whole of Eastern Europe. All of them will be competing for the same funds that we were attracting here to Barbados. It is, therefore, not going to be an easy thing.

We have to go back to our old staples and try to improve them as best we can. We have to try to get the best we can out of sugar. We have to try to get the best out of tourism. We have to try to diversify all of the old staples. We have to go back into agriculture and get that cotton project going in spite of all of the attempts at sabotage and so on which did not come off in one form or another or by one source or another. We have to go back to cotton where we can get some funds from urgently needed foreign exchange. We have to look at all of our tradeable goods sectors and we have to see how we can improve them at this point in time. It is not a very easy matter.

All of us who are looking at the situation in Barbados today know that it is not an easy matter to get the turn around that we need. There is not going to be any one shot innovation that will propel us forward out of the problems that we are in now. It is going to call for national discipline at all levels. We will have to come together and get a national strategy that is based on increasing what we have and improving on our performance, or pushing up our national level of productivity. It is going to be vitally important that we carry out almost a campaign to sensitize the whole nation of the problems that we are facing now. It is not going to be left to the private sector alone to carry the weight of pulling this country forward. But the private sector has a very important role to play and everytime you talk about what the private sector has to do in this country you hear about castigating them, lambasting them, and so on. The point is that everybody looks towards the public sector to do everything.

I heard the Honourable Member from Christ Church South say, "Look, we are going to have to build the houses because the private sector is not going to get into certain kinds of housing and so on, for poor people which is true." Governments in small countries like our own are expected to carry the social burden of everything. We have to put out money on the social infrastructure that is vitally important. When the Government goes ahead and put out the money on the social infrastructure, you hear about wastage. They say that the private sector now should be going out there and carrying the thrust of trade and making sure that the income comes into this country that we can build on it, but they are not performing the role to the extent that we would expect. I believe that we should come into a partnership where public and private sector have to work together to push our country forward and we have to operate on an agenda where we are sitting down and talking.

Therefore, I am very glad to understand the kind of discussions that the Honourable Prime Minister said that he would be involved in. I understand that he is now talking with the private sector groups, et cetera. But what we need in this country is meaningful dialogue instead of people remaining in camps and shooting at each other. I think we have to come together and understand that a national design is important at this time if we are to carry Barbados forward because the times will not be getting any easier. It is going to get increasingly more difficult and that has nothing to do with any public sector management alone. It has to do with the fact that we are operating in a very hostile international environment, an environment where no one knows what is going to happen tomorrow. The rules of the game have changed. We do not know what is going to be happening in the light of what is happening in Europe at this point in time. We have, therefore, to be very, very careful. We have to adopt a strategy of improving in all the work places in this country at whatever level. I am not talking about the factories now, but I am talking in the public sector. I am talking about wherever people have to produce to make a contribution to the gross national product. We have to be very careful in terms of the standards that we set. We have to try and eliminate wastage. We have to try as far as possible to improve on the quality and standards of what we have to offer in this country.

I would like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that these Estimates reflect that we are, in fact, in a relatively difficult position. When we look at some of the areas in which cuts complained about, they are being cut but some

are not going back to the levels where they were in some of the areas where the Honourable Member for St. Peter said there were intended cuts. If he makes a real comparison between where we are cutting and where we came from, he will recognize that even with the cuts we are far in advance of anything that was offered in periods before. I talk, for instance, in terms of subventions to training institutions. I am not sure what the direction of the cuts will be because we are looking at a Catholic figure and we do not know what the details are. You are talking at a time when the subventions used to be about $85 000 under the Barbados Labour Party Administration which went to over $3 million and now I see a figure here of perhaps $1 million. So we are talking about a cut that, in fact, measured by any other terms was a dramatic increase. We have to look and see the totality of these kinds of changes in the figures.

I would like to give my support to the Estimates and that is the contribution that I would like to make.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been said earlier that the elections are over. There have been losers and winners and that we readily concede. But I think it means that with the elections over the time has come for us to treat the public with candor and to let them know the true state of our economy.

I believe that when the last Honourable Member who spoke said that the Estimates reflect that we are in relatively serious trouble that he has seriously minimized and understated the position in which we find ourselves. Our finances are in a serious mess and the economy is in real trouble, no relatively serious trouble. I do not believe that we need to conduct ourselves as alarmists or to lose our cool in the matter. But I think that it is important that at the outset we recognize the enormity-sized scale of the problem with which we are confronted.

Indeed, the unparalleled deficit which we are now facing is only one index of the problems in the economy. It is an important index but there are several other indices that point unmistakably to the depth of the economic problems which we are facing. We are talking about high unemployment. We are talking about a minus position with respect to our foreign reserves. We are talking about a declining capacity in our productive sector to earn. We are talking about a serious credit squeeze in the country and we are talking about the unavailability of money to finance a lot of the efforts necessary to move us forward.
5.45 p.m.

So that when we look at the total picture, we are talking about a very serious economic and fiscal situation. Indeed, the last Honourable Member who spoke suggests that the way forward is dialogue. I would like to submit that more than dialogue is necessary even to begin with a recognition on all sides that the problem is serious and exists for real, not in the imagination of this Barbados Labour Party Opposition but it exists for real in the facts presented and in the experience of all fellow citizens from day to day.

Before I get to deal with general points, I want to comment on the suggestion that we are in a new ball game in respect to our position in the world as a small open economy. That has always been our lot and nothing has changed in that respect. We continue to be vulnerable to factors outside our control. That is why it is so necessary in Barbados that there be prudent economic leadership on the part of the Government. The point about our openness and our vulnerability has got to be made in another context, that is, that until the last year or so, when our trading partners in the first world began to go into recession, there had been an expansion of international trade in the mid and late eighties and for the first time in the last thirty years or so, Barbados did not share in that expansion of international trade. That is a very important consideration that partly reflects the misguided economic policies of the Democratic Labour Party. The second point which I think we need to make is that the role of government in this Barbados economy cannot be minimised. Our economic fortune depends in part and in large measure too, on the lead the Government gives, the policies it pursues, the taxes it imposes. So, we ought not to minimise and ignore the role of the Government.

Now, it is important, in my view, Mr. Speaker, that we ask ourselves why is it that we are at this point in this sorry mess. Whether the Democratic Labour Party likes it or not, they must admit that in 1986 they were given a great inheritance. In 1986 you inherited a buoyant Barbados and that is why that when you had the out-turn figures within a matter of six months, the growth in the economy was 5%. Unemployment was falling, the banks were awash with money, the agriculture was performing at a high level, we were certainly producing more than 100,000 tons of sugar, our dollar exports in manufacturing were at their highest and tourism was fighting at a higher level than the decline position in the two years before. The reality is that in the last year in which we were in office the banks were awash with money and we registered in this country a growth of 5% and that cannot be ignored. They are the real facts.

Asides.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM. These are the certainties of political life that both sides will be chased away from time to time, but I believe that it was the misguided policies of the Democratic Labour Party as reflected in their manifesto 1986 which in turn resulted in a high emphasis on borrowing rather than producing which was the result in part of serious fiscal responsibility. The public must be in doubt, Mr. Speaker about what are the serious implications of this large and horrendous deficit with which we are faced. We have been talking in euphemisms in this Parliament about the restructuring but I think the message ought to go forth from this Parliament that there is no hope

in this country for the pool of unemployed people out there that those who are employed in Government who are temporary will have to go and that is clear from the fact of the vote available in the Prime Minister's Office for temporary workers in the Government. It is clear too the vote under the Head – Employment Civil Servants, under Head 16 page 11, which deals with the wages and the salaries for the temporarily employed in the Public Service has been seriously cut and the implication is that a large number of those who are temporarily employed will have to go during the course of the year. We are not being alarmist in any respect but I think we have to be honest and we have to let the real signals go forward to the country as to the human implications of these estimates. The question arises. I hear *sotto voce,* what would you all have done? The Barbados Labour Party Administration would never have been in this mess because in all the years that we have been in Government, going back to the forties until now, we have never conducted ourselves in this irresponsible manner and that is why we were prepared to go out of office in 1986 rather than attempt to backraise Richie Haynes and the Democratic Labour Party budgetary proposals, as they called it. We were not prepared to identify ourselves with them. We said openly that they were bound to bring this country to grief and the point has got to be made that we are at the point of grief.

Now, my learned friend the Honourable Member for the City has just handed me the Economic Review of September 1986. I have no doubt it has already been made a document of this House. It says on page one of the Economic Report:

> "All the major sectors contributed to the higher economic activity during the first six months of the year."

That is consistent with the thesis I have been advancing that when the Democratic Labour Party came into office in 1986, they were handed a country, as it were, where the economy was buoyant. The foreign reserves were high, our debt position was extremely manageable, money was available, there was hope in the country. They had a very secure base on which to build and they have squandered that. I want to submit, Mr. Speaker that the way forward is really two-fold, broadly speaking. We must show fiscal responsibility and discipline. That is the first requirement. That idea that you are increasing your spending even in the face of the deficit is unwise in my view. It is not consistent with the fiscal discipline and responsibility which is necessary as part of the way forward.

The second point is that we must pay our way out of the crisis and this is where the estimates have failed so badly because you can only earn your way out of the crisis if you ensure that your productive sectors, the sectors that pay your foreign exchange expand.

5.55 p.m.

There is nothing in here that will advance agriculture. When I left office in 1986 as the Minister of Agriculture, we had already reaped 110 000 tonnes of sugar. In five years we are in a situation where we have cut that production by virtually half. These Estimates say absolutely nothing about how we are going to get the 10 000 acres of land that has gone out of production back into production. It says nothing about how we are going to get our tonnage in sugar back up to the level it was in 1986. The subsidies and the incentives have been cut. That is to deal briefly with the agricultural sector alone.

In the important area of manufacturing trade the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has nothing to be proud of with respect to his years there, absolutely nothing. We are spending $14.6 million in the area of Trade and Industry. The money that we need to put behind the IDC where there has been a cut, the money that we need to put behind the Export Promotion Corporation, it has all been far too inadequate.

I am saying if my prescription is correct that we have to earn our way out of this difficulty, that the Estimates make no contribution to assisting us to earn our way out of the difficulties. That too must be said for Tourism and Sports. It has emerged in the last four years that Tourism is the only sector which has been growing. That growth came to an end over the last year or so. That is a dangerous thing, not only has it come to an end but we are in a sense moving towards a form of monoculture in this country where we are too heavily dependent on tourism which of all the sectors is itself too heavily dependent on factors outside of our control.

In so far as we have an infrastructure there and we have something going for us in tourism, we need to strengthen that tourism infrastructure. We need to get the most that we can out of our tourism. The idea that we are only providing $38 million in that area which is our biggest foreign exchange earner, where there are some 12 000 people, perhaps, even more gaining employment, suggest that we are not giving the emphases where we ought to be giving them.

Part of the problem in recent years is that a fourth sector of the Barbadian economy which the Barbados Labour Party can take full responsibility for having negotiated, the whole area of international services, that sector has been largely ignored by the Democratic Labour Party Administration since 1986. We came to the field of offshore banking. Captive insurance companies came. The era was the 1960's. When we got into the business in the 1980's we were 15 to 20 years late. Nevertheless there are certain opportunities available to us. We put the legal

regime in place. It was necessary for massive promotion to be put behind the initiatives started by the Barbados Labour Party as that sector has been largely ignored by the Democratic Labour Party. I believe had it been given the attention which it deserved, had they recognised the seriousness and the potential of it, we would have had it today earning $100 million or something in that region. As much as it is not going to help to be distributing blame, I think the record ought to show the geneses of this hiatus.

We ought to be on record in the Barbados Labour Party, this Opposition, as identifying correctly the nature, the enormity and the scale of the problem. We ought too to be on record as fighting the way forward and indicating to the Government that they must, in the first place, be fiscal discipline and responsibility. In the second place we need to earn our way out of our difficulties. Barbados is like a man living on an overdraft. That is the position of this Government. We are living on an overdraft. When that arises, it means you have to look for extra jobs. You have to work overtime on evenings. You have to work during the weekends. You have to earn your way out in order to pay back the bank. That is what we are not doing in this country. The failure to put money behind the productive sector supported by sensible policies is one of the failures of these Estimates.

I am disappointed that repeatedly in the Right Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance's presentation we were told that studies are being awaited. From time to time it is important that you ask persons who are not particularly close to the action who have to bring detachment and expertise to have a look and give you the benefit of their experience and expertise. There is a role for such studies, investigations and reports from time to time. IDC has virtually been at a standstill while we have been awaiting reports on our competitiveness and other aspects of our industrial promotion.

Now, we do not have to go to college, Mr. Speaker, to know a lot of things. A lot of what they will be telling us in those studies are things that we know out of our experience and out of our commonsense. Even while those studies were commissioned and were being worked on, we should have been getting ahead recognising our changing reality with respect to our position as a country attracting internationally mobile capital and trying to attract offshore business.

IDC used to be known by every child in Barbados not too long ago. The organisation had a large profile in the days of myself and my friend the Honourable Member sitting on the Government side. We used to be members of that Board. The IDC has lost its public profile in this country, perhaps, for good reasons. It could be explained on a good basis. If there is nothing happening at the organisation it really has nothing to shout about. That is why it has dropped out of the Press.
6.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, as come to discuss these Estimates in detail, we will be able to illustrate by reference to the specifics the general thesis that has been advanced by the spokesman on behalf of the Opposition. I look forward to playing my part. But I think it was necessary for this Opposition to go on record in the way that we have gone on record in alerting the country to the point that we have reached in continuing to indicate to the Government that they are demonstrating fiscal irresponsibility, in pointing and alerting fellow citizens to the human price that they will have to pay for these horrendous deficits that are being recorded and suggesting in a way that a responsible Opposition can and must, that the way forward is the way of earning your way out and demonstrating fiscal responsibility and discipline.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am in a bit of a quandary about these Estimates, Sir. These Estimates have come two months after an election, two months after the electorate of Barbados have, by their votes, said that they do not see anything wrong with the economy, they do not see anything wrong with Government's finances, they do not see anything wrong with Government's finances. I say the Estimates have come two months after the electorate by their votes have said that they do not see anything wrong with the economy, anything wrong with the Government's finances. What is all this that the Opposition is talking about foreign reserves and balance of payments and Government not paying its debts? The electorate have pronounced on those already. In fact the electorate have gone further. The electorate has also said that Sandi is sound.I do not understand the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central saying that these are difficult times for Barbados and Barbados is an open economy and buffeted. What is the problem? There was a song called "Don't worry, be happy".

I am not going to be the one in here to preach doom and gloom. I am not going to be the one in here to admit that there is anything wrong in the economy. Why should there be? Two months ago the Members on that side were saying that there was nothing wrong. I do not want to hear it now.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Whoever on that side. The Prime Minister around the time of election never gave the public of Barbados the impression that we were in any difficulty, and as Minister of Finance. We never had it so good. Who am I to now come and quarrel with that judgement?

This time last year on page 4984, the first day of the Estimates March 12, 1990, the Prime Minister said:

> "We expect that during the year there will be an improvement, an increase in the rate of growth and by the end of the year I will expect that there would have been growth in the economy of our country."

He said this a year ago less six days. He said that:

> "The only disaster that we have had is due to the misunderstanding",

I quote, Sir:

> "of the tempo of moderating fiscal policy as displayed by the former Minister of Finance who completely misunderstood what introduction of fiscal measures meant and thought that he could do everything at one time, and threw the entire economy into a tail spin."
>
> *Aside.*
>
> Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Wait.
>
> "Ours has been the task of trying to correct that particular problem as well as nursing our economy out of a slow period of growth during the 1980s. All of that is a matter of record. If there is one thing that this side agrees with the minority Opposition on,"

as we were then:

> "it is the damaging effects that were inflicted upon this economy through the strong-headed policies of the former Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central",

ex of this House of Assembly:

> "but we have borne all of that and we have had to try and correct it, and we have done it patiently and quietly and systematically,"

But he was predicting growth.

I therefore do not believe the Central Bank when it is reporting that the growth was negative, 2.5%. I believe the Prime Minister. He is sound. When he says 2.5% and he is predicting growth, we have to accept that and forget the Central Bank. They are wrong. They must never be believed again in this country. I am speaking as an ordinary member of the electorate to whom the Prime Minister spoke.

We have gone through these Estimates and we have heard nothing about the reserves. We know we have a problem in collecting the CMCF debt. But I believe that Barbados has limited foreign reserves. I do not believe there is any problem with the foreign reserves otherwise the Prime Minister with the candour that we have come to expect from Prime Ministers ought to have told the country any rumours to the effect that the reserves of Barbados are negative is not to be believed. We have no problem. What is $370 million overall deficit? Is this something? Is this something for a Government to worry about? Look at all the smiling faces out there. For any other Government in the history of Barbados it would have been a problem. But for this Government, it is no problem. It is not for us, Sir – and I try to tell my side this – to deal with that. This is the Bible of the Government into the 90s and beyond, Manifesto 1991. This is my own personal copy.

The Labour Party has a Manifesto. What we would have done, according to the information that we had when our Manifesto was prepared is there for everybody to see. We are not now in Government. The functions of Opposition is to make life awkward for the Government. I am not even doing that. I have no intention of doing that. Because as I say everything is sound and good. You had a total accumulated deficit over two years of $600 million. Is that a big thing? That is no big thing in the context of Barbados when you are spending a total of $1.3 billion.

What I am concerned about is that the public of Barbados must not be told lies. The public of Barbados must not be told that the problems, if there are any, are attributable to debt negotiated and incurred by the Barbados Labour Party.

6.15 p.m.

The word must go forth now that in this year some $80 million in debt repayment has to be made by Barbados. Sir, why should I repeat it, when if you had read your estimates with the care that I read mine... You see, I have to repeat it, because as recently as the DLP Thanksgiving Service, the Prime Minister repeated at a religious service that he is saddled with paying back Labour Party debts, so I have to repeat what appears in Appendix D in this, that this year we have to repay on the 2nd October, 1991 some $55,814,000 plus interest accruing thereon at 6.9%. A loan that was negotiated in 1986 by the Democratic Labour Party, they are paying back their own debt. Don't tell any more lies on the Labour Party. Barclays Loan is $27 million and they have to pay some of that on the 7th May, this year. $30 million they have to pay. That has nothing to do with this Party. So when you say that is part of the deficit, because part of the deficit of $370 million which nobody has talked about yet, perhaps except my friend the Member for St. Peter, part of this $370 million includes this debt repayment, so it is high because they incurred the debts in '86 and '87 and have to pay them back this year, because at the time when they were incurred they were all highly supportive of the policy of the then Minister of Finance, highly supportive of that policy, and if the three blind mice

tried to warn them, they were hooted down, laughed out of court, I am going to laugh at you now. Find it and pay it back.

I expect the Budget will have to have policies to reduce the demand for goods. When that time comes we will deal with that. I also expect that by the time of the Budget the Prime Minister will tell this House to what extent the reserves of Government have improved between January and the time of the Budget, because, before the election the gentleman at the Central Bank, as the Jamaicans will say, 'the High Man' at the Central Bank was very silent, he was encouraging thousands of people to gather together to pray, to meditate, and solve the Gulf crisis, couldn't hear a word about the economy of Barbados. It was naked scuds and some precision bombing that dealt with that. Those things were not achieved by prayer and fasting but by bullets and bombs and a show of strength.

After the election the high gentleman at the Central Bank said that things were not at all good and it all depended on how the productive sectors responded in the first half of this calendar year, otherwise, as my mother would have said the cake would be burnt, so that I would expect the Prime Minister at the time of the Budget, not to force the Opposition to line up behind any trucks and waiting for documents to fall off with information about foreign reserves, but volunteer it and tell the country truthfully what is the position with the foreign reserves, because before the election we were warned, don't mind the Opposition, they only blowing hot air. And, after the election the Prime Minister said we were not reading his lips carefully and noting his choice of language. Well I quoted him precisely at this time last year, and he was predicting a reasonable growth in the economy.

Sir, I believe that the Prime Minister knows that expenditure should have been cut more drastically than has been attempted in these estimates, if the deficit was to be sustainable. I am surprised that the Prime Minister has not been sufficiently tough, although I understand that at the time when the estimates were being done in Estimates Committee he was taken up with the elections and the Minister of Agriculture, the present Minister of Agriculture, presided over most of the sittings. That is a fact. He was cutting wild, you come with ten and he will say, no, five go. These are true Harry's horrors. They are still bad, because there needed to be at least a 10% cut in expenditure to bring some sort of balance to these...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How we know? How do you mean, how we know? We know everything that is going on in Government. The lady from the IMF went around to Government Departments, went to the NUPW, that has never happened yet.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: She goes every year? Well she repeated the visit this year.

The Prime Minister ended his speech talking about the mandate that he has got. I want to remind him that unlike the period in 1986 to 1990 when he had consciously and unconsciously to be looking over his shoulder and to be seeking support and therefore when he found himself tied to giving in to the demands of his front bench and back bench in an effort to receive consensus within his own party, he no longer has to do that.
6.25 p.m.

He has said twice, once on television and again today, that he has received a mandate. So he is able now with the strength of that to tell his Ministers, "Not another cent. Stay within the Budget." I look forward therefore later on in this calendar year to a situation where there will be few supplementaries or because of the exigencies of Government business from time to time there will need to be supplementaries. But they will be very, very basic and minimal in their financial impact.

These Estimates, Sir, in addition to what the Honourable Member for St. Peter has said, imply that there will be cutbacks in supplies and materials. I think that both sides have noted that the item which used to feature in previous Estimates headed "Contingencies" is centralized in the Ministry of Finance. Each Ministry in the previous years used to have a vote of $10 000 or $12 000 that they could deal with. I do not know if the total amount of the contingency vote for the individual Ministries has now been brought into the Ministry of Finance. If that is so, you have not done anything because you are going to be making provision to spend the same amount. What you have done is to have over-centralized a contingency vote. Now a contingency vote by its very definition suggests that the money is to be spent for something which is unforeseen which arises *ex improviso* for which there has been no specific provision. A senior officer, indeed an officer in the Ministry, loses a relative. They want to send on behalf of the Ministry a wreath. You ask the Accounts Department or Permanent Secretary to buy a wreath for $60.00 and send it to the funeral. Now that used to be done. That could have been done in the old system. Now if something like that happens in the Ministry of the Attorney General or any Ministry, you have got to send to Ministry of Finance and get permission for that. I think that is unnecessary bureaucracy.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, other Members have dealt with other aspects generally on expenditure – cuts in training, cuts in agricultural incentives and subsidies at Page 39 of the Estimates. But I want to say this, Sir. In

respect of Receipts and Revenue, if you look back there is a sheet in this thing that covers the revenue over a period of time, Sir. I cannot put my hand on it now. But if you make a study of the revenue over a period of time, I think there is a feature that Honourable Members should be aware of and particularly the Prime Minister. Because he talked about financing the $313 million that still has to be financed. He has found fifty something thousand. On Page 6 in the Summary of Government Operations, there is a gap of $13 million that still has to be financed and the financing for that has not been identified. But the Prime Minister gave a hint about accretions to the Consolidated Fund. Clearly, his mind is working in the area of increased taxation and that is one way of financing the deficit or contributing to the financing of the deficit. The borrowing option is now becoming very limited indeed as a result of the experience of the Barclay's Loan last year. You have to search long and hard for money and you are going to get it on the most Draconian terms if you get it. So you have got to borrow or you can get some of the money to close this gap through taxation.

If you look at the Summary of Revenue over time, Sir, there is one feature that I wish to submit that appears, whether the times are good or bad, and that is the revenues from income tax seem to hold their own whether you are in a recessionary situation or otherwise. On the other hand, indirect taxes do not hold up as well in recessionary times for obvious reasons. If you look at the figures, Sir, the Consumption Taxes are down $21 million and Stamp Duties are down $8 million. It suggests that because of a recession the efficacy of indirect taxation is compromised because people do not import as much and, therefore, you cannot recover sufficient revenues through the port. But oddly even though it is a recessionary situation direct income taxes seem to stabilize and that is something the Prime Minister will have to give thought to in coming to grips with the financing of the deficit.

We on this side are not going to tell him what to do. That is not our role but I am making observations from the figures presented as to what seems to be the deductions that one can make from the raw figures that appear for indirect taxes and direct taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has appealed for a great debate. I do not know if he means at this stage or for the next four days when we get into the Heads and so on. But the only way there can be a great debate, Sir, is if Members on the other side are going to be open and frank with us. Now the Prime Minister, for example, in his opening did not highlight many of the projects which Government intends to undertake by way of capital expenditure this year. He was very general. In terms of education, he said nothing specific. I do not know if for example they are going to ease the problems of the people at Turners Hall Primary School and Hillaby by amalgamating the two schools into a new school at Farmers in this financial year.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There were many contracts awarded too and they stopped. He did not speak of any schools in particular. Well, I do not know. What I am doing is comparing. He said nothing specific about education. When he came to Health, he spoke of refurbishing the Obstetrics and Gynecological Departments at the QEH and continuing the work at St. Joseph Hospital. He was most careful not to predict an opening in the financial year.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You have predicted at least 25 different occasions in and out of the House an opening day.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I am glad that he gave me an opportunity, Sir. I noticed that the Honourable Member has joined a number of people in saying that there were 25 predictions. There were actually only three, Sir, and all three of them were followed by explanations.
6.35 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: MTW – the continuation of Highway 2A phase II was identified, some tenantry roadwork, bridges, drainage and gabions. There is nothing specific about agriculture and I would be grateful if by the time we get to it, somebody tells me what tonnage they expect from the canes at the Belle.

Tourism: there was a study completed and accepted and action plan is to come from the Ministry of Tourism but otherwise the Prime Minister's presentation was singularly bereft – He did mention Holetown under the Ministry of the Public Service. He mentioned the complex at Holetown but apart from that, there was nothing. He didn't even say if he expected the work at Sherbourne to restart in this financial year. One appreciates Sir, that there has to be a cutback on new capital projects to meet some of this reduction in total expenditure but I really must make an appeal at this stage because I don't know if he will get to it and don't want to leave it to chance. The Minister of Transport & Works has $4.5 million to spend on drainage, bridges and gabions and I want to say for myself and the Member for St. Joseph, since October 1986, there was a bridge, a part of a road really. Part of the road broke away at Bloomsbury and went into St. Andrew and for four years nothing was done. They started the week before the elections. The week before the elections some men were seen in the area.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is a disgrace. It was an important road because the tourists who go to the Flower Forest and are going into St. Joseph through St. Thomas...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member will have to be very much quicker. Your time has expired but I will give you the extra time to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...use that road, Sir, and I am calling for Government to do something about it as a matter of urgency.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is clear in this Debate that this side, the Democratic Labour Party, has to defend its record in light of the many misrepresentations which have been made by speakers from the other side. I would particularly want to refer to some statements made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and give a different interpretation to the information which he sought to put before this Chamber, but before doing so, Sir, I think it is rather ironic that in the constant cry from the Opposition about the need for fiscal discipline, the need for cutting back, whenever each and every Member of the Opposition gets up having made that point, they then go on to make representation for expenditure in their constituencies on various items which could only have the effect of erasing all of the points which they have made before about the whole question of fiscal discipline.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, that is misleading, Sir. When I asked about Bloomsbury, Sir, I prefaced my remarks by saying that the Prime Minister said that he had granted $4.5 million for the fixing of roads, bridges and gabions and that is why I wanted a piece of that $4.5 million.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: It is a fact, Sir. I think people who are present would understand what I am saying because the irony of the situation comes out the minute that they get up to speak. Now, let me as I said refer to some of the comments which were made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. Now the Honourable Member said that in 1986 when the Barbados Labour Party left office the Democratic Labour Party inherited a buoyant economy and dollars from exports and I quote: "exports in manufacturing were at their highest." Of course, the banks were awash with money. A look, Sir, at the export figures for Barbados during that period between 1986 and now, and certainly even before that would show very clearly what the position was. I have had to do this on previous occasions and I have no compunction, Sir, about doing it again because I think it is important that these figures be put firmly before this Honourable House, and each time that an attempt is made to distort the information we will have to put the position very clearly.

I think, Sir, that if one looks at the earnings from domestic exports from Barbados going back to 1984 when the earnings reached the highest level of $583.668 million one would see that from there the decline started. In 1985 there was a decline to $496,470,756, that was a decline and that was during the Barbados Labour Party Administration. In 1986 it declined further to $420 million. In 1987 it further declined. In 1988 a reversal started and there was a move from... It went down in 1987 to $214 million and in 1988 the reversal started and it moved from $214 million to $248 million and in 1989, it rose to $250 million.
6.45 p.m.

Now, the fact is, and this cannot be gainsaid, when Intel which in itself contributed over $200 million towards this particular effort, Corcom and Playtex, those three major companies, when they left Barbados almost at one and the same time, the effect which they had on the economy and our export earnings was devastating and is reflected here in these figures. This is a matter of record.

One talked about Intel and the fact that Intel left Barbados. The reason why Intel Corporation left Barbados was because the chip which they were producing at about $1.23, the Japanese were able to produce a similar chip for, I am told, about 0.23 cents or 0.24 cents. The result of all of that was that, obviously, Intel's production became obsolete. These large corporations have no compunction when faced with that kind of situation about closing down operations and moving on. That is what happened. They moved the opera-tion then to the Philippines where, obviously, they had an establishment and where they were able to produce the particular item at a lower rate. All I am saying is these are facts. I think that one has to be very clear when one looks at these things. I have to re-emphasise the whole question of Intel, Corcom and Playtex. Their removal from Barbados had a very serious effect on our export earnings.

I think it showed up one very important thing, something which in Barbados we have grappled with for a long time and which we still have to grapple with, that is, that our export base is still very narrow. We have to continue to diversify that particular export base. In this competitive world, as has been pointed out, and as we all recognise, it is not easy overnight to change that particular situation. I would daresay that the whole question of being able to re-organise the manufacturing sector has to do with the possibilities which exist. What we did as one of the ways in trying to re-organise and to attract other kinds of operations here which would be compatible with what we are offering was to try to develop, and which we have been doing successfully, the data processing sector which...

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. I think the Honourable Member is misleading the House because Caribbean Data Services as well as Donnelly, Sir, are not the product of any effort on the part of the Honourable Member.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Is the Honourable Member trying to say to this Chamber that the first time that a processing company came into Barbados was Caribbean Data Services? Do not try to give the impression that the first time we in Barbados have heard of data processing was with Caribbean Data Services. The fact of the matter is that there were data processing operations here in Barbados. My words were that we were making efforts to expand the data processing sector. The data processing sector was here before the Barbados Labour Party came into office.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East in the 1960's and early 1970's worked in the data processing industry here. They have been here before. The fact is we have had that kind of operation here. I am saying what we, from the point of view of the Government, have been doing is working to expand that particular sector. As a result, of course, the Caribbean Data Services which had already been established, have expanded opportunities for work and jobs. We have been able to also expand Donnelly Caribbean Graphics. One would also want to mention Confederation Life which is in the process of starting up now, as an indication of three major companies, two of which were already here and which have already expanded and a new one which has already come. On top of this one would add a number of other small operations like International Lifestyles, Demographic Lifestyles and a number of other small ones which have started and are doing very important work in this particular area, indeed, even spin-offs from the training which a corporation like Intel left here in Barbados. Therefore, we have to broaden that particular productive base.

I think it is important what the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has said about recognising that this is an effort which will involve all of us, one which the whole question of casting blame one way or the other is not going to help us. It is something which we have to recognise. We have to recognise that we have to be able to solve our problems ourselves and, certainly try to project the country in the kind of direction which would enable us to be productive. I think the whole idea has to be encouraging productivity in Barbados. I think we ought to be at one on this particular area. This is one area which I believe is crying out for re-enforcement among our people. I know, for example, this is one area in which the labour movement is particularly concerned and helpful where encouraging workers to be productive is one of their objectives.

Quite honestly, I think that productivity not only has to be the concern of the workers on the shop floor but it must also be at the level of management. I daresay that very often in our manufacturing and general management life in Barbados one would find that the productivity at the mid-management and upper management level is sometimes very sadly lacking and one which needs a considerable amount of support and boost. It is in this particular area that the Industrial Development Corporation has recognised that there is a need. The IDC has, therefore, been aiming and concentrating on developing that particular area.

Let me say further that this administration has tried to give the lead in a number of ways to our manufacturing sector and to our prospective businessmen. One of the things which the Democratic Labour Party has tried to do and they would want to continue and, certainly, encourage is the very important linkage between those persons in the distributive sector and in the manufacturing sector. We need to encourage, as a Government, persons in the distributive sector to become more involved in the manufacturing sector. They must also have a commitment towards the manufacturing sector in this country where they must not see themselves as parasites on the community in terms of expending the foreign exchange which is earned by the manufacturing sector, but that they too become part and parcel of the sector which would be productive and which would earn foreign exchange which would enable them to participate and share in some of it.
6.55 p.m.

This administration has done a lot in terms of giving encouragement to the manufacturing sector. I could mention the many proposals which we have put in place to reduce the burden on the manufacturing sector in terms of the duties which they have had to pay, the removal of stamp duties, the whole question of the burdens which were imposed on them by the past administration; we removed them.

I think that we have to understand very clearly that this is something which has to be done by all of us. I want to make the point that it has to be clearly stated, contrary to the impressions which may be given, that no government will be, or can be, involved in producing anything. We can create the atmosphere and the environment in which production can take place. A lot of it therefore has to do with the persons who are involved in the manufacturing sector. If there is one thing which could perhaps be said for Barbados it is that, maybe, we are at a stage where we need to see emerging a new cadre of entrepreneurs and manufacturers who would be able to take advantage of what opportunities exist, who would be able to be creative and who would be able, therefore, to push this country forward in terms of production and expecting the kind of challenges which there are, bearing in mind the environment which this administration has put in place.

The Right Honourable Prime Minister has indicated very clearly that the studies which were commissioned in agriculture, in manufacturing and the whole question of exports have given additional indications as to the directions in which we could go. I would want to say that for the first time the Industrial Development Corporation last year produced a number of profiles which they made available, and they are still available, to prospective

manufacturers as to how they can develop products and how they can get into a number of activities. These project profiles are available. Never before has the IDC been able to make available such project profiles.

Let me also indicate, Sir, that this Government and certainly through the Industrial Development Corporation has been encouraging indigenous manufacturing particularly in the food processing area because we recognize that this is an area in which we can make some headway. We have been able to get the agro-processing factory on the way towards being established. I am satisfied that when that becomes functional that it will establish a very clear linkage between manufacturing and agriculture and will play a very important role in our agro-industrial development. Also the food processing in Wildey which is established and which is fully occupied. We are satisfied that that also will play a very important part.

Let me further say that there are other areas which have been identified. The fact that rum has been holding its own... We have been able to establish that the rum based products are products which have some possibilities. The other areas are clay based products and, of course, in the area of handicraft development. These are some of the areas where attempts are being made, hopefully to diversify the industrial base to provide additional opportunities for persons in Barbados who are looking for investment opportunities.

You talk about the garment industry and the furniture industry. Let us talk about the furniture industry for one moment. Just for one moment. Do you know, Sir, that the Barbados Labour Party set up a corporation called the Furniture Trading Corporation which had started to lose so much money that a study was done – I do not have the study here with me now – which had showed very clearly that if it had continued in the way that it was going that it would have lost about $12 million in the space of about 3 or 4 years? They set up a company selling furniture to a firm in the United States of America called Pulaski. They were selling the furniture to Pulaski at less than what the raw material cost. That was the kind of agreement which they entered into with Pulaski. That just could not go. The study is here and we could bring the study, if you want it, and make it a document of the House.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I will bring it tomorrow and make it a document of the House. I will make you that promise.

I should like to say that there are possibilities which exist in furniture but one has to understand very clearly again that it would seem to me that one of the problems in the furniture manufacturing sector is that the kind of support which the distributive sector ought to be giving to that area they are not giving. Again they need that kind of linkage between the distributive people in the commercial and the distributive sector linked up with the manufacturing sector to provide the financial support and other support which would be necessary so that they could retool the operations and get things going. But that is another area which has been identified. In our Manifesto, and certainly in our thinking, we have also identified certain aspects of the garment industry for targetting. I think this is something which one has to understand very clearly and appreciate – I know the Honourable Members understand this particular point – that the wages which are paid in Barbados for a garment worker when compared with a similar worker anywhere else in the world is high.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: But that is beside the point. I think, in a way to a large extent, it is a credit to the union that we have been able to put wage levels at a particular level so as to enable us to enjoy the quality of life which we enjoy in Barbados and about which we continue to boast over and over again. We have therefore to recognize that there will be certain industries which, given this particular scenario, may not be particularly attracted to Barbados. But I am saying that there are certain aspects of the garment industry which could be, and would be, attracted to Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party will pursue those particular areas.
7.05 p.m.

And so, Sir, I just thought that it would be necessary for me to give another interpretation to the information which has been put before this House to make sure that the House was not misled. For that, Sir, I thank you.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hear these mouthings from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. For his brilliant performance, he has been moved to Housing.

There is a particular matter, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that I wish to address. I have heard from speakers during the course of this afternoon, words which give cause for concern. There seems to be an opinion held by some that if there are going to be cut backs and certainly cut backs in expenditure, these cut backs would have to be in the social sectors and that we must now promote the productive sectors.

I wish to issue a word of caution, Sir. I think that a certain balance has to be achieved. I don't think that it will help the impasse in which Barbados now finds itself, if the productive sectors were promoted at the expense of the social sectors. I think it has been shown that that is counter productive. These two sectors in my view, Mr. Speaker, Sir, are inter-dependent. The productive sectors will require

healthy, well educated, adequately housed, socially balanced people to man tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and the off shore regime, etc.

I think that there is a great deal of fat and wastage in both the social and the productive sectors and I am concerned that nobody is addressing this. We are taking these things for granted. I have looked at the current estimates with a very detailed eye and I see still a lot of fat and wastage. Don't forget, out here all of us except the Honourable Member for St. James North, are former Ministers, so we know where the bodies are hidden Mr. Speaker, Sir, we know where the fat and wastage and the slush funds are tucked away. Yes, just like they know on that side. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to tell you that as far as I can see – I am not going to expose them, don't worry – this wastage and this fat that I see still in the estimates is not limited to any one sector. It is to be applied to all, including the fixed charges, from what I can see.

Experience has shown, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that slippage in the social sectors is very costly to retrieve and very time consuming to retrieve and already we are beginning to see in Barbados that gains which we made in the late 1970's and the 1980's are already being eroded because of lack of investment in human resources. That is what the social sectors are largely about.

In an age, Mr. Speaker, Sir, of what is described as rapid technological change this attempt to retrieve slippage is even more acute. In fact it would be false economy to believe that for one moment, even if for a year, we savaged the social sectors in order to prop up further and promote the productive sectors. In the medium and the long term the cost is going to be greater and as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said on more than one occasion here today, you have to pay. At the end of the day you still have to pay.

Now there is a lot of wastage, Mr. Speaker, Sir as I have been saying, in both the social and the productive sectors. I hear the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the only useful thing that he said for the whole afternoon is that productivity has to inform any strategy of recovery in respect of the Barbados economy. And as a once and future trade unionist, Mr. Speaker – I use the term deliberately – I am interested to hear him as a once and future trade unionist making this point, because in my experience, Sir, and I believe that this is an experience of most or all of us in here, trade unions in Barbados, and it is not peculiar to Barbados, Sir, the trade unions only care about the workers who subscribe to their trade unions, they don't care about the workers who do not subscribe to their trade unions and they certainly do not care about the unemployed.

The trade unions over the past 20 years have been giving a lot of lip service to all sorts of things. You have to remember all of the shibboleths of the 1960's and the 1970's, worker participation, this, the next, the third and the fourth. Don't believe a word of it Mr. Speaker, Sir. Don't believe a word of it, because they see that as a threat, the union bosses see that as a threat to the trade union movement.

I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central – he is not now in his seat – get up, a lot of sound and fury, a lot of form, very little substance, he added no substance to this debate and of all the people, the trade unionist from the back bench, I thought, would have been able to add to this. I don't expect the trade unionist on the front bench to compromise his position as a front bencher, so I am not going to be led astray, Mr. Speaker, Sir, by any red herring about productivity because we know that the unions only give lip service to that. When it was pointed out to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy just now, about where the wage structure took Intel and a whole host of other firms in Barbados, he had no answer for it and I want to take this opportunity, Sir, to point out that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has deliberately misled this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not accepted as Parliamentary language. Not deliberately. Leave out deliberately.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Unwittingly did so.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, you can say misleading, but as soon as you add deliberately ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I accept Your Honour's ruling. But it is worse for him that I would have to say then that unwittingly, out of a great well of ignorance, he has misled this Honourable Chamber to suggest that Intel left here because there was any contraction, according to the Honourable Minister of Education, in the micro chip industry, since Intel left Barbados and within two years of leaving Barbados Intel set up plants in Ireland and New Jersey. Explain that to me.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy deliberately stood up in here tonight and said, how they left here and ran to the Philippines, seeking to imply Mr. Speaker, Sir, that conditions prevailing in the Philippines were more attractive to Intel, when the truth is that Intel was....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member obviously, Sir, is not aware that the plants that Intel set up elsewhere produce something entirely different from what they were producing here. What they were producing here they moved to the Philippines.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point is, that whatever was happening in the micro chip industry, Intel was not in that kind of trouble and that is not why Intel

left here. Intel was in fact expanding elsewhere, but I want to get back to my original point, Mr. Speaker Sir.
7.15 p.m.

I heard earlier this afternoon someone suggesting training. I think it was the Honourable Member for St. Peter who in his introduction pointed out that the Government in this year's Estimates have savaged training. The Right Honourable Prime Minister pointed out in his introduction that revenues fell by 10.3% in 1990. The Honourable Member for St. Peter pointed out to us in his contribution that Government's current expenditure will rise in this financial year according to these Estimates and that training in particular was savaged or is about to be savaged.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that training cannot be an area of priority for cut in expenditure. I believe, Mr. Speaker, Sir....

Mr. SPEAKER: Now may I have some silence.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that at this time....

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one minute. You can continue.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that at this time....

Mr. SPEAKER: It is very difficult to continue to debate. I am asking Honourable Members to lower their tone of voice.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I believe that at this time and particularly where we are in Barbados in respect to what is described as the new technology that now is the time to be retooling and redeploying. If we are talking about cutting wastage and fat, we can start with the Civil Service. Yes, we can start with the Civil Service where a lot of retooling and a lot of redeploying within the Civil Service will save a lot of jobs. When they fall into unemployment, the unions will have no use for them. In the private sector in Barbados and outside of Barbados, this retooling and redeployment process is already on the way in the private sector. We do not begin to think of it in the Public Service. I am not saying to cut the Civil Service. I am saying to take the fat, lazy, drone bees and retool them and retrain them for something else. I am saying to put an end to posts where men do nothing. Find something for them to do. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy has asked for productivity. There are too many posts in the Public Service, Mr. Speaker, which are not designed for productivity.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: It seems to me as if....

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not saying that they are fat, lazy drone bees. I am saying that everywhere where that is so it has to be cut. They are no different from anybody else. There are too many posts in the Public Service in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, which are not designed for productivity. It is in this way that we have to look for areas....

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot hear the Honourable Member.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am trying my best, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is about time that I probably take a different action if I cannot control the Honourable Members. I would not allow Members to disrupt the other Member like that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: If, Mr. Speaker, Barbados is to realize and very soon certainly before the end of this century the enormous benefits that are to flow from the new technologies, we have to retrain people. We have to retool people. We have to redeploy people within the Public Service if we are not going to lay them off. It is believed that the Government is planning to lay off a number of people. I am saying that it is not necessary to do that if you have some good ideas and some creative ideas about how you might redeploy those who are here.

Mr. Speaker, for this reason I do not believe that training should be savaged in the way that it has been in these Estimates. In almost every Ministry, Sir, and this is now to be illustrative, I see items particularly supplies and materials which have increased and in many cases substantially. We start with the Prime Minister's Official Residence which moved from $6 000 to $42 000 for supplies and materials. This is a residence, Mr. Speaker, that was left in 1986 where nobody took up residence. Where has all the linen gone? Where has all the cutlery gone? These items that I am seeing amount to $42,000 in supplies and materials. That is how you have to deal with the wastage and the fat, Sir.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Mr. Speaker, Operating Expenses moved from $1/4 million to in excess of $1 million and the accompanying "Note" tells us that this is to provide for postage, toiletries, and cleaning supplies. Do you understand what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, Sir? The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs – for reference turn to Page 16 of the Estimates and you will see.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, I am waiting for them to find the page like in church. Find the page and the chapter. You will see at Page 16 Operating Expenses, Revised

Estimates 1990-91, $250 000; Estimates 1991-92 $1 million. When you look across the page now at the Explanatory Note 212, Operating Expenses provides for postage, toiletries, and cleaning supplies, a 400% increase in supplies and materials. This is only in one department of Government, Mr. Speaker.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Because I went to the trouble to go through the Estimates. The Treasury at Page 22, Supplies and Materials moved from $63 000, Mr. Speaker, to $82 000. Customs – Supplies and Materials at Page 23 moved from $40 000 to $92 505.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have gone through the whole lot. These are only some examples. What I would want us to do during the course of this week as we debate and discuss these Estimates is to examine what happens on the revenue side not only in the productive sector Ministries but in the social sector Ministries as well. Some revenues are raised in health.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am saying that this is where fat and wastage is and that you can increase the revenues that have to be raised in the Ministry of Health. Fees for all sorts of things are listed. Some of them are very interesting. For instance under Health, I want to know why is it that the Estimates for 1991-92 is less than the actual revenue raised in 1989-90. I did not note the page, Sir, so I will have to find it. Yes, Sir, if you look at XIV Current Estimates Revenue, Ministry of Health, we see that actual Revenue 1989-90 is $2 577 020. We see that projected Estimates now for 1991-92 is $1 724 100.
7.25 p.m.

Why should this be so? It should be the other way around. Just collect what there is to be collected.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Wasted. So, all I am saying Mr. Speaker, is that buried in here are millions of dollars in wastage and fat. There is wastage and fat in the productive sector ministries as well. All of those junkets taken particularly by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West in their time tripping abroad and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, all those junkets which have no pay day, no pay off.

Let us look now to see how we can make them productive. Let them be a little more selective in where they go to promote Tourism and to promote Manufacturing and to promote Industry. Millions of dollars. I want to know what comes to Barbados as a result of all of these junkets. That's what we want to know, Sir. What redounds to the benefit of Barbados as a result of all of those junkets abroad? I would want to suggest that sins of omission might be the source of loss of revenue as well because while they are junketing abroad where there is nothing to be gained for Barbados, we hear a little too often of many key and critical opportunities which are lost because Barbados was not represented. Now these have to do with judgment, these have to do with understanding of the market place, these have to do with an understanding of how marketing as a strategy and as a tool works and in these ways, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think that the figures...

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, we can effect more than just these. These are not little nickel and dime economies that I am suggesting here, millions of dollars that we earn in one way and that can be saved in other ways. So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that during the course of the week we don't hear Members going too far overboard on the question of cutting back on vital social sectors in any mistaken belief that monies shifted to the productive sector will work any magic. Not that there is any shifting of large-scale funding in certain of the productive sectors because we heard already certainly from this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, Sir, today, about the huge cuts in store for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. So, it is difficult now for me to know exactly what the Government's policy is. You get the impression that it – the whole thing – is just growing like Love vine everywhere. There is no sense of direction that is informing anything. The impression is, not only here on this side, but out there, the Government is, according to what we read in the newspapers, the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister is talking to a lot of people. It is all right to talk to a lot of people but he doesn't seem to be taking advice from any of those people, not even those who are paid to advise him, like those who work in the Central Bank. They are now walking with their feet – nor those in the private sector who might want to suggest that there are certain parallels to be drawn because it is a mish-mash. I can't even assume that individual Ministers may have informed the way in which individual Ministries' estimates are structured in this year's estimates. There is no pattern. There was a time that I can remember when the Ministry of Finance would send out certain instructions and you would know that you would have to follow certain guidelines or at least to bear them in mind. I see no evidence of this at all. Agriculture is doing one thing. Trade and Industry is doing another. Another thing is happening in Health. Nothing seems to be happening in other Ministries. It is very difficult to divise from this document where the Government's thrust is going to be in the coming financial year, what the Government's priority is going to be in the coming financial year. I certainly am left with an impression that it is just a free for all. Everybody is doing what he feels like doing, that a second mandate in a row given by the people is license to do as you please. In the end, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the piper has

to be paid. We all have to live in this Barbados. History repeats itself. I think it was the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who made the point earlier today that in 1986, the Barbados Labour Party left an economy coming out of the 1981-82 recession in a good and upward progressive looking position where the Central Bank – this is a document of the House already, Sir, in fact this is the House copy, the Economic Review for September 1986 of the Central Bank of Barbados, said at page 1:

> "The economy is estimated to have grown by about 4.5% in the first 6 months. Tourism improved although the case were largely confined to the U.S. market...."

Today there is hardly a U.S. market.

All the major economic sectors contributed to the higher economic activities during the first six months of the year. That was 1986. It is not the first time that it happened. The same thing happened in 1961. If the Labour Party had not done this the then 1986 Minister of Finance would have not had that largesse that he scattered like manna from heaven over all in July of the same year 1986. It is not a new thing. The same thing happened in 1961. We left an economy in wonderful shape so that a new Democratic Labour Party Government came in and again could say at the stroke of a pen we will do this and that. If the Treasury was empty they couldn't have done it. In the same way that in 1976, when the Barbados Labour Party came into Government and in fact found the Treasury almost empty we had to tighten the belt first before we could effect that kind of recovery and the take off that began to happen in 1978 and from thereon in.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I sincerely hope that my major point in this contribution in respect of finding that balance and cutting waste and fat in both the productive and the social sectors will to some extent inform our discussions during the course of the week.

7.35 p.m.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, it is almost midnight. We are involved in a changing world. Most of you might recall that last year the Berlin Wall came down. Indeed, the Iron Curtain started to come down as well. We have just recently seen the crisis in the Gulf and the war that raged over the last couple of months creating all kinds of problems for the world economy. We have seen the departure of the Thatcher regime. We have seen the departure of the Reagan regime. We have certainly seen the departure from this Chamber of the National Democratic Party.

Mr. Speaker, I have to make those opening remarks because it is a time in our history which I think from this Honourable Chamber it is necessary for us to make responsible statements for our continued development. I think that Barbados, like all of the other developing countries, is at the mercy of the international world economy. In our local context to suggest at this time that we get involved in serious cut-backs in our national budget will be none other than a social crisis that will be created.

I am very concerned, in particular, about the suggestions made by Honourable Members on the other side that there will be cut-backs based on the figures that are presented in the Appropriation Bill. I have given assurance to many of the temporary workers employed in the Government Service, many of whom live in the area of St. Michael East, and also a clear pledge from this side that there will be no such lay-offs in the public sector.

I think it is unfortunate that Honourable Members on that side continue to regurgitate and create the impression in Barbados that there is a problem in this regard and create all kinds of fears in people's minds. I am suggesting that for Barbados and for the people of Barbados to feel comfortable and to produce, they must be mentally comfortable and must not be subjected to irresponsible comments from members of the Opposition benches. It is absolutely unnecessary and uncalled for.

Mr. Speaker, the revenue of this country has been seriously affected by the failure of the manufacturing sector, the agricultural sector and the tourism sector to achieve enough growth that they would be able to sustain revenue growth. I think that, again, if we look at the manufacturing sector, the time has come where they have lost confidence, to some extent, in the system. Maybe the time is ripe for us to encourage the distributive sector who have benefitted over the years to, at this time, look seriously at investing some of their excess assets, some of the working capital into the manufacturing sector. I think we have to give them the confidence. From time to time you will hear people say the Barbados dollar will be devalued, all kinds of statements that are somewhat irresponsible and create panic in the system and people are afraid to invest their money.

The agricultural sector, as most of you know, has had a lot of problems. I think the time has come where we have to seriously look at planning the whole system around the development of the tourism industry. I think that the linkage between the agricultural industry and the tourism industry must be progressed. There is a lot of merit in planning a particular product at certain times of the year because the restaurant sector will be able to absorb different products at different times of the year. I think we need to develop that.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent 25 years in the tourism industry. I was a little surprised that Honourable Members on the other side were suggesting that there was actual growth in the tourism industry in 1986 and before. I think one has to ask the question, what would have happened to Barbados had the policies of the then Honourable Minister

of Tourism and Trade at the time and the former Member for St. Michael Central been pursued? If they had continued those policies, woe betide Barbados in 1990.

We are talking about problems with a deficit in our current account. What would have happened if those policies had been pursued where the Barbados' economy was declining steadily since 1981 or 1982 in the tourism sector? Barbados was able to meet a lot of debt servicing through the growth of the tourism industry between 1986 – 1988. We had significant growth out of the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, Copenhagen and Germany. We had a decline in the United States market. We had a serious decline in the U.S. market purely because the country suffered. We had a lack of direct flights out of the North-Eastern seaboard. That created a significant marketing problem for us.

We had American Airlines that went direct from New York into Puerto Rico then through the hub into Barbados. We also had the termination of Eastern Airlines into Barbados. All of us know that in the U.S. market there is a lack of confidence in BWIA as a service carrier between the United States and Barbados. We are talking about a recession in the United States during this period. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we are competing with several Caribbean destinations who spend a significant amount of money in comparison to what the Barbados Government has allocated to the tourism industry. We spend about $2 million out of a total Caribbean budget of about $58 million in generic and print advertising in the United States. It is very difficult to convince people when we have such a limited budget in that particular regard.
7.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, in addition the US market has been saying to us that it is time for us to develop a national package where we offer incentives to the potential travellers to ensure that they know what they will spend before they come to Barbados. They have had a particular tend in the US market where they have been suggesting that they prefer to travel on a shorter vacation, on a 4 or 5 day vacation, and when they have to come out of the North Eastern hub, pass through Puerto Rico and on the return do the reverse, it means that they effectively lose 2 days. This has been a serious problem for us.

I am suggesting, Sir, that we are aware of some of the difficulties that we have had in sustaining growth in the United States market. But I am sure that without an increase in the allocation this year, provided that we are able to put in place similar programmes out of Europe that we put in 1987, 1988 and 1989, that we will be able to sustain that growth out of the United States in 1991.

Mr. Speaker, I really had no intention of joining this debate at this time but I think that it is time for us... I, as a new Member of the House of Assembly, had hoped that....

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I do not mind. Mr. Speaker, I will let them speak because a lot of them are in a hurry to go. I will be here for a long time. I am in no hurry. I am sitting patiently.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I have waited for many years. Yes. I am going to retire a lot of you all soon.

Mr. Speaker, I would not want to prolong the debate because I would like to speak under the Heads during the debate. I really join to support this Appropriation Bill at this time and I hope that the debate would remain at a responsible level.

Thank you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, at this point, Sir, I am going to move the suspension of the sitting until 10.00 o'clock tomorrow.

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

The question that this sitting be suspended until Tuesday, March 19, 1991 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and at 7.50 p.m., Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the provisions of the Appropriation Bill. It was my intention that my intervention would have been at a philosophical level. Moreover, in keeping with tradition, indeed, in keeping with convention of maiden speeches, I would have taken a middle of the road position in terms of contribution, non-controversial and so on. Unfortunately, I have to depart from tradition.

As someone who has derived his economic sustenance for the past 14 years from the representation of workers, I could not sit idly by and allow public workers to be vilified and attacked in such a vicious and unwarranted manner as was done yesterday by the Honourable Member for the City.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. I think that it is really quite unwarranted for the Honourable Member to suggest that I vilified public workers.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Honourable Member would recognise the point of order.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: I will quote her verbatim, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member asked that we take the fat, lazy drone bees and school them. As early as 5 o'clock this morning public workers were calling me to enquire what I was going to do about that. They will see and the reports will show what I am going to do about that. It grieves me, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Member represents a constituency which is about 99% wage earning...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member said he was quoting me verbatim. I would want to have the record called for. I do not recall that I said what he says that I said. I do not care what any of them recall. I want to be very clear on what I said.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I went on to speak of the need to retrain, retool and redeploy people in the Public Service. I am not going to have my words torn apart to give the Honourable Member a speech to make. The Honourable Member is making a speech because I pointed out that we have not heard from the Workers' Union representative on the back bench because I would not expect the one on the front bench to say anything. I know what I said.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILER: All the shouting in the world is not going to change anything. Let the records show.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I would say to the Honourable Member is that one of the provisions for points of order in itself can correct any misunderstanding or misgiving. If the Honourable Member persists with what you consider a misrepresentation then your request might be granted. I think in fairness once you have used that provision to correct any misrepresentation as you see it then I will ask the Honourable Member not to persist in using that kind of language in order that the records should be kept straight.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, I cannot sit here and allow other people to elucidate what I said. I am well aware of what I said. All the shouting will not help you. You can quote me as much as you like. Nobody can quote you because you have not said anything.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: I will press on, Mr. Speaker.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not expect that the Rules of the House will be breached in any way to please any one member. I am going to be fair with all members. I have asked Members not to have this dialogue or cross-talk to disrupt. Will the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, the Honourable Member represents a constituency which is by and large almost exclusively wage-earning, just like my constituency. Most of the Sanitation workers come from the City. Several fat, lazy drone bees, according to her, who keep this,....

Mr. SPEAKER: According to the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: According to the Honourable Member, a number of fat, lazy drone bees live in that constituency. I could not sit down...

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member, obviously, is misrepresenting the speech of the Honourable Member. She never said that any fat, lazy drone bees live in any part of the City. He said "fat, lazy, drone bees", according to the Honourable Member for the City.

Aside.

Certain remarks made by Hon. H. deB. FORDE were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I will press on. I will not be derailed. Therefore, I was grieved and taken aback about the comments. The Honourable Member should recall that she also said that trade unions only like to deal with workers who pay dues and not the non-members. The history of collective bargaining in the Public Service is that when we negotiate for workers all the workers in the Public Service get what we negotiate for whether they are members or not. That puts the lie to that.

With respect to the question of training, that was another matter that was raised by the Opposition. They lamented the fact that there were these excessive cuts in training. Mr. Speaker, you are well aware that between the years 1976 and 1986 the Barbados Labour Party almost closed the Tercentenary School of Nursing. For a three year period not one nurse was trained. They almost closed the Erdiston Teachers' Training College. This is a fact. This cannot be defended.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand that the Honourable Member must make his speech but he still must observe the Standing Orders. You cannot say that something is almost so and say it is a fact. It is not true that no nurses were trained at the Tercentenary School of Nursing for three years. That is simply not so.

10.10 a.m.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I will proceed. The training and the cut in training was not only at the level of the Tercentenary School of Nursing. The cut in training was widescale throughout the entire Public Service. Even in cases where provision was made for scholarships through agencies such as PAHO where the criteria was followed, when it got up there at Government Headquarters, where a little card system was kept on all of the workers, it was changed. This cannot be refuted. This is a fact. When they start to talk on the other side about training, they must shut up because training....

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central were ordered, by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the record.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: I will continue. Mr. Speaker, the whole concept of the Estimates, as I see them, is about expenditure control and about the resource allocation, the allocation of our scarce resources. Public workers have a very pivotal role to play in ensuring that these Estimates, the provisions of the Appropriation Bill are adhered to. If Members on either side were to vilify public workers the natural corollary, the natural human reaction would be to pull the plug.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have to recite the importance of the Public Service to the overall scheme of things in any country. We only have to take a look at what happened in Italy and France and see that the country was run by the public service. But what happened between 1976 and 1986? We must continue to repeat what happened between 1976 and 1986. It is my belief that on this side and indeed from a national perspective on both sides that we have to give public workers their due in order for the whole system to work. There is a positive relationship between employee morale and motivation on one hand and productivity and performance on the other hand. If you are going to attack public workers the natural corollary is going to be to lower the morale. What would happen?

During the year 1980, Mr. Speaker, I refer now to other statements made by that side with respect to the whole question of human resource management when it seemed to me that the Ministry of the public service was under attack. But lest we forget, Mr. Speaker, we all must be reminded that the Organization and Management Division of the Public Service was closed, eliminated under the Barbados Labour Party. No one can deny the need for the rationalization and harmonization of the human resource management function in the Public Service. The organization to do that was the Organization and Management Division. But it suited the purposes of some to close that division to do their own thing.

I deal next – and I said I make no apologies in a maiden speech for having to go down this road – with the whole question of the reclassification of public workers. The Public Service was reclassified in 1984 in half an hour at a hotel in St. James during the by-election.

This side set up a high powered three man team to scientifically look at, evaluate and make recommendations on the reclassification in the Public Service. In the end public servants were rewarded to the tune of $41 million. These are facts. They were not regraded in half hour. It was not regraded with the stroke of a pen saying, "he does not belong to us so he cannot be regraded." It was not done like that. It was done in a scientific manner.

I could come in here and go on and on with a litany of woes that were foisted on the public servants of this country during the regime of the Barbados Labour Party. The Barbados Labour Party should ask itself.....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am unable to hear the Honourable Member.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will ask Honourable Members now to start to get down to the business of the resolution. I think I have given enough room for these little interventions. I am asking Honourable Members once and for all not to continue with the kind of cross talk. I am hearing the words. Once I hear them, I have a right to deal with them. I am asking Honourable Members to contain themselves in such a way that it does not offend the Chamber nor the Member who is speaking. I will ask the Honourable Member to continue now that there seems to be a little bit of quietude in the Chamber.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The other side, the Opposition is trying to send, to my mind, it appears to me, panic throughout the length and breadth of the public sector by speaking about lay-offs and about lay-offs of temporary workers. Before I deal with the whole question of lay-offs let me again remind the Honourable Members – and if I have to spend my first year in here reminding them, I am going to do that – that they created, I use the word reservedly, what could be called permanently temporary workers in the Public Service. It was only after 1986 that this administration appointed over 2 000 workers in the Public Service.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one minute. Order, please. It is about time that we start to display a certain amount of maturity.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is again misleading this House. It is not true that the Barbados Labour Party created any permanent temporary workers. I was in this House when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South for instance introduced Orders in this House which are part of the Laws of Barbados making sure that persons who had been temporary in the Civil Service that their posts were created permanently. And then set out clearly as shown in the record of the House the policy of the Labour Party, which was to ensure that as soon as possible as many temporary workers as possible, for whose posts there was justification, would be made permanent. I was also in this House when the same thing happened under Prime Minister Adams, and it just is not true.
10.20 a.m.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I could call names of persons, I will not do that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will not allow that unless I was first informed of the names.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but there are persons in the public service who resigned out of frustration in the later years of the Barbados Labour Party regime, after acting for 12, 14 and 15 years. Some were in the Ministry of Health. I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Michael West can bear me out on that. So when I talk in here about the public sector, I am talking from a position of privilege. When I talk about knowing what has gone on, I know what has gone on in the public sector.

To get off the whole question of the public sector *per se*, I would just like to inform the Honourable Members on the other side that since the O & M Division has been resuscitated, studies have been carried out in several departments. In the Town and Country Planning Department, in the National Cultural Foundation, in the National Insurance Department, in the Immigration Department, in the Licensing Authority, in the Child Care Board, in the Personnel Administration Division, in the Labour Department, in the Government Information Service, in International Transport, in the National Insurance Department and I could go on and on if time permitted me. In the Tourist Board. I could go on and on. Sir, these have gone on in these departments that have redounded to the benefit of the society at large through efficiency, through raising of employee morale and motivation. Through better delivery of the public services, that is what has happened.

I move off, Mr. Speaker, from the public service per se, and I will deal with a matter which is sure to surface again in the next few weeks. It has surfaced during the elections and indeed it did surface yesterday – the whole question of privatization.

From a worker's view point, Mr. Speaker, I am submitting that any privatization that must take place, the private company, or the organization that should be taking it over, must be the credit unions, must be the workers, not three or four big businesses in town. We are not diametrically opposed to privatization, but sometimes when you talk about privatization you have to talk about who are going to run the organisations. Are the credit unions going to run CBC or the persons who have been the proponents of privatization, do they want CBC to go into the hands of the Nation Group of Companies, do we want that? Do we understand, Mr. Speaker, if that happens, that the minds of the entire society would be controlled by a few people? We cannot allow that. We would not sit idly by and allow that, and we make the point on this side, Mr. Speaker, that when we are considering the question of privatization, we must remember that privatization where it has been tried, where the public service has been dismembered, has caused certain basic and fundamental services to be out of the reach of the majority of people in the country and that is what we have to safeguard.

We as the Democratic Labour Party, we are not masquerading under the name Labour, we are the Democratic Labour Party, and as the Democratic Labour Party we must ensure that most of the basic social and economic services are in the reach of all the members and the masses of this country, we must ensure that, and any privatization that goes against that trend, that goes against that grain, is going to incur the wrath of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Mr. Speaker, the central issue, to my mind, in this debate is what extent the expenditure as set out in estimates goes towards facilitating and stimulating the production of tradeable goods and services, that is the central theme. I don't think it is about whether we cut tourism, because the expenditure in tourism could be cut, but that does not mean that we are going to in anyway lessen our marketing drive. The allocation for agriculture could be cut, but that does not mean that we in any way cut or dilute our drive in the area of research and development. These are the issues that the Honourable Members on the other side must understand.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for the City breathed a sigh of relief when she heard me say that I am closing. She breathed a sigh of relief. She incurred my wrath about 14 years ago at Sanitation, but that is another matter. I would want, Mr. Speaker, to associate myself in the strongest possible way, with the provisions of the Appropriation Bill and look forward to making my contri-bution under separate heads when I will reveal other atrocities that were wrought on the people of Barbados by that side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would just like to draw to Honourable Members that you cannot say Honourable Members brought atrocities on other people. By saying the other side you obviously meant the members on this side. I would prefer you to be more specific if you were saying it was done by some other organization or something like that certainly, but not members of this House, it is very offensive and I do not think you could say that.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I came in on the tail end of what, from what I heard, was a very inelegant contribution by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I came in here, Sir, rooting in one sense for the Honourable Member because he has done something that I dearly wanted long before anybody on that side wanted it, and for that reason, he has some small measure of sympathy on my part, well not sympathy, fellow feeling. He has also done something else that even strengthened that fellow feeling and that is that he was born and grew up in Carrington Village, like me. A place that has produced a number of outstanding citizens, so there was further fellow feeling, but I must say that I am a little bit disappointed at the quality of his contribution this morning in this important debate, because the Honourable Member, raging far and wide, provoked as he suggested by the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown went I believe beyond the borders of what is really satisfactory in a debate of this nature. I am not going to spend any time dealing with too many of the details. I wanted in this debate, Sir, to say a few things about the state of rural Barbados and the way in which these Estimates have failed to reflect on the situation in rural Barbados. Those of us who live in the agricultural parishes and who are perceptive enough to observe what is going on around us – some live in them but we do not notice – will see that over the past decades...
10.30 a.m.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You deal with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and leave me out or you will get grounded in the dust. Those who live in the country and are perceptive will realize that over the past few decades the rural parishes have been left behind in the development of Barbados.

I was looking in the Estimates to see to what extent that situation was intended to be corrected. I know that the Estimates are not the only indicator of Government's policy in relation to the development of any part of Barbados. Well, we shall have to wait for another few weeks to hear Part II of the Budget to see whether the Government has any intention at all of changing the imbalance in the development between town and country.

You take agriculture, for example, Sir. I searched in vain in the Estimates of Expenditure. I know a lot of pseudo wisdom is that you can cut expenditure but deliver anywhere. That begs the question: If you can deliver with less money, why were you spending more or is this the kind of charge of wasteful spending? But that is only coincidental. I looked in vain under the Head of Agriculture to see what Government intends to do with spending and I am not dealing specifically with agriculture.

Now we have a situation in Barbados, Sir, where the countryside is in decay. All across Barbados land is lying fallow, vast acreage owned by the Government.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You come from the wrong place. You do not know these terms. Also, Mr. Speaker, there are large numbers of people who are unemployed and in all of the rural parishes you can see them at the corners everyday and many of them would like to have a stake. Now we have some serious problems. You can make sport on the other side. Some day the chickens will come home to roost. It cannot be fair that all across rural Barbados land is lying around and young people cannot get an opportunity to participate in agriculture in Barbados. Now I tell you what I hear often. Young people cannot get work and they ask, "Why can we not get some land to grow peanuts or vegetables?" These things have been debated over and over again. I do not think that I am saying anything new. If you say it long enough, it will sink in. Young people cannot understand why all around them land is lying idle and they cannot get any assistance at all in obtaining small lots to plant vegetables and peanuts. I mentioned those two areas because I hear them often.

The English poet, Goldsmith, has said:

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey
where wealth accumulates and men decay.
But a bold peasantry its country's pride
when once destroyed can never be supplied."

That is happening in Barbados. The only thing is that 200 years ago the British people were able to look at the situation which was being overtaken by industrial revolution and realized that they had to operate in tandem and that agriculture was important in the livelihood of all of these people and Government has to take serious steps.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Prime Minister is looking down. He has no quarrel with what I am saying. But where in these Estimates can the Prime Minister tell me is the indication to deal with that very problem? Now I hear the experts talking about a window to this and a window to that. They want a small window for that. I am suggesting that you need a wide open door not a window. The Government has to come up with some new plans. I know that we cannot do it without money, but the Government

has to come up with some plan to reverse immediately the trend in agriculture and the tremendous disillusionment that is being built up in the minds of young people on a daily basis when they see the wide gap between the promise and the performance. The Government has not got forever. The report says that between five to seven acreage of agricultural land is going out of production everyday. That tells me that over 2,000 acreage of agricultural land is going out of production every year.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You see the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is not too good in arithmetic, because 2,000 over five years is 10,000 which represents a somewhat substantial amount of agricultural land in Barbados. But the truth is that if the Government can find comfort in those figures let them find comfort in them.
10.40 a.m.

The question continues to be raised as to how can a Government that is serious about the situation in this country allow that to continue, when all across rural Barbados we are experiencing unemployment levels perhaps as high as 50% among young people. These are some of the questions that must be addressed and for which no provision seemed to have been made in these Estimates.

I want very quickly to deal with the question raised by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy yesterday, because he must not be allowed to get away with a lot of talk without thought. There was a lot of talk about Intel and what caused Intel to leave. That is an old debate. The facts are on the files and if the Honourable Members on the other side want to tell the truth about it, they will tell the truth about it. It is wrong to say that Intel left Barbados to go and open in Manila. There was an Intel plant in Manila long before there was a plant in Barbados.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You can neither hear nor understand as well as I can, so I do not need your assistance. I am referring to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. It may very well be that I can do nothing as well as he can, but I can give you a list of things I can do. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It was stated that the manufacturing which was being done in Barbados was transferred to Manila. No one said anything about they going to open a factory in Manila. I was the Minister when it happened.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point of order taken.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I like a little interruption. It provides an opportunity for diversion. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is the man who the Honourable Member for St. Lucy should quarrel with about the Barbados Furniture Trading Company. It was the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who went into that Ministry and because the Furniture Trading Company was set up by the Barbados Labour Party, he decided that one of his first – I almost said ignorant acts, Sir – was to give instructions to the people on the Board of the IDC to shut down the Furniture Trading Company.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading this House. The decision to shut down the furniture manufacturing plant was a recommendation from the IDC after an examination. I agreed with the recommendation, I gave no instructions. I can bring the records.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Until the Honourable Member brings these so-called records, I stand by my statement.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. And I stand by mine.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member should sit down and let me talk.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But don't tell lies if you have to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, now! Two Honourable Members are on their feet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I withdraw that, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member, and I repeat it, Sir, gave instructions to members of the Board of IDC to shut down the Furniture Trading Company. He can get up as much as he likes, I stand by every word I say.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is barking up the wrong political tree when he looks over here and makes certain accusations. The fact is that the Barbados Labour Party set up the Barbados Furniture Trading Company as a joint venture with the private sector, the furniture manufacturers, to assist the furniture manufacturers in Barbados to develop the quality of their product and to be able to get a foot in the extra regional market. If we are criticised for that, we are happily criticised. The Barbados Labour Party Government, through the Furniture Trading Company, managed to secure a contract to provide period furniture to Pulaski Company in the south eastern United States.

Some of the finest furniture produced in this country was done in that particular project, Sir, and gave the furniture manufacturers the incentive to improve the quality of their work as they sought to get a foot into the extra regional market. Now I hear that they failed to produce enough. So what? The Government of Barbados under the

Barbados Labour Party does not go into furniture manufacturing companies and produce furniture. As the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said yesterday, the Government can only provide the kind of environment for these people to be able to produce, and that is exactly what they did.

The first set of furniture went up to the United States, and because of the climatic conditions and the moisture content because of the lack of proper temperature in preparing the material, it warped. The Government of Barbados, that they seek to criticise for establishing a furniture company to help the furniture manufacturers of this country, then paid for a kiln, a big oven, and established it down on the Spring Garden Highway to allow the furniture manufacturers to have that common facility at low cost to assist them in producing. And we are getting criticised for that? Keep criticising us. You are doing very well.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, again, goes on with this business of industrial development as if nothing had ever happened under the Barbados Labour Party. It is a fact that more companies came into Barbados in the period of the Barbados Labour Party than in the period since that or the period before, but these arguments are childish, Mr. Speaker, because industrial development in Barbados is a continuum. These facile arguments over whether four came in under this Government or five under the other to me is an insult to the intelligence of thinking people.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I have never brought an industrial plant into Barbados. I don't bring them in, so don't give me any. I don't want any. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that this business of attraction of offshore businesses to Barbados is a policy started way back in the 1950's and continued up to 1991 as a consistent policy of both administrations. If you want to get into this useless argument over who brought in more or less is an argument that does nothing other than insult the intelligence of intelligent people. The situation in relation to trade with Trinidad – that is where there is some shame, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West in his usual extravagance of language, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing", said that he would go down to Trinidad on a weekend and clear up all the problems with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.
10.50 a.m.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the Debate in here, Sir, I have not spoken yet. How could the Honourable Member get up and say that I said I would go down? Unless he is going to give you context, Sir, I would submit that that is contrary to the rules.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, too, he jumped in on the act. He went down to Trinidad and wined and dined for a couple of days and he came back here heavy with the wining and dining and made some ridiculous statement: "we need 2000 jobs". But they lived to learn that it just doesn't happen like that. These things are not important in the context of what is happening in Barbados today. Every time the Honourable Members speak they go back to 1976 and 1986 for wisdom. 1976 to 1986 is the period that was replete with wisdom and they have to keep referring to it. But, I am dealing with 1991 because the problems of 1991 are not the problems of 1976 and the problems of 1991 are not the problems of 1986 when the Democratic Labour Party became the Government. The ball game has changed because of a number of compelling external factors that have made an impact on every aspect of life in this country. These are the things we have to deal with. The Honourable Member of St. Michael South Central mentioned the question of privatisation and I was glad to hear the way in which he put it, that he is not philosophically opposed to privatisation. Some of us are.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You do not understand the inclusive nature of us.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Point of order. I am being misquoted, Mr. Speaker. I said that I am not diametrically opposed which, obviously, is different from being philosophically opposed.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I don't know that that is true. You learn to read what a man says in the context of the whole of what he says and he started talking about his philosophy. So, I read the whole thing in that context. So, we won't quarrel or split hairs about that. I am glad for what he said because all it means is that he has been reading the manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party when he says that he believes that when you are privatising or divesting, or whatever his words were, that they should be given to the credit unions and not, according to him, to three or four big businesses in Bridgetown. I don't know if anybody has made the Barbados Labour Party manifesto a document of the House yet but it should have been from the first day because it is a document that is replete with learning and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central may have had a look at it because on page 32 of that document which I shall make a document of the House, it says:

> "The Barbados Labour Party will invite the credit unions, and indeed the cooperative movement, to perform a crucial role in this strategy for widening the ownership of our country's economy."

So we are agreed on something. They said, Sir, that that has been said by the Democratic Labour Party for a long time.

The Democratic Labour Party under the leadership of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Minister of Trade, was so concerned about these things, the rights of consumers and all that, that he has had sitting on his desk for five years a draft Sale of Goods Act which would protect the rights of consumers in Barbados and for five years he sat down on that draft.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would like to inform the Honourable Members of this Honourable Chamber that I have never seen such a draft.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I understand why this country is in such deep trouble. Because, apart from the fact that I can say with absolute certainty that such a draft exists, it was also...

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sale of Goods Act. I'm sure you will do something about it.

Apart from that it was in a number of public documents including the manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party of 1986 and anybody who is in the serious business of politics must know what their opponents are saying. It means that the Honourable Member spent five years there without even taking a look at what was... He could have taken a look to see if it was worthwhile or not, but not to have looked at all is an excuse that cannot be accepted in this case. You see, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy...

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I don't know why they will not leave me alone. I want to talk about issues and they are distracting me about talking about them. The Honourable Member of St. Lucy spent more time working out who to get import licences than he spent carrying out a serious policy of trade in that Ministry. When the Chief Price Control Officer spent years dealing with over 90% of routine applications for price control, not referred to a Minister. The Minister has time to sit down every day and look at everything to say that A should get an import licence to bring in $200,000 in chewing gum? The Barbados Labour Party Administration didn't have time for that. I was a Minister and I never saw one yet.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You shouldn't trouble me, you know, because I could mention another one that would rock in here.

The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister must have known what he was doing when he moved the Honourable Member for St. Lucy out of the Ministry of Trade. If I am provoked I am going to say something in here that is going to make some people's hair curl, if I am provoked. You see, when you are a Minister of Government, Sir, you should be like Caesar's wife – your conduct should be above reproach. The people who work in the government departments in Barbados are split between BLP, DLP and occasionally NDP. The information is not as sacred and sacrosanct as some people believe. I am leaving you out for now. I am asking the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister to leave me alone. If he provokes me he is not going to like what I am going to say.

Let me just mention quickly one or two things in relation to the question of training. The statements made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central are a bit misleading and spoken only from the point of a trade unionist who has his people to look after, so I can understand that, but what has happened during the period when the Honourable Member said that the Erdiston Teachers' Training College was almost closed down and the Tercentenary School of Nursing was almost closed down, these are statements which are not true...

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I will deal with both. I don't know why we have to quarrel, if I say something untrue get up and talk.

In respect of the Erdiston Teachers' Training College, that is such a monstrous untruth that I don't even know if it deserves to be answered. The Erdiston Teachers' Training College was never at any time closed. It had an intake of students every year without break since it started. What happened at one point during the term of the Barbados Labour Party Government was that most of the teachers in the primary school and in the secondary schools of a certain ilk, because I thought that was what the Honourable Member would talk about – the five-star hotel that was built at Husbands for one set of children and a two-star hotel that was built in the constituency, I believe, of the other Member, for another set of students. I believe that is what you should talk about.

11.00 a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has come to the end of his time but I will give you one minute to wind up what you are saying.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I have a lot more time to talk. A two star hotel was built up in Kingsland. I will deal with that at a later stage in the debate, Sir. I cannot make the points I intend to make within one minute. Thank you, Sir.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Bill which is before the Honourable Chamber. Unlike the Honourable Member for St. George South, I will not spend the half an hour saying nothing. I

hope I am able early on to indicate what my position is and I hope to reflect the position of the Party as far as the Estimates are concerned.

What I am particularly puzzled about the approach of the Honourable Members on the other side is why over the period of time yesterday they took a considerable time out to challenge the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance concerning the management of debt in this country. I did what I believe every Honourable Member on that other side ought to be able to do. I did a slight analysis of the charges of debt over the 10 year period as itemised in the current Estimates.

It started off as a 12% of the total current expenditure in 1980/81 up to a 20% of total current expenditure in 1986/87, down to 16% in 1985/86. It is now at a whopping 27% in 1989/90. I think it is 25% in this current financial year ending in March. It seems to me extremely strange and bizarre logic and incorrect reasoning for the Honourable Members on the other side to be telling the Prime Minister "You borrowed money. The two loans you are talking about" – when I say "you" I mean the Democratic Labour Party with the former Minister of Finance – "the bullet loan from Japan and the other one from Barclay's Bank that they have to be paid this year and you have to find the money", this year being 1992.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter is not in his seat. I regret that immensely because he might be the only person who understands these things on that other side. A country that is developing does not develop one day or one year but a certain pattern of development takes hold over a particular period of time. Any understanding of the Estimates – I apologise for saying this in all frankness – by Members of the other side would indicate clearly to them that it was they, not this side, who started Barbados on a developmental trend that would have, in the long run, as the Honourable Member for St. George South said, brought the chickens home to roost.

It was not the Democratic Labour Party that started that developmental trend. I can see the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is trying to look extremely serious and making me believe he understands what I am saying. That is not really true, Sir. I am saying that the developmental trend that was established over the period of time that took the charges of debt from 12% in 1980 to 20% in 1986/87 is to the undying credit of the Barbados Labour Party.

I am one of these people and I must agree with the Honourable Member for St. George South for saying this. I do not like to constantly refer to the past but development in a country such as ours must necessarily be on a continuum. It is a continuity. I heard the Honourable Member for St. George South give the Honourable Member for Christ Church South what I can only describe as a tremendous slap in the face. Here he is saying that this is all kinds of foolishness. We should never be discussing these things at all. I remember yesterday it was the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who interfered with the Honourable Member for St. Lucy about who brought industries in Barbados. If they cannot agree among themselves that is their problem.

I will indicate as I go on, Mr. Speaker, how every Honourable Member on the other side is completely opposite to another Member. There is no unity, no continuity in what they are saying concerning an approach to these Estimates at all. That is why I believe Honourable Members should be serious in their approach when the Honourable Prime Minister seeks to do one thing, to manage the debt of this country to the extent and to a degree that it does not too seriously disrupt the productive sectors or the service sectors in this country. I think he must be given credit for this.

If the Honourable Members, let me repeat this, are saying that two debts are to be repaid this year that were borrowed by the Democratic Labour Party, what happened to the 27% of total current expenditure that had to meet debt repayment in the year 1989/90? The figures are before them. All they have to do is to work out little percentages. They would see the trend that I am talking about, a devastating trend that has now caused this country to be in a position that the Honourable Member for St. George South would get up on the Floor of this House and say the chickens are coming home to roost. He may well be right, Sir.

This trend that I am worried about caused us in 1989/90 to be only able to put a figure of 19.5% of current expenditure in Education and Culture, 14% in the Ministry of Health. I took a look at the pensions because that is an area that we must consider over time. The actuaries will be able to tell me more on this. Pensions are now at some 5% of total current expenditure. These are the issues, in my humble opinion that ought to concern this Honourable House.

If I have never agreed with the Honourable Member for St. George South, I agree with him. The time of this House is too precious for the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to be worried about whether he brought in Intel, this body or that body. The Honourable Member for St. George South said there are facile arguments, totally useless. I agree with him.

Sir, what we have to be particularly concerned about too is what the future will hold for us concerning the figures which I have just stated and trying to establish that we are now in a particular form and I dare say a particular mind set which has been established over the years, that I find it is a bit difficult to drag ourselves out of too quickly.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas yesterday said he was surprised that the Prime Minister had not been sufficiently tough. All the other Honourable Members on the other side got up and were highly critical of the Prime Minister for not having a human face concerning any cut in the expenditure for the next financial year. We hear questions what are you doing to the poor people of this country? Who would be harmed the most? Who would be worse in their standard of living?

I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church South made it plain that would have devastating consequences to the private sector, the country is going down the hill at a fast rate and the standard of living is under threat. This is the difficulty here. If the Honourable Member is saying that is the case, how come one other member in that particular Party can tell us we have not cut enough? He is surprised that the Prime Minister has not been sufficiently tough.

Some of them want a human face, others do not want a human face. It comes about because of one thing. The Honourable Members of the Barbados Labour Party are, I believe, trying to deny the fact that it was those said Honourable Members that set Barbados on a developmental trend which could well be damaging to the country in the absence of prudent financial management which we are now getting.
11.10 a.m.

Asides.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South should leave me alone. I have made notes of all that they have said and I had planned to deal with them one by one. I made a note of what the Honourable Member for the City said or was trying to get across to us. I have her name down and then under it is blank. I could not get anything out of what the Honourable Member for the City said so I left that blank.

But should concern us is what role or how we should approach the economics of development in this country and what we should be cutting, what we should be expanding and what we should be putting emphasis on. It is not enough for 10 serious persons who purport to be members of a Party that is unified that was once called The Great Combination to get up, pick at the smallest of things, nitpick about everything, quarrel about anything without addressing the principle issue which is before the country today: How is the debt of the country to be managed? How is it to be set off? What is the correlation between that and things like provision for housing, provision for Education and Culture, provision for Health, provisions for pensions in the short-term and long-term?

I regret the Honourable Member for St. Peter is not in his seat because I believe I am talking to my members alone and your learned self. I am not speaking to them any more because they do not understand what I am saying. I cannot be blamed for that.

What is it about? What is this thing debt management about?

If the Honourable Member can get up and tell me what debt management is about, I will sit down. You see, Sir, in the short-term and the long-term in this country, I have no difficulty in accepting that the present approach to the budgeting in this country is to do one thing, is to permit the Prime Minister to manage that debt, to constantly be in touch with our interest rate approach, to be also looking at institutional changes and social transformations which are not negative to the country. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South again is sucking his teeth. He happened to be the only Prime Minister on record in 1986 when he had half an hour to address the nation he could make 18 minutes.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: Sir, the Honourable Member would have to be able to prove that point. Otherwise he must be condemned as being a liar. As far the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister is concerned, I know he can give evidence. One of these days in the not too distant future, he may have to give evidence in another place. But the Honourable Member cannot make that statement without being able to prove it.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I think that we need to do is to solve these issues as they arise within the context of the Rules of the House. The Rules of the House suggest that if a Member misleads or misquotes a person, that person has the right by the virtue of a point of order of putting it right. Once I accept that then I will ask the Honourable Member not to persist with something that has been accepted as rebutted. Therefore the Honourable Member has objected to the particular statement and I would think the Honourable Member need not repeat it.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: I saw it myself. I was in Queen's Park when it was on close circuit.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chair has no way of knowing whether a thing is true or not. One has to accept that the Honourable Members in here speak the truth. Therefore if the Chair objects to a statement the Chair then is bound to feel that that statement ought to lie where it is and need not be pursued.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate the difficulty that the Honourable Members have in coming to grips with the true issues as before this country. The Honourable Member for St. George South talked about the imbalance between the town and country and all these things, a speech that is made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph whenever he comes in

here. The Honourable Member said it when the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was not in his seat. It could only be said when the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was not in his seat. A speech that has been repeated time and time again by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. He said absolutely nothing.

The only person who even got near to mentioning the issue, and I maintain that in terms of the economics of this country today, the fundamental issue is how do we manage our debt? I do not care what the other Members on the other side say. If a situation reaches when for this financial year your debt payment is 25% of your total current expenditure, last year it was 27%, it is nothing to scoff at. In 1980-81 it was 12%. I am surprised that big men and women can regard this as a trivial issue. Not only does it impact...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: You see, Sir, what I think would please them is to see Barbados jumping in to a rapid and I would believe out of schedule repayment, if that is possible, to the detriment of other sectors in this economy. They would like to come in here and scoff at the fact that the Prime Minister either has to go somewhere and beg to reschedule debt, he cannot put a cent in agriculture, he cannot put a cent in education, he cannot put a cent in health. To them it would be a big issue. They would be happy to the detriment and destruction of this country.

It was that said very Opposition, Mr. Speaker, who went across this country speaking about devaluation and of late now we are going to lay off everybody in the public sector. I do not know how nationalistic the Honourable Members are. I would put that to question. I do not know what to call the Honourable Members now. Everybody as I said before is saying something different.

Certain remarks made by His Honour T. C. ESTWICK and Mr. L. R. TULL were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the record.

Asides.

11.20 a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Let the Honourable Member continue. I am saying that members must be silent. I am not accepting or tolerating any more of this kind of disruption.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have heard voices telling someone to sit down. I consider that a very grave offence to the Chair. Any member who commits that, I do not think I should have much hesitation in dealing with that member.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it must all mean, Sir, that the fact that I am in here meant that I was a candidate worthy to be in here for everybody. But I say, Sir, with a calibre of men, who not only understand what this country needs, who not only understand where this country must go, but also understand how to best manage our scarce resources in this country, because from an analysis of the history of this country it is clear that the Barbados Labour Party has never understood how to do it and in particular, when it came to incurring debt, we are now reaping the windfall of that debt, they were totally out to sea.

Now, Sir, I do not believe that the country is not expected in the short and long term to go through a continuing period of spending restraint. I do not believe that the average worker in Barbados, today, does not understand that if we are to improve efficiency, if we are to cut wastage, firm measures, as the Prime Minister said, must be taken in that regard. I am saying, Sir, it is strikingly unfortunate, exceedingly so, that members of the Barbados Labour Party, honourable as they are, seem to enjoy gloating over the fact that in their imagination people can lose their jobs, not as a result of any direct policy of the Democratic Labour Party, or of the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, but as a result of a developmental continuum that was established and set in train by them.

It is quite simple, Sir, if you get into personal debt, and you continue to get into personal debt, you can't jump out of debt in a day or a year, unless there is an immense windfall, and I think the figures will also indicate that in spite of all that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said, trade in this country started its decline in the latter days of the Barbados Labour Party rule in the mid 80's. That is a fact, the figures will indicate that, and if there was any increase at all during that period of time it was a result of the said very loans. When they are talking about the end of term deficit or surplus, the very loans propped up everything in Barbados, the figures are here to show, so all that happened was, excessive borrowing from the National Insurance Scheme and foreign borrowings that we are now reaping the windfall of. I am not making out, the figures are here to show. Any surplus on anything at all in Barbados at that time was a direct result of loans and I went through the figures of Schedules of Repayments over that period of time.

Now I want them to tell me, honourable as they are, whether it was possible, or whether it remains possible for a country like Barbados, and they all talk about it, with an open economy, and our productive sectors are now under threat, if it is possible for a country like ours to immediately erase that debt within one year, two years, three years or five years. I know of no country in the world that can do it

and I am saying, the fact or the issue is not the fact of repayment. That is not the issue, the issue Sir, is that we were set on a developmental continuum in terms of our economy which proved over the years to be damaging.

It is not the lot of the Honourable Minister of Finance to repair that damage. I did not want, Sir, to go down that line of argument, I tried my best, Sir, to find ways and means of examining the present situation to see what was wrong and what could be righted, but the evidence is compelling, that the result of the present difficulties in Barbados could only result from this trend of 12 per cent to 27 per cent last year in debt repayments of the total current expenditure. There could be no other reason for it, in addition to a downturn in the international capitalist or free economies to a downturn and the collapse in the Trinidad market and to a downturn and a contraction of the domestic output resulting from the loss of markets. So it is nothing to laugh, or scoff at, and it is, I would hope, something which should be understood by everybody.

I am saying, Sir, that I expect that the measures which are implemented by the Prime Minister in the Budget presentation will go a long way in solving and allaying many of the fears of the Honourable Members on the other side.

At least, Sir, the Prime Minister in his opening remarks informed us that agriculture grew, in spite of all that was said about the former Minister of Agriculture. The Honourable Member for St. George South wants to see more of this, so do I and so, I believe, do all of us on this side, we want to see it growing, because in an economy such as ours when we are not able Sir, to come to grips or to grapple, or to have with us the most modern of technologies, we must go back to the age old farming and I hope to God that sooner or later it will be so technologically oriented that people will not be afraid, or people will not worry about the possibility to think that it is still slavery and things like that. That agriculture in itself, must move towards, I would hope, an indigenous technology and I would hope, Sir, that in this particular regard .....

The Honourable Member for St. George South is laughing, as if he does not know that indigenous technology includes the cane cutting machines by Dr. Hudson. What is he laughing at? He is laughing at you. What is he laughing at?

Laughter.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: If he does not understand these things Sir, that there is something called an indigenous technology that can be applied to the agricultural sector....

Asides.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: I am saying, Sir, again, Sir, it is unfortunate that when the country is beset with its present problems that we can't come here and address issues in a mature fashion, we can't come here and address issues and come to conclusions –

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Thank you, Sir – conclusions which are beneficial to this country.

I have no difficulty, Sir, in maintaining the arguments which I have just expoused and standing by them, because in my own mind they are correct. In my own mind also nothing that has been said by the Honourable Members on the other side can hold much water and I have no problem, Sir, in supporting the provisions before the Honourable House.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I listened to Honourable Members from both sides and the contribution made by them and it is unfortunate that I had to listen to the Honourable Member who just sat down. I think it is Alexander Pope who said that a little learning is a dangerous thing. The Honourable Member, he would be advised to take a little advice from the same poet and drink deep or taste not.

The Estimates debate certainly brings out some facts or seek to get information and to invite discussion on a number of matters which concern this country and therefore one would expect members from both sides to air or ventilate areas of concern to them. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Finance the Right Honourable Prime Minister to respond and throw light on areas and there seems to be some query on certain subject matters and therefore I am sure that the Right Honourable Prime Minister will not feel offended, or no Right Honourable Prime Minister would be offended if the Opposition did make certain points during the course of an Estimates debate. So, I do not really see why some Honourable Members from that side who are new to this Honourable Chamber are ranting about the concerns. Mr. Speaker, I was just taken a bit there but I will continue.
11.30 a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not hear them so I wish that you do not hear them either.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am sure that if the Honourable Member who just sat down was in this Chamber he would have heard the Prime Minister say quite clearly that this Chamber is now comprised of Members who can rate very highly as Members who have the experience and ability mind you to make contributions of a very high standard. I think the Honourable Member should remember that.

I am concerned like some of my colleagues that there are areas which seem to be cut in the sense that there is reduced financing for particular Heads or Ministries. I have that concern and it is a genuine concern. I can justify the concern and so can Honourable Members from this side. If we express the concern about training or the cut in the Training Board, we can justify that. We know what we are saying. We feel that there are areas that need to be cut and we are not saying that it needs the laying off of people as interpreted by the other Members.

I want from the very early stage, Sir, to say this. When we talk about cuts and the repercussion of cutting, we are inviting the Government – I have said that I am going to be constructive in my contribution – to look at one particular area if the Honourable Members will understand. Look at the area that involves expenditure and can involve unnecessary and unproductive expenditure. The question of land acquisition – sometimes Government embarks on a programme of land acquisition and there is nothing in return. It is a very unproductive acquisition. If Government can contain the level of unnecessary or unwarranted acquisitions, it is one area that this Government can save money. That is what we are talking about. We are not talking about laying off people. Do not care what you say, if things become tight, then it is obvious that instructions or directions will go down to trim and that means that there will be necessarily lay-offs. That is exactly what it is, Sir. There is no way anyone can come in here and convince me that there is not going to be any lay-offs. Nobody can give an undertaking. No Prime Minister or Minister of Finance can give an undertaking that there will not be any lay-offs because it is known in the political circle and in Government. Those of us who have been in Government know that at election time there is a lot of padding to provide jobs. We know that. Governments from time to time have done that and sometimes you over budget.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Do not tell me that. Look, I am too old in this business. Mr. Speaker, this is a fact, that people as soon as you hear there is an election there are some Ministries like the Ministry of Transport and Works, NCC, and the Transport Board who take on people. That is why we have to come in here for supplementaries from time to time. I am telling the Prime Minister. He knows this. It is no surprise to you. People are taken on like money has gone out of fashion, Mr. Speaker, and you incur expenditure that is not budgeted for. The obvious thing to do is to either regularize it by coming for a supplementary or lay-off. That is what we are talking about. So if you do not know like some Honourable Members on the other side, then they should not get up and make those kinds of contributions. But as I said, we have to realize that we are living in a country where politics is the game and sometimes decisions are taken for political expediency. We all know that. It is not a question of debt ratio or what not.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The position is that I really do not understand all this talk about this economic thing. People come in here and they talk about economics. There was a time when the House was run without economists and the country was run properly. But because someone may be fortunate to obtain a qualification, bare paper work, does not mean they can manage any country. They still have to wait on the leaders of the party like the Honourable Prime Minister to invite them to run somewhere. They cannot get in on their own steam.

What we have seen and we are saying that there should not be any cuts in the Child Care Board for instance. We feel that the Child Care Board needs to be supported and the programmes find favour with all from both sides of the House. We are not suggesting any cuts in the Child Care Board. I am not suggesting that. We need to expand the work of the Child Care Board so that it can grapple with the problems that confront the young people of which the Honourable Members on that side are well au fait with.

We are saying in the area of housing that there is a dire need for housing especially at the very lower level where people are earning $200 or so a week. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you know a number of people in your constituency, Sir, that have sought your help to obtain a rental unit. I like to think of that. They cannot afford a mortgage. They cannot even qualify. They do not have regular jobs, but they have to find homes in which to live. We are saying that we are concerned when we see cuts. We know what we are saying. We want to see areas like housing given money so that the nation can be housed and those unfortunate people, those at the lower round of the ladder, can be housed. That is what we are talking about.

We are saying that in the National Training Board – yes, we are concerned. People talk about it. We want to invite the Government to understand that training is very important to the development of any country and we as a responsible Opposition are not going to sit down and allow the Government to get away with this. I am hoping that the Prime Minister does not take any advice from Honourable Members on that side who seek to justify reduction in training grants. After all, I am one of the savists. When the Barbados Workers Union and the NUPW and other unions sought to increase help for training, I did not hesitate when I was Minister of Labour and the Barbados Labour Party Government did not hesitate to grant them additional funds. We realized that training was an essential part of their operation in order to have a proper work force. If you are talking productivity, then you need to train the people. I supported them on that and I will continue to support them.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I said the NUPW and BWU.
11.40 a.m.

When the NUPW sought increase, when they said they should get a grant, it was the Barbados Labour Party that said they deserved a grant so that they could train their members, who are members of the Civil Service. We are talking about that sort of training. It is not necessary to go overseas for all training, some of it can be done locally, but we go a bit further than that, the area of training involves the National Training Board at the level of worker.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House in relation to the relationship between the Barbados Labour Party and the Barbados Workers' Union in terms of training. We received a subvention from Government of $20,000 and I think the Honourable Member for the City was the Minister responsible for that subvention at the time. I remember she approached us about cutting the subvention from $20,000 to $15,000.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot have a point of order on a point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Oh, I am sorry. Is he on a point of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: He is on a point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: This is a matter of fact and historical record, that the subvention was cut on the pretext, or the excuse, or whatever, given by the Honourable Minister at the time, that she wanted to bring some more organisations under the patronage of the Government. That is the pretext which was used at that time, so I do not want the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.. . . . .

Mr. SPEAKER: That is more a point of elucidation than a point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. When I was in the Ministry of Education I invited the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union to come in and discuss with me the possibility of sharing with other institutions in Barbados which would do training.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I am going to restate the position. When I was Minister they were given the funds, the level of the funding was restored to the BWU. The Honourable Member cannot get up and dispute that either. We are talking about training. The Barbados Labour Party set up the National Training Board....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir. To say that it was restored without saying that they had taken it away is to give the wrong impression to the House. They had taken it away and were putting it back, Sir.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The National Training Board was established by the Barbados Labour Party. The purpose for setting up the National Training Board was to train young people in areas. We saw the need then as a Government to expand this training from, let us say, the junior level to a senior level, and today the National Training Board is carrying out this function.

We believe in training. In 1978 not only did we adopt the Lawrence Report, but we went further in setting up this Board and had even the trade unions make an input. We expanded the programme to an extent that there were training centres in various parts of the country, not necessarily in each parish. When we talk about training we have to understand it is important for us to remind Honourable Members what transpired. I have appealed time and time again to take the politics out, because I have a fairly good memory. I remember when the Barbados Labour Party decided to establish a National Training Board at a centre in Gall Hill, St. John, the Right Honourable Prime Minister, who was then the Leader of the Opposition, said he wanted none at all up there. He did not want any training for anybody in St. John.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Barrow, not you. I said that to remind Members that if they hear Honourable Members from this side object to the cut in training, that is the sort of thing you had. Their Leader at the time objected.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. If anybody made a statement in St. John about not wanting anything in St. John, he would have to be speaking as the representative for St. John, it would not be the Democratic Labour Party policy.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That did not have anything to do with policy. He said he did not want anything from you in St. John.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It was not from me, it was for the people. You see, that is the level to which we go, because the Honourable Member, who is not now with us, recognised at a later stage that he had made a mistake, so I do not know what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is trying to justify. The Honourable Member then conceded that it was a mistake and invited me then to re-establish it in St. John.

The Barbados Labour Party cannot be considered a party against training. We feel that the National Training Board should be encouraged to continue the training. While I am on the question of training and the National Training Board, I would like the Honourable Prime Minister or the Minister of Labour, under whose portfolio the National Training Board now rightly falls.... I will compliment the Honourable Prime Minister for having the wisdom to place the National Training Board back to Labour. That is where it belongs. Internationally, people know that the Training Board is usually in that Ministry, so we are going to compliment where compliments are due.

At the same time I want to strike a note of warning to something that is developing in the area of the National Training Board which needs to be corrected very early. When they started, the training programmes were for a period of three months. Obviously at that time we were short of trained young people and in order to meet the construction boom that was anticipated, it was thought that we should accelerate the programme and the three month modular system came into being. It was then that the demonstrators recognised that it was necessary to extend the period of training from three months to six months. It was they who said that a three month period was not long enough for a student to have full knowledge of a particular skill or trade. That recommendation was accepted by the National Training Board and the Government proceeded to extend the training period from three to six months.

What has been happening at the Training Board is that the six months have been cut to three months, and I am inviting the Honourable Prime Minister to look into that. As a former educator, I am sure he knows what I am talking about. I think he understands that. I am going as far as to say that some of the programmes need to have an extension to a year so that you could link up with the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Apprenticeship programme.
11.50 a.m.

Now let us understand what we are talking about. The apprenticeship programme has dropped significantly and therefore what you need to do is to encourage the apprenticeship system once again. Look at the statistics and they will tell you a sorry story. The Work Experience programme was started by the Barbados Labour Party and it was doing a good job. How do you transform people from school into the job market? We have to train them. So, we came up with the Work Experience Programme and I know I will take flak from a lot of people from the other side, but they must give credit where credit is due because I was partly instrumental in having that programme implemented, which is now part of the programme of the National Training Board. That is the Work Experience programme. That programme gave people an opportunity, those who came from school and wanted to find a job, because employers were saying to them that they lacked the necessary skill and training, and we thought that we should operate the Work Experience programme and we went to Wales and to Jersey to see this system. We sent people to train and the Director as well as the Chairman to Canada to examine systems. But what is happening now? That programme, Mr. Speaker, and I am saying this for the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister to hear, was put on the back burner and Honourable Members would have seen in the paper that the present Chairman is saying that he is now advertising for people to come to train. We should not have that situation in Barbados at all, where you have to be begging people to come to train and when all the time people were running. They are a lot of unemployed youth and the programme should be so structured as to encourage people to come to receive the training.

We believed in training and we approached the World Bank to bring those projects. You go to Sayes Court, now, Mr. Speaker, and you will see that massive building which will become the main training centre for the Caribbean. It was the brainchild of the Barbados Labour Party. So, the question of cutbacks – we are only seeking information, because you can start a programme which calls for X amount of funding but as the programme develops, Mr. Speaker, there is a reduction in the initial stage, therefore you ask for money up front and as the programme gets going there is a reduction. I am no fool. I understand the estimates and that is how you should read them. Not every year you ask for an increase. An increase for what? When you would have done the major work, the foundation would have been put. As I said, we are asking questions: why the cuts? Are you going to extend? We know also that there are some programmes that funding has to accelerate to reflect the expansion of the programme for its success. If we see more funding for training we know that you are thinking along the lines of the National Training Board. We expected that sort of thing.

Now, the other area I would like to touch on is the whole question of transport, because we have seen in the estimates the apparent drop in subsidies. We have heard from a Member in the other place in the Ministry saying that subsidies will be cut. It was said by the Parliamentary Secretary, so therefore I am a little suspicious that it could very well be if you are cutting subsidies to the Transport Board and it is not showing any improvement in terms of wage earning that it is obvious that I can now speculate that there will be an increase in bus fares and I have strong reason to feel that there will be increase on bus fares based on the premise – I don't want to be irresponsible. Mr. Speaker, I am not going into whether tickets went... What I am saying is I am taking the statement made by a Member of the Government, a Junior Minister, that the subsidy to the Transport Board will be significantly reduced and I am drawing my reasonable conclusions therefore that bus fares will automatically go up whether we like it or not or there will be a reduction of service and I do not expect a reduction in service. If you are going to do that, I am going

to suggest now what I feel will happen. You will have to embody the minibuses and the Z vans and other modes of transportation into your transportation fleet.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am going to run the Ministry from over here now for you, if you want that. What I am saying is that looking at the estimates, I see where provision is made for some extension to the minibus vans. I am inviting the Government, now that the Z vans are an integral part of the transport system, to find ways and means of keeping them in that system. As I said with the regulations, I am all for that. After all, they are poor people who want to make an honest living in this country and I see no reason why if they have tried....

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: They cannot zero in any longer on tourism because out there a lot of people have taxis and can't get work. They're suffering. They have to pay back the loans, Mr. Speaker, and I am calling on the Government – I am sure the Minister of Transport & Works is hearing me, other Members don't....

Mr. SPEAKER: One minute more.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: ...to devise a programme to incorporate the Z vans as well as the minibuses and at the same time provide them with adequate and proper parking facilities like a bus stand. I have seen one in here, so I am asking you to consider extending it or modify the word "minibus". You have to do that so that you can incorporate all forms of transportation. I think that the country is expecting you to do that and to give them a proper transport system. Thank you for taking my advice.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Bill which is in effect to give Government the opportunity to balance its capacity to earn and to expend for the benefit of the people of our country those things which are necessary and desirable for their well-being. In this regard, therefore, Sir, I am a little bit disappointed that the case as put by the Opposition in this debate is one which lacks its impact for many reasons. My own impression, Sir, is that much of what they have said and the way they have said it, does not make me believe that they have confidence in the case that they are putting.

The other aspect of it, Sir, is that to all intents and purposes, the pre-election agenda which seems to be preoccupying the minds of the Opposition benches does not take into consideration that the 1991 General Election is concluded and that anything they may now refer to as pre-election or anything that they may do can only be for a subsequent election to the 1991 general election. There has been a call from Members of the Opposition for prudence in the management of the affairs of our country. Indeed we do not disagree with that.
12.00 noon.

Indeed, the Right Honourable Prime Minister has made it abundantly clear on many occasions that this is a prerequisite to growth and prosperity in our country. I do not think that it is important for us to be casting blame primarily on the political directorate for some of the failures that we have in our system without recognising that in any business enterprise or business concern, the whole spectrum of workers and persons participating in that exercise must carry some sense of responsibility and comfort in that they are part of the system that must produce for the good of all.

This brings us to the point, therefore, in which we can make an assessment of what are the problems with which we are faced in trying to bring to our country some sense of balance and prosperity in terms of what we are earning and what we are spending. None of us, neither as Members of Parliament nor even as members of our community in general, would like to see a diminution of the services which go to make our lives much easier. All of us must recognise that we have a responsibility to contribute to the development of our society in a way that we can all share the cake.

I look at wastage in whatever form as a deterrent to that state of prosperity to which we all strive. It is appalling when you make an assessment of the quality of persons entering the work market, quality in terms of attitude and determination to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. I believe we have to conclude that it is timely and necessary for us to begin to remind those persons who would be coming into the job market that they need to make an assessment of the goals that they set before them which must only be part of those goals for which our country and the improvement in our country must be moulded.

I therefore think that wastage, in terms of our human resources, is one aspect that we must consider it our duty from every angle and at every turn to try to encourage people to make a better and more conscious and honest contribution to the development of our country. After all, any time you have to pay wages, materials and supplies, it comes down to a dollars and cents situation.

What are we discussing here today, Sir? We are discussing short-falls. We are discussing what in view of the short-falls is likely to happen, whether it is increased taxation or cutting jobs which have been mentioned in the debate so far. These are the things that tend to attract our attention at this point and rightly so. But it has a beginning. I believe as leaders in our community we must begin to point our fingers exactly at the source and determine how we are going to find improvement in that regard. Therefore, in this discourse, I am making the call for all persons,

management, supervisors, and run of the line workers to recognise that it is important for them to put in their best shot that we can get the best results at the end.

There is another aspect of wastage which must concern us. As I mentioned, it has to deal with materials and supplies. Both in the private and public sector, it seems to me to be a case where people conclude that it is not their responsibility, it is not a cost to them to waste materials and supplies. After all, Sir, if you mix a batch of concrete because of the lack of proper assessment of time or capacity to use that concrete then it has to be dumped. It is a wastage that neither the public sector nor the private sector can afford because, in the end, it is dollars and cents that we are talking about.

Any time we are spending more money on any project than should be spent at a time when we should be conserving then it means that we are contracting those opportunities for further job expansion. If you are spending X amount of money and you can get better job expansion out of it, I think that is something we should all aim at. This talk about reducing expenditure and the possibility of cutting jobs needs not be the result. I think if we can get our people to understand that we who are working are responsible for those who are not working or getting jobs, we must learn to produce better and produce more in order that the cake can broaden and, therefore, can be spread wider.

I think, therefore, that in this exercise which we have engaged in today our interest should be to help the people of our country to understand that they have a significant contribution to make towards the development of the country, not just to depend on the comments that are made so often that Government is not doing this, it is not providing this and it is not providing that. After all, who is the Government?

There are no money trees as I know them, Sir. Any time you have to find money to do something there must be a source from which to find it. By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread. Therefore, I believe that those people who are working must recognise that they have a responsibility to create an atmosphere where other people can find jobs.

12.10 p.m.

The Member for St. George South in his contribution made a comment that I would like him to explain, one which relates to the 5 star hotel in reference to a school at Husbands and another of a 2 star hotel somewhere in Christ Church. Is the Honourable Member saying by that reference, Sir, that these institutions which have been constructed under the regime of the Democratic Labour Party are too good for our children? Because if you characterize hotels by the quality of a 5 star and 2 star then you must be saying that there is something about it that you could have cut back on. I just want him to explain that.

The Member for St. Michael South East was very strong in his accusation about election padding. One accepts that any Member of the Barbados Labour Party who becomes a Member of this Honourable House of Assembly can speak from knowledge of election padding. If you, Mr. Speaker, had in your possession or were made aware of a letter that was sent to persons who had been offered employment in the National Conservation Commission during the months of January and June 1986 then you will understand what I am talking about. Any person who recognizes the amount of money that was squandered in the Welfare Department in the latter months of the Barbados Labour Party's regime in 1986 will understand what we are talking about. Any person who understands the allocation of funds between the first and second by-election in St. Peter would also understand what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is talking about.

I am saying, Sir, that it is timely for us to get down to the serious business of assessing where our problems are and coming to grips with those problems and as 28 Honourable Members of this House of Assembly recognize it is our responsibility to help to put the matters right.

The Right Honourable Prime Minister has called for a great debate on this Bill. I support that call because I believe that in it and out of it must come the recognition of persons who will listen to this debate or even read this debate subsequently that at least this party has taken the responsibility to get to grips with what it takes to carry Barbados into the Twenty-first Century. It is our vital responsibility. I believe we need to do this with all speed and with all haste because the country expects it of us and demands it of us.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Appropriation Bill and to say that I would hardly come so early in the innings had I not been forewarned yesterday by the Member for Christ Church South whilst speaking on tourism that we might never get there in the Heads. Judging on what has gone before us yesterday and indeed today, it would seem to me that that might well be true. Just per chance that is true let me say that I rise to support the Prime Minister as he piloted the Appropriation Bill in this Honourable Chamber and to say, Sir, that economies especially small, open economies like the Barbados economy must do all within their power to survive this financial battlefield. The Prime Minister came with a plan to control spending. For so many years now, Sir, at least 3 or 4 we have heard about runaway expenditure, squander-mania and such like. Now that we have attempted to do some cutting it seems to have invoked the wrath of the Opposition.

To be quite honest with you, Sir, I would love to have $50 million for Tourism and Sports. I would really love that. I can imagine how I would sharpen my competitive edge in the tourist industry. I can imagine what market diversification we would have. I can also see how aggressively we would market this wonderful product of Barbados and how we would go into the non-traditional areas instead of depending on those traditional areas in the eastern cordon of North America. I could well imagine that. I could imagine how it would strengthen my hand and give me some more clout as I negotiate from a position of strength when dealing with airlines, tour operators, travel agents and all the people that we have to negotiate with. That would be a fairy book ending. Everything would be fine. Because when one considers that a country like the Bahamas has 18 offices in the United States of America then you will see what I am talking about. If we had that type of money we would be very happy in the Ministry of Tourism.

But we have to look at the stark realities of the world scene and we have to see that there is a recession in the United Kingdom. The now Prime Minister, John Major when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer about four months ago said there was a recession. There is a recession in the United States of America. There is a recession in Canada. As we move to Continental Europe, Sir, some hotels have more workers than guests. In mighty Russia people are begging for food, as they are in Poland.

Here in Barbados, I say we must look at the stark realities of our local situation. Having looked at that scenario I think that you could then decide in your mind whether the Prime Minister was right when he said that he was going to control spending and tell us exactly how he is going to do it. That is the way I have looked at it and therefore I have no problem with him. I have no problem with what he said in introducing the Appropriation Bill.

But we have to look at tourism because tourism is not only important to Barbados, indeed it is important to the whole Caribbean area and it is the number one industry in the world. I think therefore that we must pay it some special attention. Tourism in Barbados has become our major growth sector area in terms of foreign exchange earnings and balance of payments considerations. Secondly, it is a great employment generator.

It is little wonder therefore, Sir, that we in the Democratic Labour Party recognize the importance of tourism for sustained economic growth in the decade of the 90s and certainly into the Twenty-first Century. I think the most significant achievement in tourism is the fact that we have been able to have all year round tourism. Historically, as you know, the affluent visitors came here for the winter and by the time summer came around all of the hotel workers used to go overseas on the Farm Labour Programme or look for other jobs. This is no longer the case and that is why we have to look at it in that way. Indeed it is a truism that if you are going to look at tourism, its success can only be determined by its performances in the second and third quarters. We have to look at that because I remember in 1986 when the now Minister of Health was the Minister of Tourism and he decided that he would try and encourage some charters to come out of the U.K. and I think he started with Air Tours, we got the sharp end of Aaron Truss' vituperative tongue. He had just learned how to begin a sentence with a capital I and therefore he thought he should write a lot of foolishness in the papers about that.

I wish to say that it is a curious paradox that while all this criticism was going about Barbados and everything was written in the papers for hoteliers in this country in particular and the tourist industry in general have gone for better times. But success is not an illusive dream hanging hauntingly out of somebody's reach, it can be achieved with determination, the will to succeed. All those things can happen if you have the co-operation of your people behind you. That is the reason why I think tourism has done well. Nobody wants to admit it has done well.
12.20 p.m.

For three years in this Chamber, Sir, not a word was said about tourism, indeed a word was said. I think a member of the opposition said that because the global tourism trends were good, Barbados had to be good. That is analogous to say that if a cat was born in an oven it is a bread. I think, Sir, that we have to look at this foolishness. Sir, this is no joke, I am serious today. Sir, in 1986, let's see what happened. In 1986 from April to June, we are talking about the second quarter, 75,380 visitors came to this country. By 1989, from April to June 106,478 came to this country. In 1986, Sir, from July to September...

Asides.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, I hope you will give me a few minutes for these interruptions, Sir, because I have a lot to say. From July to September in 1986, 81,133 visitors came, long stay visitors, Sir, came to this country; and by 1989, 113,408 long stay visitors came to this country. In a word, Sir, it means that between April and September of 1989, Sir, 220,000 visitors came to this country. Sir, that is an impeccable performance, people should walk around Barbados and shake the hands of those responsible for it, Sir, but instead they just throw abuse.

Sir, let us look, there are three sides to a story, your side, his side and the truth. I am opting for the truth, Sir. I do not wish to ever have to say this again in this Honourable Chamber, that is the performance of tourism, and I think I have to speak to this, Sir, simply because, if I were Prime Minister of this country I would be looking very seriously to see what is going to happen in tourism, what are the trends. I would want to know that, so let me tell the Prime Minister what is going to happen.

Sir, let us decide to do it this way, from whence we have come, where we are, and where we are going. I shall now proceed with that, Sir. In 1979, Sir, long stay arrivals in this country were 370,916. From 1979 to 1985, Sir, I would say, even 1986 no one can claim that there was growth, why, because in 1980 there were 369,915 of long stay arrivals, in 1981, 352,555 arrivals, 1982 – 303,778 arrivals, in 1983 – 328,338 and by 1984, 367,652. Sir, if we were to go on, in 1985 – 359,135 and by 1986 – 369,770. Sir, we are still 1,000 behind the high of 1979. So, Sir, there was absolutely no growth.

Let me have a look now at the figures since 1986 and you will see that after 1986 there was an increase, and where we had 421,859 a record in the history of tourism in Barbados. By 1988 – 451,485, another record, Sir. By 1989 we had 461,259, another record.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Yes, I will get to that. I know you would say that. That is a googlie that I am flicking through mid wicket because you should not pitch that ball to me. I will do that. Sir, let me just tell you the real facts. Tourism expenditure in 1986 was $600 million by 1988 it was $918.4 million, by 1989, Sir, it was $1 billion. I will get to 1990. I can't go over that because I have to run on. The length of stay was 6.3 nights. The length of stay, let us look at the length of stay for the visitors. In 1986 was 6.3 nights by 1989 it was 7.1 nights.

Sir, let us go to 1990. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South asked me to say what the figures were for 1990. 1990 long stay arrivals in Barbados were 432,000 visitors. Sir that would have been a record up to 1987. There is no way that we have seen that amount of people coming here who are long stay visitors, but that was a decrease. Yes, Sir, it was a decrease of 6.3 per cent, but the short stay visitors, the cruise ships were 362,611. Perhaps I should not have gone into that yet, because I should have told you from whence we have come. I have told you that in 1980 you had, let us go to the nearest thousand, Sir, 156,000 short stay arrivals here, Sir. By 1981, 135,990, 1982 – 110,000, 1983 – 102,000, 1984 another decline, three years on a run, 99,000 and by 1985, Sir, 112.000. The Democratic Labour Party, Sir, came into office in June 1986, so let's say that by 1986 that figure had moved to 145,000 in short stay arrivals. That was not a record because it had not gone past the 1980 figure of 156,000. But, Sir, in 1987, we saw a massive increase to 228,000 arrivals, a record, Sir, by a long way. In 1988, we saw another increase, another record to 290,000 arrivals and in 1989 we saw another record to 337,000 short stay visitors. In 1989, Sir, we saw an increase of 7.5 per cent and in 1990 we had 362,000 short stay arrivals.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sisnett? You should not have said that, because when that regime was controlling the Government, Sir, they had a Parliamentary Secretary who I understand, you can tell me if I am right or wrong, he worked exclusively with cruise ships. That was his job, and in that time he went from 110,000 in 1979 to 112,000 in 1985. Two thousand more people came, Sir. I should have thought then, by the same token Sir, you will have to give me an army ...

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: On a point of order Sir, the Honourable Member is unwittingly misleading the House. The former member for St. Michael North East was never Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism in 1979.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, I don't think, Sir, that he is referring to me. He is referring to an aside. I think so. But, Sir, certainly he told me Sir, that thanks to Leroy Sisnett, so I can only assume, Sir, that Leroy Sisnett did a great job. Let me say this. He is my cousin. If he did a great job, I will applaud him. He did a great job, Sir. But if doing a great job means that you move from 110 000 or perhaps even 156 000 or 135 000 as the years roll by, how far do you go in greatness if you move from 145 000 to 362 000? Jump over the thing and come and congratulate me. That is what you should do.
12.30 p.m.

Sir, I am only saying that give credit where credit is due. I do not walk about and brag, Sir. During my life, Sir, were I inclined to brag about my exploits on and off the field, Sir, I would never be able to stop writing a book. There is no doubt about it. I am unassuming and humble. There is no trace of egotism in my bones. This is a fact, Sir, and the Members over there know it. Therefore, Sir, I do not see why they should get on like that.

Mr. Speaker, let me deal with 1990. The whole world is in turmoil, Sir, and in Barbados we had a 6.3% decline and people called for my resignation. Those people are no longer with us and I am glad to see that you have not done so. I just wish to say, Sir, that half an hour is not enough for me. But there is a lot of time left and we will deal with that.

Sir, I just wish to say this. In 1990 we had some serious things. Not only was there recession in our major markets, Sir, but we had high interest rates in England. They had a poll tax, a ridiculous tax where the nobility paid less tax than the rabblement.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, it forced the resignation of a Prime Minister. I am saying that the populace discretionary spending power was lessened and hence that is the reason why we have not been able to see a lot of people taking our charters out of England.

Sir, we have had the threat of war in the Gulf and followed by war. We have had a higher price in aircraft fuel which increased the air fares. But I will say this, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, I hope all that time is not coming out of my time. I do not particularly like when people cross me but I understand it. Sir, perhaps even my own Members are staggered at the phenomenal success of tourism in the last four years. Sir, I am only saying that I am not going to stand before you and say that the recession and the Gulf War are the only problems we have had. No, Sir, I am not going to say that, Sir. Oh, no! We have to face these stark realities as I said and undergo some self-examination. That is what we have to do.

Harassment raises its ugly head all through this land, Sir. A recent survey said that 37% of our visitors here were in some way harassed either mildly or very, very seriously. The last one, Sir, only a week ago said 60 odd per cent of the people who come to this country, Sir, had been harassed. I have seen the coral man operate, Sir, in Broad Street. Sir, I came to the House and I was a few minutes late not only because the Member for St. Andrew tricked me into having an appointment with one of his colleagues from overseas, Sir, but they were bringing conventions to Barbados as far down as 1995. There was I ever eager for a 1995 situation where thousands of people will come to Barbados. Sir, I was delayed because a man with a big axe just stood up in front of all of the cars and waved it. In this country in the year of our Lord 1991, that is happening. So I understand how people are afraid. I understand too, Sir, that we are talking about transforming Baxters Road and I know, Sir, that we will never be able to have that as a place where tourists will frequent every day and every night of their lives if people are bedding down there at 5.30 p.m. in the afternoon. I have to say these things before the Opposition thinks that I am as pure as the drizzles. I am, Sir, but the system is not. You know we have human beings who will do foolish things, Sir. That is why I put up my hands and say that we recognize that there are irritants or problems which this Government or any other Government that is responsible for the affairs of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I just wish to say something about 1990. I just wish to say this, Sir, lest I be accused of not talking about when things went bad and of the 7.1% decrease from the United States, Sir.

Yesterday the Member for the City said that there are hardly any people coming from the United States. Would you say, Sir, that the 143,000 people who came in 1990 was not a sizable section? One hundred and forty-three thousand people came from the United States in 1990 and I will say, Sir, it started from 1979 when 91 000 people from the United States came, going right through to 1985 when they had a high of 148 000, Sir. This 143 000 would be the second highest up to 1985, Sir, and since then we have had 166 000, 175 000, 170 000, 154 000, and 143 000. That brings me to the point, Sir, the reason why we had declines.

Sir, we have seen the demise of Fly Fare who was in bed with Eastern Airlines who stopped coming to Barbados just so. We woke up one morning and the big boy at American Airlines said that we are not going to Barbados straight. We are not going non-stop to Barbados. You have through the hub in San Juan. What could we do, Sir? Only yesterday or two days ago, Sir, we saw a situation where Pan Am was in trouble. We heard about Continental in trouble. Airlines have been having troubles. Ten years ago there were 48 airlines in the United States. Now they are mega-airlines. There are three or four conglomerates, Sir. That is the position and yet people talk about things that they do not know.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I will tell that to my Prime Minister and not you. My recommendations will go to Prime Minister Sandiford, Sir, and not the Member for Christ Church South. I know you fellows are coming hard.

Sir, just let me say this. The American public became very inward looking. Let me tell you what happened in America, Sir. The Americans during the war never even travelled from New York to Boston far less to Barbados. Those who travelled went on short trips to Bahamas like a 15 minutes drop and things like that, Sir. I just wish to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that as I talk about the decline out of America is to tell you one thing. I just wish to tell you this. I wish to give you a reason why the Americans are not coming. The Americans, Sir...

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: They are trying to throw me off. It will not work, Sir. The Americans are now making shorter trips. I am saying that we in Barbados recognize that there is a problem out of this gateway.
12.40 p.m.

We recognise that there is a problem. We will look at it and see what is going to happen. When I say the Americans are looking inwardly, they are travelling to San Pedro Islands in the Gulf and to the Mississippi. There was a time when we in the Caribbean referred to the Mississippi as the place for cotton and race hatred. Nowadays it has 26 miles of beach. You are getting packages to Orlando, Las Vegas and all over America.

I predicted in 1990 that we would have a 5% decline in long stay arrivals and a 5% increase in short stay. That would have meant that 795,000 visitors would have come to Barbados in 1990. Do you know what happened, Sir? There

were 794,678 people who came as opposed to 789,359 in 1989, or a drop of 3,600, but my prediction meant that 322 more people would have come.

Early in the peace, Sir, without knowing about the ramifications of the war – I knew about a threatened war, but I have never been to war with anybody, so therefore I would not have known about the ramifications – but still I predicted that we would have 795,000 and we had 794,678. I was 322 short.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: No, 678 from 1,000 is 322. I am as accurate as the bombers in Iraq with the high tech operations. I was very accurate.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: These neophytes cannot talk to me about tourism. Do not question me. Talk with the big boys, I am not dealing with you.

Sir, let us have a look at the successes. While we were getting declines... Five minutes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You do not have five, you are on time, so you are going to have to make your final statement.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I just want to tell you, Sir, that the success of Europe is staggering. We had 31% out of Europe, 81.5% out of Switzerland, 30% out of Germany, 128% out of Austria, 38% out of Denmark, 23% out of Italy, 16% out of France and 17% out of Sweden. That is a success story, because I decided that I would be equipoised to make the decisions I had to make.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the sitting be suspended until 1.45 p.m. today.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Bill was read a second time.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

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

HEAD 10 – GOVERNOR-GENERAL – $370,213

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 10 – Governor-General – for the sum of $370,213 stand part of the Schedule.

I should say, perhaps in amplification of something I said during the introduction of these Estimates, that the amount to be voted should be seen in Part I of the Estimates, so before each Head you will see a Part I. That is the non-statutory amount that has to be voted on by the Committee.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, this is a non-controversial Head. When I speak on this subject I will speak with very great restraint, as I normally do on sensitive areas of constitutional policy in Barbados, but although I have been in Parliament for 20 years and have been a Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council for a considerable length of time, as well as being a Minister of the Crown, I really am not aware of whether outside of the Privy Council there is any body of civil servants who offer advice to the Governor-General on the conventions which govern the office.
1.50 p.m.

I recognise that we had in the person of one of the past Cabinet Secretaries a very knowledgeable person who has proffered advice to all of us who have held ministerial office, to Prime Ministers and to former Governors-General, on the conventions that obviously must be followed when we hold office. I wonder whether the Prime Minister could tell us whether there is any body of constitutional practice which has devolved and whether we should not, if it is there, codify the position. I said, Sir, I don't want this to be in any way a controversial matter. I feel that the Governor-General rightly should be above all considerations but I, myself, was a little surprised at the paper which showed in the last election that the right to vote was being exercised. I wonder whether or not the paper was correct in publishing the newspaper print of it in any event.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I know. I believe that in the United Kingdom the convention which follows is that the members of the Royal Family do not vote in those circumstances. I raise the matter, not because, as I said, I wish this to continue as a debate but I would wish the Prime Minister perhaps to advert to the conventions which we ought to follow in Barbados on all matters particularly affecting the Head of State.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I don't think I can be very helpful to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in this particular matter. I, myself, have not seen any codified conventions relating to the Office of the Governor-General and that, no doubt if it is desirable, would be something that would have to be researched very carefully and thoroughly drawing upon not only the practice here but taking into account also the practices elsewhere, particularly in Britain, where the Governor-General is the representative of Her Majesty, the Queen, in Barbados. As far as the....

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I refer to Britain because the Governor-General is the representative of the Queen in Barbados and I believe it was within the same context that the Leader of the Opposition raised it, but I know of nothing in the Constitution that would deprive a Governor-General of the right to vote. We are talking about a very fundamental right now, not an act of discretion or choice in terms of leisure time activities, so I would hardly think that anything relating to the exercise of the franchise of a citizen would form part of any convention even if the practices were codified and given the status of convention.

I don't think, Sir, that this is a matter that we should pursue on the floor of the House. If what is concerning the Member is the exercise of the right to vote, the Governor-General has that right as any other citizen in Barbados so long as she is able to do so according to the laws of the land.

The question that the sum of $370 213 under Head 10 – Governor-General stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative.

HEAD 11 – JUDICIARY – $20,952

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that the sum of $20,952 under Head 11 stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that the sum of $20,952 under Head 11 – Judiciary stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 12 – PARLIAMENT – $4,559,498

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $4,559,498 under Head 12 stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to mention the concern I had, Sir, about the opening of Parliament in February. I want to express dissatisfaction with the arrangements that were made for the opening of Parliament. In the first place, Members on this side, were only allowed as far as I am aware an invitation for themselves and spouses.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I don't know about that side. I am speaking for this side.

When I came here, I saw the gallery full of all kinds of people who were not directly connected to Members of Parliament. A lot of Civil Servants, a lot of other people and then when I went down in the yard, the "yard fowls" were down there – not from this side, because they were not granted entry into the yard. There was one, Alice, who dressed pretty, put some flowers in her hair, and how she got past the people at the gate I will never know, but I saw her inside the yard. I therefore formed the impression that the invitations were extended on a very arbitrary and discriminatory basis.
2.00 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Just let me finish. Why I cannot talk of that and who I saw was that I found it also inappropriate during the sitting of the House to break the proceedings of the House and go down into the yard.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I found it also inappropriate that after we met here first, went to the Senate that instead of coming back to the House and completing our business, there was an interruption in the proceedings in the House where we went downstairs, stood up any old how milling around while a choir sang. While the choir was singing all kinds of people were having drinks at the bars. Then we came back to the House to complete business. There was only one thing I could do about it. I expressed my disgust by not staying. As soon as the House adjourned I went home. You did not see me down there. I was not mixing up in that.

I think it was a very inappropriate arrangement. I am not against having the drinks and some conviviality on the occasion of the opening of Parliament but it would surely have been neater and tidier if we had come back, finished

our business, selection of committees and so on, adjourned the House and gone downstairs. We broke the proceedings to go downstairs to have drinks, to listen to a choir and come back up, then to go back down again. While we were up here, everybody else was downstairs licking through. It just took away from the solemnity of the occasion. I believe I speak for a number of persons who refused to stay and a number of persons who that evening and since expressed, some in very strong terms, their disapproval of the way we arranged our business.

I complained about the matter of invitations. I do not know who prepares the invitations whether there is a list, where the list is kept and whether the list is kept updated or not. I am submitting that it was unfair to the Members of Parliament – I can only speak for the Members on this side – to deny us the opportunity of inviting a few of our constituents to come to the Opening whereas a preference was given to other persons who did not really in any tangible way contribute to our getting in here.

I really am not concerned about what used to happen when we were in power because I believe the records of this House would show that in previous debates Members of this side have complained about the way a list used to be kept in Cabinet Office for functions at Government House. Cabinet Office used to play a major role in picking the invitees for Government House. We complained about it. I know that the list was revised after some political input at a time between 1976 and 1986. That is the first complaint I have to make about the operations of Parliament starting with this opening session.

The second thing I wish to place on record is I have seen a copy of the plans for this Wing. I want to make representations that the Opposition has an office and accommodation in this Wing. I have nothing to do with the West Wing. I am not walking up those steps to the top of the place where MTW is now until all out there is fixed up. If we go over there then everybody should have proper rooms and so on. For the time being the plan shows that we must have an office downstairs in the East Wing. I want it to be known that we would like that properly furnished and set up so that the Opposition can function in an office on this side of Parliament.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I obviously do not purport when we are discussing Parliament to respond because there is no response. We are all Members of Parliament. I believe as a Member of the Management Commission there is a duty which flows from that membership but I do not think it was brought into contemplation to the extent that anything which the Honourable Member said has to be discussed by the Management Commission. I give him the assurance that it will be discussed.

I want to take the question of the invitations. Arising out of the Opening of Parliament there was a very unfortunate article in one of the newspapers where a Miss Demora Kirton writing in the newspaper referred to the invitations....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am dealing with the fact. I am not dealing with her at all. She referred to the invitations and made the following statement, words to the effect that while she was upstairs sitting down, all the DLP yardfowls were at the gate. It has brought a tremendous offence to a large number of people some who may not even be supporters of the Democratic Labour Party....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am making the statement now since on a previous occasion when the same lady writing in the newspaper referred to the Democratic Labour Party yardfowls it was a matter which touched me personally which I do not propose to repeat. It would not have been in good taste for me to have responded at that time except to say a public apology to all the persons I know from both sides of the political spectrum who had the misfortune to have to stand up on that occasion. I felt particularly bad that anyone would speak in such poor taste on that occasion that she was seated and others had to stand.

When it comes to the public place of Parliament where the seats in here are relatively limited – I share the Honourable Member's view. I do not know how persons were allocated. I am not discussing that. I am saying, however, that if a person by whatever means gets an opportunity to sit in the Gallery to observe the proceedings by close circuit television, it is disgustingly inappropriate for that person to refer to all those other citizens who out of interest came and did not have the privilege to sit inside Parliament to refer to them as yardfowls and to say they had to be at the gate while she was sitting inside. I feel that is an affront.

There are a lot of people who talk about womanhood. They have a lot of words to say about who represents whom. I think it is disgusting for any columnist to use their column in such a way as to insult any sector of the community. As a politician I fully expect to be criticised sometimes fairly, sometimes unfairly. I believe every Honourable Member in here expects that to happen at some time. When the criticism is unfair we will protest as best we can and wherever we can but to the citizens of this country I do not feel that politicians have the right to insult them nor do I feel that columnists have the right to insult the citizens of this country. It is nothing short of an insult. I hope that will be the last we will see of anyone bragging, parading and making the Democratic Labour Party look as though it does not look after its own. We are not in the business of

looking after people but if we are to look after people we would have to look after the Democratic Labour Party people.
2.10 p.m.

So I do not understand anybody saying that the Demoratic Labour Party yardfowls were at the gate. We have no yardfowls. There are people who will attack us from time to time who themselves feel able to do the things that they attack politicians for. I feel very strongly about it, Sir. As I said, I could not use the opportunity on which it had occurred the first time because it would have been in poor taste, although I felt very badly about it. I take this opportunity now, in my personal capacity, to say that I would not wish to see it repeated where anybody is insulted. Everybody in Barbados has a right to their political affiliation to support who they want to support when they want to support them, to stop supporting them when they want to stop. That is a privilege which we got on November 30, 1966.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: 1951. I am glad the Honourable Member has reminded me that we had Adult Suffrage in 1951. But I would make bold to say though that the privilege though given in 1951 was not really as concrete as November 30, 1966. But it does not matter, Sir. The point is....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, since the Honourable Members wish to discuss it in those terms, I would say that one of the major contributions which the Democratic Labour Party has made to democracy in this country is that it presided, as a Government, over the peaceful transition from itself to another political party and it has had the honour in opposition to see that political party preside over the transition of power. Those two events will stand out in the history of Barbados forever. We are glad that all those other parties and sub parties who do not understand and did not seem to understand...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I am keeping this at the parliamentary level. I do not think the Honourable Member for St. George South is now saying that he is a member of the NDP? Am I to understand that he is now claiming that he has taken over the mantle of leadership of the NDP? I doubt it, Sir.

But seriously I really do not think it is decent, I do not think it is desirable for anyone to behave in that manner. If you have been fortunate to be invited to wherever, surely there must be some other phraseology, if you must brag about it, that....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But I do not know. I am not in a position to say. It is clear that if the lady was able to refer to the Democratic Labour Party yardfowls that it must have been somebody from the other side who invited her. But I am not in a position to cast any light on how persons were invited. I can only deal by the consequence of that invitation. But I think, Mr. Chairman, I have dealt with the issue I wanted to deal with.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, continuing on the same subject, that is, the one raised on the Opening of Parliament, I just would like to draw to the attention of Honourable Members of this House that the conduct of some persons, invited guests left a lot to be desired. Some of them were rather offensive. I had the experience of one or two people, identified regrettably – as I said I would not want to encourage this for even members of the Barbados Labour Party. I deplore that kind of conduct – who made it their business to offend. At one point in time I moved into three places and there were about four staunch members of the Democratic Labour Party, I say that, who made it their business to be extremely offensive. At one time the Commissioner of Police was standing up and they were so offensive that he just turned away. Take it as I tell you. I am not drawing any partisan line here.

I am a Member of Parliament and if anyone is invited in here I think that I have a right to ask that I be respected. This is nothing to do with BLP, DLP at all. I want to make that quite clear. If I am out there and I heard some of the Members hurling abuse at the Honourable Member for Christ Church South's wife, that is not something that should be encouraged. My wife drew it to my attention and I looked over and saw them. This is the sort of thing. We do not know these things. Not the Right Honourable Prime Minister. It is something I am sure that the Prime Minister will not encourage. I am sure he would discourage this sort of behaviour. They were invited. We all talk, but this is not the sort of behaviour that we encourage.

The other point I want to raise is that during a meeting two weeks ago, while we were in here, there were some persons sitting in that corner of the Public Gallery – I have never seen the likes of it before – with I think it was something marked "Sandi is Sound" and putting it here. Here again, nobody would encourage that sort of behaviour. Not in Parliament. It was taking place right there. I must say I can identify the lady that had it. As they were talking it was like this. This is no matter for laughing. This is serious. I did not want to get up and draw it to the attention of the Chair. But I thought I had a right. I am bold enough to get up and say it and make a noise in here about that kind

of thing. I am, not going to sit down here....I did not come in in a wheelbarrow. That conduct should not have been encouraged inside here. After all when you encourage that, what you sow you are going to reap. I do not encourage that sort of behaviour, not in Parliament. Go outside. Let us go into the public square and let them have that. But if you are talking about projecting us and having some respect, let us talk about that.

Mr. Chairman, as I said I would have to mention that sort of thing whether it is a BLP or DLP matter.

One other point which I want to raise is that this Head deals with the Management Commission of Parliament. Allowance is made for payment of a Constituency Secretary and payment for offices, those of us who have office. I am sure that Members will agree with me that it makes nonsense of the whole thing if no provision is made for at least a sweeper, somebody to clean the office. I am asking that some consideration be given. I have heard Members of Parliament talk about it. I do not know if some consideration could be given to this aspect of it, where you have an office and you are either asking the Member of Parliament to pay to get it cleaned or asking the Secretary to clean it. I am only making a suggestion. I think the Prime Minister will take my point, because it would happen in his case. Some provision should be made to have someone to keep the office clean. It should not be paid for out of the Member of Parliament's salary.

I am not making out a case for me as such. I am just throwing it out as a suggestion to redound to the benefit of all Parliamentarians. That is the area. I am not talking about a watchman or that sort of thing. But I am saying that at least some consideration should be given to the payment and moving in some sort of expense to cover cleaning of the constituency office.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, obviously there are legitimate concerns of Members relating to the functioning of their constituency offices to enable them to service their constituencies properly.

During my 20 years in Parliament we have made some progress in making provision to enable Members to carry out their functions as Members of Parliament in a proper manner as is expected of us by our constituents. I would hope that the concerns raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East will be addressed by an early meeting of the Management Commission of Parliament on which both sides of the House and indeed Members of the Senate are represented as well.

2.20 p.m.

I hope that the Commission will meet early and it will be possible for us within the Commission, as I said, to address these problems. I would wish to see that the position of the Constituency Secretaries or representatives is reviewed from time to time. We have managed in the last Session of Parliament to review them, but in my view there is still a good deal of room for improvement in their conditions and terms of service. I am not sure that the remuneration which they are given at the moment adequately represents the diverse duties that they have to perform and I would hope that we can look rather speedily at increasing that remuneration as well as giving them proper consideration when their security of tenure is effected.

On page 3 of the Estimates, on the explanatory notes, details of the staff of Parliament are shown in the Schedule of Personal Emoluments at page 2. That is being deleted, but I think we ought to know in some way how the money being voted in Parliament is to be spent and there must be some report from time to time from the Commission given to us here in Parliament. An adequate report which would be published and I would hope to see that Report published so that members would have the benefit of proper debate, if it is called for outside of the Commission on these matters.

Sir, I want to go on to talk about Members' privileges and the way in which we are serviced as Members of Parliament. I think many of us have spoken about this in Committee for several years now. I am sure they were talking about it before I came to the House of Assembly. I believe the Prime Minister and I are the two longest serving members in this House with continuous service in the House. There are others who have been here before us, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South actually came to the House before I did, but I believe, and I am not sure, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, myself and the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South, came to the House on the same day.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy reminds me that he came in Sir, but he is so troublesome sometimes, Sir, that one only hears him when he is in his impish moods, but we came here and there are only two of us now who have been in here in continuous service since 1971, but other members also have equal experience. In my view, I think that we have talked enough, and long enough. We are in the twenty-fifth year as an independent country and the three hundred and fifty-second year, or fifty-third year, I am not sure, as a country with a Parliamentary democracy and I believe we have reached the time when we really have to get understood by the public at large that democracy can only be preserved in a setting in which its Members of Parliament have the facilities in order to carry out their work.

It is mighty difficult, unless you are in Government, to have adequate facilities to really do the research that is

called for in this House. There are no assistants given, other than to the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister. The research facilities of the House remain inadequate as usual. I know that we are at present working on the West Wing of Parliament which when it is completed will provide some facilities for all members of Parliament. But literally, if a member of Parliament wants to meet with a constituent during the five days that we are continuously down here, you are at times at the mercy of using the rooms of the Clerk or the administrative officers, or an off room which is used for meetings of committees etc. I think we have to get beyond that stage, we not only have to have the physical setting, but we also should be given, as I said proper research facilities.

In Parliaments, no bigger than ours, whether it is the Parliament of New Brunswick, the Parliament of Ontario, any of the provinces of Canada, Members of Parliament are well serviced and looked after. There are some Parliaments in the third world countries that have moved to that stage, the public has accepted it as a necessary cost of preserving democracy in their country, and I have no doubt that the public will accept it in Barbados as a necessary cost of preserving democracy.

We have made some progress, don't misunderstand me, Sir. I have seen the progress made, both under our administration and now under this administration, but I believe that we ought, and I don't think even party's not represented in the House would argue against it, to get to the stage where the facilities are put in, in order to help us properly service the House.

Now, Sir, Committees. It is said that we have various committees of this House. The committees have seldom met, usually you will get a Select Committee to which we have referred legislation, meeting. But the Committee of Privileges has not met, certainly I had difficulty when I was first head of the Public Accounts Committee, in finding even the past proceedings of the Public Accounts Committee. They just were not there, and there have been a lot of problems in servicing these particular committees from time to time. I will hope in this Session to be able to get regular meetings of the Public Accounts Committee. We are also dealing with a situation where there is a limited number of people staffing Parliament and their availability to meet in these committees. I believe that we should be meeting in committees from time to time.

I also believe that the procedure of the House should be under constant review. We have inherited, and continued with the position, for instance, Mr. Chairman, Sir, on these estimates, that we have a second reading and go straight into Committee of the whole House. Other Parliaments have managed to look at how we deal with estimates in a much more incisive manner to the benefit, both of the administration and of the Members of Parliament in the Opposition themselves.

We should be reviewing some of our procedures to improve on those procedures, so that business is done efficiently, swiftly and otherwise, for the benefit as I said of the ultimate aim of all of us who believe in the principles of democracy which is the preservation of democracy and the preservation of freedom.

2.30 p.m.

I would hope that in this session we could make a further advance on what we have had so as to improve the manner in which we really deliver the services which we are expected to deliver to our constituents and to the public as a whole.

I have also pleaded, Sir, for a review of the Parliamentary Privileges Act. There is quite a lot of modern legislation on this and in the light of our Constitution as well, that we should be looking at. I have also pleaded and asked before in this House and I am going to continue to ask to see whether or not the various rulings of Mr. Speaker and Chairman of Committees on Matters of Privilege be collected in some manner and used effectively. Very frequently I have seen in here when I look back over my 20 years in Parliament rulings that have varied from former rulings on exactly the same question and this could no doubt lead to a good deal of problems and contradictions, particularly for new Members who are coming into the House. I believe that we should now, when the financial circumstances allow it, give it as a special project to people to review and look at.

Hansard has again started to come out. I am pleased to see that it is back. It is not yet fully up-to-date. But I think it is necessary that once this House finishes its meeting one week that by the next meeting of Parliament we should have the publication of Hansard available for us in a timely manner. I make bold to say, Sir, that very often you can find in Hansard grammatical errors, misspellings and that sort of thing not because Members may have made the error themselves...

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: They do sometimes. But it is usual to correct them. We are doing something for posterity. You do not edit out the substance of what a man says, but surely the opportunity to put in punctuation to correct things and what not should be given. Very often when you look back over past debates you see that words are spelt in the way you never really meant them to be spelt. I think that we should tighten up on these areas. Everyday that a politician lives out his or her existence, he is part of the history of the country and we have to be conscious of that legacy which is a very vital legacy for us to hand on to future generations when all of us have passed from this mortal being of ours, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not intend to be very long but I want to say that in the nearly five years that I have had the opportunity to serve in this Parliament – it is nearly five years. It will be five years in July.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It is four. I am not cynical yet though – that substantial advances have been made I think in the way in which parliamentarians are able to service their constituencies particularly with the development of the Management Commission on Parliament. I think that the unanimity which the previous Parliament demonstrated on this is admirable. I believe that the group of people who have something that bind us which is the fact of our membership in Parliament that perhaps we should do more to project the image and the importance of Parliament in the society as a whole. During the 25th Anniversary of Independence, I hope that we will take the opportunity to establish our own agenda for demonstrating to the public the importance of Parliament and how we feel about serving in Parliament rather than letting people constantly turn and point their finger at us as though as we are pariahs or engaged in some of the worst practices known to man.

Now I am not surprised by what I read in that newspaper article about people being able to get in the Senate Chamber while the yardfowls are down in the yard. There are people in this country who flip from political party to political party and walk around and tell people that they are the most objective and sensible people in this country. There was at least one of our members who I do not think that he was motivated as much by a class position as he was being pejorative which I do not mind. But we would refer to those people who stand by us through thick and thin, the people who after you lose an election will still stop on the street and give you a mint or express some commiseration, or call your house or bring a breadfruit or pear, and demonstrate that they still care about you and we would get into this Parliament and refer to those people as yardfowls.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: This is the point that I am going to make. It has developed into a term of abuse. That is why I am saying that he may not necessarily mean it that way. No, it is not a form of endearment. The mere fact that she used it in that way, I am saying that I do not think that the Honourable Member intended to use it in the same way in which she used it, but I want to say this. Membership of a political party in a democracy like this is something that we should be proud of. The longer that we lead people to believe that the fact that you belong to a political party is a disqualification for being objective, disqualification for being honest, and a disqualification for a whole range of other things and virtues that reside in people who are not members of a political party we will be making great strides in relation to our democracy.

Now the Honourable Member for St. George South might accuse me of being idealistic, immature, and the usual things. But he has not reached that level of cynicism of General Secretary of the Democratic Labour Party. I am proud of that particular position and will defend the integrity and the rights of members of that political party. Nobody is going to come to me and make me believe at any point in my political career that a membership of a political party and service within a political party is some major disqualification. You go all over the place and hear people sitting down in their living room drinking a drink and telling you – "Well, you know that I never joined a political party", as though by saying that all of a sudden a halo appears above their head and everything they say after that is shrouded in some kind of virtue which we, because we are members of political parties and we have to debate important issues but from a particular perspective, do not share. I am saying that perhaps we ourselves outside of the political debate and the robust platform scenario of elections that we have to ensure that peoples' views on what political parties are and their impact on the development of institutions in this country is important. The Labour Party celebrated fifty years....

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Pardon. Look at you. You quoted some great poet this morning and put some fancy English in the middle of the quotation. There is no Englishman that would have used that combination and now you are going to tell me to edit. The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the Labour Party celebrated its 50th anniversary recently. Was it last year? It is an important national event. I accept that.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We celebrate thirty-five and there are people who work in prominent positions in this country who, if a political party had a cocktail party tomorrow to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its existence, would not go because they feel that they would be tarnished because they were seen at the headquarters of that political party. Something is wrong. Now I am not saying that I would go to the Labour Party's cocktail party. I might have a drink downstairs if I were forced to. But the point is that it is these kinds of attitudes that lead people to have intrenched views of the party political system that are unhealthy. I am only saying that while I was not present to witness what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East said that because of the way we permit people to disparage the fact of membership of a political party and make it appear that it is one of the lowest forms of associations that a human being can endure, then our own

supporters will turn on us and probably on opponents in ways that we would not wish when we have to have a national function and that kind of thing.

So the concept that a yardfowl is a mendicant and is unobjective, and should only be invited once a year to Ilaro Court or to the opening of Parliament, let us disabuse peoples' minds of that and not get into that kind of confusion. Let us lift membership of our political parties by a process of consciousness or education, that makes them feel proud of that political membership. When people sit down in their living room and talk about they are not going to join a political party, that should be more a damnation than the kind of wholesome comment that we treat it as. In fact, sometimes I get caught up in that when people say it, I honestly then think that maybe this person is going to say something objective until he opens his mouth and you wish to God that he had the opportunity to join a political party to gain some sense and to understand how people function out there in the society. So, the longer that we take this kind of stand-offish position and we encourage our supporters to believe that they are on the periphery and are mendicants and so on, the longer you are going to endure the kind of scenarios that are being mentioned. Build the institution! That is part of the development process. Let us build the political institution as we would build all of our other national institutions and let us accord that level of respect to those institutions that are necessary as we pass into the 25th anniversary of Independence.
2.40 p.m.

I only say that, Sir, because I feel it should go on record. While I did not think that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was taking the position that the writer of that article took in a most despicable piece of rubbish on two occasions writing in the newspaper about attending a funeral and then about being escorted into the Senate Chamber while the yardfowls were in the yard and out in the hot sun. How can people even conceive in this society that that kind of thing should be printed in any newspaper anywhere. I am also saying that the people who promote it, the owners of the newspapers, should be chided by us, on both sides, for permitting that kind of rubbish to be printed in the newspapers. There is no philosophical, nor intellectual value to it. It is a personal assessment based upon somebody's vendettas against people. That is all it is. So in the final analysis, Sir, I believe that based on the comments that have been made I can sympathise with some of the positions that have been taken. I understand but I only want to suggest why some of these scenarios arise and to suggest to us, as Parliamentarians, that we can avoid them if we carry out the kind of programmes in our political parties that will make people proud to be members and not to feel that to be a proud member of a political party that it is necessary to demean themselves or, for that matter, demean others. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I only want to deal with two aspects in this debate. I want to deal with the matter that was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas with respect to the procedure which was adopted at the opening of Parliament. I have witnessed a number of openings of Parliament and I must say that it was always understood by me and by others that on the day of the opening of Parliament that the gallery in this House was the place where all Honourable Members who were elected to the House would have access by way of a special number of invitations equally divided so that the people who helped them to come to Parliament would have the privilege of sitting in the gallery and seeing their Members perform.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is a procedure that I know was adopted. Well, if it was never adopted, I think it is one that is eminently reasonable. I remember it, because I have been around here in 1966 and there is one thing I would say about the then Leader of the House, now serving in retirement in another capacity, and that was he always insisted on the rights of parliamentarians and what occurred on the opening of this Parliament could never have occurred because from the time the election was finished, the Honourable Member would have been in touch with some Member on this side trying to make arrangements for that day which would be satisfactory to both sides.

Now, that gallery there, it must be clearly understood, concerns all Members here. It doesn't belong to anybody other than a Member of Parliament and the Press, of course. With your leave, Sir, that's the next point, Sir, the leave of the Chair.

I have observed recently, Sir, a very deplorable standard of reporting that is taking place about Parliament. My understanding of it is that the privilege that is granted to the Press to come in here is to comment on the debates, not on any particular incident that takes place in Parliament in respect to any Member. In other countries in the world, the Debates Committee would have set that too. The Committee of Privileges, I well remember and I see them in the United Kingdom. When a lady was elected in Parliament from Northern Ireland and one of the reporters had a special feature, not only about how she was dressed, how she took off her shoes and things of that kind it was raised as a matter of parliamentary privilege. Now, the next time it occurs in here, I am going to raise it as a matter of parliamentary privilege. The reporting of debates is to enlighten the public as to what takes place with respect to the contents of the debate, not any old frivolous, gossipy foolishness and asides. I am very glad to see that His Honour the Speaker has obviously noticed the trend and that he is putting down his foot very early. Members of Parliament must do it. Because if it happens in the future, I am going to move that the gallery be cleared and I am going

to do it every Tuesday until we get a clear understanding. I will do it, because it must not be done.

The last thing I would like to raise, Sir, is the matter of the debates and the return to Parliament by the various Statutory Boards of authority pursuant to law of their reports. I am at a considerable disadvantage, Sir. I did ask recently for the reports that have been sent to Parliament by Statutory Corporations and there is no librarian now. There used to be one, Sir. Whatever one may say, Sir, about the library, there was a librarian. It is a very serious thing. The law states very clearly that statutory organisations must report to Parliament within a certain time after the financial year and we ought to have an updated list so that we would know and we would be able to discuss the estimates intelligently, because we would like to discuss some of the matters here. We are soon getting to the Head of Agriculture and I would like to see the reports now, Sir, of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation, because I am sure that it would help in my contribution to this, so that we must take very seriously this matter.
2.50 p.m.

As a matter of fact, it is quite clear that if we really want to improve parliamentary control over the expenditure of large sums of money in Barbados that a look has to be taken at the Rules and see if it is not necessary. We have not reached the stage where we should have a few more sub-committees. I am not talking about a large number of sub-committees but a few more who would periodically review the performance of the public corporations. These are matters which should be non-partisan.

I really feel that all of these things should be done now that we have been implementing plans for the development of the physical conditions in Parliament, something like the contribution of the Honourable Member for the City. I remember the time that she used to try to persuade everybody that it was a worthwhile activity. Now that is coming to fruition, the east wing is finished, the west wing is being completed, that we should really parallel with that improvement in the physical development should improve some other aspects of the parliamentary system.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sir, speaking under this Head I would like to go further along the line of the previous speaker. I believe that part of the job of improving the image of Parliament and parliamentarians certainly has to do with the physical aspects of Parliament. I believe that probably the biggest job we have facing us as parliamentarians is the image that the pubic in general has of parliamentarians and politicians. It is a very serious matter to me.

It appears to me, as said by other speakers, that for some reason there is a perception out there in the public that parliamentarians and politicians should be held in low esteem. It is an image that permeates the entire society. I believe when we see any mock parliaments and so and we see how the young people perceive parliamentarians as blusterers and people who keep a lot of noise, that we should have a particular concern about that image which we have.

I believe the last persons to contribute to that negative image should be ourselves as parliamentarians. Unfortunately, we are probably the worst in this particular area. While political debate will have cut and thrust there will be charges levelled....

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I am concerned that potential politicians and potential parliamentarians are sometimes not guided by those who are more experienced along the path that should be pursued in terms of maintaining an image because all of the persons here represented in Parliament are people who are trained. We are not now in the early days when several persons came into Parliament without the necessary kind of training for this kind of function.

Quite frankly, on any objective analysis the quality of Parliament has increased tremendously over the years. We seem to be seen in one light as professionals and in another as politicians. Whatever your professional accomplishments as a politician that negative outweighs anything that you have been able to achieve. It is not something that is peculiar, I think, in Barbados. There are some countries in the Caribbean that seem to have this negative approach.

My experience with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, however, does not give me that as the general impression held about parliamentarians and politicians. There are certain countries that hold persons in that position in very high esteem. Therefore, I believe that while we might set out clearly and it is fairly easy to improve the physical surroundings in which we have to operate, the bigger job is in improving the image of parliamentarians. I think we have assiduously to go about doing that. One of the ways, certainly, is trying to observe certain canons.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have heard the issue of conflict of interest discussed in relation to parliamentarians. I have heard the other side trying to give the impression that there is some conflict of interest in being a representative of the people as a trade union leader and coming in Parliament. It has been said night after night, day after day on platforms. It has been put even in some persons' circulars.

I can paint a profile of an Opposition parliamentarian who would have interest in the plantation sector, in the business sector as landlord for a number of big businesses in this country who represents the business sector as an attorney, in hotels, restaurants and that area, who has a pig farming business and who has interest in boats. I can

continue to do a profile of a particular Member of the Opposition as well as the others who, generally speaking, have big business interest. They would not raise the issue of their conflict of interest. They would try to go around this country trying to give the impression that if you are the representative of the workers and you come into Parliament that there is a conflict of interest, notwithstanding that some of their leaders in the past, distinguished leaders, had been leaders of the trade union movement and also have sat in Parliament.

The young neophytes who belong to them, who walk around with them, and are close associates of them, would talk about this conflict of interest. Unless we get out of that kind of situation which smacks of hypocrisy to be very mild in terms of the language we apply to that kind of behaviour, we will have this problem in our country. The point is when we discuss matters like conflict of interest, there is a fairly clear idea in the world what we mean when we talk about conflict of interest in relation to political life.

I was a member of a committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association that investigated Conflict of Interest legislation throughout the Caribbean and, in fact, the Commonwealth. Draft legislation has been prepared in that respect in terms of what is meant by conflict of interest and where it applies. The conflict of interest we talked about basically in this general legislation has nothing to do with whether or not we represent workers and become a Member of Parliament because the two things are congruent.

There is no conflict of interest involved there. Trivialising these matters and brooding them abroad will detract from our position as parliamentarians because those people who are less able to understand these matters will then start to tout the same words that they hear others who know better repeating. That is the kind of difficulty we will have in this country in terms of accepting leaders in the roles that they have to play.

Mr. Chairman, I would wish to make the point that one of the problems I see in terms of how we perform our role as parliamentarians is that we concentrate very much with our nose to the grindstone. We are parliamentarians and politicians in a very practical sense. The other side of being involved in that particular activity – I am talking about the intellectual side – is very weak and missing.

The point made about not having research facilities and libraries etc. we can go further. When have these two sides got together away from the antagonistic political cross fires and had seminars where those who have had tremendous experience in politics as parliamentarians would share papers that they have developed out of that experience, not only with themselves, but with the people of Barbados? Where can anybody draw on a paper that has been written on a practising parliamentarian in this country on any matter of substance? Clearly they are capable and able to do that. The point is, perhaps, we perceive ourselves as politicians and parliamentarians in a very narrow sense, that is, coming in here and doing Government business or opposing Government business for narrow and very prescribed reasons.

I think there is room for us to use the local association of the CPA, for instance, to put on seminars. I am told, for instance, that some of the Members in the other House might need that assistance, those persons who have come into Parliament for the first time and are not too sure about how they should deport themselves in some instances. Secondly, one would get a broad idea of the traditions of Parliament and the issues in Parliament. There is no reason why we cannot hold seminars for new entrants into politics or would-be entrants into politics in terms of using our vast experience and knowledge here in writing papers which can be put in a journal coming out of this Parliament to educate those persons who know little.

In fact, you will find that, for instance, the CPA Journal is used to expose papers by senior parliamentarians on a number of issues. Now, what can stop us in Barbados from pursuing that direction so that what we put out can be used at the University of the West Indies where there are Political Science courses denuded of this kind of experience that whole nexus between academics and practice? Nobody at Cave Hill can really refer to any papers produced by any of us in here about parliamentary life and so on. I believe that is one area that has to be pursued.

I would also wish, Sir, to say I am hoping we will be giving full support to the position put forward by the Honourable Prime Minister where at the level of CARICOM he has been calling for an assembly of Caribbean Parliamentarians. It seems to me that when that matter comes up in our own assembly that it should be given full support. It seems to me that is a very important development in relation to the strengthening of CARICOM. I believe at some time we should be given full opportunity to discuss the import of such a development.
3.00 p.m.

We are aware that among the small countries of the Caribbean, the OECS countries, they are at this time planning a constituent assembly and in fact a meeting that was earlier proposed was postponed. I am told it should be coming off in April. That is the kind of issue that I think we should spend some time to discuss, the importance of what is happening in the region in terms of coming together in such activities.

Finally, Sir, we need to note that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is very much alive in the Caribbean. We are very happy to report that it has been meeting very regularly. In fact a meeting is scheduled for the Caribbean branch in Trinidad some time this year and

we are hoping that Barbados would be able to send a full delegation. I know that the Honourable Member for the City is a much beloved member of the CPA. Wherever we go she is very well spoken of. But a meeting is scheduled for Trinidad this year and, of course, the international meeting would be in India. I hope again that Barbados would be able to send a delegation. I hope that that delegation will include a female. It is very, very important that on these delegations wherever possible we have a balanced team that has both male and female Parliamentarians.

I should like to suggest also, Sir, in closing that we must consider that when we send Government delegations to CPA meetings that we should develop a system where a formal report should be written and that that report should also be laid and discussed in Parliament because I believe it is vitally important that that information should be made available and discussed by those of us who are here. And I believe that that responsibility should rest squarely on the head of the delegation whoever should be that head of delegation.

Thank you.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Honourable Member who just sat down for jogging my memory in relation to this matter of reporting.

In the last Parliament the former representative for St. Michael South East used to be absent from Parliament from time to time ostensibly or allegedly attending meetings of the ACP group in Switzerland, parts of Africa and so on. I do not know as a representative of who. I presume that his passages, *per diems* and subsistence allowances were paid out of the public purse because I did not think that he would be that generous and altruistic to pay for himself privately. At no time during the last term of Parliament was Parliament given any information about the basis upon which that Honourable Member came to be chosen, came to represent us or Barbados. When I say us, as a Barbadian. What were his terms of reference? What was he supposed to do there? What did he ever achieve, if anything? Because this Parliament never got a report. I am not criticizing the fact that he went. But this Parliament never got a report as to what he was doing. If he was not to report to Parliament and he was to report to a Minister then at least he should have submitted a report to that Minister who from time to time should report to Parliament. I do not know what is going to be proposed in this new session but whatever arrangements are made, I think whoever is responsible – I have to speak like this because I do not know if it is the Prime Minister reponsible, the Minister of Trade, the Minister of Foreign Affairs or who, but whoever is responsible ought this time now that I have shown the areas of uncertainty and the gaps in the appointment and the operation, I think that Parliament deserves to know.

I see the gentleman on television speaking about things in Africa and somebody asked me, "But how did he get there? What is he doing?" I said I do not know. It cannot be right. The public has a right to know what its representatives are doing especially overseas, putting cases for Barbados or getting information or attending conferences or whatever. Parliament has also the right to be informed of what is going on and what are the results of the particular mission that has been assigned to the Member. I hope we can clarify that perhaps during these Estimates so that we will know in future who is the representative and what are his terms of reference.

Yesterday, Sir, dealing with the measure that was before us in relation to salaries, I did give a hint that I would have a couple of things to say about the last election in relation to Parliament. I spoke very frankly yesterday even though briefly about the status of backbenchers. I heard they cursed me on Fishcakes and Bakes this morning. I could not care less. They can curse again tomorrow because that is how I feel and I know that is how all Members in the House felt yesterday.

But the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central and by inference the Honourable Member for St. John in their contributions today were making the point that I was making yesterday that the public has a very dim view of politicians all 84 plus the independents that ran in the last election. As the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central says they may respect you in your professional capacity, so and so is a good lawyer. But when you come to discuss that same person who has all the integrity, all the skills and the intelligence and this, that and the other professionally, when you come to discuss it in terms of his ability to represent the people that same person then assumes the status that was attributed to a school one time, lower than pond water. I do not believe that was the attitude when white people were in control. I do not believe that was the attitude of members of the electorate when the white people were in control. I believe that fundamentally there is a sociological problem in this country where we now have a House that is all black.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Who?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well one mulatto I know has been characterized by Don Blackman. But the same people that we have all committed – I said this yesterday – ourselves despite the political divide to the upliftment of these people to the enhancement of their quality of life and

they would have the worst possible things to say about us when it suits them and the most charming to say about us again when it suits them.
3.10 p.m.

I cannot understand how it is that in 1991 the turn out for the election should have been nationally as low it was ultimately. In the past you would have found, indeed as we found in 1988, you may have found the odd constituency where the voter turn out was in the early 60's, but as I have said to people, it is as though Bajans on the 22nd January, all over this Island took up the telephone and rang each other, from St. Lucy to East Point, from St. Joseph to South Point and said we are not voting today. It was not an isolated case of a constituency having a problem with a particular representative and therefore showing resentment against the particular representative by not going out. All 28, the same thing.

Now, that is a phenomenon that I feel requires the most thorough investigation and analysis by the various political parties, because the worst thing that could happen at a time in our history where we are in control of our destiny, is for the vast majority of people in Barbados who are like us, to be turned off politically, presumably because of the way that we are operating the system. That is the problem, we have to investigate it. My fifteen minutes will be far too short to begin that analysis and we may have to come to it later on if we get to Electoral and Boundaries Commission. It is a very worrying thing. Now I know that to some extent we are to blame as politicians. There is no doubt from observations...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are having some conversations across the table that seem to be interrupting the debate. Continue.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I have no doubt from the experience of canvassing that we are to some extent to blame for the cynicism and the recent apathy. It will be a bitter pill for members of the Democratic Labour Party to swallow, but I have to tell them, there was a feeling among a large group of the youth that they had been promised much in 1986 and received little in fulfillment of those promises between '86 and '91 and they were turned off.

I am speaking of my own experience, that is why I said I would like us to discuss it at some time, because I know that on election day, Sir, there were seven youngsters in a particular district and I asked them if they had gone to vote. It was about half past seven and they told me, "vote for what, all of you all are the same. Last time we were promised a lot of jobs, look we are here on the block", was how they put it. That is a sense of broken promise. That turned off people. What it means therefore, is that the electorate will require of us more realism in the promises that we make. Less pie in the sky.

I know that the present position of the Democratic Labour Party is that those days are perhaps over, because the author of the document, pie in the sky 1986 is no longer with us on this side. He is still promising full employment though and collecting pension at 65, and all of that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That I think is one of the lessons of 1991. They want more realism, they want more honesty and truth from politicians. I know that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was concerned and has been concerned about the comment about conflict of interest. Not the question of conflict of interest insofar as members of the Union are concerned, Sir. Rest not upon a principle, as I have understood it. Indeed, let me be frank, I have spoken about it, certainly in the Member's constituency in 1988 at a meeting in Blue Waters. I did not get there last time, he was saved, I was up North. It is this, not that anyone denies the right or indeed the ability of a member of a union to represent the people, indeed he does it all day long, but the efficacy of that position was weakened and certainly undermined by certain statements that emanated from unionists, even him – unionist during '86 to '91 – when the Honourable Member, quite legitimately presumably, made a comment about the negative side of the receipt of unemployment benefit. You stood by it as a matter of principle, but it was seen as being anti-worker when he said, Sir, that he was philosophically opposed to levies, but since then sits and votes for an increase in levies from $24 million under us to $84 million under them, Sir. The public becomes confused, so it is a question, not so much of the principle but various actions which may seem to militate against the principles.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not saying that a member should not speak his mind...

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I think it is appropriate that we spend some time discussing the head of Parliament. Parliament after all is a very pivotal institution and notwithstanding the view expressed the people seem to view it with disrespect, I think even those who view us with a certain amount of disrespect, though I feel that it is more envy than disrespect, will all agree that Parliament plays a very critical role in the life of this country.

Already very eloquent and vigorous pleas have been made for the improvement of the facilities here. I only want to blend my voice in support, quite briefly and very specifically. I have in mind, Sir, three very specific areas to which I believe immediate improvement should be brought and the first has to do with the Library.
3.20 p.m.

Some four, six, or a half dozen occasions a year the debate in this Parliament has reached its highest standard as a debate in any English speaking Parliament in the world. I have been to several and I know of occasions in this Parliament when the debate has reached an exceptionally high level. That it happens I think is a reflection of the composition of our Parliament, the preparation which people bring to Parliament, and the education. But I believe that we can do even better if we had readily available a well equipped library. For many years we have had a librarian on staff and we have not had two dozen books available in Parliament. We have been fortunate that in the last 15 years we have had two Prime Ministers who have taken the keenest interest in Parliament, the late Prime Minister Tom Adams and now our present Prime Minister. When they become Ministers of Finance, however, their priorities tend to differ. They move away from Parliament although in the end the late Tom Adams' great contribution was that it was in his time and with his support that the plans were drawn up and the financial support given even though much of the work has been carried out within the last three or four years for the renovation and the physical improvement of Parliament.

I would hope that much as our Prime Minister and Minister of Finance is presently preoccupied with the mess which the country finds itself financially in that he will find some money to make sure that we have a well-equipped library and a reading room. But we cannot come here and get a copy of the *Daily Gleaner* from Jamaica or the *Guardian* of Trinidad, or even the *Advocate* and *Nation* our local newspapers.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that we need to have a well-equipped library with books, journals, and daily newspapers of our own country and the Caribbean region. That we are able to perform at all in Parliament is really a reflection of how well-prepared so many of us really are. Because often less than 24 hours before the debate starts you will get notice this week of a public finance matter, international trade, public health, or taxation. Next week there is a matter relating to agriculture, international organizations, public finance again, and some other remote subject dealing with forestry and you are asked at such short notice to speak and make an intelligent contribution. That many of us are able to do it says a lot for the composition of our Parliament. I believe that we can improve our respective contribution if we had the facilities on which to draw.

The second point I wish to make has to do with the publications of a Parliamentary agenda at least in skeleton form many months in advance. I have seen that work very effectively in Canada. I know that there are many things that the Government would not be able to indicate, so many arising out of the blue at short notice. But I believe that if Members have an indication of some of the items that are likely to be discussed well in advance that they can do their research, reading, and settle their viewpoints and be able to come to Parliament better equipped.

They are just two or three of the areas in which I think can make a beginning. Not a lot of money is required and I am really hoping that the Right Honourable Prime Minister who has always taken the keenest interest in these matters will find the modest sums available so as to make sure that we can make a beginning in those matters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Bridgetown.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I want to very quickly endorse what the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has said about the library. I know that all of us here know that I take a particular interest in the physical restoration of this building. Even though it is only the East Wing so far, the West Wing is on the way. We very much need to attend to so many matters inside and the library is one of them. I have sat on the Library Committee for over 10 years in here without ever attending a meeting. In the very early years, you would attend a meeting and only two people would turn up and you could not get a quorum. The Chairman never came and so there was never a meeting. The Right Honourable Prime Minister knows that. He testifies by shaking his head and indicating that I am speaking the truth on this matter.

It takes time to build the library, but even as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has said something is wrong that if even now during an important debate like the Estimates debate you cannot get the *Advocate* or *Nation*, you cannot get a regional journal or a regional newspaper. One of the first things that I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we have to get, because do not let us forget that our first obligation in here is as legislators. If we could, and I am sure that it could not be that difficult, negotiate an exchange arrangement of the laws of the various countries of the Caribbean and if we could exchange a copy of the laws of Barbados with the Parliament in Trinidad and they would let us have their laws of Trinidad and Tobago and the same for Antigua, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and all of the countries, and even if we could not do an exchange that has to be a No. 1 priority in the library. The space is here. We have got the whole West Wing. There is no problem with that.

It would not be a bad thing if this Parliament had a reputation within the Commonwealth surely of having perhaps the best collection of laws. But it is not only the library, Sir. I want to address a more fundamental point. I have seen in my short lifetime so far in this Parliament that the legislative and the executive functions are blurring. The executive has begun very slowly and very deliberately to assume so many of the functions of the legislature. This is not anything peculiar to Barbados. It is something that you would find, Mr. Chairman, in most of those Commonwealth countries where they practise our system of Government,

where the Cabinet is behaving as though it is the entire legislature and also as though it is the entire executive as well. What this has done, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is to create a situation where backbenchers on the Government benches, those of us in the Opposition and those in the Senate nominated by both sides have found themselves very much like left-over people, left-out people, and for the most part certainly back benchers. I have heard the complaints in the Other Place often from those people who sit there in large numbers nominated by the Government, that they are often treated worse than the Opposition.

We are living in a time, Sir, when as our system evolves, there are people who are described as technocrats, bureaucrats, and some people suggest other kinds of rats and other kinds of prats, Mr. Chairman, gurus, advisers who know more than and have a greater input than Members of this Parliament. We have to look very carefully at this. Back-benchers find that they come in here, and you all will find it too over there, and that you are told at the last minute – it does not matter what happened at parliamentary party meetings – that you are told to look at the Order Paper the night before or two or three nights before. In other words, what happens in the caucus is one thing. What happens on the Floor of the House is another. You come in here and somebody leans over from the back and you look back and they tell you that you have to vote this way in a certain matter. Something is wrong with that, Sir.
3.30 p.m.

I think that in the 1990's, as we now have restored our Parliament physically, we need now to look at the system as it is used and abused within this Parliament.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do believe that parliamentarians and particularly again those on the back benches and those on the Opposition benches need to become more involved in the work of Parliament. There are Members of the Government's back bench who as long as they sit on the back bench will never see Government papers. Ministers early will become – I don't mean just passing – there is something sacrosanct about a Government file – and begin to behave like civil servants and it is a secret thing. There is nothing secret about it. But something is wrong when it is the parliamentarians who face the public out there, who are elected by the public out there, who come in here to do the public business. We have heard from the Honourable Member for St. Thomas today about the attitude that now exists about people like ourselves in here. People have views about how we should be paid or what we should be paid. Perhaps we need to show people more clearly the quantity and the quality of the work that is expected of Members of Parliament. It was said yesterday, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Neville Nicholls as he then was, when he was asked to look at this question of remuneration for Members of Parliament, found that we should be day workers. He did that, of course, from the lofty heights of his statutory salary but he had no understanding of the work that we did. He very mistakenly believed that we only work when we come in here on Tuesdays or when we come in here for the week to do the Budget Debate. Nobody ever telephoned him at five o'clock in the morning as somebody in here has already said. Nobody ever approached him about a funeral or a wedding or a dance. Nobody ever approached him about garbage.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members on their feet.

Miss B. A. MILLER: What I would want to see evolved in the 1990's is more use of committee systems in our Parliament. Most of the parliamentarians, particularly backbenchers, like to complain that nobody says anything to them, but there are many mechanisms available to parliamentarians which they don't use. The parliamentary question, in my view, is underused. Of course, you can't overlook the fact that the Government fails to answer parliamentary questions and let them die with Parliament. The device of the Private Members' Resolution is another mechanism which again very much depends on the Government's willingness or unwillingness to address a particular issue. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think that something has to be wrong when after 352 years of the institution of Parliament in Barbados that in 1991...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am making an effort to hear you and to follow you.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir. We live with this in here.

When in 1991, Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no Parliamentary Committee in the Barbados Parliament that deals with the major sectors of the economy. There used to be a committee that dealt with the sugar industry. It hasn't met, I believe, since I came into this Honourable Chamber many years ago but there ought to be a Parliamentary Committee that deals with tourism. There ought to be a Parliamentary Committee that deals with manufacturing. There ought to be a Parliamentary Committee that deals with agriculture, both sugar and non-sugar. There ought to be a Parliamentary Committee that deals with the off-shore regime and the social sectors as well. Health and education and housing should all be subject to Parliamentary Committees where the private sector could be co-opted on to these Committees, because don't let us be in any doubt that on both sides in here, Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are satisfied now that certainly in this decade there has to be more than lip service given to the kind of collaboration and cooperation that must be encouraged between the public and the private sector.

I am suggesting that it is not only at the level of frontbenchers, those who are the executive but at the level of all parliamentarians from both sides of the House that

these committees should be made to do serious work and that there should be committees of Parliament, not committees that should report to any Minister, but committees that must report to this Parliament, and on a regular basis as well, not committees that will suffer the fate of the Library Committee where you will hardly ever get a quorum together and not least among those committees is the Public Accounts Committee which suffers from the same ailment. You can't get a quorum. The people who ought to turn up will not. If people will not be seen to work for the money that they are drawing then they can't get too vexed when the people of Fishcakes and Bakes say what they say.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that this is something which must not be postponed too far into the future, if we are going to be serious about finding solutions to what is now an endemic and acute problem in Barbados, we must move very swiftly in that direction.

I would also like to say a few words about the CPA as well. It has taken many years to try and I suspect that we have now achieved a great deal of success in resuscitating the regional CPA group. Barbados is one of the few of the countries which had, according to the note in the estimates at page 3:

> "Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Exchange visits provides for a grant to the CPA and also for the cost of exchange visits made by Parliamentary delegations."

This is a way of widening our knowledge, making our contacts and if we are serious and we, on this side of the House, the Barbados Labour Party, when we talk about regional integration then we do have to be prepared to put our money where our mouth is. The local branch of the CPA must begin. I know that there is a great deal of business which can now occupy a CPA agenda. It cannot be any business where any situation, where any individual or individuals is going to handpick any delegation. There are new Members on this side who need to be introduced to the whole business of parliamentary procedure and they need to be given the chance and they are Members who have been sitting on this side who have sat in Parliament before who can add a great deal to a CPA debate and who in the spirit of CPA... Mr. Chairman, Sir, I know that you as a person who has played an active part in the CPA are fully aware that it is a joint Chairmanship that is shared partly between the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. I wouldn't like to see any repeat of an ugly incident which took place some years ago at a CPA Meeting in London in 1986. Other complaints have been made about the way in which the Opposition has been treated in respect of CPA business. It is not a nice thing that the Honourable Member for St. George South should be invited to travel in one section of the airplane while other members of the delegation of which he was a part travelled in another. There can be no excuse for it when there are only three people travelling.
3.40 p.m.

That kind of snide discriminatory practice must now come to an end. You have an Opposition of some size now with Members who are as dedicated on this side as they are on that side to the principles and objectives of the CPA.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, with those few remarks on this Head – Parliament, I take my seat.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I would just wish to make a few comments on this particular Head. First of all, I would like to say, Sir, that I believe Parliament is and should be at the centre of the debate and discussion of public affairs in this country. It is one of the great institutions in this country. It has a tremendously important role to play not only in terms of passing legislation but in discussing and debating the great issues of the day both nationally, regionally and internationally. That is why at the start of these proceedings I indicated that I would like to see a great debate take place on this Appropriation Bill and on the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the coming fiscal year. I was thinking not only of this debate, Sir, but of debates generally throughout the life of this Parliament.

All of us as Parliamentarians should be fully cognisant of the role that we are required to play both in terms of how we conduct our business in this Chamber and how we carry out our other responsibilities as Parliamentarians because the work of a Parliamentarian is not limited to attendance at the House of Assembly. You cannot clock in at 12 o'clock on a Tuesday and clock back out at 9 o'clock or 9.30 p.m. when the meeting ends and people have the impression that is all there is to be a parliamentary representative. There is other work to be done in terms of representation of people. When we come here we speak nationally and we may speak constituency-wise as well. We have to reconcile the different roles. We speak as members of political parties as well. That is also a commitment. The many roles of a parliamentarian would have to be appreciated.

Sir, this side, and I hope all Members of Parliament, will make an effort during the life of this Parliament to extend and intensify the role and importance of Parliament and this House in particular in the public affairs of this country. Recently Parliament agreed on a proposal made that there should be a Joint Committee of the House and Senate to discuss a particular Bill that is before this Honourable House. That was an indication and an intimation that we intend, the leadership of the House and, hopefully, the co-operation of the other side of the House, to seek to make this House more relevant to what is taking place and what should be taking place in the country. In other words, this House must be a centre of leadership.

I do not believe that we are big enough – in terms of size, Sir – to have an elaborate committee system, a committee for each item of public business. The procedure that has been followed has been that issues are debated in the full House and that Members are responsible for generating their own information, doing their own research, gleaning information from whatever source they may glean them legitimately, and then the matters are debated in the House either in Committee of the whole House or otherwise.

I do not think there is going to be any proliferation of committees during the life of this Parliament, not specialised committees as such. What we can expect more of is the establishment of a committee of this House or joint committees with the Other Place subject to their approval, in which matters whether they are of social, economic or of other importance, can be examined. Persons can be summoned or called before the committee to give evidence. The committee can ask questions, seek out expert witnesses, question them and then try to find out what are the alternatives and what are the parameters of the subject being examined, thereby seeking to get a better understanding of the issues confronting the country or the issues which come before this House for determination. I can promise, Sir, that there will be more of that. I believe that would be one step towards getting the House of Assembly more involved as an institution and getting the people of the country more involved in the debate on matters that are of the moment.

As far as library and research facilities are concerned, I cannot gainsay anything that the Honourable Member for the City has said. I will confirm that more often than not in the past the Honourable Member was then on the Government side, I believe, and I was in the Opposition. Most often we would turn up. We would be the only two Members of the Committee to turn up. Sir, I must say, very pleasant company. I think we had actually gone to attend meetings of the Committee that never materialised. I would expect that during this coming session we would be able to have meetings of the Library Committee and the other Committees that have been set up to transact the business which may have been submitted to that particular Committee.

Under this Head, Sir, I believe funds are provided for the payment of the salaries of Parliamentarians. The backbenchers are paid under this Head of Parliament. I should like to clarify a point which I made recently I believe yesterday when I was speaking on another matter. I want to make it clear that the increases in salaries for Parliamenta-rians, the increases would cost $306 180. That is just the increases alone. The figure I gave of $2.1 million is the cost including the existing salaries for Ministers and Parlia-mentarians. I would not wish anyone either in this Chamber or outside to believe that the increase, and that is why I am clarifying the matter....
3.50 p.m.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sure if you were in here you would have clarified the situation there and then. I want to know why you were not in here.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Right Honourable Member address the Chair.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: So, Sir, the increase of $306 180 is the cost of the increases by themselves. But when put on top of the existing salaries the annual amount paid to Ministers and to Parliamentarians would be $2.1 million for a full year.

As far as the procedure on the Estimates is concerned, a matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition – I am not sure what areas of the procedure he may be concerned about. But the area that I am concerned about is how we approach these Estimates and the Budget itself. Because I believe and I will make a determined effort as part of the reform that I am talking about that the two processes should be coalesced. There is no reason why we should be debating the Estimates now and then later on we should be debating what is called the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. Because the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure represent an integral part of the budgetary process. It is my view that it is about time that we should bring the two together. But this will be examined I think in consultation . Would you agree with that?

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think, Sir, that is one aspect of the precedure that we can look forward to. But we will have the discussion because it will be a question of the time allocated and things like that that will have to be taken into account. Probably it might be five plus three. We may bring the eight days together and have one debate. Whatever.

I just wanted to clarify those two points. I believe the Member for St. Thomas raised a matter about representation of a former Member for St. Michael South East who is no longer in this place but is in the Other Place. I should like to say, Sir, just briefly – I believe the question related to what was his status – he is not there as a representative of Parliament. He has been attending meetings as a Government representative through the Ministry of Trade on the ACP/EEC Assembly and that is the capacity. He is chosen by the Government approved by the Cabinet. He would report to the Minister of Trade in

this particular matter. Sir, he has served this country admirably and was even chosen to be a part of a very select delegation to enquire into the subject of the abuse of human rights or the state of human rights in places like the Sudan and elsewhere. I do not think this is a matter that we should query. I believe my 15 minutes may be expiring now.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, as the Minister who introduced this particular Head, there were a few matters which I thought should be responded to or could be responded to in particular the one matter raised by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas relating to the Opening of Parliament. I should like to be able to be in a position to say that I could help the Honourable Member. Unfortunately, I do not think I can be of very much assistance to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

I myself have enquired from time to time how people get invitations to various functions. I really do not know. The Honourable Member was in a position, the same position that I am in now to know that these are matters that are handled by the Civil Service. In fact this particular matter I believe by the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office was responsible for the invitations that had been sent out to persons invited by Honourable Members as their guests at the Opening of Parliament. How other persons got in here? I believe there were some very, very, very late... I raised it, I think it was the day before, that there should be some persons in here who wanted to see and could not get into the Senate Chamber and would not be able to follow what was happening but would like at least to come into Parliament and say they were in Parliament. That is how people got into the Gallery. It was a very last minute decision.

Honourable Members would realize in fact that there was a change in the proceedings for the Opening of Parliament. There was a choir on this occasion. I see nothing wrong with having a choir on an occasion like this. There was a choir when the Governor-General was sworn in. I believe it added something to the procedures on that particular day.

The Governor-General was attending the function and I do not believe it would have been quite proper for us to be conducting the business here and the Governor-General downstairs when in fact I believe the Prime Minister and others perhaps should have been in the company of the Governor-General at that particular time. I see nothing wrong with interrupting the proceedings to go downstairs because we interrupt the proceedings every day to go downstairs whether for lunch or for tea, we ourselves do our own independent interruptions and go downstairs and elsewhere. I can see nothing wrong with that procedure myself. As a matter of fact I think it added a bit to the occasion. We are in Barbados, we are not in the United Kingdom. I believe what we have done, we have done for Barbados. We did not have to follow any other procedures. As a matter of fact I think we can add to it from time to time and we can review the procedures from time to time. It may not be a choir next time. But who knows? There may be something else we can do as Parliamentarians in order to make the proceedings less tiresome than they have been in the past.

4.00 p.m.

Another matter raised was the question of the offices for the Opposition. In fact it is the office of the Leader of the Opposition. That is what is provided in Parliament. An office for the Leader of the Opposition, not an office for opposition members. There is no office for Government members, there is no office for opposition members. There is an office for the Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, he wants to bring the Leader of the Opposition over to this wing of Parliament and my understanding Sir, is that the work on the office for the Leader of the Opposition, I think he is well aware of this, he, himself did not raise it, but the work on the office of the Leader of the Opposition is very nearly complete, Sir. It is only a matter of time now, Sir, before we are able to get the Leader of the Opposition into this wing here of Parliament and he can take other members with him if he so wants, Sir, but it is the office, let it be clearly understood, it is the office for the Leader of the Opposition.

I believe, Sir, the other matters have been responded to by the Prime Minister, I don't remember if he spoke about the constituency officers, Sir, but these are things that are developing, these are things we did not have before. For instance we did not have a paid constituency secretary before, so we have one now. That was started by the late Prime Minister, Mr. Adams. We now have an office provided as well, paid for, and this was started by the present Prime Minister. Sir, these are things that are developing and from time to time, Sir, development for the better running and functioning of the office of Parliamentarians in their constituencies. I believe this is something that is developing and that is growing. I think, Sir, these are the matters on which I can respond, there are other matters of a philosophical nature, in which I have been in substantial, if not full agreement, and I do not believe that they are matters which were intended for response by Members, but were matters really in the nature of an admonition to Honourable Members in this Parliament.

The question that the sum of $4 559 498 under Head 12 – Parliament stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 13 – PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
(as amended) – $35 572 674

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 13 for the sum of $35 572 674 stand part as amended.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are several matters under this Head which will obviously cause debate. I want however, Mr. Chairman to begin with a linkage between the last head and to deal with the whole question of broadcasting. I am first going to deal with it in relation to Parliament. Under this Head is a grant for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation as well as operating expenses which are provided to keep the Broadcasting Authority functioning in accordance with Cap. 274 of the Laws of Barbados.

A little earlier in this Committee I said that it was necessary for us to try to preserve parliamentary democracy. I also adverted to the fact that in some respects Barbados was showing the maturity of its three hundred and fifty odd years of history and its twenty-five years of independence, but there are other respects in which we are falling far short and I believe that it does neither parliamentary democracy, nor human rights any good, where in several respects, in practice, and I am going to go further than that, we are really not free in expressing ourselves, particularly on political matters in this country on the airwaves.

There is no regular and I would say, impartial report necessarily on the airwaves on all sessions of both Houses of Parliament. I believe that the time has come when there should be a policy on public broadcasting, when the debates of this House and indeed of the other House, the Senate, should be broadcast on a regular basis both on radio and on television. I would welcome the weekly discussion on radio and television of topics which are currently before this Chamber. One very seldom sees that happening in Barbados. You could, however, tune in to CNN or SKY or indeed, if you are in London to ITN or any of the television stations and recognise that on a regular basis what goes on in the Houses of Parliament, receives the sort of report that one would welcome in a mature democracy. It is not unusual, in fact, it is the rule to see Parliamentarians, not from one side, but from each party being selected to give their views on current matters. Views that sometimes accord, no doubt, with the partisan stance that they take and views that sometimes might even be contrary to those stances. You hear the views of independents, you hear the views on dissenting matters. I am really appalled that in Barbados today you can have a publicly owned, I don't want to say Government, because we too often assume that CBC which is the only television station is the Government station. You can have a publicly owned broadcasting station and it is an exception to find anyone from other than the particular political party in office at the time being given the opportunity to express his view. Whether it be on an election just past – and I think that is the only time that sometimes you do get any of us being asked to send a representative on the night of election – whether it be on the regional economic conference, a subject so important to the future of the Caribbean, whatever it is, you will find that the policy is that you bring a Dr. Somebody from somewhere or any person who maybe a journalist from somewhere, but it is anathema to ask for the considered views of the people who are the representatives of the country and who have the primary responsibility for determining the policy that we follow in our political affairs. I don't think that Barbados today, and the political parties today, should have a fear of opening the airwaves in the manner in which I have outlined.

Of course there are ministerial broadcasts, I believe that ministerial broadcasts as well should be part of an overall and proper broadcasting policy, but I equally believe that there should be, also within the media policy, discussions in addition to what I call the regular impartial reports. There should be discussions in which Ministers and other Members of Parliament may appear in political discussion programmes and news commentaries. I think this is necessary, if we really are to encourage a growing democracy in our country.

Of course, Sir, when we come to the subject of party political broadcast, my views have been known in here and have been expressed very clearly. We have had a debate in the last Session on that and, when I get under the regular Head of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, I will speak more specifically to that particular aspect of the subject. But I do not believe that party political broadcasts are all right only during an election time but they are all wrong outside of an election time. That is the policy that at present we adopt in Barbados. We have to seriously ask ourselves as a country which boasts in the 21st century and as a leader of democracy whether or not we should persist in that policy at this time in our country.
4.10 p.m.

I believe, Sir, that we have a very strong conviction on human rights, about fundamental freedoms and freedom of expression, and I stand up regardless sometimes of the criticism I get on issues such as these. I believe that one should set out, as my party has set out always, to ensure that freedom of expression is respected at all times and that we broaden the scope for such expression. I really am calling, Sir, and if it becomes necessary I will move a specific Resolution in Parliament about it, on the widening of airwaves so that we can free up the airwaves to allow the sort of discussions that in the long run can only be healthy for a democracy.

I do not believe that democracy suffers where views are expressed provided, of course, they conform with the laws of libel and they are not sadicious, blasphemous, and leading to mutiny and the overthrow of civil powers. There will always be several views contending and difference in the society about those views. But we must let the views be heard and there will always be a retort. I have a point of view and you have a point of view. We may not always coalesce in our views, but there is no reason why at this stage in our history we must be hesitant. In fact, all of the

problems about which the Honourable Member for St. John complains and also the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, spring from this. It springs from the fact that people see the politicians only at the time when we are vying for their votes and in the most partisan fashion particularly and not at other times. Politicians themselves seem to have despair of talking freely about subjects whether it be the reintroduction of the cat. How many of the practising politicians have been asked for their views on the public airwaves on any such subject? Whether it be the Association of Caribbean Parliamentarians that is being proposed by the Prime Minister...

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He said that VOB had people from the Labour Party. I am not talking about people. I am talking about those of us in here. I can give you a number of subjects.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is *sotto voce* as usual and is interfering. I have a strong suspicion that if the Honourable Member for St. John was not already married that he would by now have proposed to the Honourable Member for the City. He is constantly referring to her and interrupting the debate. Constantly he is interrupting the debate, Sir, by comments about her and I cannot but hear, Sir, as he speaks *sotto voce*. But seriously, Sir, I think that I have made the point in as forceful a manner as I wish to make the point. I believe that if we can take the party political broadcasts at election time why is it that this country is not mature enough and grown up enough to take the party political broadcasts and other broadcasts for that matter on political subjects outside of election time and it is confined only to a few regulars. It seems impossible for the stations to have discussions from anyone else.

Sir, I said that my first intervention is going to be on this whole Head of Broadcasting and its relevance to media policy, multi-party democracy, and freedom of information. I want as well, Sir, to make a few comments about the vote to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. It comes under two Heads in the Estimates, under Head 13 dealing with Economic Affairs as well as under the Subhead of Investments. I think it is about time, Sir, that we are told what is the true financial state of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. I have reason to believe that of all of the Government Statutory Boards it is probably the one that is receiving perhaps the highest subvention in the last few years outside of the Government Statutory Boards and that it is still not being run on a commercial basis and showing the profit that one would expect.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I believe there is a vote here of two million dollars under this Head and a little later on the global vote of thirty odd million dollars or $35 million which I cannot recall. It is one of the four or five investment institutions for which the Government is making provision. I want, Sir, to hear from the Minister in this debate how soon that CBC, since it is this party's policy, will come out of the red. I also want to know, Sir, about the CBC, of what has become of the report which has been given to the Prime Minister sometime now by a committee which was set up under the head of CARICAD of which Mr. Selwyn Smith was Chairman. There were some other members such as Mr. Rudder on that committee, Sir. What steps have been taken on the report? What exactly were the main conclusions of that report and in what way that report would be beneficial to the improvement of the Corporation and its functioning as well, Sir? I think the House is entitled to know that.

My time has expired, Sir, but I am going to have to intervene in the debate on other Heads in this Committee.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: If there is no other Member who wishes to speak... I was about to reply to the debate. Are you speaking? Sorry, I will give way.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Do you mean for the whole Head, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is Head 13 that I called.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Oh, no! There are lots of things in Head 13, Mr. Chairman, Sir. There is the Prime Minister's Office. There is the Prime Minister's Official Residence about which I want to ask some questions. There is National Defence and Security Preparedness. There is the Barbados Defence Force. I believe the Prime Minister has a brother there. There is Information and Media Relations including CBC. There is Caribbean Broadcasting. I believe the Prime Minister has a sister there. There is the Administration of Justice, Supreme Court, Data Processing Department, and the Printing Office. There is a great deal under Head 13. There is no way we are going to finish this in 15 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, to start at the beginning. I am deeply concerned about Sub-programme 0.2 – Prime Minister's Official Residence. Now we are fully aware that the Right Honourable Prime Minister is going to move into the Official Residence. But I am greatly concerned that Estimates should move from actually spent in 1989-90 – $126 356, at a time when nobody was supposed to have been resident there.

4.20 p.m.

Revised Estimates for 1991: $177,487, and the Estimates for this coming financial year 1991-92: $504,104, over half a million dollars. I have already adverted earlier speaking under another Head to a particular item under this sub-programme, Item 210 – Supplies and Materials moving from $6,000 last year to $42,000 estimated for the coming financial year. $19,979 actually spent on Supplies and Materials at Ilaro Court in 1989-90 when no one is supposed to have lived there. I know that you have to buy cleaning materials, toiletries, sundries and so on, but $20,000 worth? I know that receptions are held there from time to time. I know that the Prime Minister and his wife stay there from time to time. I know that press conferences are held there from time to time but that is a lot of money, $20,000 for a year, 1989-90, when nobody was supposed to have been resident. If you divide that by twelve it would tell us what per month. I don't have a calculator on me.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir. I am concerned that supply of materials for Ilaro Court will now more than double to $42,000. This is only one item. This has nothing to with operating expenses or maintenance of property. It doesn't have anything to do with the library. It doesn't have anything to do with utilities. All of these are exclusive of this figure $42,000. Utilities at $48,000. The library – there are periodicals and journals and newspapers to which the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister must have access and which must be delivered there and I can understand that. $37,000 estimated in this coming financial year for the maintenance of property – I can even understand that. Operating Expenses at $12,000 and more. Structures at $100,000 – I do not know what is proposed to be built on at Ilaro Court now.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I don't want to hear talk about any old house when we said that about Culloden Farm? You were one of the first talking.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

Miss B. A. MILLER: There are no repairs to be done. $100,000 for structures – I am very keen. There is nothing in the note to tell us what this money will be spent on. The Barbados Labour Party was criticised for the restoration of that residence and for the money that was spent to make it fit to be a place where a Prime Minister of Barbados could entertain a President of the United States or a President of any of the Republics in the Caribbean, or sister or brother Prime Ministers, or from anywhere else in the world.

I still do not understand why it would now require $100,000. We need to know. We are entitled to know this. The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister had an open attitude to this whole business of the official residence. He felt he had to consult the whole of Barbados before he moved in. Well, this part of Barbados is standing up here now and wants to know what is the $100,000 for structures because Ilaro Court is not without some national and historic significance. We need to know if little huts are now going to be built all over the place and what will happen to it. I am concerned that it has a swimming pool. When the Government acquired it, it had a swimming pool. You mean a second swimming pool is to go in now?

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for the City were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it has to be a matter of enquiry. Seeing the vote on the Prime Minister's official residence move from approximately $177,000 to in excess of half a million for the financial year 1991-92, I think we need to have some clarification of that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member has raised some of my concerns about the vote under Prime Minister's Residence and perhaps the Minister could give us some idea of the other personal emoluments and what I consider to be a substantial increase in the other personal emoluments section from $49,000 to $232,010. I don't want there to be any misunderstanding of the Barbados Labour Party's position on this. I have always made it on behalf of the Party abundantly clear that if a house is provided for the Head of Government as indeed one is provided for the Head of State that our policy is that the Head of Government should live in that house. I am not going to go back over that debate. In this House from almost the first day of the 1986-91 session when the Democratic Labour Party, because of certain personal difficulties that it would then have posed for the late Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, decided that it would elevate to an official stance the idea that he did not want to live in Ilaro Court because he said a smaller house was good enough for him. He never moved to the 2 x 4 chattel house of which he spoke but that was his way of doing things and Barbadians accept that from some people. They don't accept it from others. In my view it was really not a principle at all, it was a personal justification of the late Prime Minister. I told him that in the debate. He is now gone and that is past history. I believe that if we are now getting around to the stage where it is going to be accepted in future that whoever becomes a Prime Minister of Barbados, be he a rich man or a poor man, always an honest man, we hope, that the state must provide a residence for that Prime Minister and he should live there. So, I am not going to get into that.

I believe that it should be reasonably provided for, but I think it is equally legitimate for the Committee to want to know why there is such a sudden rise of expenditure and indeed on the structures what further undertaking of capital works are being planned under that Head. Also, Sir, the Prime Minister began with the debate in the second reading

of this by saying the election is past and we must now move on and forget other things. I can understand his statement on that although I am sure he, like myself, have in our minds some things that can never be forgotten about the election. One of the things I think we ought to get quite clear, Sir, which I raised during the period and I raise it again, is the convention surrounding certain things in our public life. I believe, and I feel, it was highly improper for a political photograph to have been taken at the official residence of the Prime Minister and placed on the back of a manifesto.
4.30 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. James South asks what is wrong with that. If it is the standard that you want to set for the future, do it. It is not the one that I think I would want to set.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member would just hold a minute.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: That is not the point. The point is that in our countries there are certain things that have to be moved from the purely partisan to another level and we will never achieve it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to intervene here because we have made the point on numerous occasions that *sotto voce* remarks are not part of the record. If an Honourable Member is on his feet and is responding to those remarks, it draws it into the records. I do not think that should be. I must ask Honourable Members not to interrupt other Honourable Members on their feet.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We must never forget we must ourselves be setting the standards. Now, I want to go on to the Barbados Defence Force. Once again one sees the twists and turns on the part of the Democratic Labour Party when one looks at policy under this Head. The Honourable Member used to be very careful on certain matters either to be very cautious how he spoke, as I am on some matters, or did not speak at all.

I remember the Democratic Labour Party taking the view that the Barbados Labour Party had gone ahead and established a monolithic structure in relation to the Barbados Defence Force. We were having this large corps of people. It was even reflected at the time in a calypso "Boots". The impression was being given that we were using the Defence Force in ways that were contrary to the Constitution of Barbados. Indeed, the policy that was being stated by the Democratic Labour Party, and I heard the then Right Honourable Member for St. John, former Prime Minister Barrow, saying how he was going to allow the regulars to wither away by attrition. There was to be no further increase in the numbers of the Defence Force.

I am not going to ask the Prime Minister in this debate because I have served on the Security Committee, like the Honourable Member on my side. We are very careful how we ask some questions. I am not going to go into the numbers of people constituting the Defence Force. If I want that information I will either write to the Prime Minister about it or if he does not answer me that way, I would then ask a question legitimately. I am not going to introduce it in the debate being conscious of security concerns in Barbados.

What I am really concerned about, as I said, is the change of policy which must be commented on. When we saw the need in the Force – let me say I do not believe one whit of the Force was reduced since the Democratic Labour Party came into office. In fact, I have seen advertisements for further recruitment. I would not be surprised if either they have come back to the regular establishment or slightly increased that establishment, whatever it is, of regulars as well as the volunteer corps, etc.

What is significant, Sir, we were criticised for spending on the overall Defence and Security vote during our time. If you look at the statement of current expenditure for the ten year period you will find the total vote when we emitted office in 1986 in 1985/86 was $21 226 684. In 1984/85 it was $19 917 511. This is for the whole of the Defence and Security Division. I am not talking now about the Defence Force. The Defence Force was less than that. The grant now for the Defence Force under this Head is $23 546 610. This is for the Defence Force alone, not for the whole Division.

I want as well to raise this point, I want to look at the wider policy. When we went into the Regional Security System we also bore the brunt of criticism as a Labour Party. The idea of going into a regional security system, the idea of suggesting a treaty arrangement with our neighbours in the Eastern Caribbean, in St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, the OECS and other countries, that was almost anathema to the Democratic Labour Party. I have lived to see that they have come to accept that.

I must ask the Prime Minister whether or not there is now a further policy of an expansion of the Regional Security System to include islands outside of the Eastern Caribbean and, in fact, the CARICOM countries themselves. Our foresight in recognising the necessity for a tight security system in the Caribbean was because we saw where we as a small land mass was exposed to the ravages of people who could come in as marauders and otherwise as mutineers in our country. We had a vision to conceptualise it. We took the brunt of the criticisms. I give them an opportunity to put it in the House. I only hear it on the radio that the policy is now recognised as a correct policy for us to follow.

Let me say, Sir, that the Barbados Labour Party has never resiled – this is one of the reasons why I was attracted to the Barbados Labour Party – from seeing Barbados in the context of a closer union within the Caribbean. One of the reasons that justify those of us who joined the party in the 1960's and early 1970's and defended it at the time was because it always had the foresight to recognise that small specks of dust as we are can only be strong in some areas by being closely knitted. Defence was one of the reasons, not defence in order to attack another country or to invade but defence in order to be able to hold ourselves against the people who may be terrorists, mutineers or even the new destroyers, that is the drug barons of the world.

We recognised that Barbados could not hold that line of defence alone. We saw the wisdom in regional security as a safeguard for us. I know that we pay 49% of the cost of the Regional Security System. It has always been my party's view that system should have been, and we should have worked towards bringing Trinidad, for instance, into the network for the Eastern and Southern Caribbean to share part of the overall security costs and, finally, Jamaica.

I was looking, Mr. Chairman, the other day at the gross national product spent by countries in the Third World and the Developed World on national defence. It was an answer I gave in a paper delivered – I was not able to deliver it in person but I sent it to a Conference on National Security in the Caribbean. The answer is that the per capita cost and the cost of our GNP, if you look at it as a percentage, is less than it is in some of the other countries that I hear the left wingers talking, that are not militarised. I recommend we look at it.

Therefore, when I heard the harsh criticism against the late Prime Minister Tom Adams, against those of us who had responsibility for security, I say it was totally unjustified. I am glad I have lived to see that the reversal of policy is proving that the Labour Party was right. Make no mistake about it. We support to the hilt a regional security system. We consider that it was always a right policy to follow. I hope we have got past the stage where we are going to hear about the war of attrition, cutting people down to size and reducing them and so on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute to conclude.
4.40 p.m.

Sir, I recognize that there are friendly countries with whom we must co-operate in any defence of the Caribbean of our states whether it be from drug barons or from others and I am very grateful that those friendly countries with whom we ourselves set out to create good relations have continued to support the Regional Security System. The capital cost is going to be very heavy for any of our countries individually or even collectively to get a level of security without undue militarization in this region. But I believe that under a formal treaty arrangement it would be much easier for those countries who are like minded as ourselves, whether it be the United Kingdom which still has a continuing interest in the Caribbean because of the remaining Dependencies it has, whether it be France which still has Departments right within our region and of course territorial seas to defend or whether it be the Dutch Holland, I believe that we should continue our discussions with them and that the time has come for a formal treaty relationship not on the basis of any dependency but a formal treaty relationship which respects the sovereignty of our country and gives our citizens proper safeguards.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: And finally, Sir, if you will allow me to make just one point because I am sure there are other Members speaking. In other aspects of it, I will come back. But on defence, I do not want to speak again, Sir.

I believe that we also have in Barbados to establish quite clearly the conventions which will make the military understand that they are subjected to the civil power of Barbados and that I think those conventions will have to be enforced and clearly respected to get the fear out of the minds of people that the military is going to become some special stick to beat us, Sir. I believe that we were dealing with this problem and dealt with the problem reasonably well. I do hope that those conventions, those laws, those regulations, that relationship will become so embedded that the military will never be a threat to multi-party democracy in Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief. I think in the introduction of this Head, it was pointed out that the amount introduced was $35 572 674 under Part I. I also recall at the beginning of the introduction of the Estimates that the Right Honourable Prime Minister was clear to point out that we will be dealing basically with Part I because we are not dealing with statutory emoluments.

I want to refer specifically to sub-programme 2 that is the Prime Minister's Official Residence and make a reply to the comments made by the Honourable Member for the City who was rather clever, Mr. Chairman, in her comparison of the figures used for 1990-91 with the figures that are currently projected in the Estimates for 1991-92. She was correct in utilizing the figures. However, Mr. Chairman, the figure referred to of $504 104 as against $174 430 is in fact a figure that is in the Estimates. However the query about the increase, after all the discussion, after all the debate, after all the coercion, after all the demands made that the Prime Minister should live in Ilaro Court, we have to be clear that items 102 through 105 are statutory emoluments. They were not there before. In

fact the figures if you were to total them 102 to 105 they would give you something like $242 000.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Yes. But the Honourable Member for the City was trying to make the point that you were moving from $173 000 to $503 000 which is an increase of $400 000. I think that should be made clear, that the real increase.....

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, nothing of the kind.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misrepresenting what I said. I said nothing of the kind. I know what fixed charges are. I was not talking about them.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Do not tell me yes. I know what I was talking about.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I did not need to deal with them. I spoke about it already.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member might have been speaking about something in particular. However she did make the point that there was a difference of $173 000 to $504 000 almost an increase of $400 000. I did not want that to go unchallenged.

Thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I am energized by the vocal power coming from St. George North behaving like a loose cannon. I have a number of questions. The Prime Minister yesterday asked that we have a great debate on these Estimates. We can only have a great debate if the Prime Minister is going to recognize that part of his function is to respond to questions and enquiries raised by Members of this side. Often the Prime Minister does not answer questions which are put to him and questions which are within his own competence.

I am not going to deal with any one item at this stage in the debate because I will have a number of occasions to speak. But I want to ask the Prime Minister in relation to the Defence Force, if the public of Barbados in 1991 can now expect that the policy that was mooted for the Defence Force by the late Leader of that Party in 1986 has now been abandoned and if the Democratic Labour Party now accepts that the Defence Force is a necessary part of the public service of Barbados and has become a necessary valuable institution in the context of contemporary Barbados? Because the 1986 position was to reduce it to a commando unit. But that was perhaps in the heady days of DLP Opposition politics when even the Member for St. Michael West used to speak of using the Defence Force to go and shoot down people and he even attributed the wild use of guns to the Chief-of-Staff, the Colonel. I remember that debate in here very well. All that was in Opposition politics when the DLP were not in office. I hope the Government has now become more responsible.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That was when Tom Adams was Commander in Chief. But after he died nobody worried about anything like that.

4.50 p.m.

Sir, I have to ask a question about the policy and the shift in emphasis, or the acceptance of the Defence Force as a necessary institution, because the Prime Minister will remember, better than any of us in here, that as late as 1985, the present Prime Minister, then in Opposition, was having pot shots, firing his own scud missiles at the Labour Party in relation to the Defence Force. I believe it must be, so that in the last four years since he has been Prime Minister, there have been no exercises with the Defence Force and other forces in the region.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Under this Prime Minister there could never be. There could never be that kind of arrangement such as Exotic Palm in 1985 when we were the Government, because the Prime Minister then, as a member of the Opposition asked a parliamentary question appearing at page 2842 in these terms:

1. What were the benefits and costs to Barbados resulting from participation in the military exercises, code named "Exotic Palm", held in St. Lucia during September, 1985?

2. Would the Minister agree that participation in such war games has led to the further militarisation of the Caribbean region, has pushed back the objective of establishing the Caribbean as a zone of peace, and has diverted resources from full concentration on the very pressing trade and economic problems in the region?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Was I the Minister of Defence and Security at the time? You are asking me for the answer? I would like to put a similar question to this Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister tell us whether:

1. There have been any exercises in the nature of "Exotic Palm", between 1987 and 1991?
2. What were the cost and benefits of those exercises?
3. Does the Prime Minister now agree that participation in such war games or pseudo war games has led to further militarisation of the Caribbean region, and has militated against the reputation of the Caribbean as a zone of peace, or words to that effect, and indeed whether there has been any diversion of resources which could be used for the generation higher of levels of employment?

I also wish to ask the Prime Minister, to what extent have arrangements been made to constitute a Harbour Police unit to work alongside the Defence Force for the more efficacious patrolling of the coastal waters of Barbados, because I seem to recall that in the last three or four years, we have been hearing about Government's desire to extend the police force into the area of coastal patrol by the re-establishment of the Harbour Police as a department within the police force. I want to know to what extent that desire has concretised into some kind of reality, and how does the Prime Minister foresee that the coast guard and the harbour police will function together in the better policing of the coastal waters of Barbados?

Yesterday, the Prime Minister made mention, very, very fleetingly, almost en passant that an attack would be made on youth unemployment through the Defence Force Sports Programme and a separate youth service scheme. I think the country deserves to hear from the Prime Minister to what extent the Defence Force will operate and run this sports programme. For example, how many people you are aiming at, what will be the kinds of qualifications? Is it just broad, or the ability to run fast, or jump high, or throw a discus far, or whatever? What are the qualifications for getting into that kind of programme, how long would you serve or indeed would you become a full time member of the Defence Force or what are the terms of enlistment in this programme? I wouldn't deal with the other programmes at this stage. I want to know about this sports thing. The Prime Minister will know, because his brother is the person who is organising it, so he shouldn't have any difficulty in giving me all the details about this new sports programme within the Defence Force.

Now, Sir, I want briefly to mention CBC also. I don 't get a chance to watch television too often. I got home early enough last night to see some programme called L A Law, which I have never watched, but I hear it is a good programme. It was on, but while L A Law was on, there were some people in the studio making a very loud racket behind, I don't know what was going on, but I know that the L A Law people were talking with Yankee accents and the other voices behind booming through like the Honourable Member for St. George North, were talking in naked 'bajanese' for a long time, so they had a problem. It was like an over dub. But the more important and fundamental point is that at page 6 of the Estimates we are giving CBC a subsidy of $2 million. I think if you look at page 26 of the Estimates there is also a provision under Programme 11 for loans and advances, Sir, to Caricargo, Industrial Credit Fund, BNOC and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

Now, this amount on page 26 is $4.6 million and I want to know what would be CBC's share of that, because that is a loan which presumably they are expected to repay, and at page 6 there is $2 million as a grant. I think that before we vote for either of these, we are entitled to know the overall indebtedness of CBC as at today, and its several loans through commercial banks and Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I think we are entitled to know whether the recent appointment of the Assistant to the General Manager – and this is nothing to do with the substantive question that was asked – whether that appointment is going to make for closer supervision of the financial management of CBC.

Some two or three years ago, I asked a question in here which the Prime Minister quite properly answered fully. A question of many parts about CBC, and I want the up-date as to its indebtedness. I want to know, to what extent, CBC is able to meet its monthly expenditure from its current revenues, because it is one thing to be putting money into an organisation. Sir, we are all concerned about the role of parastatals. We are all concerned to bring a greater efficiency to bear in that aspect of our public sector to make sure that parastatals don't waste money. I think as a matter of information the House is entitled to that information from the Prime Minister, Sir.
5.00 p.m.

Finally, Sir, at this part of my intervention in relation to the Supreme Court, I see there is an additional $1 million to be spent on structures this year. It appears in Head 13, Sub-programme 0.1 against Item 623. Now what I am asking there, is if the Government hopes to spend any of that $2 million on the erection of the Supreme Court this year or whether they are still in the planning stages of design and so on. I know there is a cutback on Capital Expenditure. We understand. It is up by $1 million. So I am just asking for some clarification and, as the Honourable

Member for St. Peter said, a programme update as to how that additional $1 million is supposed to be spent in relation to structures for the Supreme Court.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am just waiting.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me say that Honourable Members must be paying attention to the debate. It has been the custom that the Minister who introduces the debate will rise and answer the questions that are asked. If the Minister exercises his right of reply, then I am going to call the Head. Is there any other Member who wants to speak on this? This is the second time that this has happened.

Aside.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: I could understand the Prime Minister's concern about my rising, but this is not one of the occasions that he needs to get very nervous. I do not know what has transpired in the area of Defence and Security in the last few minutes because I was not here. But I want to ask a few questions to the Prime Minister. I am glad to see that the Prime Minister is a recent convert to regional security and I am glad also to see the recent convert to proper security of this country.

I well remember the Right Honourable Prime Minister like other Members on the other side raised a lot of strictures about the Barbados Defence Force and on other occasions about the usefulness at one stage of the efficacy and at another stage of the regional security system and they went beyond their strictures. There was a lot of biting criticism from Members like the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. He used some very vivid language in his salad days. I hope he is a little wiser from the days when he made the kind of statement owing to Brigadier Lewis.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute now. That is exactly the point I am making about responding to asides. Now it is also a fact that names should not be called in Parliament without some notice being given to the Chair and the reason for which the name should be called. Since there has been no development of the point that you are making so far, I would caution not to put that name in the record.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I was the person who was sinned against. Because the Honourable Member for St. Michael West made a statement so loud that I could not discard it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, asides are not part of the records of debate and, therefore, you should not respond to them. If it had become loud enough that I can hear them, then I will ask whichever Honourable Member it is to be silent.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, you know how I like to work around the rulings. But the only way you would know that I responded to an aside is that if you heard the aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, I hear you. I hear whoever is on their feet. However, let us proceed.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, talking about Defence and Security, I am interested in finding out more details about the recent trip of the Prime on the Damascus Road in respect to regional security. I know, for instance, that the Regional System was at one stage considered for expansion and indeed for there to have been a treaty between constituent members of the Regional Security System there was talk about expansion to other Caribbean countries.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Oh, I did not know. Well, that is why you have got to tell me. If that is done, I will sit down. But I am interested in the answer not in the question. I know, for instance, Mr. Chairman that there was some consideration to getting the Government of France involved in the Regional Security System but that the Government of Dominica was resistent to the involvement of France because of a problem which Dominica had with Guadeloupe. The Prime Minister can tell us all of these things whether that kind of problem....

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Well, if you do not know, let me sit down instead of wasting my time. These are the kinds of problems that we have to answer. I want to know also what is the contribution of the Barbados Government to the Regional Security System and whether that has also been subject to a cut in the way that children who are not getting food regularly in Barbados are subject for a cut under the Child Care Board and the cut for the Welfare Department.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: There is a cut for the Welfare Board and a cut for the Child Care Board and I want to know from the Prime Minister whether there has also been a cut on the expenditure by the Barbados Government in regional security. I believe it is a very sad case in truth. I believe it is a very sad case.

There is also one other thing I want to raise in this regard, Sir, before I get up again and this is the question of security at schools. I have been told, Sir, that the Ministry of Education has been receiving a number of requests from schools across Barbados to beef up security because of the increasing problem of lawless forces encroaching on the schools and disrupting not only school activities on school grounds but also in the classes. One of the complaints I hear and I will pass it on for all it is worth, is that the maturity of many of the security guards that are put in the schools – I am talking about age and experience – is not a contributing factor to the solution of the problem. Not that I am suggesting that young security guards should not work, but, perhaps, they should be placed to work in places like the Ministry in areas where they will not encounter a problem of children who consider themselves the peers of the security guards. It appears there is a security guard who is in his twenties and he has a problem disciplining the children who are in their teens and I have been getting the feedback that a number of the schools have not been getting the guards. I know they are expensive and I have also been getting the report that the maturity of the ones who have been assigned to the schools is not conducive to proper control and security, so perhaps the Prime Minister can also address that problem because in some schools, and I don't want to call the name because I don't want to prejudice any school or give it a bad name. I am sure the Prime Minister will know of at least one of which I am talking without my mentioning it where the question of security is really a very critical problem and of a number of problems of children being assaulted by people who come to the properties and which actually end up in the Law Courts.
5.10 p.m.

There are school children who in some secondary schools have been indecently assaulted on the school grounds. There are a number of cases in which the security guards themselves have been beaten and wounded by people who come on to the property and there are cases where people go into the classrooms at secondary schools and remove their girl friends while a class is going on and a teacher is in control of that class and when the teacher tries to intervene the kind of abuse that is hurled on the particular teacher is making the system extremely difficult to work. If the Prime Minister or the Minister of Education is not aware... They can't be aware of every single instance but there are certainly some of them that have come to my attention that I am willing to put in the hands of the Government to see what they can do. Security in the schools is vital for the integrity of the school. There is no point putting teachers and auxiliary people working when there is absolute chaos, not because of the children themselves, but because of the people in the district, the young fellows who can't get any work, coming on the school and making thorough nuisances of themselves and also threatening the physical persons both of school children and of teachers. I would like to hear the Prime Minister respond to these things.

I am sorry that I had to get up when the Prime Minister had risen on two occasions, but there are other things we want to raise on this Head, so don't let the Prime Minister feel for any moment that this is the end of it.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. There are a number of questions that I would like to be enlightened on too, in relation to the numbers of the Defence Force. I want to know what is the percentage of reduction. I am dealing against the background of a political party that got up in Parliament when it was differently designed and I think I see now the former Leader of the Opposition getting up there and saying that the numbers in the Barbados Defence Force were far too great and that he foresaw a situation where the Democratic Labour Party, if elected to power, would drastically reduce them to around 100. I heard that and I also heard the Honourable Members on that side supporting it, including the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who got up and supported it. So, I would like to know whether the Government has been consistent and implemented that well known, stated policy.

Secondly, I well recall the debate that we have had in here on more than one occasion about the role of the coast patrol in Barbados and the experience which this House was given repeatedly by Members on our side that in truth and in fact the police are uninterested and unable and not competent to carry out that role. If the Honourable Member who is now in charge of the police is able to evoke any interest or competence on the part of the police and coastal patrol I would be glad to see that day, but there was a Harbour Police and for no reason at all the Harbour Police ceased to function. The police have repeatedly been given boats and because of their inability to service the boats the boats have rotted out around the coast of Barbados. It is very clear that successive heads of the Police Force have manifested little interest or competence in being able to service boats and to run the boats in such a way that coastal patrol is carried on. These are facts. It is no point our getting in here and taking a position on these matters when repeatedly all opportunity has been given to the police for a number of years to show some degree of interest and competence in this area and they have demonstrated neither interest nor competence. Don't let anybody fool you about this. Boats were bought. Local boats were built and the Honourable Members on the other side are now the victims of their own folly because they were the ones that have been systematically in here trying to promote the idea that the Barbados Labour Party was showing preference to the Defence Force *vis-a-vis* the Police when we always pointed out that we regarded both of these agencies of Government as being complementary and not competitive. I well remember how they used to come up here every day and say: "Look how you are treating the Defence Force. They are the darlings." Especially the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: You see, I want many people to remember it. I understand now in Barbados that you have to say things a thousand times before they understand. There are some Sir, that even though you say it a thousand times, don't understand it.

Now, Sir, even though we recognise that coastal patrol is an important and integral part of law and order in Barbados we still are hesitant as to what to do about it. We must make up in our minds about it because while we are fiddling around with decision making on this point every day in Barbados the need for coastal patrol is becoming more and more evident. I want to hear what is the Government's position now. They have changed directions so many times that if they change direction this time in the way that the Labour Party has always told them should be done they shouldn't be ashamed. I mean they are shameless already. So this would just be another example of it.

Now, Sir, I am going to move to another area.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: You? You have no competence to deal with it. You are like the Commissioner of Police in the Police Department. I am not talking about an individual commissioner of police. I am talking about the office. I was very specific about that, that successive commissioners of police have been unable to generate sufficient interest in the Force to motivate the officers.
5.20 p.m.

Now, Sir, we now come to the question of the use of some of the facilities available at the Defence Force as an integral part of the delivery of training to young people in Barbados. If ever a Government was abused by the Opposition and now Government, it was what the Honourable Members on the other side did to the Barbados Labour Party when we raised the concept of utilising the facilities that were available at the Defence Force as part and parcel of delivery of training to young people. I remember that.

The trade union boss used to say in "The Union Speaks" that we wanted to militarise young people in Barbados. The Teachers' Unions as well. All of the agencies of mischief in Barbados used to coalesce...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I have come back in here to let you know the truth and to tell you how right we were. Now, Sir, St. Lucy and the Navel Base in St. Lucy was to be an important venue for this. I would like to hear what has happened to that? What has happened to the former Naval Base in St. Lucy? What has happened to all of the facilities that were there that could have been used as part of this training? I would like to know what has occurred now? Does the Government envisage once again the utilisation of those facilities as part and parcel of the facilities for training of young people? It is very important.

The Democratic Labour Party has done so much injustice to the young people in this country by delaying for deliberate political purposes the implementation of a scheme to help them. If we had a measure of political responsibility at that time there would have been a sufficient consensus among all the political parties in Barbados over the last seven years that we would have had a youth training scheme that everybody would have given their support to. But because of narrow, partisan politics as practised by the Democratic Labour Party, because the concept originated from this side, they set about to do what they are best at doing, destroyed it before it was started. They now have the lack of shame to come and tell us they are going to restart it. I just wanted to know how far you have got in another example of reversal of your position?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Now, Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West also mentioned the question of a regional security system. I went to the War Games. I remember that. I made a speech then and said that the drug trade in the Eastern Caribbean, including the Grenadine Islands, was such that I felt the only way to police it was as a result of the expansion of the Regional Security System to include the question of drug smuggling beyond national boundaries. I said that.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, one of the wonderful things about politics is that many politicians do not have to retain a stand of either interest or memory for longer than the last nine days. Do you notice each one of them must refer to St. Michael West and when St. Michael West gets up all 8 of the Independents and the representative for the Barbados Labour Party want to take me on. The representative for the Barbados Labour Party is keeping very quiet but the 8 Independents want to fight me. Nothing is more interesting than to hear the former Prime Minister of Barbados, the shortest serving....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The point is that even in that you cannot get it right because I acted for a whole week. During that week it was a momentous week. The record would show that there was a massive strike .....

Let no one confuse themselves. What I will promise the Honourable Member is that when I become Prime

Minister I am going to serve longer than he did. I am going to deal with him. The former Prime Minister has the temerity to come in here and talk about who changed their mind and who did not change their mind. Because there may be some young people within hearing distance like the Honourable Member for St. James North and some other people who might not remember, they want to put the discussion that occurred between 1976 and 1986 in their own terms and perspective. Let me help them to refresh their memories.

This Manifesto is the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto. All of the debate that occurred during that time occurred in the context of the flim-flam wishy-washy turn-around policy of the Barbados Labour Party in light of their statement in this Manifesto which I now read, Sir. It is the Barbados Labour Party 1976 Manifesto, page 22 – Defence and Security and I quote:–

> "Barbados should have no territorial ambitions. Whilst recognising its crucial geographical significance to the North American and Latin American continents there is no reason why Barbados should attract foreign invasion or intervention."

Listen to this now, Sir.

> "The Party will not commit our country to any foreign defence pacts."

The present Leader of the Opposition and the former Leader of the Government who just got up here talking – one of them said they had the vision to look at the Regional Security System. I cannot believe my ears when I hear one of them get up in here and say they had the vision to see.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get some order, please.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, do not protect me from them. Let the people see how they behave.
5.30 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is my duty to protect all Honourable Members.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: They went on... My back is bad. You wait until. All of you waited until I went to Caracas and discussed my back. They waited until I went to Caracas and behind my back they discussed my back. Now I know at least one Honourable Member over there has been longing to discover the efficacy or otherwise of my back's capacity.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are not going to discover anything about my back until I am ready.

> "The Party will not commit our country to any foreign defence pacts."

That takes care of all the vision that we have just heard about. They went on, Sir:

> "Internally, the defence forces will be limited to such as are adequate to maintain law and order. There will be no need"....

I am quoting:

> ..."to maintain any standing army or other defence force."

This is the same Party that comes here today and accuses us of having changed our minds. All of the discussion that occurred between 1976 and 1986 was the discussion of this particular pledge which the Barbados Labour Party had gone to the country with. Almost from the day General Tom Adams came in.....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Will the Honourable Member do the House a favour by giving the date of that Manifesto and answering in his speech whether that pre-dated the Cubana terroism or Sydney Burnett-Alleyne?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I do not know what they want from my life. I am quoting their Manifesto. I am not quoting something written by Matthew or Mark or Luke or John which would be entirely alien to them. I am quoting from their Manifesto. It is here. It is a document of the House, Sir. This is what they said in order to get the Government in 1976. This is what you said in order to get the Government in 1976.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds. I am having a little difficulty in following the debate because of the interruptions. I would wish that they do not continue that way. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, Sir. Let the Honourable Member have the opportunity to expatiate. The Honourable Member said that his debate was on what happened between 1976 and 1986. Now, Sir, the Honourable Member in fairness to conduct his debate must refer to the 1981 Manifesto which explained the Party's policy in toto and said that:

> "Events within the Caribbean and elsewhere have proved the need for Barbados to have a limited

Defence Force with a capacity to withstand the immediate result of potential terrorists and mercenaries."

Then it went on to speak of the...

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am making it a document of the House. The Honourable Member knows that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not consider that a point of order in the context.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What I find remarkable, Sir, is that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is a Q.C, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is a Q.C. – pardon my leaving you out for the time being – the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is a double Q.C., the Honourable Member for St. George South is a Q.C. and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is a Q.C.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back to Head 13, please.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am now beginning to understand it, Sir. The five of them are quite confused. Okay, let me accept that. Here am I responding to what they have said so far in which they are accusing this Government of being twisty and twirly. All I have done is got up and used their Manifesto and the Lord knows all I have done so far is to read from it. They are like five terrors jumping up, interrupting, interfering. I have not said anything about you yet.

This one talked about the Democratic Labour Party, when it comes to moral character, the Barbados Labour Party had as much moral right to discuss twisty and twirly.....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, we are in the House and we like to keep this debate at a certain level. I am not going to finish that statement. I leave them. You know when you are playing the game of fill in, I leave each one of them to fill in.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is right. That is why I wonder what you are doing in here.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I know it is no game.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I know how it is no game. You see they can send but they cannot receive. In Morse Code you have to have somebody who can send and who can receive. But they can send. They are the ones who are over there demonstrating that the Right Honourable Prime Minister has changed his mind, that the Democratic Labour Party has changed its mind. They gave the impression that they have, would never, have never, could never conceive of changing their minds. He started to get praise for conception of the RSS.

I sat in this chair and almost died when I heard someone over there saying that they concevied the Regional Security System. Well I am so happy to hear that they conceived it. Then they probably went to Washington. I can imagine the Barbados Labour Party contingent going up to Washington and saying, "Listen, let me tell you all something. We have conceived of a Regional Security System and we believe you all should join it. Here are the terms and conditions." That is what the Honourable Member would like us to believe.

The intelligent people in this country know better. But one of the things we will not do is to discuss in detail information which either of us might have about the security system, how it operates and how it came into being.

But I have a lot of objection to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West getting up in here and giving the impression about some great visionary concept which they had. How could they have conceived the RSS in the context of a few weeks after getting elected when in their Manifesto that was published just before, they were stating categorically information....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You and I know better. Do not start with any five year talk with me. The files and the facts are available to all of us. The difference between the last jokers that used to sit over there and this Opposition is that we can afford to go to certain limits because we now have Opposition with the exception of the two Honourable Members at the end where all of us have been more or less in the same Cohobolopot. We have now been both Government and Opposition so we know what the facts are. There are certain things which we are required not to discuss in great detail. I am sure you will sit there and push me in the full knowledge that I am not going to go too far and that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South also will get up and make his bluster but he will stop at a certain point. We understand that. But within that context, we are going to hurl you back into the trenches. Because you have come in here, you believe....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not interfering with you. I have not interfered with you.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The fact is, Sir, that I have been able to demonstrate that all the bluster by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who obviously is still smarting under the blows that the people put in him in 1986 and who apparently, based on my own observation, will be using this session as a launching pad to take care of every sector in the community which he perceives to have done him some harm and wrong and will not recognize that, as the calypsonian says, he just could not get it managed. That is the only reason they got rid of you. And you furthermore allowed yourself to be defeated in your constituency, as did a whole host of the others. You went on vacation. It is Defence and Security. You have been accusing us....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for the City is the least of the problems over there so we are going to leave her there. The fact is that you tried to give the impression in this debate that the Democratic Labour Party took a position during 1976 to 1986 and now we have resiled from that position. What we have done is what any government is expected to do and which is what the Honourable Members did when they were the Government. When you become responsible for the situation, you assess the situation based on the facts which are available and you make the relevant decisions that are necessary in the interest of the country, irrespective of what position you may have taken in the past.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time. The Honourable Member for St. John caught my eye.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, a couple of points were raised during the course of the debate and some comments were made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South which attempted to rewrite the entire history of that great movement of young people and patriotic Barbadians who resited the attempts by the Barbados Labour Party to introduce a national youth service. He called it a youth training scheme. But he suffers a little political amnesia at sometime and then it is compounded by a lengthy absence for the cut and thrust of politics. And therefore he returned to this House. He has all the information available to him, he has the Estimates before him, he reads nothing and he gets up and bluffs his way through each and every area of Government policy that comes before us.
5.40 p.m.

Now the point is, Sir, that in 1981, I think it was the Barbados Labour Party had conceived of a national youth service and the aim of that national youth service as I understand it now from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, was youth training. That is not the concept of a national youth service. Anybody who has a smattering of knowledge of the purpose of a national youth service in national development, would understand that the youth service has other important functions; the building of self-confidence, patriotism, exposing people to other areas of the national endeavour, for example, first aid and a whole range of other skills which are not normally provided by the educational systems.

A national training scheme, as I understand it, would be akin to those things which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, sought to take credit for today. Now the point is, Sir, that the criticism then was on two very solid grounds. The first ground is that the Barbados Labour Party sought to introduce this service under the auspices of the Barbados Defence Force and part of the programme would have included courses, such as map reading, drill and weapon training. We took strong objection to those kinds of courses being taught in a National Youth Service. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West, myself, and other young people throughout this country, took strong objection to a national youth service involving that kind of military training.

The second thing is that it was the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who then as Minister of Agriculture got up on one Sunday and addressed the 4H-Movement, seemed to have forgotten the script and suddenly informed Barbados that the National Youth Service would be compulsory and that all Barbadian youth between the ages, I think, of 18 and 22 would be conscripted into this national youth service. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph, he did say it. He was addressing the 4H-Movement as Minister of Agriculture. I can produce it tomorrow. Again the debate broke open and there was considerable discussion again and we found those two aspects of the National Youth Service to be particularly odious.

Now, if the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would read the document that is given to him, instead of bothering to raise this matter under the Head under which it does not belong he could look on page 85 of the Estimates and he would see that provision is made this year for the introduction of the Barbados Youth Service, Head 38, Sub-Programme 2 and that we are hoping to get the programme under way very, very shortly.

Now, I am not going to say at this stage what the components of the service will be, because there are aspects of it that have to go to Cabinet. I will give the House the assurance that as soon as we are settled on the final arrangements to the programme, that we will return to the House with the relevant information. I don't think that Government would be in a position at this stage to maintain any large properties for the purpose of a national youth

service. That was characteristic of the Labour Party's approach to projects. They would identify all kinds of locations, the St. Lucy base for some residential programme. Instead of starting small on some kind of pilot scheme and trying to develop the programme, they identified sites for the programme, buying bunk beds....

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, we put up on all sorts of things....

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. Relevance. What does the National Youth Service or whatever it is that the Honourable Member is trying to discuss have to do with this? We on this side would like him to tell us about the youth service component of the Defence Force. Tell us about that, headed by the Right Honourable Prime Minister's brother, tell us about that. We will deal with the youth service when we get to that Head.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, she was not listening to the debate. I am responding to the comments that were made by the de facto Leader of the Opposition, in respect of the National Youth Service. If she was not listening to him that is her problem. The point I am making is that they identified ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order? In the first place the matter of the youth service should not form a substantive part of this Head. I will rule that there be no further....

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I will not respond on the matter of the youth service. I will wait until it comes under Head 38. But, I will respond to any allegations which are made in this debate that seek to characterise the people who conscientiously objected to conscription, who conscientiously objected to a programme of military training for young Barbadians. That is what I am objecting to and nobody is going to throw it in my face when, as a young man, I objected on the basis of principle, and they then turned around and said that we were misfits or – what was the expression – mischief makers in this country. I was then interested as an 18- year old in where my future lay. It was pretty dismal at that point, that is 1981. It was pretty dismal, but I had a right, just as the teachers of this country, just as all of the other persons of good will who are interested in the development of young people to object to any programme which the Labour Party sought to implement and which we did not feel would have had a positive and useful impact in engendering the kind of young people that this society needed at that time.

I am saying to you, that on the basis of the proposals that were made, and I saw all of them, there was a point when the National Youth Service Scheme which I am not discussing now, became part of the Defence Force and two persons were seconded down to the Barbados Defence Force, my present Permanent Secretary is one of the persons who was seconded down to the Barbados Defence Force along with a Mr. Ralph Walker and they were put there to plan and execute a national youth service. If you do not know what is going on, don't get in the debate. You do not know. They were sent down to the National Youth Service at the Barbados Defence Force.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If Honourable Members do not desist from that kind of behaviour I will have to invoke the rules.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You all are not the only people who can get excited and feel that in you reside all of the virtue and all of the ability to plan for the future of Barbados. I was not even involved fully in politics at that time, but I was conscientiously objecting to anybody conscripting me at the age of 18 to go and learn map reading and weapons training and that kind of foolishness which form part of the proposals and was ready for implementation. But in any event I am going to say this, if the Labour Party was really committed to implementing it they would not have bothered with us, they never bothered before when the wanted to implement things.
5.50 p.m.

But when they want to implement all other kinds of things and bring legislation like the Emergency Powers and so on, there is nothing that we could have done except conscientiously object and vote against it, but they would have forged ahead. So let us not have this kind of debate where people like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who is now crusading to demonstrate that he knows more about the truth than anybody else and to get up and object to things that happened in the past when the basic facts on which he makes the objection are completely flawed. I will not sitting in this seat listen to that kind of debate. As I said, it was not a political issue. People objected for other conscientious reasons. There are a lot of members who would not agree if their own children were to be constricted down at the Defence Force involved in those kinds of activities. It has nothing to do with personality. It has something to do with peoples' conception of how Barbados should develop and what are its useful pursuits for its young people, and what are the characteristics of a development programme for young people. I am saying, Sir....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point of order.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. John structured his intervention on a speech which I had allegedly made in 1981 about the Youth Service. I just wish to give this House the assurance that I have never made any such speech as indicated by the Honourable Member.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: When we get to the particular Head and you permit me, I will introduce the clipping from the Sunday Sun which was referred to in a newspaper known as "Horizons" and published by the Democratic Labour Party quoting a speech by the Honourable Member to the 4-H Foundation relating to the National Youth Service. But that is not what we are debating now so his intervention really has no relevance.

Mr. Chairman has ruled that I am not to debate that. I am, therefore, saying the Defence Force has its role and however you conceive that role is one thing. A development plan, a community programme, or a National Youth Service geared at young people is something completely different. A Youth Service Scheme has no right being run by a Defence Force, but a Defence Force may have a role in some of the programmes which are involved in a National Youth Scheme. Therefore, in response to the contention of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Youth Scheme will not be run by any Defence Force but there may be areas in which the National Youth Service might receive some kind of programmatic assistance through the Barbados Defence Force. So long as we do not blur the role, then there will be no need for the kinds of objections that obtained before and those objections, I think, were part of the process of democracy and should not be derailed, decried, and criticized in the manner in which I think they were criticized in this particular debate. I think they had some validity at the time and they still have some validity and we can conceive of some alternatives which do not involve military training in a strict sense and which gives young people those attributes that we wish to build as self-confidence, patriotism, and skills. Give them the opportunity to be involved in service to the community, job attachment programmes, and that kind of thing. I hope the Honourable Member for St. James South will augment what I have said about that particular matter.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to be very short, Sir. It is fairly obvious, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St. John would have been a great beneficiary of the Youth Training Scheme because in that scheme one would be taught a number of things. One would be taught the value to speak the truth.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable must not try to shout down the Chair. My intervention is that the Honourable Member was just told that the National Youth Service is not the substantive part of this debate.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member talked for nearly fifteen minutes on it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It was mentioned in passing earlier and I accepted his as a reference to it and expressed the fact that he should not enlarge upon it.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am just making the point, Sir, that if the Honourable Member had been a beneficiary of the training scheme that he would not have spoken in the manner in which he spoke.

Certain remarks by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South were asked to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I will substitute this, Sir. He would recognize that it is useful to speak the truth.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: According to this document, Sir, those words are unparliamentary. I submit that the Honourable Member conveyed the same. This is the Journal of Society of Clerks at Table and it has a section here "Words that are acceptable in Parliament".

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do not mind what it said. Are you the Clerk?

Laughter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I submit the substituted language convey the same identical impression and that those words should be withdrawn as well, Sir.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: In clarification of my point of order, the import of the words by the Honourable Member was that that Honourable Member could not recognize the truth. He said, "If not, he would have been..." The tense and the whole mood suggest that, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Before Your Honour rules, Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West asked if I could quote from what I was quoting from. It is the Table "The Journal of The Society of Clerks At Table In The Commonwealth Parliaments," Volume 57, 1989, Page 238 and following was the phrase which attracted me, Sir, in the submission that I made, words which were not accepted: "Whether the Minister intentionally or whether the Minister inadvertently lied to the House." That was in an Ontario debate 7/6/88 No. 75 on Page 4101, Sir.
6.00 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My ruling is that the words that have been substituted are not offensive.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I only wanted to respond to the comment as I understand it made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in reference to the

Harbour Police. It is my understanding that the Honourable Member said that the Harbour Police Force was disbanded because the hierarchy, or words to that effect, of the police did not show any interest in the Police Force, that the boats were not maintained properly and therefore the Coast Guard took over the functions of the Harbour Police. That's my understanding.

However, I have checked this out and that does not seem to be the case. As I understand it, from the police authorities, there was a hurricane or bad weather around 1979 just after the Cubana affair. The Cubana affair was in 1976 but the hurricane swells came in 1979. The harbour pier was destroyed. The Government never repaired it. Therefore the police had no where to haul up their boats. I know that. I lived at the Harbour Police Station between 1947 and 1950 and there was a boathouse there and the boathouse went into disrepair as well and was not maintained so that the police had no where to maintain their boats. Up to 1980-82 there was a man called Sgt. Bourne who was the brother of the Deputy Commissioner of Police who was a very good engineer, so to say that there was nobody in the Force is incorrect. What happened was that there was no where to look after the boats as a result of which the boats went into total disrepair. My understanding is that also the Prime Minister of the day, the Rt. Honourable Tom Adams said, that the functions performed by the Harbour Police could easily have been performed by the Coast Guard and the Harbour Police Force went the way of all flesh.

Asides.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Now, we will bring back the Harbour Police Force and as we see it the coast guard will look after off-shore patrolling. The Harbour Police will look after inshore patrolling and indeed my understanding is that the Police Force have a wider jurisdiction than the Coast Guard especially on shore, but in any event the Police Force will patrol inshore and the Coast Guard will patrol offshore but there will be coordination between the two bodies. So that's why we are bringing back in the Harbour Police.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, just a short intervention. There are at least six ex-Ministers of Youth Affairs in this Chamber and therefore there are many of us. I happen to be one too and there are many of us who can give their view on this subject.

As far as I remember, the Democratic Labour Party Members were opposed to the straitjacketing and militarisation of youth but we saw no reason why countless numbers of youth in Barbados that are on the streets could not be in the army now to have discipline, for them to get four square meals a day. In sports it is important that you should be well fed and you must understand that you must have great powers of concentration and you must be well-disciplined and have a well rounded personality. With that type of training, one must be in a position to pierce the pain barrier. That is the problem sometimes with your youth today. Some people cannot even endure one second of pain.

Asides.

Hon. W. W. HALL: The position was that as far as we are concerned they were not for conscription and for straitjacketing and militarisation of the youth. That is as far as I remember.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minister has lost me, Sir. He talked about the four square meals a day and you have to be big and brawny....

Hon. W. W. HALL: On a point of order, I never said that you had to be big and brawny to have four square meals a day. There are many people who have five square meals a day and....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is precisely what I was about to ask him, Sir, if that is why the Honourable Member for St. John was objecting because he was so frail he wasn't even able to lift up a rifle, Sir. If that was the real reason that he had.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I think there are a couple of points that have been put wrong in the debate by the Honourable Members and the Honourable Minister of Justice and Public Safety hasn't obviously had time to read certain aspects of his files as yet. In the period 1979 the Coast Guard service was fully operational. As a matter of fact, I think this can be confirmed by the Honourable Member for St. George South who succeeded as Attorney General. The Canadians also gave us assistance with the Coast Guard and actually provided a boat for the police. Various things were happening then. One of the things as shown by the laws of Barbados is that our legislation over our maritime area was expanding. We expanded our territorial seas from three marine miles to twelve marine miles and we also gave ourselves jurisdiction over the exclusive zone beyond the territorial jurisdiction of Barbados. The Coast Guard did not have the capacity in itself in order to keep surveillance over this wide area, and part of the discussion going on then was the correct role that the Coast Guard would take alongside the Defence Force. We also came to the conclusion that even in the areas of the exclusive zone that the Police could be able to go on the Coast Guard vessels so that if matters that pertained to the civil law of Barbados arose they would be able to deal with those matters.

Now, I agree there was a lot of partisan political controversy in those days which confused the minds of some of the Police Force and was designed in order to bring enmity between the two forces. At each stage that the then Rt. Honourable Prime Minister spoke on the subject or I

spoke on the subject we clarified that these were two of the protective forces of Barbados who in the long term interest of the country had to work together and side by side. That is what has happened. Now we have seen that again the Democratic Labour Party has come around to accepting this and indeed, you will find the responsibility of the Labour Party demonstrated that in the last Kadooment exercise, on the Floor of the House, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas speaking on our behalf as Attorney-General gave the commitment that we were going to support the Government's position in using the Defence Force, something that they never did for us. I remember once when the Police themselves asked us to call out at Swan Street the Defence Force for a fire that was liable to destroy Bridgetown and, as the Minister responsible, I agreed with Mr. Prescott that it should be done and I justified it to my Cabinet colleagues in the House. We were the butt of severe criticism by the Democratic Labour Party. They forget these things quite easily but we have been consistent on this matter. When the Honourable Member talks about the Defence Force and our policy, I believe that our 1981 manifesto is already a document of the House.
6.10 p.m.

On the first day we met on October 6, 1976 after the Elections and a change of Government, we were faced with the Cubana exercise. I could never forget the then Right Honourable Member for St. John who, despite whatever contribution he made to Barbados, was at times very wicked in the way that he approached matters. He said he was on Paradise Beach and he saw everything that happened. It occurred within Barbados' jurisdiction.

We went to the trouble of getting assistance from the United Kingdom to get them here in order to look at the position. It was proved to be absolutely incorrect. We set up a tribunal under the present Chief Justice in order to hear evidence on all of these matters. All of that was proven incorrect. It was not a question of the national interest of Barbados then. It was simply a question of whether or not they could score political points. What happened, Sir, is you will find that our 1981 Manifesto made it absolutely clear that events within Barbados and the Caribbean, as elsewhere, have proved the need to have a limited defence force with a capacity to withstand the immediate assault of potential marauders, terrorists and mercenaries.

We went on to say – I must read it, Sir. It is at page 28. It is already a document of the House:–

> "The Democratic Labour Party has been relentless in attacking the Defence Force, its role and its cost – although this is a very small portion of total Government spending. A re-elected Labour Party Government will maintain a moderate level of defence expenditure, bearing in mind our limited financial resources and our insistence that primary responsibility for law and order rests on the civil forces – namely the Police. A Coast Guard Headquarters, to be named Fort Willoughby, is now being built at the Pierhead, and will include extensive ship repair facilities which are generally needed in Barbados. We will continue to explore the co-ordination of our Coast Guard's work and services with those Caribbean islands nearest us, namely, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, as for whose vessels the repair facilities will be used."

I want to say it was out of those discussions with St. Lucia and St. Vincent and later extended to the other Eastern Caribbean countries that the Regional Security System was born. I also well remember the then Right Honourable Member for St. John in one of his wicked moods again suggesting that the Regional Security System was born in Washington and the Honourable Member hinting of who were ready to fire. It is not true.

I had to correct a Dr. Dion Phillips of the Virgin Islands College who wrote an article in a recent publication that is not based at all on any truth on Caribbean Affairs. I had to write him a long letter that said he was absolutely wrong and that he was, obviously, not going to primary sources to find out what sort of defence policy Barbados was following.

I am pleased to see that, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said, the Democratic Labour Party now has a policy that accords with everything we have said. Perhaps, in the future this matter will not be controversial when it comes to using the Defence Force for a part of youth training because that is what is happening.

Talking about sportsmen being trained in the Defence Force is nothing more than we said. We said:–

> "The re-elected BLP Government will expand the Skills Training Programme for youth already established and in operation and will institute a National Service Programme. Under this scheme, young persons will be encouraged to undergo, on a voluntary basis, a short period of paid, full-time attachment to a National Service Corps of the Defence Force followed by weekly attendance for a period of two years in all. Training will be non-military but will include discipline, self-reliance, and physical fitness. Youth in the Skills Training Programme may also be included in the National Service Corps so that there will be full opportunities of equipment of useful employment during and after the service period."

When I hear the Honourable Member for St. John get up and talk about conscription, there was no concept of conscription in the position.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I rise to support the Honourable Member for St. John

and to dispute what is being said by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. As an officer of the Barbados Workers' Union, we were presented with a formulation along the lines mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. John. What the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is speaking about is another version. He has to be very clear about this. There were different formulations about the National Youth Service. The one that we objected to and rejected was one based on conscription. There was no question about it and for him to give the impression that the Honourable Member for St. John....

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It is misleading. You are trying to mislead this august Chamber.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order. My ruling has been that the youth service does not form part of this Head under debate. I accepted the intervention of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West in the context of Defence and Security and the point he was making. Therefore, I do not consider that a point of order. We must stick to the Head under discussion.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would not go outside. In the context of Defence and Security I must emphasise that concept was voluntary and non-military. I hope that we get to the Head of Community Services because I will bring to this House – I have carefully selected the documents to answer all misrepresentation, all of the releases made, both through GIS and otherwise, from the then thinking that had gone into the planning of the youth service in the particular time. I have a file on it. I am going to bring it in, including an article written by the Honourable Member for St. John at the time on the subject. I have all of the publications. I will walk with them just in case the Head comes up. I will be able to answer the allegations then, Sir.

What I am saying is, when it came to dealing with matters of defence, I submit to this Committee that the Labour Party has always taken the high road and will always take that road in relation to these matters. I hope that it is an area of Barbados' affairs that is extremely vital. It is one when we are discussing in this House that we have to be careful what we say and how we say it and to exercise a certain amount of restraint. That is why even when we are seeking information, we do so with certain caveats that those of us who have had some responsibility for dealing with security will always have to show.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I really was not minded to enter into this discussion because I thought that much better would have been served if I did not. Then I noticed the organisation I have the honour to represent, the Barbados Workers' Union, has been brought into the debate. I notice there are a number of things which are being attributed to that organisation that would have to be clarified.

The question of people having one point of view and varying that point of view from time to time is time-worn. It is respected and respectable. I see no reason why if the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party have made adjustments in their positions in this matter of our defence element and the military element and/or training element for young people, that adjustment examined against the critical considerations of the period needs to become a subject for political harangue and any unwholesome diatribe. Of course, that would never happen within these Chambers, but I mean outside of them.

What I am concerned about, Sir, is the suggestion – when they spoke on the subject of the youth programme as it was envisaged at the time and as it was understood at the time by those organisations....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have given the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central the authority to speak at this point.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: When those organisations understood what was being put forward, they had certain impressions. Insofar as the Barbados Workers' Union was concerned, there were a number of situations which were taking place almost simultaneously which occasioned the position which was adopted by the organisation and by several others at the time. We were of the view, if we were not correct we were never put right, there would be conscription and that there would be militarisation within the youth service programme.

We were further of the view, not as I have been made more recently to understand, that within the context of the Emergency Powers legislation, that there was no understanding of there being any definition of emergency that was national, but that emergency consideration would lie only within the understanding and the interpretation of the Minister of the day responsible for defence.

What I am saying is that the Barbados Workers' Union, indeed, several other organisations took a position which endeavoured to represent an approach to defence and security matters and youth affairs matters which would have separate and distinct positions and portfolios for each and every one of them.

I have no difficulty in understanding, Mr. Chairman, that the position which was previously adopted by the Barbados Labour Party in 1976 in its Manifesto would be adjusted and would have, of necessity, had to be adjusted in

relation to certain national and international events that took place after that time. On that occasion and in those circumstances I see no reason why I should want to look at the position which they had arrived at by 1981 as being a position which contradicted the principle or the integrity of that organisation.

In the same circumstances, Mr. Chairman, I see no reason nor can I find any justification for there being any attempt to vilify the Democratic Labour Party, if the Democratic Labour Party, having taken a position on the same matter some years after, after deliberate judgement and careful examination of all the facts and the circumstances involved has also amended or modified its position. In short I believe that all of us are concerned with advancing the well-being of our peoples in Barbados. And if in doing so we are being very careful, conscientiously to examine what is before us, then our positions from time to time will have to move from where they were before. In those circumstances, Sir, I beg to suggest that there cannot really be any divide between the two parties in this matter.
6.25 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Right Honourable Prime Minister.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I rise to reply to the debate on this particular Head. It has been a wide ranging debate. I wish to respond specifically to two areas of discussion, one relating to Ilaro Court and the other one relating to the Defence Force. First of all, Sir, let me make it clear that I am not going into any debate or discussion on how many spoons, forks and saucepans are at Ilaro Court, unless there is a specific substantive question, I will give the reply to the question. There are inventories that are taken from time to time and if anyone wishes to know of those matters they can ask a substantive question.

But throughout my life I have never had to answer any questions relating to my own domestic personal household matters and I do not intend to do that now at my age. Make that quite clear.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There are only two of us in this Chamber who perhaps might know on an intimate basis, the position at Ilaro Court. One is the Member for Christ Church South and the other one is myself.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I go there. Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South put up with a lot of inconveniences at that particular residence. He will not say so himself. All of the prison furniture and other make shift arrangements. You see there seems to be a lot of glamour about this particular building and that it is some building in tip-top shape that anyone would be very willing and ready and tumbling over themselves to occupy as a residence. I should like to make it quite clear, Sir, that I am very comfortable in my own personal residence and I will continue to try to meet my commitments to my bankers who may hold a mortgage over my house. I am quite comfortable in that, Sir. It has the same four bedrooms that are at Ilaro Court so there is no big catch for me to go to Ilaro Court.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes. That is right. But it seems to be a big matter for the Opposition and for others in this country that the Prime Minister should live in the Official Residence provided and even though I warned that it would be significantly more expensive to live at Ilaro Court than under the present arrangements, they have persisted with that. I have assessed that there is a preponderance of opinion in the country which believes that the Prime Minister should live in the residence so I will take up residence by the 1st of April of this year, as I have said. But I want to make it absolutely clear, I am not giving up my private residence nor am I renting it out. If under those subterranean areas under the residence and those doors and other apertures which have obviously been sealed up and I don't know what is inside of them, if anything emerges of an unsubstantial nature, looking tall or short, or however, I gone.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. I think the Prime Minister, having given that exposition that borders on the possibility of his seeing apparitions, I think he ought to tell us whether he believes or does not believe in obeah.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will only say that the member for the City seems to be very much concerned about how much money is being spent, something going from $29 000 to $40 000 for supplies or whatever. Anyhow, Sir, I won't pursue that particular angle. Maybe, across the dining table I would say.

Let me make this point, Mr. Chairman, that the official residence of the Prime Minister must be comparable to something and the only other thing I can see it comparable with in this country is the official residence of the Governor-General.

Now, I have never heard on this Floor, any kind of argument about the amount of money that is provided for the upkeep of the Governor-General.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order in this Committee?

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Let us understand it. Those who have been trying to depreciate the office of Prime Minister and depreciate the person of the Prime Minister himself, must understand that this Prime Minister will not be putting up with any make-shift arrangements, there must be proper arrangements there befitting the office of Prime Minister, and if we compare it, we have $559 000 provided for the Governor-General's residence. $559 000 in these estimates, passed without one word, but it comes to the Prime Minister's Official Residence now, $504 104 both recurrent and capital provided and there seems to be some big debate about this, when the residences have to operate on the same basis, the same level of staff must be provided. They come in shifts and the buildings have to be kept at a certain level. It is as simple as that. If this House does not wish to make that provision, I am quite happy where I am, and I am sure that my constituents will support me in whatever decision I make.

So, the provision is $504 104 in these estimates, both recurrent and capital. You want to know what the money is going to be spent on and all of these questions. The security at the Official Residence is faulty, it is defective, even now in the last heavy rains that we had, the perimeter wall has fallen down. It has not been put back up yet. We had heavy rains, there was damage. The perimeter wall is not in place.

They want to know about how much money is being spent as if it is too much money for this Prime Minister because this Prime Minister is going in there. I do not know what other considerations they could be. I do not want to speak with feeling on the matter.

A little earlier I heard a lot of talk about how Parliament should be a place of importance in this country and how people outside disrespect Parliamentarians, but I believe that parliamentarians are their own worst enemies, because at every turn we try to depreciate one another, whether they are alive or dead.

Now I just heard the Leader of the Opposition, who should know better, in the permanent absence of a former Prime Minister of this country describe him as wicked. He is not here to defend himself.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member would well know that not only have I described that Right Honourable Member as wicked now he is dead, but I did it in his presence when he was wicked. And, also, the Honourable Member knows that Honourable Member never spared anyone. He never even spared the Right Honourable Member for St. Thomas the late Prime Minister Adams by giving an interview and accused him of taking cocaine during his lifetime. So, what is the Right Honourable Member talking about?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that if we are trying to raise the level of debate and if we are trying to elevate the image of Parliament and Parliamentarians, I do not know why we have to have our heads so firmly buried in the past, and the entire speech of the Leader of the Opposition seems to have been one in which he and perhaps his party are firmly looking back into the past, because everything was what the late Member for St. John did or said or what is the position in respect of the Defence Force and so on. If anything accounts for the present position of that group and that party over there it is because they are not facing the problems that we are dealing with today and tomorrow, but they seem firmly to be looking back into the past, reading extensively from archival material – some kind of 1981 manifesto on setting out policy. I am not sure what is the purpose, what we are trying to prove, unless we are speaking for the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I don't know what you are trying to prove either. The Honourable Minister of Health started with our Manifesto in 1976 sitting where he is now, very close to you. He started it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. Look, you have been out of here ever since, the Rules have changed. The speaker has ruled on that and if you read the Parliamentarian you will see that is acceptable.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member just said that I started it, when the Honourable Member knows all I did was respond to the former Prime Minister. It is true he belongs to an era of the past, but I read from their manifesto because he said that we were twisting and turning, that is all, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay, point is made.
6.40 p.m.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I believe a question was raised in relation to an increase of a vote from $25 000 to I believe $100 000. The fact is that we have included under the Prime Minister's Office an amount to be spent at Ilaro Court because from time to time the Ministry of Transport and Works, as it was then called, which was responsible for carrying out the repairs and other works there found it difficult from time to time responding timely to the requests for the upkeep of the premises. There have been difficulties in this Parliament. So we are providing a sum under the Prime Minister's Office in order to meet those particular requirements. Ilaro Court is an old stately house. I cannot ask the Member for St. Thomas because,

while his house may be stately, I do not think that it is an old house. I may have to ask the Member for Christ Church West....

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I thought you lived in a plantation house. Oh! He lives in a new plantation house. But those who live in old houses would know that the upkeep is costly and you do not know from time to time what exactly you have to encounter.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, we are going into a house. There is a lot of glass around and there are I believe curtains in only two rooms or something like that. These have to be provided.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I have said enough.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: No, I am a parliamentarian and I believe that Parliament should debate things but it depends on the context in which things are being debated.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are having too much cross-talk. The Member for Bridgetown – I am just asking the Member for Bridgetown to observe the ruling of the Chair.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I do not think I wish to say anything more about that. Mr. Chairman, I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition has indicated. I have not attacked the Member for Christ Church South.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There are too many interventions while the Member is on his feet.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Oh! We can forget about Ilaro Court. Okay, Sir. There is consensus that we can forget about Ilaro Court. So that is that with some of those funds I may have to find an exorcist.

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I will leave Ilaro Court now but I will just give this anecdote to illustrate what I am talking about. One Sunday afternoon around dusk I went with my family to Ilaro Court and I was in the kitchen talking with my brother and we were there talking about music, sipping some soft drinks on a Sunday afternoon, and then suddenly there was a noise. It was the noise of a saucepan cover coming back down on the saucepan.

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I swear that that is what it was. I turned to my brother and asked, "Did you hear that?" He said, "Well, I was just about to ask you the same thing." Sir, I would have almost said that somebody lifted up the cover of the saucepan and then put it back down when there was nothing in the saucepan eatable or so. I do not know what they were looking for. Sir, the Member for Christ Church South can relate his own experiences. But I know, Sir, that I did not stay there too long after that. I found some reason to depart from there.

Mr. Chairman, let me leave. I make it clear that I do not know how long I will stay up there either. I want to make it clear because it has not been too kind to Prime Ministers. They lose elections from up there. I can only say that I will monitor the situation carefully.

Now as far as the Defence Force is concerned, one question was raised in relation to something called "Trade Winds" or something like that. This Democratic Labour Party has always felt that there was a need for protective and defence services in this country. We set up the Coast Guard. We made provision for that.
6.50 p.m.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We all have these kinds of misadventures but there has never been any disagreement over the principle of having protective or defence services in Barbados. It has always been a question of the extent of those services and how they should be provided for and how they should be structured. There was a divide on this particular matter. I have always felt that there was and is a need for a defence force, the amount of money provided, the resources that should be available including the manpower available with equipment and the scope and so on. All of those are matters over which there may be differences of view. Any question I have ever asked in relation to those matters such questions would have been asked out of a genuine desire to get information because we were never really given much information on the Defence Force when we were in Opposition. When the Member for St. George South in his contribution referred to the position of Dominica in relation to Martinique or Guadeloupe, I don't remember which country he said. I genuinely can't give you any information on that because I have never heard that there was a position and I haven't read that file. If the matters are on file, I don't know. No one has drawn it to my attention. I didn't have that information even about the scope of the force at that time. Others may have it but let us not believe that there was any abundance of information given either at estimates time or at any other time in relation to the Defence Force. We just didn't have it and there may be good and sufficient reason from time to time why fullest information may not be given in matters

relating to defence and security. But what is sure, is that there has been increased provision for the Defence Force and that since 1986 these activities that have been raised 1986,1987,1988 and 1989 there have been exercises carried out in each of those years. If Members wish the....

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: They have been carried out in each year since 1986. So, there has been continuity in that particular regard.

A question has been asked apparently about a programme within the Defence Force. There is a sports programme and I have said publicly that it is the goal of this Government to seek to improve the performance of our sports persons and that one contribution in addition to the general sports programme which falls under the able leadership of the Minister of Tourism and Sports that we would seek to find a number of promising sportsmen and sportswomen who may be unemployed who have potential to develop into national representatives in their particular field of discipline and that we would bring them within the framework of the Defence Force but their particular discipline would be sports, that they would have some kind of light training in areas like map reading and I suppose, light arms, I am not sure, but they would not be going through the same military training as the regular soldier would go through. They would be going through the discipline and the regime that is necessary for their own discipline. So, when the others are out marching, if you are a table tennis player you would have to be out there going through your paces on the table tennis court. It is nothing more and nothing less than that. There is no youth arm of any youth brigade or pioneer group or anything like that in there. It is a sports programme. Sir, I believe there are about 30 and 40 young people now I believe in that programme, in soccer, I believe table tennis, maybe boxing, I am not sure, Sir. I have the information here.

The areas are as follows, Sir: Soccer, track and field, boxing and table tennis. The programme commenced in November 1990. Various sports organisations were asked to nominate promising athletes. Phase 1 of the programme was of 6 weeks duration and it included drill, first aid, physical training, map reading and interpersonal relationships. Phase 2 is the coaching programme which is now in progress so the coaching in the particular disciplines have commenced. Additionally, there is remedial work taking place in English and Mathematics. In other words we are trying to develop the sports person in an all round capacity that they are good in their disciplines but they must also be good in other areas because if they make the national team they have to be ambassadors for Barbados. Some of them even attend classes at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and they receive lectures in sports medicine, motivation etc. The plan is to increase the numbers to 50. There are 42 at present.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Youth Brigade? No, no. It is the sports programme of the Barbados Defence Force and it is their contribution towards national development in this particular area. What is the thing about my brother being in charge of this? It seems to be repeated as though there is something more behind that....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Can we have some order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: If you want to know that you can ask me too. If you ask me on the Floor of the House two and three times I assume that there must be some other reason behind it. Yes. It is headed by a qualified person who has helped to train. He has a Master's....

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: – They know more about it than I do – in his particular discipline, trained the Cayman Islands' team over a period of time, graduate of Erdiston and the universities which he attended. So, what is all this thing about?

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: He has not been a politician. How do you mean get a job like McClean?

Mr. SPEAKER: Can we have some order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The point is, however he is, he is there. The Honourable Member for St. George South was hand-picked too. It would not have been by him. 7.00 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member get back to the matter under discussion.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sorry. Mr. Chairman I am not referring to you. I am not sure what else was asked about the Defence Force. There was a question about the cost of the Regional Security System. Barbados pays 40% of the cost of the Regional Security System. Last year the System expended some $772 000 and the share of Barbados in that was $309 000. For this coming financial year it is estimated and the amount being budgeted for is some $350 000 for the Regional Security System.

I myself at the Heads of Governments Meeting in Jamaica last year proposed that there should be an expansion of the System taking into account developments within the region. Other countries have shown interest in the Scheme. Barbados is the Chairman of a CARICOM Committee dealing with this particular matter. The

Attorney-General recently chaired a meeting in Trinidad and Tobago in which these matters were discussed. We are preparing for a follow-up meeting in May. Then that should lead on to the next Heads of Governments Meeting scheduled for St. Kitts, I believe, towards the end of June and the beginning of July. We are proceeding apace with that.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We are talking, Mr. Chairman, about the expansion of the system within the context of existing CARICOM countries. We have not got into any serious discussion about expansion into non-CARICOM countries. I believe that there should be co-operation with countries outside of CARICOM and, maybe, those arrangements will be put in place. Right now Barbados is thinking of expansion within the CARICOM countries.

I could add, additionally, Sir, that the Chief of Staff of the Barbados Defence Force was out on training leave for most of last year. He did during that leave a study of regional security systems. His work was so commendable that those at the College are seeking to get the paper published. I just put that on the record to indicate that both from that and from other sources we have been studying this whole question of the Regional Security System. We will proceed as resources become available and as the political will within the region becomes available to take the decisions that need to be taken.
7.05 p.m.

I believe, Sir, that I have dealt with most of the questions...There was a question – I do not remember which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas asked – about $1 million under the Judiciary for structures. That is for the continuing planning for the judicial centre. The planning will continue apace on that.

A number of questions were raised about CBC. I believe the Member for Christ Church West asked about the financial state of CBC. Two Honourable Members asked that, Mr. Chairman. Information available to me indicates that CBC reduced its losses from $5 million in 1989 to $3 million in 1990, that losses will be further reduced to approximately $1.5 million this year and the losses have been substantially the result of debt servicing and depreciation costs. The outstanding debt now stands at $1.6 million down from $2.6 million in 1990. The bank commitments have been met. If there are funds under the Ministry of Finance provided – let me be accurate according to the information supplied to me – $2 million have been provided as loan funds for CBC under the Ministry of Finance to assist the Corporation in meeting its debt obligations to the Bank of Nova Scotia with respect to the $8.5 million non-revolving loan that was entered into some time before 1986, I believe. There was a loan for the development or re-development whatever it was for the new building and the development of CBC. That was with the Bank of Nova Scotia. To date from that amount $1.9 million have been advanced to the Corporation during the current financial year to assist in that particular regard.

What CBC is reporting is that if you take away depreciation and if you take away the debt servicing, that they are tending to break even or thereabouts. I would not put it any stronger than that.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sure it is not a Sandifordism.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There is a vote under the Prime Minister's Office from which some advances are made to CBC but that is to help with their operating cost, the capital development of the station and also to help support local programming for which sponsorship does not come very easily or readily. I believe we have to maintain some kind of local signature because it is a station that has to respond to local cultural needs as well. The corporation is projecting that by the end of 1992 that it will come out of the red.

Sir, I am trying to find....There was a question asked about the Opposition appearing on news programmes. Really the station has never provided for any extensive coverage or for Opposition politicians outside of the election period. So there is no point of talking about any policy now being pursued which may give the impression that it was the policy before to bring Opposition politicians and Government politicians together on discussion programmes and so on. That has never been the policy at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. But I will look at all of these matters. You can be assured that this Government will seek to put in place the kind of balanced programming that the management and staff of CBC competent as they are will be able to implement.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am just trying to deal with the issues as I recall them and if there is any other issue that Members would wish to raise, I am willing to respond to them because we do not have anything to hide.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Smith Report? The Smith Report is on my desk.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Do you want to know what is in it?

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have ruled that asides are not part of the debate and if Honourable Members need to raise a point which must be responded to then it should be done in the proper manner.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the Prime Minister asked if I know the contents of the Smith Report. I was aware that it was on his desk. If I said what was in it he would say that I might have removed it from his desk. Therefore I am asking him to tell us what is in it, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I know that the Member for Christ Church West is not really seeking any information about the contents of the Smith Report that he does not know. I know that he knows what is in it. In due course I will indicate what steps are being taken on that particular Report. Meanwhile we are concerned about developing that station into one of the best stations of its kind in the Caribbean.

I believe I have answered very fully, Sir, the questions that have been raised and where I have not so answered it has been with the approval or tacit acquiescence or otherwise of the Members sitting but I wish to make it absolutely clear we have nothing to hide as far as the operation of the Ministries for which I am responsible are concerned.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The question that Head 13 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 – CABINET OFFICE – $4 270 384

Head 15 – Cabinet Office – was called.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 15 for the sum of $4 270 384 stand part.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, on a general policy decision in relation to the concept of Cabinet Government since it is under this Head that the Cabinet Government gets its supplies from.

Sir, I have been in this House and there are some conventions that have come up that I think in the interest of democracy have to be clarified very carefully. It is my understanding that if one becomes a Member of the Cabinet and a decision is taken in the Cabinet whether unanimously or not that one is bound by that principle of collective responsibility. If you disagree with the decision on a matter of principle as a Minister of the Government, you must resign. But what we cannot have continuing in Barbados is the view that once a decision is taken by the Cabinet of Barbados and that decision is implemented through resolutions or by legislation in this House that subsequently we find the position of other Ministers attributing responsibility only to one person.

I have been appalled in the House particularly in the last session of the House to see that principle being paid scant regard. I believe it is a bad constitutional practice to have crept into Barbados where you will hear a former Minister of the Crown in a Cabinet with other members being castigated and responsibility for whatever had gone wrong being abnegated by his other colleagues. The former Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has been held up in here as being only responsible for implementing some of the proposals in the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto. That is a denial by the other side. If we are going to really be governed under the concept of Cabinet Government then the Government must make quite clear whether or not that principle still applies and whether we accept the concept of collective responsibility.

I do not want to hear at all that what was done during that period when the former Member was Minister of Finance is not the responsibility of his colleagues who were in the Cabinet with him and who would have sat and considered the matter and passed it. I do not believe that it leads to good government. If you want to know one of the reasons why people were cynical about politicians that is one of the reasons. Certainly during my campaigning people have referred, and asked me about it, including students of Cabinet Government. The Right Honourable Prime Minister, this is one of his fields and he knows the principle I am enunciating is a correct one and I believe that we must get back in Barbados, no matter what are the political divides and what we are doing, if we are to work the Westminster System of Government and have it respected by the country we must get back to those principles.
7.20 p.m.

This other aspect of the matter, Sir, I am again going to explore, because I don't believe that the convention has been clarified here in Barbados and it is a convention that I think we ought to clarify.

When I was in the Cabinet, let me say, that I have seen, even myself, not follow the conventions and in this House I haven't seen it followed. It is my understanding

that notes on files that are current, made by an outgoing Government, are not referred to in debates in Parliament. There are reasons for that, because it might well be protecting civil servants, it may well be protecting Ministers. We have departed from it, when I say we, I am not meaning the other side. We have not established a proper convention, and we must ask ourselves again whether the country has been right in breaking that rule. We are very free to get up in the House, at any time, and either say, let me see the file, I doubt you, or for reading the file in order to go and to attack a particular Honourable Member or a particular provision.

There are good reasons why in the constitutional practice of countries such as Canada, countries such as the United States, countries such as Australia, New Zealand, even in India, that rule has been honoured and there is a tradition that for a period of time you do not refer to those matters in the way that I have seen us in this House not follow traditions.

I am concerned about them. I am concerned about them, not only as a student of Constitutional Government and Cabinet Government, I am concerned about them as well as a lawyer skilled in the knowledge of constitutional history and I am more concerned about them in my capacity as someone who has to assist in setting the type of conventions. They are not written into our Constitution, but they are important if the Constitution is to work. When I see people writing in the paper about partisan shift in politics, and believing that it is just a matter of one's personal approach to others, it is in these rules that on some areas one is at pains to assure that there is a national consensus and a national way of dealing with matters. And, it leads us then to rise above the particular personality to deal with issues on a broader plane. I think I would be failing myself, my party and my perception of how I would wish Barbados to go, if I did not use particularly this opportunity when we are not in the actual election period, away from an election period, to discuss these matters. I believe that we can get a little bit more rational discussion on areas such as these at this time.

I believe to the extent that we do not follow conventions such as these, we are not giving strong support to multi-party democracy and maintaining a certain standard that I would expect us to maintain as a country of over three hundred and fifty odd years of Parliamentary Government.

Sir, under the very head of Cabinet Government, I see that the explanatory note to Sub-Programme 01. It says that this Head meets claims for compensation against Government for personal injury or damage to property. I believe that is now a wrong note. From my knowledge of the situation, that Head formerly came out of the Contingency Vote, there used to be a general contingency block vote, of between $100 000, it has gone up to as high as half a million from my memory from time to time. That block vote is now removed and it is placed instead under the Ministry of Finance and I would suggest that the right position be taken.

Let me say, Sir, I feel that there is a necessity for the Ministry of the Attorney General to have its own vote to deal with answering the problems that occur when a person secures a judgment against the Crown, either for personal injuries, for damage to property, for breach of contract, for costs or for whatever cause it is. I have said that before, I am not saying anything new. I have said it even when was I in the Cabinet, and it is difficult to get into the Ministry of Finance's head, that responsibility should really lay where it rightfully belongs.

The Minister of Government who has responsibility for the conduct of the Government's legal position on issues relating to litigation, continues to be the Attorney General, and it seems but proper that this Vote should be under his Head. It is not too difficult for him. Page 9 under Sub-programme statement, the last sentence of the three "This sub-program makes provision for the payment of emoluments ", and then the second sentence, " It also meets claims for compensation against Government for personal injury or damage to property."

I make the point, Sir, that we must now in making these changes give to the Ministers their true responsibilities. There is no reason why this must be under Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office, it is true, coordinates all aspects of Government services, but it does not have day to day responsibility for dealing with litigants who must of necessity under the Crown Proceedings Act, sue the Attorney General. In fact, Sir, I was never sued in a court of law until I became Attorney General of Barbados. I am sure the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, like me, has got more Writs served on him in his short time as a Minister of Government than he would have had in his own life time. They sue you in your personal capacity as Attorney-General.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Well, Sir, I have never said that, Sir. The Honourable Member said, we said in an election campaign, they sue Maurice King. Whenever he has been sued by me, Sir, he has never been sued in his capacity as Maurice King. He may have been sued by a former Minister of the Crown in his capacity as Maurice King, but that is another matter. As far as I am concerned, when you are sued as Attorney-General, you are sued pursuant – because you are a nominal defendant really – under the Crown Proceedings Act and you have been so designated. And it seems to me, therefore, and I am strongly suggesting to the Committee, Sir, and through the Committee to the responsible Government Department that the correct place to give a vote for it, should not be any

contingency, it should be a vote under the right Head. It would facilitate the faster disbursement of sums against the Government, because, let me tell you what is the financial implication, Sir. I am not making light of this matter although it seems so. The financial implication is this, you will always find that costs continue to run against the Government, and not only costs, interest, and sometimes Government ends up spending more than it needs to spend if the people had who had direct responsibility for litigation were dealing with the matter. Eventually, it gets back to the Attorney General's Office, but, sometimes he has to write to various departments of Government about these matters and since the Attorney General is the coordinating body I will strongly suggest that is where it should be.
7.30 p.m.

Sir, I intend to go on to another Head and you tell me that I have two minutes, Sir, in which I cannot finish in that period of time. If any other Honourable Member wants to speak, Sir, I will have to have a nominal sit down and get back up because I have a lot more to say on some other Heads.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I want to raise the question of the operation of the National and Social Security Scheme, Sir, and I want to know what is the position with respect to those schemes particularly in relation to the important work that was done by a body which was appointed after the fullest consultations between the Ministry of Finance and the trade unions with respect to the integration of the two Social Security Schemes in the form of the Severance Payments Act and Unemployment Insurance. I believe that it was agreed at the time that there will be a representative or nominee of the International Labour Organization, a body that we all have confidence in and who has always lent us technical assistance in the area of our Social Security Scheme. Subsequently, an appointment was made who was a nominee of that body and a report has been filed for a long period of time. We would like to know what is the policy of the Government in relation to that. It is a very important point, Sir, particularly in the light of some of the statements that emanate from no less a person than the one who is the chairman of that scheme, Sir.

Now I am not going to engage on the Floor of this House, Sir, any debate on the merits or demerits of some of the statements that have been made. Some of them I would say, Sir, are statements that I am surprised that they emanate from such a source. Because anything that is said or done to cast doubt upon the integrity of a scheme which is really a scheme that concerns the future of each and every person in Barbados who is a contributor is a very irresponsible position to take. That scheme never lost $600 million. It is an impossibility for the scheme to have lost $600 million. The question of the utilization of the funds of that scheme is constantly being monitored. I just want to say this, Sir, just to show how that scheme is operated in its true context.

I gravely doubt that the person who holds the office of General-Secretary of the Trade Union, who has been a nominee of the trade union on that body from its inception, would stand by and allow that scheme to be administered in a manner which is prejudicial to the interest of the workers who are contributors to that scheme. So that when these statements are made by a person like the Chairman, it is not only a reflection on him but it is a very serious reflection on every member of that body and, in particular, on the representatives of the workers who have been there from the beginning. If there has been dishonesty in the scheme, they would have to be part and parcel of it. If there was incompetence in it, they would have to be part and parcel of it. So that those statements are statements that cannot bear critical examination but they do have an effect. Because you see, Sir, people hold these offices and they have a lot of paper qualifications. As Honourable Members know, sometimes you have to look behind the paper qualifications and the character of the people and particularly at the mental stability of the people. That is a very important point.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Now Sir, I will withdraw any remarks that you rule that I have to withdraw because I have to accept your ruling. But the position is this, Sir. I am saying that statements that were made by the Chairman of the National Insurance Board have very gravely reflected upon the integrity of how the scheme was administered. I am saying that I am of the opinion that those statements are very revealing about the stability of the person who made the statements. Because I find it exceedingly difficult to believe that a person of the character of the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union would sit on the Board of the National Insurance as he sat from the very beginning to represent the interest of the workers...

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not want to curse the General Secretary. I know the Honourable Member has a problem with his General Secretary. He will soon leave. You will soon reach your rightful place if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy allows you or the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Now Sir, to say that $600 million is missing from the contributors' money is a very grave thing. I believe that a person who made such a statement in

the light of the circumstances is fit for a mental examination. I say that. That is my opinion. I say that he is fit for a mental examination. Six hundred million dollars is missing. That is what he said was uncounted for. That is a very serious thing. Sir, I do not want to be side-tracked because that is obviously patent nonsense. That is obviously foolishness, Sir. But what is more important, Sir...

Aside.

7.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The asides are too loud.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: More importantly, Sir, I really am seriously concerned about what is the Government's position in relation to the integration of the social security scheme they abolished. This should not be a political football, all of us want to get the maximum social security for everybody in Barbados. I contribute regularly to the scheme, I am looking forward to the day when I receive my social security pension. I have been a contributor for a long time, from the very beginning.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: The receipt of that does not stop me from receiving others. It is a contributory scheme, Sir, and we would like to see maximum social security protection for Barbados, because it is an integral part of economic decision making that when decisions are taken one must know that the cushion of a social security scheme is in existence. I stood by here and witnessed some of the most horrendous decisions taken, particularly in statutory corporations, and I know that the social security scheme in Barbados provided a measure of protection for a number of people.

After the onslaught of 1986 and the atrocities committed – to borrow a word from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central – by employers against employees, had it not been for the cushion by the unemployment insurance fund, particularly that part of it that was extended, which I had the honour to do, and I am very proud of it, Sir, to provide that six months' cover, I know that many tables would not have had food.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I would expect the Honourable Member to be wrong again. The Honourable Member should not intervene in this, because he presides over CARICARGO and the people have not yet even got a cent of severance pay.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir. CARICARGO is a private company set up by them. He is misleading the House, I do not preside over CARICARGO. I never did.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: You are disowning that. What about Aero Services employees? They never got theirs either.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back to the subject under discussion.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I only want the Honourable Member to understand that people in glass houses should not throw stones. The point is that the social security scheme is important and I just wish to know the Government's policy on it.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Member who just sat down, is correct in saying that there was some discussion during the time that he had the honour to be Prime Minister of this country regarding the matter of the social security scheme. At the time of the extension of that scheme the Member for St. Michael South East was the Minister of Labour.

We entered into very serious discussions regarding the programme which they had envisaged at that time. As I recall, they anticipated that by extending the period for unemployment to six months, and by extending the period for layoff from four weeks to 13 before a claim for severance could be made, they might have been able to do several things in terms of the projections for employment in the country.

The Barbados Workers' Union at the time had certain very strong reservations and our position as it always was, is now, and will be, was to seek to have discussions with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour. I think we had very meaningful discussions and they understood the position which we adopted and which I will explain in a moment, although there were some Members – not those persons I referred to, but others – who abused us very roundly for the positions which we adopted. We advised that although the intention was honourable, it was our view that the business of extending the unemployment period from four weeks to 13 before a claim for severance could be made, would have particular hardships for the working people of this country, and that the people would be considerably worse off as a direct result, because there would be several things that would happen in so far as they were concerned.

The Prime Minister of the day did not think that would take place, but he promised that he would examine it. The position of the Minister of Labour also was to endeavour to examine what the implications were, in so far as we were saying, to see whether in fact what we were putting forward as our expectations would be true. I think that when subsequent to that we had some discussions – as a matter of fact, when the Minister of Labour addressed the Annual Conference of the Barbados Workers' Union, he spoke very

forcibly in the matter indicating his position as Minister in regard to what he would wish to see safeguarded as the interest of the workers.

I am saying all of this to make the point that both sides of the House should be very conscious of the concern that we have had over these several years now with what the implications for the workers of Barbados would be from an extension of the layoff period from four weeks to 13, and I think that by now the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party as Governments would have recognised that the projections which the Government of 1984 had, and the expectations of that time, have not been realised. Far from that, what has been happening is that the period has been used like a football. There have been several occasions when people have been laid off for very, very long periods, Mr. Chairman, for as many as 12 weeks, then they have been re-engaged for short periods only to find themselves being thereafter laid off again for a very protracted period.

There are some places in Barbados which are particularly grave in the way that they have exercised this legal entitlement, or this legal right, they have, although in my estimation it happens to be morally very improper. There is one company at the harbour – I have not sought your permission and therefore it is not proper for me to call the name – if I could I would say it is Barbados Children's Wear, Sir, but I am not permitted to call the name of the company – but that is a company that has very large numbers of people employed in Barbados, and nobody would deny that the garment industry is undergoing difficulties at this time, but that company has been using the layoff period like a sword, with the result that the workers who are working for that company are in the worst kind of enslavement that one can seriously think about. They have been working at that company for far too long to leave, because they have in many instances as many 18, 19 or 20 years of service and nobody can put twenty years of service into a place and walk off and leave those number of years, because a working class person has only his or her blood and sweat and labour. So, that is your investment in the workplace and you cannot leave your investment without trying to regain some measure of it either by form of pension, where one exists, or by severance payment if the place is going to close. It is in my view, Sir, that that company really wants to close its doors but they have several people with many years of service and instead of closing up and paying the people severance it is using the law or as one might say, abusing the law.
7.50 p.m.

I am suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that unless the Democratic Labour Party Government notwithstanding whatever the Member for Christ Church South has said about the need to move towards the ILO expert opinion given by Pelikanos, whatever is looked at regarding that Pelikanos report, we need to move even faster than that to come to grips with this lay-off problem. When we move from that particular company, Sir, I would wish to make you aware that there are companies in Barbados, where the employers are aware of the fact that they can lay off people for so long have according to reports advised workers that they have been given advice and one must conclude that that is legal advice and that within the confines of that advice they are not going to fire them but they are going to lay them off for the full period of 12 weeks, bring them back on and lay them off all over again. So what you find, Mr. Chairman, is that between the layoff of 12 weeks a re-engagement sometimes for only three days a week and then a further lay off that there are workers in Barbados who are worst off than if they were made redundant, were allowed to get their severance and to take their places on the open market. I think that we have a responsibility to work very swiftly in the direction of looking again at that bit of legislation. I have spoken of this before, Sir, and I am urging the Government to recognise that there cannot be any period for delay in this matter because people are being very severely hurt as a direct consequence of having this bit of legislation remaining on the statute books.

There cannot be any reason why we cannot reduce the lay off period because the employer still has the possibility when once he or she has laid off the worker for a period of say, four weeks, and when the worker makes a claim the employer has a right to say to that individual "although you have made a claim for severance I am not going to pay you severance because I am taking you back for work at so and so time." So, he or she still has the opportunity to lay off for more than four weeks but when the period is thirteen weeks, the same exercise is done and when that person is laid off for that length of time a number of things go wrong in that exercise. The possibility for the person being able to maintain a claim for unemployment after the first claim becomes severely hampered, the possibility of a person on resumption of work being able to make a claim for sick leave becomes very severely disrupted and the possibility for that person to enjoy other social security benefits such as maternity leave when the time comes or if the time comes if the person becomes pregnant, that becomes very severely hampered and all of that is because there is in this situation brought about I am sure by good intentions but nonetheless causing a very severe difficulty to people who have nothing else but the investment in a business of their years of service.

I am satisfied, Sir, that the social security scheme has been set up for all of the best purposes. I am satisfied that that scheme has maintained its integrity. After all the Member for Christ Church South has been very careful to mention the continuing presence on that Board of the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union and he is satisfied with the utmost integrity of that individual. We thank him that they have managed to recognise that and always to speak about it. Because we are very careful to respect the scheme, we are very anxious that the scheme's

original intentions which are to safeguard the interest of the working man and working woman be not brought to disrepute in the way that the scheme actually finds itself being taxed. I am merely making this point in this intervention in the hope that the Government might become aware as I am sure that many Members are aware of the significant hardships that are being experienced and that within the very shortest possible time the requisite amendment to the present legislation will be brought before this Honourable Chamber.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P.M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the sitting be suspended until Wednesday, 20th March, 1990 at 10.00 a.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. Speaker: This sitting is resumed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, with your leave, Sir, I feel it incumbent on me, as Leader of the House, to raise a matter which I think, in my opinion, affects the privileges of this very august Chamber. I am referring to what is referred to in the Advocate of today's date Wednesday, March 20, 1991 referred as a "PAGE ONE COMMENT", the headline being "The Speaker dictates". It is a reference, Mr. Speaker, to a statement made by yourself yesterday about the publishing of sotto voce remarks or remarks made by members who are not yet on their feet. It states, Sir, which I think are the very offending parts, I think I should make reference of the very offending parts:

> "A little power is a dangerous thing and would appear applicable to the Speaker."

It goes on further, Sir, in another paragraph to state:

> "It would appear that the Speaker is trying to arrogate to himself a power which resided only in the House. It is an attempt which cannot succeed. The Press of Barbados would not be prepared to tolerate any attempt to restrict the freedom of the Press to publish proceedings in the House."

Mr. Speaker it is my submission that this offends the privileges of this Chamber.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: As the Member for St. Peter says, dangerously so too, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Some others say it is libel. It is my opinion that it offends not only you, Mr. Speaker, it offends the entire House. It is offensive to me as a Member of this Chamber. It is offensive I would submit to the entire House. I am putting it to you, Mr. Speaker, as my submission and I am making this a document of this House that this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges, if that is what you desire, Sir. Or maybe it should be dealt with in some particular manner in which the Advocate understands what are their powers allowed in here by us, through you, Sir, in this Chamber.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I read the article this morning at a quarter to five and I was appalled at the unjustified attack which was made on Your Honour and, impliedly, on Members of this House. Nobody has sought at all to restrict the freedom of the press in this House in order to report accurately the Debates of Parliament and those asides that may have been properly made. I certainly interpreted your ruling that asides that were totally irrelevant to the proceedings of the House should not be reported and that Your Honour will obviously deal with those asides as you are entitled to do under the Privileges and Immunities Act and under the ancient powers.

I believe, Sir, that it is not only an unwarranted attack. I believe that on the face of it the words are defamatory of Your Honour as they stand. I am appalled that a paper of this standing should write without further consultation with any Member of the House or Committee of the House in this way. I believe that it is rudeness on the part of the Editor and the Publisher of the Advocate to believe that they can, in this manner, launch an unwarranted attack on the Speaker of the House and on Members of Parliament in this way.

I believe that the matter should be dealt with as seriously as the powers of this House allow. From the point of view of the Opposition, we will support the motion of the Honourable Leader of the House and I second it, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will ask that as the guardian of this House's privilege that Your Honour should take the appropriate steps to defend the privileges of the Houses of Parliament, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think I need to add more than to accept the submission that it be sent to the Committee. I

myself will be looking at the matter in greater detail, I would only like to say at this point that the Speaker is the spokesman of the House. It is as simple as that.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

HEAD 15 – CABINET OFFICE – (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply has resumed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, it seems as though there is a little reluctance on the part of some Members but I wanted to comment very briefly on Head 15 as it relates to the Cabinet Office.

Yesterday the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Leader of the Opposition raised some questions concerning the preservation of, or the creation of, conventions as they related to the Westminster Model of Parliament. He took a position which I think merits some discussion. I do not myself believe, and I hope it will not be regarded if one discusses these issues, as holding partisan positions, because I do not believe that in the area of the convention and the Constitution of the country that one holds a partisan position so much as one holds an intellectual position on the issue.
10.10 a.m.

So, if we are to have the kind of Government and the kind of democracy in the country which we all speak about and which we hanker for, then it is necessary for views of a certain kind to be ventilated and it is indeed desirable that contrary views should come into the market place so that at the end of the day, what emerges will be something that is beneficial to the body politic.

The first thing I want to say is that constantly in Barbados people are making references to the Westminster Model of Government and suggesting that there is this model that has been put down in concrete or is like the slabs that were handed to Moses, that they are there unchangeable. I am not now saying that is the position of the Leader of the Opposition, because I know from previous utterances that is not how he feels. But, I think it is important that when we talk of the Westminster Model, that it be recognized that the Westminster Model itself is constantly changing over time and has changed so far as Britain is concerned. Now, not many people seem aware that the amount of political power which the Prime Minister and Ministers and Government in the United Kingdom have taken over time, have in fact placed the Westminster Head of Government in a stronger position, *vis-a-vis* the system, than, say, the President of United States as he relates, or as his office relates to his Government.

I recall, not so long ago, creating quite a stir among some fairly bright people in Barbados when I indicated that there were certain activities in the United States which had occurred in the last ten or fifteen years which could not have occurred in the United Kingdom over similar acts. For example, the dismissal of Richard Nixon over the break in at Watergate, I would submit, is not something that would have happened, had the same set of circumstances obtained in the British system. Also, and I need not spend time going over details and giving more examples, other things where the President of the United States and/or high officials have had to account to public opinion and searching examination by their colleagues, would not necessarily have occurred in the same way in the United Kingdom for the incidents that had generated them in the United States.

On the other hand, the decision of Mrs. Thatcher to resign would not have flowed from any conventions in the United States in similar circumstances, but would only have come at the end of a bitter and severe and acrimonious debate and vote, and therefore what one is saying is that the two systems are different although they may have the same objective.

The point I am making about the Westminster model however, is that over time, if one examines it in terms of what it was in 1911, if one examines it subsequently in the 1950's, and if one sees where it has emerged to in the 1990's one would see that there have been substantive changes in the approach to Government over that period of time.

For example, it is not well known in Barbados that a Prime Minister in Britain has a substantial amount of patronage which is dispensed in that country by way of some two thousand or more persons who have to exchange jobs with the change of Government. That is not recognized as part of the United Kingdom system. It is usually attributed to the American system, but in fact, it happens in Britain where there are some two thousand, I think the books say two thousand, five hundred jobs at fairly senior level which are changed almost automatically as a new administration comes in.

The Honourable Member said that notes on files are not used in the Parliament. I think that is a tradition which ought to be maintained. The problem arises when it has been breached in the past. Other persons subsequently feel that they have thereby earned the right to continue the breach as it has occurred or to respond, so that unless there is going to be a kind of pact by which it is decided that from a particular day thereafter there will be no discussion of the files – exchange of information left behind by an outgoing Government – then this matter is not likely to be settled as comfortably as the Honourable Member had hoped.

I recall, for example, a certain amount of consternation when as a Minister leaving the Government

back in 1976 I found myself at the bottom end of an enquiry which sought and left the population at large with a feeling that they had been gross infelicities and that a whole number of decisions which had been taken were taken in less than good faith, and without hauling back up old wounds, it was for me a traumatic experience, because to have been accused, inherently as part of the cabinet system, in what was called the Duffus Commission was a very, as I said, traumatic experience. But, in the final analysis, it turned out to be useful because the Duffus Commission did manage, in its diligence, to clear the names of all those who had operated at the Ministerial level of any wrong doing or any mal-administration.

Even so, it was interesting to hear the Leader of the Opposition saying, as he did yesterday, taking his position on notes on files when only about an hour before the Honourable Member for the City had raised the question in a different context pointing out that Cabinet Ministers seem to hold the files to their chests like if they were precious gold and silver, and her words in essence were that there is nothing sacrosanct about files, which perhaps demonstrates the difference between the points of view of two Honourable Members in good faith from the same political party and having the same approach to administration.

I believe that in the final analysis what is good administration, is what is decent, and the other point I want to take in regard to that is this question of collective responsibility. Collective responsibility cannot be selective responsibility. It cannot be that persons will use the concept of collective responsibility to pillory some one when it is convenient and then use the same concept to defend, when it is convenient.

I think that in the case of the Minister of Finance of the Democratic Labour Party, who was the subject of yesterday's discussion, impliedly, the Minister of Finance during the first year of the administration of this present Government, I think it has to be remembered that the Minister of Finance was the one who broke from the Cabinet and who in breaking from the Cabinet took certain positions which required defence.

If any Honourable Member in this Cabinet now chooses upon determining that he and the Cabinet are on different wave lengths, and therefore, since we have no 'she' in the Cabinet at the moment, he must go, he is so free to do. All he has to do is to resign. Inherent in that resignation is an understanding that what occurred while he was a Cabinet Minister occurred when he was a Cabinet Minister and that any differences he had can be explained, but if that Cabinet Minister feels bound to point out that during Cabinet Meetings the Honourable Member for St. Michael West used to sleep or the Honourable Member for St. Michael West used to X or Y, if that is going to bring the Honourable Member for St. Michael West into ridicule in the face of the public of Barbados then the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has to choose between self-preservation and preservation of the Convention of which the Honourable Member speaks.
10.20 a.m.

It is a question where self defence has been elevated to the highest level of understanding of the social compact. Self defence is accepted so that a man may kill another in self defence with impunity. That is as high as it goes. Therefore, if one is going to discuss that principle in the context of the Cabinet Minister who was Minister of Finance who laid claim for having made all of the decisions by himself, it has to be recalled that that former Minister in putting his position laid claim to having made all of the decisions by himself.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Any approbation or reprobation that falls from that position necessarily must fall from that position. If you are the only person who prepared the Budget, you are the only person who wrote the Manifesto, you are the only person who won the Government, you are the only person who did everything, well you would have to be the only person to take the blame. Well, that is logic. This is not convention. This is straightforward logic.

I heard the Honourable Member over there earlier saying that the late great Prime Minister said something on the floor of the House and that we, who were then in his Cabinet, sat meekly when we were discussing the salaries, and said nothing. We did not disagree and, therefore, we agreed. Well, all we were doing at that time is performing at the highest possible level in the context of what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is asking for. That is all we were doing. We did not disagree and this is something which has to be understood. Cabinet Government is not sheep-like Government. Cabinet Government is the pitting of intellectual capacities and finally agreeing to disagree where necessary. But when one disagrees within a Cabinet system, one only resigns if the disagreement is of such a nature that one cannot live with it. That is the essence of Cabinet Government. Surely, no one believes that when one joins any Cabinet that one is thereafter like a sheep going "Yes sir, no sir, three bags full, sir" or any of those things. What it is, Sir, is that one is an independent intellectual being who has agreed to join forces together for a particular policy and, as in the case of a marriage, you work at it. You agree and you disagree sometimes, but when you are presenting the case to the public you present it as one. That is all it is.

Now in the cut and thrust of politics it is necessary to score points and from time to time each of us will try to score a point and sometimes go too far. Each of us can recall some situation in which someone either on the other

side or even on your own side may have gone too far or you may have gone too far with that person in the context of an argument.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Each of us can recall such an incident. But in the final analysis the system works because all of us accept the system with its difficulties. I think in the final analysis what the Honourable Member might have been talking about is the unwillingness of certain mavericks to accept the system as it is or to try to improve upon the system where it has faults. I do not myself promise that if anyone says anything about me which is detrimental to me as a person to the extent that I would be ridiculed in the face of those whom I hold dear that I would not respond and defend myself. Therein implied in that statement is that I will defend my political party against all comers on matters of principle within the political party. Hence, by definition as an officer of the party and as a Member of the Cabinet, I have agreed that I am a defender of the faith. Once we are agreed on this side what the faith is, then each of us has a duty to defend that faith as each of the Honourable Members on that side would have the duty to defend the faith. I wanted to get that in.

Therefore, you will notice, Sir, I am grateful to Your Honour for the extra minute. You will notice that I have not interfered with anyone who writes foolishness about Constitutions in the newspaper on a weekly basis, because I believe that matter is to be dealt with somewhere else.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a very great pity that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has waited until the former Member for St. Michael South Central has left the House to put the very serious licks that he is putting into him this morning, Sir. We will recall, Sir, that he spent three years doing a dog dance with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

I did not enter this debate however, Sir, to speak about the relationship between the Member for St. Michael West and former Member of St. Michael South Central but to continue the debate which was initiated yesterday afternoon, Sir, by the Member for Christ Church South concerning the operation of the National Insurance Department.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the time has come when some very fundamental decisions have to be taken about the operation and the future of the National Insurance Department, Sir. I think that the point that my learned colleague of Christ Church South was making was that the quality of the management of that department can no longer be dissociated from the overall financial performance of the department itself.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter were asked to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I withdraw the remarks, Sir, and substitute that the utterances of which the Chairman of the National Insurance Department from time to time delivers himself, Sir, are ones which are not in my judgment intended to inspire confidence in sense of balance. We, for example, have been regaled in Barbados with his statements that he knew of plans to form the NDP six weeks before the General Election of 1986. That is a matter of public record. We have heard, Sir, in 1986 the Chairman of NIS went on record as saying that with the same tax proposals he subsequently found it necessary to criticize in 1989-90. He said they were the most imaginative and thought provoking set of Budgetary Proposals which have occupied the public's attention since 1954. In 1986, Sir, he was telling the public of Barbados that Richie Haynes' proposals were the most imaginative and thought provoking proposals ever to occupy the public's attention since 1954; but by 1989, Sir, he was telling the public of Barbados something else. We have heard from that Chairman, Sir, nonsense to the effect that if the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and other Departments of the Ministry of Finance were only to collect the arrears that one would be able to cut the level of taxes in this country on a permanent basis by 30 per cent which is known to be nonsense by that chairman, Sir.

We have from that chairman nonsense, Mr. Chairman, to the effect that if the Barbados Labour Party were to become the Government of this country that we were going to privatize the beaches of this country and introduce legislation banning picketing to put Barbados in a similar position, Sir, as that which exists in South Africa. I have complained in this House, Sir, about that Chairman of the National Assistance Board conspiring with persons in the Inland Revenue Department to be able to say that in 1989...

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have the evidence.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: It is a criminal offence. That is why I agree.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. I am not aware as to whether the Honourable Member, first of all, has handed anything to Your Honour indicating that he was going to be speaking of an individual in his public capacity. I am not aware if he has given you such notice.

10.30 a.m.

Unless he has so done, Sir, I submit that the line of discussion which the Honourable Member is taking is contrary to the Standing Order which discusses a public official in his official capacity. Secondly, Sir, the Rules say that no one who is identifiable by what is being said can be vilified and/or abused on the Floor of the House. The Honourable Member made a statement which in my opinion borders on defining someone in criminal terms. I submit those for your consideration.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds, I have some difficulty. The remarks have been withdrawn and struck from the record. I have a little difficulty, however, in hearing all that the Honourable Member has said because of the drift of his body and therefore I am myself not sure, so that I would ask for the exact part of his comment to be made clear so that the full record can be clear.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the remarks, but I want to say for the record that I find it surprising that the Chairman of the National Insurance Department could have known that I submitted my income tax returns in 1989. I find it astonishing that a person holding that public office should go in public and reveal, contrary to the provisions of the Income Tax Act, that he knew that I had submitted my income tax returns for that year, and I find it equally disturbing....

Hon. M. A. KING: On a point of order, Sir. Standing Order 28 of this House, Rule 9, specifically says that the conduct of a number of persons, including Members of either House of Parliament, may not be referred to except upon a substantive motion. Honourable Members on the other side have clearly identified the Chairman of the National Insurance Board, who is known to everyone as being a Member of the Other Place. I am submitting, Mr. Chairman, that there is a clear breach of the Rules and that if Honourable Members on the other side wish to impeach the conduct of that Honourable Member, they must do so on a substantive motion. All comments about his conduct should be struck from the record.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am not reflecting on his conduct, I am just referring to a statement the gentleman made. I am saying I am entitled to the protection of the law, that nobody in Barbados, because of the privilege of holding a public office, should be in a position to speak about my income tax returns in public, whether that be the Minister of Finance, the Chairman of Committees or any other person. Nobody is entitled to speak about my income tax returns in public, and I feel that every Barbadian is entitled to that protection. It reflects upon people holding public office when they do not allow to the Barbadian public the protection that they are afforded by the law.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is only one very thin line here on which I think the Honourable Member must stand very clear. It is that we are under the Head of Cabinet Office and I am submitting that if you are referring to the National Insurance Department and its Chairman, then you are in effect dealing with exactly what you say you are not dealing with.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have said that to come to this point, Sir, because there is a general pattern of behaviour on the part of that Chairman which culminated on 7th October, 1990 in his saying....

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is continuing in breach of the Rules of this House. If he must impeach the conduct of a Member of the Other Place, he must do so on a substantive motion. We cannot stop him if he does that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I wish that the Honourable Member would allow me to finish my statement. On 7th October, 1990 the Chairman of the National Insurance Board said at a Branch Meeting held in St. Philip South, reported in the Press and not contradicted by the Chairman of the National Insurance Department, that there was approximately $600 million of National Insurance funds not accounted for between 1981 and 1990. He is reported as having said that. That is an attempt, in my judgment, to bring the administration of the National Insurance Department between 1981 and 1986 into public disrepute, in the same way that that Chairman has brought the Central Bank, of which he is also a member, into public disrepute by questioning the integrity of its estimates.

I want to start at that point, Sir, that the Chairman of the National Insurance Board has publicly said that some $600 million of National Insurance funds were not publicly accounted for between 1981 and 1986. That is not true, Sir. What is true is that two funds administered by the National Insurance Department are not only in serious problems but have undergone even greater stress since 1986 when the present Chairman became the Chairman of the Board. I am speaking specifically in relation to the Severance Payment Fund and the Unemployment Benefit Scheme.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party Government commissioned a study by a Mr. Pelikanos and the recommendations of that study were considered by the National Insurance Board at special meetings held on 5th December, 1987, 5th January, 1988 and 9th February, 1988. I am saying all that to establish that specific proposals pertaining to the Severance Payment and Unemployment Benefit Funds have been put to the Board of that Department, that the Chairman has sent on specific proposals to Government – and during the course of this debate if necessary we will have to say what those specific proposals are – and that for three years, despite the fact that this report is saying that recommendations made by the

Pelikanos Report and the recommendations put forward by the N.I.S. Board were made against the background of the complete depletion of the reserves of the Severance Fund, absolutely nothing has been done by the Government. The point in all, is that the Minister of Finance can no longer pretend, as he has done in so many other instances, Sir, that if a problem arises that the best way to deal with it is to pretend that it doesn't exist. We have seen that attitude operate in relation to, for example, the land development duty, where in 1989 he was supposed to have brought out the land development duty order shortly and we have had to wait for two years for it shortly to become a reality. We have seen the same attitude towards different urgent matters in relation to the formation of the Advisory Committee for the Offshore Sector to generate work in that sector.
10.40 a.m.

However, this matter has stayed for too long without being seriously addressed. It can compromise, Mr. Chairman, the livelihood of a lot of people, as it has already started to do, who look to the severance payment funds and their unemployment benefit schemes when they face financial and economic hardship, and we are saying to the House in this debate that the time has come for the Government to address this particular matter and that we want to know where the Government stands in relation to the specific proposals that were put to it by the Pelikanos Committee. More, especially so, we want to know what the Government intends to do in relation to the recommendations that were put to it as far back as 1988 by the Board of the NIS in relation to guaranteeing solvency of those two funds that are so vital to maintaining the livelihood of such a large cross section of the Barbados public. If necessary, Sir, I will come back to this debate.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to join the debate on the issue of the Pelikanos Report which was mentioned yesterday by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and which was adverted to again by the Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Sometime ago, Mr. Chairman, about three years ago I had cause to discuss, first of all at a meeting of the Barbados Economic Society, the issue of the unemployment benefits scheme and the severance payment scheme as they operated at that time in Barbados. I have since engaged in discussion relating to the strengths and the weaknesses of the two schemes. The Barbados Workers' Union, through resolution of its annual delegates' conference, addressed the Government of the day in terms of looking at the two schemes and trying to bring them back into a system of regularity. As a result of that, the ILO was asked to send a consultant to examine the scheme and come up with recommendations. Mr. Pelikanos came here and he drew up his recommendations and I understand the National Insurance Board would have done a similar exercise. These recommendations, I am sure, are before the appropriate Minister. Some of the comments I made about the scheme at that time and which I will stand by now, and at any other time, have been used by the same Honourable Member for St. Peter, who is now calling on Government to take a position on the Pelikanos scheme, on the political platform to give the impression in general to the people....

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS:... and adverted to. I will say it again. You can't come on me on these matters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We have been going very well. Let us keep the asides out of it and the response to the asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS:...and mentioned too by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas yesterday in what he considered to be a part of this conflict of interest matter, but I will repeat my comments. The ones I made originally, which were distorted – I have no problem with that. That is part of the political game but I will make the point again.

When the Severance Payments Scheme was introduced in 1973, it was a very important piece of social legislation then and it still has its place now. When the Unemployment Benefit Scheme was introduced in 1981 sufficient cognisance was not taken of the fact that the Severance Payments Scheme was already in place and therefore there should have been a relationship between the Unemployment Benefits Scheme and the Severance Payments Scheme. In 1981 when Mr. Adams introduced the Unemployment Benefits Scheme in a Budget Address as a vote-catching measure, sufficient thought was not given. There was no actuarial study of the scheme. Sufficient thought was not given about the structure of the scheme. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South extended the benefits under the scheme and he defended it yesterday and said that because of that a safety net was provided for a lot of people who were unemployed, and somebody reminded him that they were unemployed because of the economic policy of the Barbados Labour Party that had places shutting, left, right and centre between 1981 and 1985.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It may be true, but I will not deny that what he did was good for the people who benefitted.

Now, we get into situations sometimes where because we are the people who introduced schemes and put them into place, we become very quixotic and very defensive about these schemes even in the face of the reality that the schemes have to be looked at again. It is a natural thing with people. When you create something, you don't like to hear any criticism about the things you created. You can become very shortsighted in the matter. What I am suggesting is not that we criticise the parenting of the

scheme. The Democratic Labour Party introduced the Severance Payments Scheme. The Barbados Labour Party introduced the Unemployment Benefits Scheme. As responsible legislators and parliamentarians, if we see that over the process of time difficulties arise in terms of the schemes and how they are structured, if we can't together look at these schemes and come up with the changes that are necessary, then something is wrong with us. If we are just trying to score cheap political goals on one another, then the scheme and the potential beneficiaries of the scheme will suffer.

All I am saying is that the time has come for us to recognise that each time you look at the outturn figures, both of the schemes are in the red. The reserves that have been built up...The Severance Payments Scheme is in the red. Look again at the latest report. The Unemployment Benefits Scheme is in the red too, and whatever reserves we have been building up over time will be frittered away, so something must be wrong in that scheme. If you look at the structure for the Severance Payments, the contributors to the Severance Payments Scheme are the employers only, but the fact is that when the scheme is burst, you have to come to the people of Barbados. You have to pull out of the Consolidated Fund to put in the Scheme which means that the workers are now contributing to the Scheme when structurally they were not supposed to do that. My advice to Barbados, that is to the parliamentarians of both sides, and to the workers out there, is that it cannot be to their benefit to have a scheme that was not originally well thought out, and because of that it is experiencing certain difficulties. There must be a time when together we can go on common ground and say, let's look at the Scheme again.

Now, that does not mean that I am saying we have to accept anything that Mr. Pelikanos or anybody else suggested. I wouldn't like anybody to give the impression that because Mr. Pelikanos came down from the ILO and said this is the way how the scheme must be modified that my Administration, the Administration of the Democratic Labour Party, has to accept that scheme. Nobody would want to put that position at all, because in the long run we will be responsible for what happens in Barbados and we will take the advice that is given to us, and we will reflect on the advice, and we will come up with a solution that is relevant to our own particular situation.

I made comments about the scheme, about the difficulty if someone is laid off and can get a severance payment and enjoy 26 weeks at 60 per cent of their average gratuitable earnings, that that person is unlikely, if they are offered a job two weeks after they are laid off, not to take the 26 weeks. Once the law allows it, most people would take it. I am saying that when that happens, you can develop a situation where when a person is working that person is also producing and adding to the national production of goods and services as different from when the person is just drawing out income and not adding to anything, that if that situation ramifies that it will lead to certain problems in our society. I will stand by that. That is not to be interpreted, Sir, that Barbadians are lazy, that Barbadians like to stay home and take away money or anything like that. Those distortions don't bother me because I know that I am not in that. I am saying that that situation has happened in other countries and that is something that has to be monitored and looked at. Furthermore, I also made the statement up front that while an Unemployment Benefits Scheme is a good scheme under certain circumstances, I would prefer jobs to be created rather than have to put safety nets to receive those persons who are tossed out of jobs.

10.50 a.m.

I am saying that what I want to see in Barbados is economic growth I know that if there is a growth of 10% in our economy that the likely outflow is that employment will rise about 2%. I believe those are the kinds of elasticities related to labour output and employment. I would prefer to see a policy adopted in our country where together we try to improve the economy and therefore pick up people into jobs rather than go the other direction of having to create safety nets for people to be falling into them. Now, it is not an easy thing to do, getting 10% growth in our economy and pushing towards that level and increasing it. It is difficult. It is not easy especially in our circumstances, but I am saying that is the aim. That is what we have to do. Unless we realise that then we would just be marking time in these countries looking for safety nets all the time.

I will continue to make the position very clear that whereas I support the Severance Payment Scheme and whereas I support the Unemployment Benefit Scheme, where you have both Schemes in place it is a different situation from when you have one or the other scheme. Therefore, you have to look at the situation again. Probably the best thing that could have happened and I believe we should get political oneness on this, quite frankly, and what we need is a committee of the two Houses to look at that Scheme so that it does not become a Pelikanos Scheme or any other scheme, but a scheme where Members of the elected House of Assembly in Barbados sit down and look at it and come to an agreement which will have to be discussed with the employers' side and with the workers' side so we can rationalise a scheme that, certainly, has difficulties at this time. That should be a matter of concern for all of us as legislators. Those who are happy and quite satisfied to see a scheme that every time you look at it is in arrears and you have to come back to the House all the time and top it up... I am sure most of us are not happy with that. We want to look at the situation again.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is saying it cannot be so. I am saying that in recent times the history of the Severance Payment

Scheme is one of deficit. It has been a recent Scheme anyhow. If you have just started out you should not be in this position. We therefore have to look at the Schemes.

Now, I want to know what is the position of the Barbados Labour Party on the Scheme, quite frankly. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is nodding his head seemingly in support. I just want him to get up and say so. That is all. He can do that any time. I want to know what is the position of the Honourable Member for St. Peter because he made a lot of political mileage out of this. Get up like a man in this House of Assembly and put your position on the Scheme without fear of what anybody might say out there so that nobody can say you want to take away Unemployment Benefits from the workers.

Let us understand. The majority of workers are working. They are not the beneficiaries. It is only a safety net. The majority of workers want to work. That is what we have to understand. The Unemployment Benefit Scheme is a net where you are not working you are protected. The majority of people out there want to be working. That is something we need to understand.

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

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That is my position. I just want to set the record straight on this. The statements that I made in public I can make in private. I can make them here any time. I am not afraid of the political distortions. I want the Honourable Member for St. Peter to get up on his feet and say what his position is in terms of the way how these Schemes are going at present.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Barbados Labour Party's position has been absolutely clear on this Scheme. Let me just for the purpose of the record indicate that before we demitted office in 1961 we had set up the commission which studied and reported on the establishment of the whole National Insurance Scheme. The whole National Insurance background, including severance, came out of those discussions. That is my memory of it.

Obviously we wish both Schemes to be viable. They are both Schemes that are beneficial to the workers of Barbados. In fact, we introduced the Unemployment Benefit Scheme in circumstances where world recessionary conditions were affecting the position of the workers. As the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said yesterday, were it not for this Scheme, certainly, several poor persons in my constituency who had been put out of work would not have been able to live. This is a fact. Therefore, nothing must be done to undermine the Scheme. The Schemes must continue as viable Schemes, both the Unemployment Scheme and the Severance Payment Scheme.

Now, Sir, the Honourable Member said that the Severance Payment Scheme was brought in after due consideration but the Unemployment Scheme was not. It is surprising that the Severance Payment Scheme has been in a losing position for a long time. So far as it has performed it is no different from the Unemployment Scheme.

I really must set the records straight about one of the other statements he made. He says that the problem with the Unemployment Scheme is that because there were a lot of bankruptcies in the period 1983/84 that it caused the Scheme to go into an insolvent position. If you look at the number of unemployment claims between 1986 and now: in 1986 – 10 409, in 1987 – 8 979, in 1988 – 9 635 in 1989 – 11 431 and last year was a record – 13 549. That is one of the reasons why I continue to say that the unemployment figures which should be published by the Statistical Department instead of the poor excuse I see coming out of that Department, should really be done and done on an objective basis in order to assist the people of Barbados to see how serious the problem is.

Now, there are really no big recessionary world economic conditions as existed during the period of 1983/84. There is no doubt that there are many more people claiming Unemployment Benefits and that the Scheme remains – I agree with the Honourable Member to that extent – in a negative position by the end of 1990 as, indeed, it remained in a negative position by the end of 1986, 1987 and 1988. The same goes for the Severance Payment Scheme.

The figures for the Scheme are set out in the Central Bank's Economic and Financial Statistics for any month. I have the January edition in my hand. The Honourable Member for St. Peter has the February edition in his hand. The figures that I am quoting are documented from evidence made available. Obviously, we would be anxious to see that both Schemes are therefore put on a sensible footing, that there are self-sustaining not to make a profit but to make them viable so that the workers who benefit from these Schemes can have faith in the Schemes and can realise that if they are severed and the employer is no longer able to pay them that they can still get their money out of the Scheme; if they are unemployed for the period of time they can get their unemployment benefit.

Whilst on the question of being severed and being able to get their money out of the Scheme, the Government ought to be aware that one of the reasons why the Pelikanos Report should have been dealt with promptly is that employers are legally, let me say legally – not accusing them of anything illegal – setting up dummy companies and sub-contracting labour from those companies.

Whenever that dummy company goes into liquidation then the Severance Payment Scheme is paying the full cost of the severance. That is part of the problem. I want to relate it. Within the existing law, employers are now able to set up dummy companies to carry the workers that are being employed, sub-contract to that company and, in the circumstances, they are able to get the full amount of the Severance Payment Fund. And really what is required is that we should put our heads together – it is the Government's primary duty; you have the mandate – and come up with a proper position to prevent these problems occurring.
11.00 a.m.

Pelikanos reported since the 21st July, 1987. The comments of the National Insurance Board were available to the Government in early 1988 – by the first half of 1988. The comments of the Barbados Workers' Union were available within that period, and the other worker organizations, as well as the comments of the various employers organizations. I think it is about time the Government makes a decision on the matter.

The Honourable Member cannot throw the onus back on the Labour Party and ask what is our position and what we are doing about it. What he should have asked is what is his Government's position? Because his Government has access to the Report. The Report has never been sent to this side. I know what is in the Report, because they must recognize you cannot be in public life unless you know what is in the Report. If the Honourable Member is in any doubt at all I can tell him all of the details about the Report, if he wants that. You have workers' unions committees and you take positions and the employers have theirs.

My view is that a Report like this should not have been kept confidential between 1987 and now and Members of the House not being given access to it. But you can get it anywhere in Bridgetown. If it comes into the hands of the Members of the House it appears as though we who should be concerned about it in public, should be doing something wrong. But every employer would have had access to a copy of this Report. Every trade unionist is in the good situation that you would have had access to it. I represent some trade unionists as well. There is nothing that should be hidden. This affects people's Social Security and Unemployment Benefit. What is the point of hiding it? Like the Actuarial Reports on the National Insurance Scheme get to this House rather late. That is of vital importance to each one of us.

I am concerned, as I get older, that the Social Security Schemes must be maintained and their integrity maintained. I have no doubt. That is why yesterday when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central said that they would be satisfied that the Head of the Workers' Union would not sit idly by and see a scheme or schemes like these undermined I agreed with them. We would not sit idly by either and see the schemes undermined and would not want sensible action taken about them. But the Government must explain why more than two years, three years, over three years have gone since Pelikanos, and nobody knows what is the Government's position in relation to a scheme that we both say, both sides of the House say, has been in difficulty and that should be put on a sound foundation and a long-term planning for them. How long is too long? The Honourable Member is entitled to raise those questions because they remain unanswered. In my constituency they are being raised.

We also want to raise some questions about the National Insurance by itself as it operates. Experience has taught us that some of the regulations are too rigid in some respects in relation to the older Barbadian. You may have a Barbadian who left here at age, let us say, 30, and has lived abroad for most of the time but maintained property here, remits funds here and then comes back and lives in Barbados. Such persons have to live a total of 20 years after their eightieth birthday or twelve years after, I think it is their fiftieth birthday, before they can qualify for any sort of pension – non-contributory pension which is now paid out of the insurance fund. I believe it has become too rigid. I do not know of any Member of Parliament who does not come up every week in his constituency against this sort of problem. I certainly come up against the problem and I frequently write and speak to the people of the National Insurance Department who are most helpful, let me say that, about the matter but there is nothing they can do about it.

There is a case for an ongoing review of rules and regulations affecting the various schemes from time to time. Not only ongoing but a timely way of dealing with the matter.

Sir, the NIS has been under the Right Honourable Prime Minister's portfolio, as far as I know, for most of the time that he has held that office. I believe that as the Head of Government he must give urgent attention, and should have given it a long time ago, to dealing with the problems of something that affects the large mass of workers in this country and particularly those who are at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder. Because unless these schemes are kept intact and well protected, in my view, we will find that we are not showing the caring attitude that we should to those people who are most in need of assistance in these circumstances.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, after listening to the contributions made by Members I must say I am very sorry that the Right Honourable Prime Minister is

not in his place to listen to the appeals and certainly some very good suggestions and recommendations which could go a long way towards improving the Severance Payments Scheme as well as the Unemployment Benefit Scheme.

I agree with some Honourable Members, those who spoke and made the point that there is room for improvement in both schemes. The time has come when it is absolutely necessary to look at or to revise both laws, the severance payments law as well as the unemployment benefit scheme. This is necessary because from time to time we pass legislation and considerable time passes before we have a study of the Act or the legislation that was passed. That is why I am saying that it is timely now that something immediate be done to correct the problems and the concerns that have been expressed in here and certainly in the public domain.
11.10 a.m.

When the Severance Payment Scheme was brought into being under the present administration, the Democratic Labour Party, immediately after it was set up it ran into financial difficulty. This point must be made abundantly clear, it ran into financial difficulty, it was broke and the then Government had to rush to Parliament for money in order to prop it up. So, I mean, it is nothing if you hear a scheme started by the Barbados Labour Party ran into difficulty, or if it seemed to be in difficulty that there is something wrong about that. What I am saying is, it is not doing the country any good, or doing us any good when we criticise an administration. What I am going to recommend is that proper actuarial studies be done on a regular basis, so that we will be able to detect at a very early stage the shortcomings of these schemes, because it is very difficult sometimes for a Government or any Government at all to project the number of persons who will be unemployed because of the crises which confront nations from time to time, and certainly Barbados, as a small developing country. We must constantly monitor the situation because as I said the world economic situation could worsen and hence it could affect Barbados in such a way that unemployment is on the increase.

What we are saying is that we have to look at that scenario, the up and down of it, but the position is, I know that the Prime Minister realises that. We have discussed it, don't worry. So, there are some areas as expressed by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, it is a fact that he did raise the whole question of the problems which arose out of an amendment which was intended to improve the scheme.

When the Barbados Labour Party was in Government, the scheme or the package was amended to extend the period from four weeks to thirteen weeks as the Honourable Member indicated yesterday, but that was done with the objective, of improving the scheme and at that time the situation demanded it. But, what has happened at a later date, and the Honourable Member has recognised that – we both discussed it and I am in agreement with him on this ... But what we must bear in mind is that although he made attempts to have the amendments made to the Act, the Government of which he is part, ignored it.

Now I am going to call on the Government on this occasion. My support is with the Honourable Member to make the necessary amendments because there are workers in the garment industry who are suffering as a result of this particular amendment. The Barbados Worker's Union has been locked in battles with this situation. There have been demonstrations. The Honourable Member must read the newspapers and see that workers in the Harbour Industrial Park have been complaining, they have sent a petition to the Prime Minister. It is a situation which the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, who represents the Barbados Workers' Union knows, is a question which he has to address and it is of some concern to the Barbados Workers' Union, so if the Honourable Member does not understand what is going on let him realise that there are other people on his side that he should listen to if he does not care to listen to us over here.

I support the Honourable Member because....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I have constituents and persons who do not live in the constituency who have called me on several occasions asking what to do. There are people who have been laid off for four weeks, after working for thirteen years, Mr. Chairman; they were laid off by some garment industry. This particular garment industry laid them off and brought them back after thirteen weeks and gave them one week's work and then sent them home again. What is appalling about the situation is that these poor workers, these poor women, cannot get the claims as quickly as possible to cushion the hardship which some of them experience.

Mr. Chairman, the position is, we must ventilate this position here because the workers out there are complaining. They have called, they have written newspapers, trying to highlight their plight, and I am saying I am standing in here because I feel they have a case and I am with them. I am supporting those poor workers in the garment industry who are "unfaired" and I am going to walk with the members of the Union to make sure their rights are protected as far as I am concerned. This is not a question for any partisan politics, this is no time for that. Let us understand that people out there can't get unemployment benefits when they turn up to the National Insurance Office, the claims are late. This brings me on to another point, because there are several persons who when they are laid off and they have to claim unemployment benefit have got to wait for lengthy periods. I am saying

that something must be done within that department to hurry up and to expedite the processing of these claims and the payment of these claims because it is causing hardships.

People have got to wait for months and when they call the National Insurance Office they are being told that the processing is not complete and even those that were drawing claims cannot get the payments in time. You know what that means, Mr. Chairman, take for instance people have got their rents to pay, even to the National Housing Corporation and the National Housing Corporation is hounding them down for the rents, threatening to put them out, putting them out and taking away their furniture and at the same time they cannot get money which is due to them from the National Insurance. What I am calling for is a system to be put in place to speed up the processing and the payment of these claims.

Now all sorts of criticisms have been heard. I hear them. People have gone as far as to accuse officers of the National Insurance Department, saying they have to pay something in order to get the claim processed. You all don't understand these are things that are being said. Allegations, which I don't want to hear and which I do not try to give any currency to, but we have to understand and protect the integrity of the National Insurance Department and its officers; that is what we are talking about. Until we can sit down and explain to the people that there is some difficulty within the scheme, a scheme that handles so many things, old age pension, severance payments and all sorts of things, that there are problems like these that would arise from time to time...I am saying if it is a question of putting more computers in there, let it be.

It was the Barbados Labour Party that sent the Director of National Insurance over to Jersey to have a look at the system there and he came back here and implemented it. We took him to Geneva in order to have discussions as well, to examine and to observe the system. So, nobody can accuse the Barbados Labour Party, both parties have been doing something to improve it. I am calling on the Government today and I hope that I will have the results that are expected....
11.20 a.m.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, as I said, I think that we all agree that it is time for a review of both schemes and surely at the National Insurance Department with a view to improving it. Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, there are some persons who like others to beat them and to inflict pain on them. I think they call those people who like to suffer that sadist. I am not too sure what you call persons who like to beat themselves and inflict pain on themselves. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East spent a large part of his contribution supporting, in fact, the call made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central to restore the lay-off and short time periods in relation to Severance Payments claims from 13 weeks to 4 weeks.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Well, tell the Honourable Member that. Tell the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East that.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. M. A. KING: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East clearly does not have the support of his colleagues on this matter. He spent his time saying how he gets so many complaints from the workers. Would you believe it, Mr. Chairman, that the person who introduced the amendment changing the period from 4 weeks to 13 weeks was from the Government of the Barbados Labour Party, and was not the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East the Minister responsible? The Minister was, in fact, saying or is today saying that all he did was nonsense, what he did was unfair, what he did was creating a lot of pressure on a whole lot of the poor people of this country? Is that the admission of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East that he was acting on instructions? He was saying....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Hon. M. A. KING: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition is good at trying to divert me, but I am not going to be diverted on this point, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is saying that there was a wicked Government which forced him obviously into taking the position in which he took.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is obviously misleading the Committee. The Honourable Member said nothing about a wicked Government. He said no such thing and he must not put words into his mouth. But perhaps the Honourable Member will explain why since he knew it was a wicked act, for five years he did nothing about it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Certainly, that is not a point of order.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the term about the position being unfair, wicked, and so forth did not come out of my mouth. I was commenting on the presentation which was being made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I think it is agreed on all sides that the Severance Payments Fund and the Unemployment Benefit Fund have run into financial difficulties. All of us recognize, as well, that it is not in the interest of those for whom the fund was designed that these funds should be in difficulties and that everything should be done to ensure that the funds are solvent. But one of the problems about dealing with these matters, as is demonstrated by the debate today, is that one recognizes the political input which comes into play when issues of this kind are being debated. We are going to hear from one side who says: "You had a report, which recorded the way forward in dealing with this matter, on your desk for three years and you have done nothing about it." From our side we would say,"Well, what are your proposals in relation to the way forward?"

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: We have the mandate so we will deal with it the way we want to deal with it. So if we take a little time analyzing the whole issue fully we will come out with the right and proper solution. It is clear that these are not areas where impulsive decisions need to be taken because, when I talk about the politics of a situation, you would recognize that the moment that any benefit is to any extent reduced you are going to hear the political dimension. You are going to hear the political dimension that you are the Government which is taking away something from the workers. That is all which is coming from the mouths of Honourable Members when they are saying, "Get on with this issue and do it. You have the Pelikanos Report."

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: What are you laughing at? You know that is true. You have the report. Therefore, get on with it. We will deal with the issue. When we ask you on this side what are your proposals for dealing with it – what are you proposing? Are you proposing, for instance, that the Severance Payments Benefits be considerably reduced? Are you proposing that the Unemployment Benefits be substantially reduced? Are those the proposals which we hear coming from the mouths of the Barbados Labour Party?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir. The Honourable Member is in the position that he is making a speech as to what proposals we are making. We have asked the Honourable Member's Government who has the Pelikanos Report to tell us what is in the report and what is the Government's position on it. That is what the Committee wants to hear. We are before the Committee now on this Department. When the report has been made available and laid in the House, then he would hear our comments on it, Sir.

Hon. M. A. KING: All that will be done in due course, Mr. Chairman. But I just would like to remind the Honourable Members on the other side that it was they who attacked Severance Payments in excess of $25 000 and that "attack" has subsequently been removed by this Government. So what we have to do is to look at the total programme to ensure that the benefits to the working class people in this country – the people who most desperately need the assistance of these schemes – are preserved and remained in tact.

Comments have been made about the state of the Severance Payments Scheme. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West quoted some statistics from the Central Bank statistics to show what the position was in relation to unemployment claims paid in 1988, 1989, and 1990. A point one has to note, Mr. Chairman, is that the Unemployment Benefit Scheme started I believe in 1981. So that some time would have elapsed, Mr. Chairman, before payments under the scheme could be made and where the full impact of the payments would be seen. So that in the first year I believe a period of 52 weeks would have been necessary before anyone could get benefits under the scheme.

The point I am making is that in the early years of the scheme it is unlikely that there would be a lot of payments out of the scheme.
11.30 a.m.

The other thing about statistics which one has to look at is that raw statistics do not necessarily always tell a true story. First of all, you would have to look at the whole question of what is the employment position. What are the figures for employment? How many people were actually employed in those periods of time? How many people, in the context of the unemployment conditions, lost employment and needed to receive the unemployment benefit? I am saying that the figures by themselves do not tell a full story. In 1983, for instance, it was 4 million five hundred and five, 1984, 8 million, 1985, 9 million, 1986, 10 million. Then there was a drop in 1987 and 1988 and then back up to 11 million in 1989 and 13,000 claims in 1990.

When one looks, Mr. Chairman, at the payments under the Severance Payments Scheme in those same years, you compare the position. You start from 1982, for instance. In 1985 there was a large payment of $7.9 million. By 1990 that was reduced to $2.7 million.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: But you say you are using statistics, but you are making the very point that statistics by themselves, statistics which you see in reports, do not tell the total picture, so that you are adding now a new dimension. You are saying there was no money to pay, so you are saying the statistics of themselves do not show the true picture. That is why I am saying you have to be careful when you are using statistics to make any point.

The other consideration which has to be taken, Mr. Chairman, and anyone who analyses the Severance Payments Scheme has to take it into account, is the fact that part of the problem of the solvency of the Severance Payments Fund is the fact that over the years there are a whole lot of employers whose contributions to the Fund were not made. There were a lot of companies, you will recall, which went out of business, particularly in the years between 1981 and 1986, owing the Severance Payments Fund considerable sums of money. Those sums of money will never be recovered, because those companies have long since gone out of business.

The mission, I suggest, for Government is obviously to ensure that the administration of these Funds and of the Schemes is tightened up to ensure that all the contributions which should be paid into the Funds are in fact paid in and that there is no delinquency in this aspect of the administration of the Funds.

Of course, other considerations have to be looked at. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East pleaded for actuarial reviews at regular intervals. One cannot quarrel with that, that is a necessary aspect of the whole matter, but the bottom line has to be to ensure that these Funds remain solvent so that the protection which is needed for those who deserve and desire that protection is available.

I am concluding my remarks by giving the assurance that the Funds will be looked at and the whole problem of trying to come to a conclusion in the best interest of all concerned will in the fullness of time, in the not too far distant future, be addressed fully by this Government.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not going to be very long on this matter, Sir, because I think we have had a full debate on the question of the need to integrate the Severance Payments Scheme and the Unemployment Benefits Scheme. It was always envisaged that an integration would take place and all the Opposition is trying to say is that that integration has taken so long that the Schemes themselves have been prejudiced financially because of the failure to take the decisions to integrate.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East have adopted a position that the amendment to the law which they acknowledged was intended to ensure that a person who drew unemployment insurance, because of being laid off, could not at the same time be deemed to be severed under the existing law, because that was the rationale of the amendment, that in its operation it has been found to have been capable of being exploited by employers contrary to the original intent of the Act.

I well recall this debate took place previously in this Chamber and I was pointing out at the time that the section in the Severance Payments Act which has given rise to these problems was the section where the law makes provision for "deemed severed". In other words, the law says that if you are laid off for a particular period of time you are deemed to be severed. That is where the problem lies. It does not affect all the other provisions of the Severance Payments Act. I would say that mature legal consideration has obviously not yet been brought to bear upon the activities of the employers, for it is my opinion, Sir, that had mature legal consideration been brought to that by either of the Honourable Members – and I would not expect that they would be able to do that – the question would not arise, given the extended definition of dismissal which courts throughout the Commonwealth have now come to a conclusion, that employers can dismiss a person without saying they are dismissed. If you bring a man to work and you withdraw work from him, although you are paying him, the courts have held that that is dismissal. So too I say that it may well be that had this matter been submitted to the courts, the courts may well hold that if you constantly bring back a man and only give him a week's work against his pattern of having for 13 years many weeks a year, you are constructively dismissing him.
11.40 a.m.

I understand the position adopted by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. As laymen, they wish to have a simple law, but this area of law is not simple. Now, Sir, that is all I would have to say about that. It is obvious, from the very beginning, that you cannot have two schemes which purport to cover a given situation where a person is laid off and is not working for a temporary period of time. If you are drawing unemployment insurance up to 60 per cent, the intention was that during that period of time you could not be deemed to be severed. So, I have no doubt that that matter is a matter which all sides agree should be looked at. Our problem is the time that is being taken to look at it.

I want to draw the Honourable Members' attention to another point. It has been constantly said in here that our social security schemes are great. I agree that they are in some respects very beneficial but I would also like to point out a number of defects. Now, a few of the Honourable Members in here would recall when we had a Workmen's Compensation Scheme in Barbados in which people who

were injured were paid a number of weeks per year over their average earnings. Now, I say, Sir, that under our existing regulations, people who are beneficiaries under the successive scheme to the Workmen's Compensation, namely, the Industrial Injury Regulations, have been deprived by new regulations which were introduced in, I think, 1958 or 1959. I am sure that Honourable Members would agree that it was not the intention of anybody when we changed the law from Workmen's Compensation to National Insurance to deprive the workers of the best benefits that were available. Today if you are a crop time worker and you are injured in the crop season your benefits are calculated on the last but one quarter before the injury. Now that is a period of time when you have little work so therefore it seems to me that in that respect the scheme is worst than it was previously which took 52 weeks prior to the injury and your average earnings. I have come across some of these, so that, Sir, don't let us point fingers at one another in relation to these schemes. I want to make it clear. I am a member of the working class in this area. I am going to get. Every one of us who pays up to $2600 a month is entitled to the benefits of the scheme.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: If you don't have a company which employs you and pays for you that is your business. I mean that it is possible. So don't let us fool ourselves, the aim of the legislation has been to cast the net on all employees and I hope that periodically the Honourable Member would look at what is called, the maximum insurable earnings, because that should be changed with inflation too. I look forward to receiving the receipt of an adequate pension when I retire in relation to my national insurance contributions. $2600. It started off lower than $2600 and gradually with inflation you increase the insurable earnings.

I only got up really to draw these two points to the attention of the Honourable Members that this question of industrial injuries is a matter that is causing some concern because of the failure to take into account the average earnings. Now, in respect of this fund I believe that the actuaries will show that the Industrial Injuries Fund is a very healthy fund. I am not saying that we should amend the law to such an extent as to make it unhealthy but I really do feel if you are a person like a tractor driver and most of your real earnings take place between January and June and you happen to be injured in January just as you go back you have to go back to the last quarter month. Something should be done about that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party would have it almost as if there should be adventures involving hours of meeting with the Government to work out a solution to this problem. My position on the matter, Sir, is very similar to that my learned friend, the Member for St. Thomas, adopted in relation to the question of our collaboration on the matter of drugs, that the Democratic Labour Party seems to reserve for itself the right to be unreasonable in its criticisms of the Barbados Labour Party all across the country and then having issued those unreasonable criticisms thereafter to invite us to join hand in hand in these bi-partisan efforts at collaboration. I will not have any part of it, Sir. I am arguing, Sir, by analogy, that the Democratic Labour Party reserves for itself the right to criticism all across Barbados as being the persons who supported the spread of the drug traffic in this country and when that perception had sunk in, then it invites the Barbados Labour Party to join with them in some committee to address the question of drugs.

In this Debate, Sir, we have had the same level of unreasonableness. We have been told, for example, about the problems of unemployment between 1981 to 1986 leading to the problems with the Severance Payments Fund and the Unemployment Benefits Fund as if unemployment stopped being a problem in 1986. We are being told about how the Unemployment Benefits Scheme is burst because, it was not properly thought out, ignoring the argument that the Severance Payments Scheme is in deeper trouble presumably because it was very well thought out. We are being told about the problems with the payment into these funds, as if we are to ignore the fact that when the list of N.I.S. arrears was published that over 80 per cent of the arrears accumulated since 1987. But, we are to ignore all of these things, Sir, and to join with the Government in agreeing with its unreasonable criticism of the Barbados Labour Party and dismiss those criticisms in a spirit of bipartisanship for whatever purpose.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not in that frame of mind until the Democratic Labour Party stops its unreasonable criticism. If you want us to collaborate, establish the foundation of good faith first of all and we are not having that good faith from the Democratic Labour Party, particularly in this matter, because they know what they would like us to come out and say.

On the National Insurance, in its generality, I want to ask the Minister of Finance what progress has been made in relation to the construction of the National Insurance Building and I really want to understand the circumstances which can explain the award of a contract to a company called P'S Security for windows in the amount of $605,215 in circumstances, Sir, where the consultants to the project recommended that that contract should have been awarded to Oran Limited in the amount of $349,014. I want to understand, Sir, the circumstances which explain why this contract for the award of windows for the National Insurance Board was awarded in contravention of the recommendations of the consultants to a company which put in a bid $250,000 more than the next bid and not only $250,000 more than the next bid but in circumstances where the contract price of $605,000 was in excess of the figure $500,000 for the award of the contract for the

windows plus curtains, walls, combined. One needs to understand why these things are happening in relation to the National Insurance and we are anxious to hear from the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister who has responsibility for this portfolio what set of circumstances can explain the award of contract in this particular matter.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we would also like to know who is P S Security and who are the human shareholders and directors of the company as well. We have an interest obviously in ensuring that squandermania does not take place in this country through the medium of the award of contracts to the highest bidder whether that highest bidder be a bidder for a road or for the award of work on a building such as the National Insurance Building. We therefore would like to hear the Minister respond specifically to the circumstances which surround the award of the contract to that highest bidder.

Mr. Chairman, in relation to the matter of the insolvency of the National Insurance Scheme, the Barbados Labour Party would be anxious to give Government our position on the matter provided that the Government shows us the courtesy of providing us with a copy of the Report.
11.50 a.m.

We have never yet been given a copy of the Report, yet the Government is telling us that we should govern for them by taking decisions on the basis of recommendations contained in the Report which we have never had but which they have had since 1987. That is why I want to say that the Democratic Labour Party is unreasonable in these matters. We are now to tell the Government how to run this country on the basis of a report which we have never been presented with but which the Government has in its possession since 1987.

My colleague made the telling point in this matter that payments such as Severance Payments have been reduced to the levels that they are now at, $2 million as compared to $8 million two years ago, precisely because the funds are illiquid because the Government has refused to take action to make them solvent. I want in the absence of having seen the Report to ask the Government if it is indeed a fact that the Pelikanos Report did recommend that there should be co-ordination between the Severance Payment Schemes and the Unemployment Benefits? I want to ask the Government if that is a fact so we can work out our position in the future.

I want to ask the Government if it is also a fact that the Report recommended that the amount of severance should be reduced and that instead of assessing severance payments at four weeks' wages for each year of service, it should be assessed in the following manner: For the first 4 years of service 2 weeks basic pay for each year of service? I want to ask the Government if that is a recommendation before it – from the 5th to the 10th year 2 1/2 weeks of basic pay, from the 11th to the 15th year 3 weeks basic pay, from the 16th to the 20th year 3 1/2 weeks of basic pay and from the 21st to the 33rd year 4 weeks of basic pay.

I would also want to ask the Government if the recommendations before it are for the unemployment benefits to be reduced from 60% to 50% for the first 13 weeks, from 40% from the 14th week until the 26th week. You have asked us where we stand. We have not seen the Report but we want to know if these are things in the Report whether it is recommended to Government that the Severance Fund should be increased to 1% and that the contribution of the Unemployment Scheme should be maintained at its present level.

I also, Mr. Speaker, would like to ask the Government what were the specific recommendations of the Board and whether the Chairman of the National Insurance Scheme was party to a set of recommendations going to Government to the effect that the prescribed amount for payment of unemployment should be reduced from 6 months to 1 week, whether the contribution of the Severance Fund should be increased to 1%, whether there should be a sliding scale for unemployment benefits from 60% of insurable earnings to 40%. I have not seen them but they are asking us for a position on a document that we have not seen. I will give the Government my position in due course but I would like to know if these are the kinds of recommendations that have been put to Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have not seen the Report. I can speak for my colleague for St. Thomas who has not seen the Report either.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Let me make it clear. We have information about the Report. I have not set these four on it, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, could the Honourable Member tell us if anybody at all connected with them has seen the Report so we would be able to assess whether it is worthwhile listening to the questions being asked? It makes no sense if nobody has seen the Report.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You have seen the Report? He has said he has not seen it, then he proceeds to ask are these not the things that are in the Report? It does not make sense wasting the time of the House.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, it is important the House understands where we are on this point. What is emerging is that the Democratic Labour Party is throwing

the onus on the Barbados Labour Party to take decisions in relation to the solvency of the National Insurance Fund. It cannot be fair for a Party which is claiming that it has a mandate and all we are hearing from that side is that they have a mandate that we are not in a position to tell them how to run a country, that the people just spoke on January 27. If the Democratic Labour Party has the mandate we must ask questions. We are saying that the solvency of the National Insurance Scheme is a sufficiently important matter that a responsible Government will act.

I want to finish on this point, Sir. This matter was raised in the House in 1987. The Prime Minister and the Democratic Labour Party held a retreat at Heywoods. The Prime Minister used the public television at prime time on the Sunday evening immediately after the retreat to give the people of Barbados the assurance that they had under active consideration matters pertaining to the solvency of the funds that are now engaging the attention of the House today and that the people of Barbados could have expected action taken by Government shortly. That is a fact. That is a matter of public record.

The Prime Minister of the country used prime time to give the people of Barbados the assurance in 1987 that action would have been taken on these matters shortly because they were matters of a concern to his Government. That was 1987. This is 1991. They have not taken a position. They have not acted. The situation has gone from bad to worse. Now it is to be the onus of the Barbados Labour Party to tell the Government how to govern. In the circumstances, there is no element of good faith on the Government side. That is our argument. Unless the Government can show that good faith, the first part of which must be to let us have the Report in the same way that it has been passed on to all trade union groups and private sector groups in the country, we are not in a position to state our position.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to make one final point that the Government may benefit from. I have made it in this House before. I am going to repeat it. The NIS Board is not collecting revenue that it can lawfully reclaim under the NIS Act Cap. 47, I believe. I think section 53 of the Act entitles the Board where an employee has been injured by another person other than his employer and he claims any benefit to bring an action or to recover monies that have been paid to that employee particularly where the employee is receiving NIS benefit during the period of his illness.

Now, most employers are insured for liabilities such as these. What you are getting, I have seen it through the years and that is why I have raised it, is that an employee is injured, he recovers money while he is awaiting a settlement of his case for loss of wages, various benefits and disablement benefits paid by the NIS Board. Some employers take the view they do not have to pay because the NIS has already paid the employee. They argue that in reduction. Some pay and the Board never seeks to recover that amount of money.
12.00 noon.

Once again I believe the Scheme would be more solvent if Section 53 is properly imposed. More often than not the persons who are the beneficiaries of those omissions are the insurance companies who have already received benefits by way of premium covering those circumstances. I have raised it, I think the Right Honourable Prime Minister will remember me speaking in the House about it, and I have not seen any action on the part of the NIS through its legal people to put that right. But I would say that since the Scheme has been operating substantial sums have not been collected under that section.

The section is quite clear. The persons should really give notice to the Board. Nobody has done it in any case that I know of. In fact the section should be amended. It is not only when you are bringing an action but if you have a claim and you are collecting from the insurer the NIS should really be notified and an onus should be placed on the person paying out, the insurance company, to refund to the NIS the money that the NIS has advanced in the meantime.

I feel, Sir, as a person who, in the not too distant future, will be a beneficiary of this Social Security Scheme that I must defend the Social Security Scheme. A long way away from it, Sir. The Social Security Scheme is too important for any of us in this country not to defend that scheme. When we raise our concerns over here we are not raising them to harry anyone. We are raising them because we have a concern both as a political party and obviously a concern as persons who contribute to the scheme as well.

I want, however, Sir, since the Prime Minister says he is going to be replying to the total Head, before I sit down, to deal with another item under this and this is the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. Only yesterday I was looking at the Report, the proceedings of the Clerk of Parliament and noticed that British Columbia had passed a Bill setting up an Electoral and Boundaries Commission on as non-partisan a basis as we set up ours. Indeed I am going to get hold of the Bill and send it to, in this case, my learned friend the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, so that they would see some of the ideas that we develop here also inspire people elsewhere. I am not in this for any plaudit, Sir.

I want to say that bodies such as the Electoral and Boundaries Commission have to set proper standards. When we confer on them the duty to participate in maintaining multi-party democracy in the country we believe that they should be worthy of carrying that

obligation and they should be able to rise above certain narrow partisan attitudes and maintain that concept which is very vital to the survival of human rights and to Barbados.

Sir, I wrote the Electoral and Boundaries Commission since July last year asking to meet with them. Up to today I have not had an official reply or the courtesy of seeing them. I think it is disgusting. I think it is absolutely, totally disgusting and as a person who believes in human rights and serves on human rights bodies. I think that body should be ashamed of itself, if it is going to conduct the affairs under the Act, in this way. It was never so intended. I am ashamed of them for the way they have behaved on a matter such as this. There should be no fear of them having open discourse with any of the political parties on this island on any matters that come under their jurisdictions. The proceedings could be public if they want to. I am not coming to ask them for any extension of any preferences to the Barbados Labour Party or myself. I think their conduct is not what I would expect of a Board that is given this type of responsibility. As a head of the political party that has survived and is the oldest surviving political party in the Commonwealth Caribbean, I will not let history go by without saying that the people who headed that Board and did not deal with the matter should be ashamed of how they conducted themselves on that matter. They are not insulting me personally. They are dealing with a political system that they should be able to deal with.

The other thing too, Sir – the Act was so worded that they promised, when I was no longer the Leader of the Opposition, the NDP which was then the Official Opposition to appoint two members of the Board. I have no difficulty with that. We have seen the Act working and like any bit of legislation we must now do that. So the NDP appointed two people. One under the Legislation becomes the Deputy Chairman and became the Deputy Chairman. I do not believe it is good enough for him to say to anybody because of his partisan position that it appears as though Richie appointed you to look after the interest of the BLP. I think the retort which was given to him was that it appears that Richie appointed you and what Cammie says about you is right, that you were always looking after the interest of the DLP. I want to put those sorts of things in the record. Do you know why I want to put them in the record, Sir? I am usually very careful in how I speak. I do not believe that a Deputy Chairman – no longer Deputy Chairman – who is acting in the absence of the substantive Chairman should use his position in the midst of, and a few days before the election to issue a public statement about correspondence between the Board and himself that is talking about "the statement is misleading". If we want to maintain fairness in the electoral process, it will never be done.

I have seen in Trinidad where similar circumstances occurred, it was not done. I think it is disgusting again that they should have pre-empted proper advice. I think that they should take very proper advice on matters such as this nature. We are in the midst of an election, one side will win, one side will lose. But if that is the type of precedent that we want to set in Barbados for people who have a duty to be impartial in those circumstances...They did not have the decency despite the fact that I was writing to them to write back to me. Instead they came out with a public statement. That is the way they act. Obviously I am not surprised that he jumped ship from the NDP within a couple of days.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He has gone back to you all. With the people who are parties in power. That is the way they behave and expect that they are going to get away with it because they are not going to say anything. Back home with you now and openly bragging about it. It is not a question of whether you win or lose an election. My Party has lost and won elections in this country and will continue to win elections and lose elections in this country because we believe in the democratic process. That is not the point. 12.10 p.m.

The point is that I believe that if it is done on the next occasion when we may be in office, to another political party, and I am still alive I will take the same attitude that I take on this.They must have proper standards and know how to conduct themselves on matters of this nature. And, if I am the last person, and my party is the last party that will stand up on human rights and how people should establish themselves we will do it all the time. I am really disgusted, I hope that the Board will now outside of the election time get on with the things they have to do properly, clean up the register which is still in bad shape.The register affected all of us, it is still in bad shape. That is the sort of thing they should be listening to. I wrote and asked them to make available to the political parties, to everybody who is running, in the form in which they have it, the diskettes, we have moved into the technological age. They wrote back and told me to send them the regulations. Now, I believe things like that they should keep up with. I believe that every member of Parliament is entitled as you are entitled under the British Regulations to purchase the software so as to get on with improving the job of everybody. That has not been done either.

They cannot, if they don't have a system of meeting with the political parties on a regular basis to discuss these matters, ever get any improvements that are worth while, that will get the day to day conduct of elections outside of the political thing.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will give the Honourable Member two minutes to conclude.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I believe, Sir, that in electoral matters we have advanced in many respects on things like how we keep our Register, objections to them, and I

believe, and I said it after the elections, that basically Barbados has an example to set to the balance of the Caribbean in the manner in which we conduct our elections. I have said all of that. But, that does not mean that we are perfect. There are still areas that we are not functioning properly on. There are still some inconveniences. Every Honourable Member can recite instances during the last elections that people were taken off. The daughter of the Honourable Member, you can talk about that.

I can give you people who were taken off the Register because of inefficiency and this idea that you publish something because the law may require it but we have to do a bit more than that. It is not enough just to publish a notice in the Press, where you bring out three, four, fifteen thousand names of people – the person may not be in the island at the time – and expect the people to recognise that is the end of the thing. Officers must go to the homes and find out and do their jobs. They have not done the job and I can give many instances.

There is a lady who is now in her 80's, who since the right was conferred on women to vote in Barbados for the first time she voted consistently. Her name came off once before and I was able to spot it. She was on the Register in June but by the time the time came she was taken off. By the time we were able to catch up with her it was too late to put her back on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude now.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Those are matters we should investigate properly, so we are outside an election period, so nobody is scoring partisan points in here.

I am anxious to make sure that the Barbados precedent is the best precedent for proper functioning of the holding of elections and that is my interest. If the Board, guided by the misguided ex deputy chairman, believes that they were getting at me personally – and to say that I am a personal friend and all of that sort of foolishness – I am not dealing with this on any basis of personal friendship, I am dealing with it on a bed of principle and I don't believe they have the proper conduct and they should get proper advice on how they are going to proceed on matters such as this, Sir. I hope this is the last time that I have to speak on matters of this nature in the House, Sir, because we are trying to preserve multi-party democracy, we are setting examples and we must move this question of elections to a different level.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I lost a lot of people who would have voted, because of the system. I am sure the same happened to Honourable Members on the day. People got annoyed, Sir, last minute because when they went they found out they were not on the Register and that they were disenfranchised. I am going to advise some of them to do what they did in Jamaica, Sir, sue, because they do not know, the Board does not recognise that people are entitled to sue in circumstances where they are denied the right.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: There is a plethora of cases on it. I hope it won't come to that next time Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have a few comments to make under the Electoral and Boundaries Commission Head. We have been saying during this week and soon after the elections that it was a low poll on January the 22nd, that is, assuming that the register was as nearly accurate as we could have made it, or as it could have been made. On a close analysis after the election, it is clear that the Register of Electors for the 1991 Elections was far from accurate. I am glad members on the other side are agreeing that is their experience too. It was padded with a lot of people who had no right being on it which is a reflection on the way that the duties of the persons who should prune the register were carried out. We have full time people now as Registering Officers who have to keep the Registers up to date and I think it is scandalous Sir, that we should have found the situation after elections as ultimately it turned out.

Now it was a short election and a lot of candidates did not have time to do a thorough house to house. I did not complete mine but I started from July last year. Because of the heavy rains in September/October, particularly October, one was limited. But, I have also discovered that in relation to objections to persons on the Register they were not dealt with as satisfactorily this time as on previous occasions.

Similarly in respect of claims to be put on the Register and transfer of residence, I know persons who applied in good time to be placed on the Register and on election day their names were not on. The excuse was given, an excuse which I anticipated in here in a debate many years ago, that there was a computer fault on a particular day, I think the date I was told was the 11th January, that is subject to correction. We were told that persons who went and registered and whose forms were put in on, I believe the 11th January, there was a problem and their names did not appear on the final voters list.

I agree with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that the only way you can bring some of this to a head is to test it in court by action and let some people get some damages if they are entitled.

Now I had a personal problem which I am going to put in the records of this House, but I am reserving my rights on it to sue. My daughter went and registered in good time, not in the constituency, Sir. She went and had the

photograph taken at the Wilkie Cumberbatch School. She became 18 in October, she received her I D card in good time to vote.
12.20 p.m.

A few days before the election someone called my wife who is the Registrar, and told her that she would not be able to vote on Election Day and that Marie Simmons was not going to be on the Register on Election Day. She asked me to check the Register and I checked and my wife's name was on. On Election Day my wife's name was on but my daughter's name, who is Lynn Marie Simmons, was not on. She went to vote and had to come back home without voting. Now that is not going to finish in here because you know that I am not like some of you all. I do not cool out. It is not going to finish in here because we had the information beforehand that something was going to go wrong with one of the votes out of 19 Neils. I am going to make an official complaint first to the Chief Electoral Officer.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What do you mean that I am in Zone 1. I am in St. George North. I must be a house or something.

Now Sir, I think that is a scandal for that kind of thing to happen and I make it public that my daughter was very upset especially as a student of politics and law. She could not even get a chance the first time to vote. It was a disappointment. But I think we have to analyze the list from last time and really determine over the next few months whether, in fact, the number of persons whose names appeared on the register were truly entitled to vote. Because if that was not so then you have to take the proportion of those who voted in relation to a smaller number of those who were entitled to vote and it might be a reasonable poll.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You were not in here. I have already said the Register was in a total state of disarray last year. We are analyzing it now on the party's computer. We will know to what extent it was out. But I am saying that that should not be so now that we have full-time Registering Officers and computerization and so on. We should be able to get a much cleaner list next time. That is all I want to say about this, Sir. I am not going to rehash the elections now under this Head. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a little contribution on this matter relating to electoral matters raised here today. I am in complete agreement with the last statement made by the Member for St. Thomas in relation to the percentage of persons who voted and I, too, have been of the view that we had a higher percentage of persons voting in relation to persons eligible to vote. I believe, Sir, there is a problem with the Register. I do believe so. I honestly find it difficult to accept that we can have a register out of a population of 190,000 so that when one takes a percentage of those who voted in relation to persons that the register claims are eligible to vote of 190, 000, then it would appear as a low vote. In fact, Sir, my own commonsense tells me that that cannot be so. That, in fact, we have a smaller number of persons in Barbados who are eligible to vote.

Sir, I can understand an inflation of the Register for a number of reasons. There are people abroad who cannot come off the Register. You cannot take them off the Register. By law you cannot take them off the Register because the law particularly states how a person can come off, and being abroad is not one of the reasons unless you have been abroad long enough. Even so, Sir, those persons who have been abroad for five years or more than five years it is difficult for an Electoral Office to be able to determine when a person has been out of the country in excess of the five years to remove that person from the Register. You will find, Sir, that persons are on the Register who have been outside of the country for more than the period permitted by the law for them to remain on the Register, in other words for more than the five years.

Again, Sir, we still find a number of persons on the Register who are deceased and their names still remain. Sir, it is not necessarily the fault of the Electoral Office because the Registry should have the information.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: They have full-time officers. Well, the information should have been sent from the Registry to them. But anyhow, Sir, it is a fact that names of persons are on the Register who are deceased. That is a fact. I have had it in my constituency. As a matter of fact, Sir, when a former Registering Officer in the constituency I represent, it was about ten years after he died before I could get his name taken off the Register.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: But he could not vote and he did not vote. Could not vote and did not vote, that is the important point. We have heard from time to time about dead persons casting a vote. But this is one occasion, Sir, that that dead man did not vote. He was on my Register so I do not know what other area he could have voted in. I do not know if he was on a different register unless a dead man has a special dispensation to vote in the area where he is not registered.

Sir, the point I am making here is that I believe a higher percentage of persons voted, because in St. Michael

North there were a lot of voters. In relation to some other registers, ours seemed to be very few people. But, in fact, that is not the position.

I would like to respond to some matters raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. He raised the question, Sir, of the responses made to him as Leader of the Opposition or the Barbados Labour Party, in fact, in relation to matters that he himself had raised. Mr. Chairman, sometimes very often persons walk into a situation that they had not expected. It is my belief, Sir, this is exactly what happened on this particular occasion. I recall, Sir, that when we were discussing electoral matters here in this House of Assembly the Leader of the Opposition raised a question of his party being allowed only 15 minutes of political broadcast at election time. Yes, I remember all of that. Apart from that, Sir, it was raised in the Press by the columnists and by the Honourable Member on the political platform. My understanding is that the Honourable Member wrote the Commission on this particular matter and sought an interview with the Commission. Now the regulations, as I have said in here before, were the same regulations under which we had earlier contested in the 1986 General Elections. They were regulations made at that time with the Governor-General which were used in the 1986 General Elections. When the last Electoral and Boundaries Commission's term was about to expire, that Commission decided that it would have to make regulations for that particular election because by that time there was a Constitutional amendment which removed the power from the Governor-General from making regulations to the Commission.
12.30 p.m.

The Commission, the Chairman of which was Mr. Kenrick Jordan – we all know him as "Buzz" Jordan – made the regulations which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West found were unacceptable to his side. Let me state the position here clearly. The Commission had the majority of members on it that were not placed there by the Democratic Labour Party. The Democratic Labour Party had a minority of persons on that particular Commission that made those regulations. So the Honourable Member, as Leader of the Barbados Labour Party, wrote the Commission, I understand, and sought an interview on the particular matter. What I understand was particularly offending or offensive to the Commission was that the Leader of the Opposition went to the newspaper and on the radio and accused the Commission of wedging him in between the two other parties.

Under the regulations, Sir, the party in Government had one hour for a political broadcast, the party in Opposition had 45 minutes and the others, unfortunately, under which the Barbados Labour Party came at that particular time, had 15 minutes. I say unfortunate. It was unfortunate for this particular occasion, but it was they who made it in the first place. It was not the Governor-General who made the elections in 1986, he could only do what he was advised to do.

A couple of days before the election the Commission was accused by the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party, now the Leader of the Opposition, of wedging that particular party in between two other parties and did not give him an opportunity to reply. Mr. Speaker, somebody will not have an opportunity to reply.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Not your letter, that is what was said on the radio. In other words, the Commission had no alternative but to defend itself.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Yes, I am going to defend it here. I am a member of the Government here and I have to defend it. The Commission had no alternative – whether it was headed by Clyde Turney, Asquith Phillips, Mr. O. K. Husbands or whoever was there at that particular time – irrespective of the timing of the matter but to defend itself against unfair accusations made against it by the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party at that particular time. The accusations were unfair, the regulations that they themselves had put in place in 1986 were the same regulations in 1991.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is contradicting himself. In one instance he says the regulations had been made by the Governor-General on the advice of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, then the Democratic Labour Party argues in the next breath that they....

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I sat down to hear the point of order. The Commission was put in place by them, Sir. The Governor-General signed the Order. Let us get the facts as they are, Sir. The Commission therefore had no alternative but to defend itself. It was only unfortunate that the elections were to be held a few days later, but that was when the accusations were made. The accusations were made before the elections and the defence came days before the elections. I do not believe that the Commission at that particular time was playing any politics, the Commission was merely defending itself against accusations unfortunately and unwarrantedly hurled at it by the Leader of the Opposition, then the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party. That, Sir, is the position.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, it is significant he has not done two things. One, he refused to deal with the discourtesy of the Commission in responding to a letter I wrote to them since July....

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, let us go back. Do not say "No, no." Listen to the position now, this is not debating and running away. You debate and listen to the response.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I was merely dealing with the question of the timing, two days before the elections, which was raised by the Honourable Member.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Since July 1990 I wrote to the Commission. It is my understanding – since the Honourable Member is interpreting his understanding – that the Commission took a decision to have an interview with me to raise not only the matters the Honourable Member has spoken about, but several other matters. Up to today, Sir, it has not been officially conveyed to me as Chairman of the Barbados Labour Party that we should have a meeting. If the Honourable Member considers that that was the way a subsidiary body should treat a political party, whether it is the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party, then I feel myself that the Honourable Member is not following the sort of standards I would expect he would follow in public life in relation to a matter of this nature. That is the first point.

The second point, Sir, is that everything I have said, either during the election or have written, was said by me before, other than one point he has raised, the date on which we should tape the political broadcasts. I once, when I was first Leader of the Opposition, had to respond to the then Right Honourable Prime Minister on a matter about which I was being consulted under the Constitution. I responded. He never responded further to me on that matter, but my response to him and the letter were discussed openly around the Bar Table and I was placed in an unenviable position, and am still placed in an unenviable position. It was made to look as if I was taking a personal stand on the matter. I cite that as an example, Sir.

Now, I said you must watch the people who are holding offices, and I was in particular talking about the Deputy Chairman. The statement that I made, that we were being sandwiched on the particular date, was made openly in the public of Barbados by the Member of the Commission. What is the Honourable Member going to tell me?

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: He did not make it on radio, he was saying all about that the Labour Party was going to be hoisted on its petard, and all that foolishness.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No, before I made the statement, before I knew the date. How would I know and be talking about the date they were going to give us the broadcast unless one of the very members was talking about it all around the place? If you want to hear people's business, go into the law courts any morning and sit down at the Bar Table, because you hear more of what is actually happening.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I belong to the Inner Bar, I don't get in that.
12.40 p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sometimes I see the Honourable Member, who is a new member in the House. I am going to move off of this point but I think I have to get the record straight. So, when the Honourable Member is talking about courtesy, then I expect that standard to be maintained and that therefore I was in a position to make the statement that I did that the dates which were being given to us, before I even responded to them was going to be the date of the 18th, because it was being said.

So, Sir, I am not going to delay this debate because I want to talk about a few other matters and we want to get on into the debate but I don't want the record to go without putting on the record that I do not consider the Honourable Member to condone that situation and he has not answered the substance of the charge that a Commission must also recognise that it has a higher duty in how it deals with matters such as these.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of issues raised during this debate and I do not intend to spend too much time in the reply. I believe that the Leader of this House has responded to the question relating to the charges against the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. That is an independent body under the Constitution and the body is quite capable of assessing when its own susceptibilities or sensibilities may have been affected and to respond appropriately. I am not getting into that. I believe that is the function of the Commission to assess and determine matters to which it feels it should reply in public, however those messages may come, or however they feel the Commission may have been offended. I am not really dealing with that, nor am I really fighting yesterday's battles. The Leader of the Opposition, as I warned yesterday, seems to be very intent on fighting yesterday's battles and why he should be in that retrospective mode, I really cannot tell. It seems as though he has put on the retro-rockets. I really am not dealing with those particular matters.

What we have to deal with, Sir, are the matters that confront the country now and to look forward. There is no point generating a lot of heat and animosity over those kinds of issues. The elections are over and done with and I am very surprised that the Leader of the Opposition gets up

here seeking to defend the ex Member for St. Michael South Central, who tried to dispossess me as Prime Minister and when he failed in that particular regard, he went over there and dispossessed the Leader of the Opposition, and he is in here now trying to defend him.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not saying anything either about the principle of collective responsibility. I think when we are in here, Sir, we are in here as practical politicians and we have to deal with practical situations and I do not believe that anywhere there is any pure principle of the doctrine of collective responsibility. There is a statement about it or an expression of what the doctrine means and there are certain situations in which there have been departures from it.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We can go back to the times of 1939 at the time of Munich. We could go back to the time of Suez. We can go back to the time in the nineteen-seventies with the British Labour Party. There are many instances of which there have been some modifications of that particular policy and some departures from it, indeed. So, there is no pure policy anywhere although the core of the doctrine still obtains and it obtains in Barbados as well. Now, if someone wishes to codify that, I believe it could provide part of a research thesis for some student but that is not our function here.

I want to deal substantially in the few minutes remaining before we rise for lunch, Sir, with the question of the National Insurance, in particular, in relation to the Severance Payments Scheme and the Unemployment Benefits Scheme. The two schemes have been the subject of review. Recommendations have been made and the matter is under consideration. There are a number of issues involved in the two schemes. Firstly, there is the question of whether the schemes, the Unemployment and the Severance Payments Benefits Schemes should remain as separate schemes or whether they should be coordinated. Another issue relates to the prescribed time for claiming unemployment benefits, whether it should remain what it is or whether it should be reduced and if reduced to what level it should be reduced.

There is an issue relating to the modification of unemployment benefits in relation to the average insurable earnings. There is an issue relating to the contribution to the Severance Fund payable by the employer whether that should be increased and if so, to what level, it should be increased. There is the question that has been raised relating to the insurable earnings. I believe it was raised by the Member for Christ Church South – the question of whether it should be an assessment for severance payments in respect only of wages up to the amount of insurable earnings.

12.50 p.m.

There is the question as to whether Severance Payment should continue to be paid by the employer and the level at which that rebate should stand. Sir, all these are issues. The interests in this particular matter have differing views on all of those issues. To date a number of bodies have been consulted. These include the Barbados Workers' Union, the National Union of Public Workers, the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union, the Barbados Employers' Confederation, the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited and the Barbados Union of Teachers.

They have all been consulted on these matters. Their reactions represent not a consensus on these matters but there is still considerable divergence of views in relation as to how the scheme may be reformed, modified or altered, but reformed it must be. The scheme is in a dire situation at this particular time. I have instructed that all of the parties should be summoned to a meeting which should take place shortly. Out of that we would assess the position so that I will be in position then to come to Parliament with proposals for the reform of the schemes. That is the scenario against which I am dealing with this matter.

I have instructed that the interested parties should be called around a table to see if we can hammer out some kind of consensus or agreement as to how we should proceed. Out of that I will be in a position to take decisions which I will bring to this Honourable Chamber so that we can take the final decisions on the matter. That is where it is.

I am grateful to Honourable Members for pointing out that there is need for action on this particular matter and action right away. That is what I have already set in motion.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sorry, Sir. I was not in my seat at that particular time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Honourable Member has given way on a point of elucidation. I am asking the Minister to explain the circumstances which justify the Board of the National Insurance awarding a contract to P'S Security for the installation of windows in the amount of $650 000 against the recommendations of the consultant with the project who had recommended that the contract be awarded to the next bidder of, I think, $341 000.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order. A question has been asked legitimately.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I think I understand the matter that is before us now. My recollection of this matter if I may respond to the question that was raised is that the contract was awarded at a higher price for windows in the new National Insurance building than the lower or lowest tender received. I do not quite recall how many tenders were received. My understanding is that the National Insurance Board is concerned as anyone else about getting value for money. They determined that they would not accept the lower or lowest tender but would go for the better quality at the higher price in this particular instance. That is my understanding of the matter.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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

On motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour, Mr. SPEAKER, and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I now move, Sir, that the sitting be suspended until 2:00 o'clock today.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee has resumed. Head 16.

HEAD 16 – MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE – $6 144 460

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr.Chairman, I beg to move that Head 16, Ministry of the Civil Service in the sum of $6 144 460 stand part.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will recall that on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill there was some debate in this House on the issue of training and the point was made that under this Head and under other Heads in the Estimates we have now seen reductions in the vote for training in circumstances to help spur on the productive sector to retool the country et cetera, it was necessary for us to concentrate on the training needs of Barbados. The retort of the Honourable Members on the other side as it has been for the past five years is that the Barbados Labour Party discontinued training in this country and that we should be the last to be protesting it.

The Prime Minister is always worried when I look back, Sir. But as a student of history, and he did history, he will know that one always has to look at the facts sometimes in retrospect the better to move forward, perhaps, and to give an objective assessment.

I want to say here and now that the Barbados Labour Party, contrary to what is being said by Honourable Members, did not abolish or stop training in Barbados. I am going to read the Training Report for the years 1st April, 1980 to 31st March, 1985 which I think is a document of this House. There has been no such report laid since then so we are not in a position to keep it up, Sir. But Appendix 1 to that Report showed a "STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS APRIL 1980 TO MARCH 1985. Training Administrations Local In-Service Staff Development Programmes." The total over that period is 2 028. Training Leave Awards (Government of Barbados) 735. Training Leave Awards (International Fellowships) 515. Study Leave Awards (Government of Barbados) 734. Giving a total of 4 012. Under the particular years, Sir: In 1981, 1 047 trained, in 1982, 910, in 1983, 676, in 1984, 560, in 1985, 819.

When you read the Report as well in itself, under every category you will find provision made, financial provision was here. It was here and it was set out as well in the Report. But under every category training continued during that period of time. The only reduction , if you could call it that, occurred in persons who wanted to go for overseas training and even in that category there was a substantial vote to assist in overseas training , what is called overseas study leave, study leave awards between that period. This was also granted. It says:

"Study Leave Awards facilitate personal training initiatives and individual career aspirations for training programmes that are considered relevant to the public service. These Awards are granted on full-pay, half-pay and no-pay conditions. Courses for study are assessed in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the Public Service Training Committee.

Between 1980 and 1985 a total of 734 candidates were granted study leave awards to undertake training courses at various local, regional and extra-regional colleges, universities and other educational institutions. Generally, the main areas of study were Public Administration, Economics and Accounting." That is at paragraph 2.4 on page 3 of the Report. You will see that under every category training continued. Sir, that was within the Civil Service, *per se*.

But as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East said and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said, we also took that opportunity to expand considerably training within the concept of a National Training Board, the Barbados National Training Board and that Report is also a Report which is a document of the House. We have a comprehensive scheme applied both within the Civil Service itself and outside for continuing training. It is not true to say that at any stage, training was discontinued.

The Honourable Member for St. George South has already in this House read into the record the Report of the Community College for the relevant periods. It is seen there as well that both in the nursing field and otherwise that training was, continued in every year by the Barbados Labour Party. Even if you take the figure now you will see that in this period – and allow for inflation – that the Government in 1991 – 92 has provided really no more money than we ourselves had provided during our relevant period. I want to put it to rest once and for all, Sir. I hope I would not hear the allegations being made in the wild and unfounded way in which those allegations have been made and the misinformation being persisted and giving people in the public at large and in the Civil Service in particular the impression that this was so.

I am sorry that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is not now in his place because he made part of the allegation. I would have thought that he would have at least consulted with Mr. Joseph Goddard who could have given him some very proper and necessary advice in order to improve his knowledge of these things. He obviously does not know what went on in the Civil Service during this time. As a good representative of the workers I hope he will familiarize himself with these reports so that he will be better able to argue their cases. Sir, these documents are 1980–85. If I read the earlier document... All of the Reports are here, Sir, April 1976 to March 1977 and April 1978 to March 1979. I am not going to read them all into the Record. But they are there. We cannot falsify these. These are there now. Honourable Members can be satisfied that their allegations are totally unfounded. I trust that they will not delay us any more on having to look back, which the Prime Minister does not like us to do. But I have to look back to put the truth straight. Outside of the little partisan swipes, I have to put the facts, Sir, so that history cannot be rewritten. Because the Democratic Labour Party is very good at rewriting history for us you know.

I ask the Minister, how soon will we get the training report for the period from 1986 to 1990? I have not seen that document. Certainly it has not been in the House. I have been asking for it in the House, in the Library and elsewhere for a long time to be able to talk about it. I have not seen that Report given at all, Sir, so that we will know what the position is about training that is happening rather than the sort of talk. We cannot really discuss as we would like to discuss in an intelligent manner, Sir, the position as to training under this Head without knowing what has happened in the years 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989, so that we can comment, compare and look at the lessons to be drawn from that area as well.

I notice as well that under this Head, Other Personal Emoluments there is a cut of $1.2 million, a 41% per cent cut under this Head. Under General Administration and Co-ordination Services, Direction and Policy Formulation, Head 16 – I believe that this services the personnel needs, this subprogramme – it provides: (a) initiating and maintaining programmes of administrative reform in the Civil Service; (b) servicing the personnel needs of the Public Service; and (c) providing advisory services to Statutory Boards in industrial relations and other Personnel matters.

2.10 p.m.

Now, I believe that it is from that vote that temporary appointees in the service are paid, and would I therefore not be correct in drawing the conclusion that if there is such a substantial reduction in the vote, that this year, either there was wastage or this year the Government is going to have less cause and less reason to employ persons on a temporary basis in the Civil Service.

Now, when we made various conclusions and inferences, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South got up and said – I think he made the point that we were saying, cut. We have not said that in that way, we said control, Sir. And I think the Honourable Members on the back bench said we were scaring people about layoffs in the public service. But it is legitimate for us to ask if the Government is reducing a vote which last year on the revised estimates was $5 226 257 and it has reduced it this year, the next financial year, to $3 966 943, reduced it by some $1 254 207. We must ask the Minister to explain who will be affected or what will be affected under that vote, and I inferred that temporary appointments will be curtailed or substantially reduced. It may well be that there may not be various leave situations occurring under the Head, so I really must ask why the substantial reduction has occurred.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 16 stand part.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I have taken note of the query raised in relation to training. I have no information at this moment to hand. As soon as I get the information I will let the Honourable Member know in respect of the matter relating to training.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was one aspect of the speech of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and that aspect did not require the Prime Minister to give any explanation beyond why the large delay in the Government's turning out a training report for each of the years 1986 to 1990. The gravamen of the Leader of the Opposition's case is something that should be easily answered by the Prime Minister, if he looks at page 11 of the estimates, because what we are saying and what we expect a reply to is why there has been such a drastic cut in Item 102 – Other Personal Emoluments from $5 221 000 to $3 966 000. We are not debating that, but we are saying the cut in that vote of such magnitude implies that Government is retrenching workers in the public service or will not increase the number of temporary appointments during the financial year, and we want to be sure that the inference we are drawing is fair and reasonable.

I know the Government has to take tough decisions within the next three weeks. We appreciate that Government has to take tough decisions in the next three weeks. The Budget must come early; there is no argument about that. I am not going to pick the date yet, because you know I am generally right. The Prime Minister knows that I will give him a week. There will be a mix of policies in the budget aimed at tightening control, aimed at increasing contributions to the Consolidated Fund and so on. So that we want to know if it is fair to anticipate, because of the severe cuts in these items under the Ministry of the Civil Service, whether it is fair to infer that Government would be holding down on the number of temporary appointments or allowing itself elbow room to actually send home temporary staff. It is almost $2 million in cut, so I think that one does not require any great intellectual struggle for the Prime Minister to answer.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I was just waiting to find out if there were other members wishing to speak, because I am replying to the debate. The question itself took no great mental agility to ask and the member demonstrated that in asking the question, so the reply....

Aside

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Precisely. And, I think the Honourable Member would very well understand that personnel costs represent by far the most significant expenditures as far as current revenue is concerned and if we are to reduce expenditure, that particular aspect of expenditure can be expected to make some kind of contribution. It may very well be that if persons go on leave that substitutes might not be as readily forthcoming and other measures of this sort, but we have made provision in the Estimates for the permanent civil service to continue in place. I think it is the results that will demonstrate what will happen. Let us not start spreading any alarm in these matters. We will deal with matters in an even manner. Thank you.
2.20 p.m.

The question that Head 16 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 17 – OMBUDSMAN – $50 925

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 17 – Ombudsman in the sum of $50 925 stand part.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I want to second that. In seconding it, I want to take a position to clarify a pseudo constitutional point that is no point that has arisen recently where in the newspapers it was stated – I believe they took the Ombudsman out of context – that the Ombudsman had indicated that he was having some difficulty getting the Prime Minister's Office to respond to his request to have the Head separated because he wanted to establish that the Ombudsman was not under any Minister. The question is now, who should move the Head in the House? If there is no Minister to move the Head, he will not get any money.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, you cannot say it for him. He reports only to Parliament. He should really come under Parliament. If you will recall, the Ombudsman is an independent agency. There are different kinds of Ombudsmen. Is that the plural? I have forgotten. You have got to be careful these days. But whatever it is somebody seems to have misunderstood and believe that there is an Ombudsman and there is only an Ombudsman and that is it. There are all kinds of Ombudsmen. They have Ombudsmen for local Government and they have a different context from the ones appointed as Parliamentary Commissioner in the United Kingdom and then this one came from a different kind of system. I really believe that some of the issues which are put out in the place by the newspapers who do not always understand what may have been said...Oh sorry, I did not know that you had cursed them. I am not cursing the newspaper. I do not want any headlines.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, the point that needs to be made is that the Constitution of Barbados from the beginning had a Director of Public Prosecutions who is not under the jurisdiction of anybody for any reason at anytime. Yet he falls administratively for purposes of convenience under some Minister. Anything at all that is paid out of the public purse must fall under some Minister. That is a

constitutional position which is clear and we really ought not be detained in our discussion of what is going on in the world by these kinds of thoughts.

I just thought, Sir, in seconding this motion I would put that issue to rest.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He has an independent Head but he has nobody to move it. I think the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has very graciously agreed to move it. Otherwise, the Chairman might have to move it.

The question that Head 17 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 18 – AUDIT – $249 705

Head 18 was called.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 18 – Audit in the sum of $249 705 stand part.

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

The question that Head 18 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (AS AMENDED) $67 638 045

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 19...could that be right?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is there a seconder?

Head 19 recommitted.

HEAD 29 – ATTORNEY GENERAL – $728 941

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that Head 29 for the amount of $748 941 stand part.
2.30 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Are we on page 53? This is a substantial cut. That is part of the reason. Some of the functions formerly performed by the Attorney-General have now been offloaded onto the Minister of Justice. What I am not clear about, Sir, is to what extent the Attorney General will have any work to do in the next year, as Attorney General, properly so called. Perhaps you can enlighten us. Criminal Prosecutions opposite the pink page, under Attorney General, Part I: that has nothing to do with him. Provision of legal services for Ministries, Departments and some Statutory Boards – Will the Attorney General, therefore, still have responsibility for the settlement of cases and defending cases, civil actions in Court and so on, Sir?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: So much has gone that I am trying to find out what is left.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I see here under Explanatory Notes, the purposes of this sub program are:

(b) Negotiating the purchase of land on behalf of Government, including advising on values and goodwill;

Now, I thought that that used to be under the Ministry of Housing. There was a separate unit that was set up with a heavy legal component attached to the Ministry of Housing – they still have a Unit – which used to deal with the land acquisitions and all the displacements caused by the construction of highways and that sort of thing. I wonder if that work is now being duplicated in the Solicitor's General Chambers, because I thought that the intention was to hive off that to a separate Ministry as we had done and put it in the Ministry of Housing, but something appears here. I suppose this probably means that at the end of the day if you have a dispute, or something like that, it is referred to the Attorney's General Chamber, but it did cause some concern, Sir.

Another thing of which I am not clear. The Ministry of the Attorney General is probably still at Marine House. What about the Ministry of Justice? Where are the headquarters for that, Marine House, too? Ah, I have got it. The Attorney General is at Foreign Affairs and the Minster of Justice is at Marine House.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Some of the functional staff are at Windsor Arms.

Sir, there is not a lot really. I am at a loss, Sir. You know you have never seen me like this. We are only voting for the Attorney General $728,941 in a million dollars expenditure program. So, what can we find to talk about?

Mr. SPEAKER: So, there is a solution.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Attorney-General can have an easy time now, Sir. We share with him the relief that he must now feel from not having to deal with the problems of the Police and the Fire Officers Association who complain bitterly of lack of momentum in that Ministry for the last five years.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What I think we need to know is what sort of legislative programme, and I am very serious about this now. Since Parliamentary Counsel's Services remain with the Attorney-General, what sort of parliamentary programme does the Ministry have in train for the next couple of years. In terms of the introduction of new legislation, there are areas of the criminal law which need to be modernised. I know, because I have seen that the Government has circulated a copy of the Evidence Act which was first drafted, which was left up in the Ministry in my time, and it has been obviously updated and brought into line. A Theft Act was drafted and an Arrestable Offences Act was drafted, a Bail Act was drafted. There was a first draft of a Rehabilitation of Offenders Act which I do not recommend that that draft should come back. The best place to get a Rehabilitation of Offenders Act is from Australia. You will see one in one of those Commonwealth Law Bulletins. The people in the Ministry can research it but there is a good Rehabilitation of Offenders Act I saw reported there.

Now, Offences against the Person. We had started to update the legislation and move it out from the days of 1868 and I hope that the Minister will give some attention because some of the offences under that Act like the Vagrancy Act really no longer bear relevance to contemporary Barbados and indeed, the penalties provided for some of the offences are so far outdated that we need to bring them in line. That is on the criminal side. On the civil side, Mr. Ryan when he was at the University had drafted and submitted to me a new Sale of Goods Act. So, there shouldn't be too much difficulty in ironing out the wrinkles that may have been left in that draft and bringing a new Sale of Goods Act. We really need a completely...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to talk, because this Head has in $728,941. I think we need a code of legislation to bolster protection for consumers – a new Sale of Goods, Hire Purchase, Credit Sales, that sort of thing should all be dealt together. Now, that the Attorney-General has been freed of the trammels of the Police and Fire Department and all the other departments that gave him a hard time he will be able to concentrate now on helping us modernise the legislation.
2.40 p.m.

Now, Sir, the Evidence Act is probably the most forward of all those Bills I mentioned. It is urgently required. I had mentioned to the Attorney-General in the last session during a debate something I thought was worthy of consideration, but which I do not see in the draft. I want to reiterate it again because I know the Attorney General has a Law Reform Committee set up, or a body of persons who are helping in this area. It could be referred to them. It is this.

I have been very unhappy when a person is charged for the importation, or trafficking, or possession of drugs that the quantity remains in police custody until whenever the case is tried. There have been cases of the disappearance of substantial quantities of marijuana and cocaine. We have all heard of the cocaine that was flushed down the sink at Oistins. We have heard a senior officer was disciplined after two suitcases of marijuana were handed over the wall at Boarded Hall to a taxi driver and then disappeared.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Many years ago. I would not put the name in the record. I represented the man in the disciplinary hearing. When you leave large quantities of drugs in the police locker it constitutes a temptation. I put it no higher. I would like to see the Evidence Act amended in such a way as to provide for the admissability of a sample of what has been taken. Let me explain what I mean.

If you arrest a man with 100 pounds of marijuana, there is no need for that quantity of marijuana to remain in police custody until the case is heard next year. In the presence of the accused, and/or his legal representative, a sample should be taken, weighed, marked, identified, do whatever has to be done then you get the analyst report confirming whether it is marijuana, tea leaves or whatever. The bulk should be disposed of as soon as practicable after the initial sample has been taken to the satisfaction of the accused person. We could come into court and say a sample was taken of an ounce or whatever you arrive at, a detail, and get rid of the rest.

Similarly, locking up the vehicles of persons who are charged for offences for long periods or livestock is, I think, another matter in which the Evidence Act could be modernised to allow for the production of photographs. You get a man's car, it does not have to be involved in drugs, for whatever purpose. They carry it in the police backyard and leave it down there. The police have taken their photographs. For months on end it remains there exposed to the elements and it deteriorates.

The Attorney-General knows of a matter which we had great difficulty in settling after a long time where a car deteriorated through no fault of the owner. This was one stolen by an escaped prisoner. The police got it. It was down there for years. Now, again, surely the Evidence Act could be made to provide for the taking of photographs, admitting the photographs in evidence, satisfying the man that you have photographs, let him sign them, do whatever is necessary and get back the car to its proper owner unless you are going to confiscate the car.

If you are going to confiscate the car because it is being used as a conveyance for drugs, or something, that is a different matter altogether. Where confiscation is not an issue, where you only want evidence of the fact that a car was used or whatever, photograph it and get rid of it. It would save the Crown from time to time having to pay unnecessary damages for retaining vehicles which deteriorate in the custody of the Crown.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member can conclude in one minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I think it would simplify the procedure a lot more. I am limiting myself to the areas of drafting. I want to make that submission to the Attorney General in the hope that, perhaps, if it is not too late, the Evidence Act could be looked at with a view to simplifying these administrative procedures.

Certain remarks made by Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Dr. R. C. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, so as to be able to reply one time I notice that among the areas for which the Attorney-General will be retaining responsibility will be negotiating the purchase of land on behalf of the Government including advising on values and goodwill, settlement of claims for negligent damage on the part of Government Departments or employees and the general area of law reform. I think my learned friend, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, was right to emphasise the need for a continuing programme of law reform particularly in the areas identified.

In my view, however, there is an area that is as urgent, if not more urgent, than the ones he has mentioned. It relates to the need to put the Government or the Crown as a defendant on the same footing as any other citizen. The position is right now that if you are injured by a Government employee in the course of duty, a MTW truck, for example, if as a nurse you are injured while lifting a patient in the course of duty at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, or at any of the polyclinics, or in any other health institution, or – this is something I have been dealing with recently – you have a situation where a child goes to the Hospital for an operation, the operation is negligently performed and only 18 months after is the mother told there is nothing that can be done about that arm. An error was made by the doctors along the way and the child no longer has the use of the arm.

2.50 p.m.

By the time that legal advice had been sought over a year has passed since the initial operation was performed and as a result you are statute barred in suing the Government. All that you are left with is to apply to the Attorney-General for an ex gratia payment on the same basis as though the crown had admitted full liability. Invariably you get no response to your answer. Civil Servants seem timid in dealing with these matters. Rather than investigate, they despatch and send a firm note to the Attorney-General saying, "This is a clear case of injustice, it ought not to be allowed to go uncompensated, the facts are as follows." Months, years pass. You call as high as the Permanent Secretary and you get no response. Meanwhile a child is to go through life as a result of the negligence on the part of the Government worker without any compensation because they have moved beyond the period of limitation.

This was the situation in England, too, from which we borrowed our legislation for many years until around 1970 when a special Act was passed that put the Crown on the same basis as any other citizen with respect to being sued. I think that that is a very urgent piece of law reform, Mr. Chairman, which is needed in Barbados. I am appealing to my learned friend, the Attorney-General to ensure that at the top of his law reform programme is putting the Crown on the same basis with respect to the period within which an action for negligence can be brought. The suffering as a result of the present situation has been enormous. It is continuing and until the reform measure is brought to Parliament, I would urge the Attorney-General to give instructions to his department that the claims for ex gratia payments be processed with despatch, if necessary be drawn to his attention so that we can ensure that justice is done in the interim.

The second point on which I should like to comment, Mr. Chairman, has to do with the large number of people – this dates back to when we were in Government – who had their lands compulsorily acquired, some of them now 15 years and more and they have not been compensated. The machinery is far too rigid. The whole process is far too cumbersome and too slow. It happened in the time when the Barbados Labour Party was in office. It has continued in the time of the Democratic Labour Party. I wonder at this point what is the amount owed. I wish the Honourable Attorney-General would let us know how much money is still owing to people for compulsory acquisition of land? How far back do these claims go? And how many persons, 200, 300 are actually involved?

It is a blot on our system of justice in a way that here in Barbados when people could be deprived of the use of their land compulsorily by the Government and then 15 years have passed and there is no compensation received by the owners of that land. I am not attempting to distribute any political blame. The situation obtained both in the time of the Barbados Labour Party and in the time of the Democratic Labour Party. But I think that it is about time that some overhaul of the machinery of compensation is put in place so that these inordinate delays are avoided.

The third point on which I should like to comment, Mr. Chairman, has got to do with the fact that the Government is involved in major litigation in the name of the Attorney-General. As I said in here yesterday, it is no overstatement to say that in every week in this country some 10 writs are filed against the Attorney-General, sometimes more relating to all forms of action. The position is that you cannot conduct a major litigation department unless there are the funds available whereby payments can be made in the court. It seems to me that a lot of the matters with which the Government finds itself involved could be settled short of actually going into court and starting a trial, if only the Attorney-General had a vote whereby he could make a payment in the court $25 000, $30 000, $40 000, $60 000 as the case may be and he says, "Look I am making this payment to the court. We regard this as a reasonable compensation for the claim that you have brought," well-knowing that if the other side does not take it up, they run the risk of having to pay the Government's cost, rather than winning the case because no payment has been made when there is a clear case of negligence either in part or in whole, but the Government is in no position to make a payment in the court. I would hope that my learned friend, the Attorney-General would use the weight of his office to press for funds of $\$^1/2$ million or so to be available to the Solicitor-General's department whereby payment in the court can be more readily resorted to with the hope, and I am sure with the result, of avoiding a lot of litigation which at this stage need not go beyond the point of pleadings, if indeed that device and that fund was available.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I want very much to endorse what the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has said about the limitation period in respect of certain cases. I want to reinforce this because it is not always a case of negligence on the part necessarily of medical practitioners but sometimes and particularly nowadays when environmental illnesses are becoming more prevalent sometimes, and more often nowadays, it is the nature of the illness itself. So that through no fault of the victims they discover that they in fact have got a particular condition or that they in fact become invalids or disabled in some material way through no fault of their own. They are denied justice. It is working great hardship on individuals and on families. There is really no reason why this unfair situation should continue.

Like my learned friend I have a similar matter on hand and it really is brutally unfair that through no fault of your client's that...These matters can be addressed quickly. That is what I particularly want to address, Mr. Chairman.

I am concerned that legal matters are now fragmented, according to Estimates into three major departments. I cannot call them Ministries. In the Prime Minister's Office we have the Supreme Court. Then we have the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety which carries the Magistrates Court, the Police, Traffic Wardens, the Fire Brigade, Prisons, Probation, the Government Industrial Schools and Immigration. And we have the Attorney-General's Office which deals with Parliamentary Counsel, the work that the Solicitor-General does and the work that the Director of Public Prosecutions does. When it all used to be under one Head, it was bad enough then, the delays of justice.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon?

Aside.

Miss. B. A. MILLER: It is true they were never under one Head but they were never quite as fragmented as they are now. The delays of justice were bad enough then. We just heard the Honourable Member for St. Joseph make the point. We are very conscious as practitioners particularly that justice delayed is often justice denied to people. They never get their just desert. I hope that this further fragmentation now will not lead to further delays, inordinate delays. It wreaks havoc, especially the situation recently described about people whose properties have been acquired by the Government. It makes for terrible disputes in the case of the winding up of estates. It puts families at war. Interest sometimes cannot compensate. So, I too, I would like to urge upon the Attorney General, that now in his much pared down Ministry we would hope that matters long outstanding and matters which in the profession we do identify as matters of urgent priority will now occupy his immediate attention.

3.00 p.m.

It has been mentioned in here before, now is as good an opportunity as any to mention again this whole question of the new hall of justice. There is a large body of opinion within the legal profession and the para-legal professions, and all of those which are in one way or another allied to the legal profession, that the proposed location is not a favourable one, especially considering that all of the other offices and persons who have to deal in the court are really at some distance from it.

It means that all attorneys' offices will be at much more now than walking distance from the new Supreme Court, and that people will have to employ mobile clerks, mobile secretaries, I mean, if you want to go to the Law Library then you will have to get in a motor car to go somewhere. Sometimes, in the course of a day, two, three times, you find yourself having to go to the Registry.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Where we would put it? In my opinion, exactly where the Supreme Court is located now continues to be the best location point. All you do, is to temporarily re-house, and let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is square footage upon square footage of space

available in central Bridgetown now and some of it well within the precincts of the present location of the Supreme Court. In my opinion, I would re-house people temporarily and custom build a proper hall of justice. Right where it is, you can have a four storied building with parking and cells at ground level, a whole floor to accommodate the Magistrate's Courts, a whole floor to accommodate the High Court, a whole floor to accommodate administration, library, etc., etc. The Registry building there can be built upon, it is on a firm soft stone foundation. I don't have any doubt in my mind, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that is in the end still the best location for it.

You are next door to the police, because with a new location you are asking the Police too, to get in their motor cars and that easy access through the wicket gate into the Magistrate's Court is gone. We are not talking about 150 yards, we are talking about convenience and people's time for which they pay. Being a non-practitioner you cannot appreciate these niceties. Even now, police will nip in from Central Station through the wicket gate and into the Magistrate's Court. Three, four, five times a day this happens. When people find themselves up in Passage Road that will not then be the case.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Miss B. A. MILLER: What logic can inform a move from a central hall of justice from the general precincts and environment where all the other support services are, such as the Supreme Court, all lawyers' offices, etc., etc.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, if it is thought that is not a good enough location, and there is a lot of room, there is an old parade ground behind there, going on to Tudor Street, police don't parade anymore, not behind there. Stop fooling ourselves. There are alternative locations as well. The block between Walrond Street – put that down in writing – and Gills Road, there is an entire block which was formerly the property of Cotton Factory and the Central Foundry. That is another admirable location for a Supreme Court complex for a new hall of justice in Bridgetown. There are even locations in Roebuck Street which would still be central enough so that attorneys will not feel themselves discommoded.

I mean, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not aware this is a subject which has undergone any consultation as far as the profession is concerned and it is not too late to do so. It is not too late for the Ministers to do with legal business to consult with the profession. I do not see why it should not be a subject of public discussion. Barbadians love litigation, but I really do not see why we should discommode all of the support services and all of those who have to work in this hall of justice in the process.

Barbados is not the only place which will have built a new hall of justice within recent times. In Trinidad they did that and they found it possible to make it easily accessible to attorneys and those who practise. That is my contribution, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, in relation to the administration of justice, there are some areas of concern that like other members on this side, I have. Mr. Chairman, you will have heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph make some suggestions in relation to the improvement of the administration of justice. Sir, my concerns are, that in this country we have two acts, one called the Trespass to Property Reform Act and the other one called the Maintenance Act which are not working, Sir, at their best and if you read the Trespass to Property Reform Act in its entirety, it is an Act designed to make sure that when people trespass on other people's property, that the Magistrate's Court can make a ruling, either by way of fine or by way of imprisonment, to ensure that acts like that are not repeated. But, that Act does not permit a Magistrate's Court to make an order not to trespass. The Magistrate's hands are tied where he, or she, either has to fine or confine, but cannot make a magisterial order for the person not to repeat the act.

We know that generally speaking, Magistrates do not have any power, Sir, to grant injunctions, but it is my view, Sir, that if that Act were amended we could have a situation where some part of the act can be amended to permit Magistrates to order people not to trespass on people's property so that we do not get breaches of the peace. At the moment, if I trespass on my neighbour's property and he warns me not to trespass, and I trespass again, and I am taken to court I can either be fined or jailed but the Magistrate does not have power according to the Act to tell me not to trespass again.
3.10 p.m.

The magistrate cannot grant an order. I am suggesting to my learned and noble friend, the Attorney General, to have a look at that Act because it is possible that a Magistrate might take a chance and make an order and then an attorney-at-law might very well prove that the Magistrate had acted *ultra vires*. In Barbados, Magistrates derive their powers from statutes. Magistrates do not have any inherent or common-law jurisdiction and, therefore, Magistrates in dispensing justice are bound to follow the written law. I have discovered that Magistrates feel very, very uncomfortable when they have to make a ruling in matters of trespass or when they have to fine or jail somebody in circumstances where justice would warrant than just to order the person not to come back and trespass. I think this Act is Chapter 155(b). I urge both the Attorney General and the Honourable Member for St. James South to have a look at it.

In relation to the Maintenance Act, which I believe is Chapter 216, this is an Act which is seeing a lot of

problems emerging precisely because it is designed, as one of its purposes, that the children of single parent mothers receive maintenance from fathers who do not necessarily maintain their children. We have a situation in Barbados where a Court can order a man to pay maintenance for a child but that man does not have any automatic right of access to the child. I am asking the Attorney-General and the Member for St. James South to check that. What has happened, Mr. Chairman, is that a lot of men knowing that the Courts do not have any legal right written down in the statute to give them rights of access refuse maintenance on the grounds that, "It is my child. Yes, I admit it that it is my child but I will be supporting it and cannot see it." Some women in Barbados also recognize that the spirit of the Act is to treat the mother as the single parent of the child who is to receive financial support from a man but who, for all intents and purposes as the Act is at the moment, is very much the sole parent of the child. This has created a measure of injustice. It is my view that this Committee, the Member for Christ Church West Central, and the Member for St. James South who both now exercise a concurrent supervision in justice look at this matter.

There is also another concern where at the moment in Barbados we have some peculiar anomalies in relation to magisterial jurisdictions. For example, Sargeants Village, Vauxhall, Christ Church still fall under the jurisdiction of District A rather than the Christ Church courts. Okay. Hastings, Christ Church is under District A, the City. I believe that the Government might very well have a look at these jurisdictions because those rules were laid down years ago when the sort of public transport that we have now did not exist then. They may have worked in the interest of convenience 30 or 40 years ago, but to my mind they represent anomalies that need to be addressed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney General.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, this is not a final reply but so many interventions have been made on that side that I think it is about time something be said from this side.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: What is that? The Honourable Member for St. Thomas was at a loss as to where to start but as time went by and he was on his feet, like a lawyer, something eventually came to his mind and he found something to speak about, which is proper I suppose. He eventually got into the area of law reform and law revision which is essentially now the function of the Attorney General. He wondered what work was left for the Attorney General. But I think that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas above all else would know that those are some very significant and important areas of the law and certainly the advisory role of the Attorney General is something which must not and cannot be minimized.

We talk about the fusion of the work which was formally done by the Minister of Legal Affairs as well. But if one looked at the portfolios which the Minister of Legal Affairs had and look at them in the context of what happens in other countries, you might well come to the conclusion that in other countries what is regarded as the Ministry of Home Affairs would properly cover some of those functions like supervision of the Police, Fire Service, Prisons, Immigration, and a whole lot of other matters of that kind. These are essentially matters which fall within that purview and which in other countries fall within the purview of a Ministry of Home Affairs.

So that the other thing which one has to look at is that there can be some inconsistency in the work of an Attorney General and in relation of a Minister of Home Affairs there can be some areas of conflict which can make for some difficulty. So that the existence of the Office of the Attorney General to deal with matters essentially connected with advising the Government in the areas of law, law reform, and law revision is still a very large area. Even when the two Ministries were together it was the largest area of the work of the Attorney General and the Minister of Legal Affairs. What has perhaps upset the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is that....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I am not upset at all.

Hon. M. A. KING: What perhaps concerns the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is that he had escalated such a programme in relation to the Police and Fire Service that he needed a butt against which to direct his enthusiasm in these areas. So that the fact that those areas are removed from the Attorney General have, I suppose to some extent, removed from him the opportunity to continue in the way in which he has continued. But I suppose the Honourable Members on the other side still have the opportunity to put it in the public's mind. I made this point a little earlier in the debate and before the last election the thing was abroad all over the place. Look how much Maurice King is getting sued. Every time somebody is suing Maurice King and they created the impression. The constitutional position is....

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Do not mind that. The constitutional position is that any action brought against the Government must be brought against the Attorney General. But even the newspapers and the Press, I think they are wicked people to do this by saying, "X, Y, and Z are suing Maurice King", rather than say that the action is being brought against the Government. They would say that Maurice King is being sued again. Maurice King is being

sued. It has not changed. It went abroad and people throughout the length and breadth of the constituency said, "What is wrong with you? Everybody is suing you." There is no way that you can explain to people that when the Crown is being sued the action must be brought in the name of the Attorney General.

The Honourable Member raised questions in relation to areas of law reform. He wanted to know what was the Government's law reform agenda. He recognized that there is a Law Reform Committee in the Attorney General's Chambers which I have set up which involves some members of staff of the University who contribute to discussions on a variety of legislation which has been referred to them from time to time. It is under the Chairmanship of the officer in charge of law revision.
3.20 p.m.

They have put out a new Evidence Act. I think it has been referred to the Bar Association for comment. Some of the points which have been raised by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I am sure, can be effectively addressed in the comments of the Bar Association, but that new Evidence Act, Mr. Chairman, is designed to be very modern to deal with all the modern issues relating to the admissibility of evidence which need to be addressed. We would want to ensure that as wide a cross-section of opinion as possible is available so that a modern, comprehensive Evidence Bill is available.

The Honourable Member made mention of a Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. We have already completed a draft of that legislation. I thought it had gone to the Bar Association as well, but that is complete. A Limitation of Actions Act has been completed in draft as well and that too, I thought had been sent to the Bar Association.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: No. I am saying we sent them to the Bar Association and I am not sure that we have the comments back.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: I did one the other day in relation to the Domestic Violence Act. When I mentioned that I had sent it to them and kept writing them for a response and didn't get one and eventually came in here with it, it was said, why didn't you refer this to the Bar Association? They said not, but the files showed it was done.

The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that wherever possible I try to involve the professional association and the University in constructing legislation and we will make every effort to ensure that that legislation gets before Parliament at an early opportunity. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Bill is ready and is available. It is at the stage where it can be introduced in this House. The Limitation of Actions Act – there is not much that needs to be done on that and I am sure it will be here soon.

The Committee has looked at the Theft Act and has completed its work on it and it is in the process of submitting a final draft to me, similarly so, with the Evidence Act and a number of other bits of legislation which the Committee has to look at. A Financial Institutions Bill has been completed and an International Business Companies Act. All these bits of legislation have already been completed and just the additional procedures in getting them before Parliament would need to be gone through.

What I have also done is to seek to get from the Ministries an indication of what areas of law reform they would wish to have done and to have them list an area of priority in respect of the work of law reform.

In the area of commercial law: This is one of the areas to which attention is being made. There is a group at the University which is looking at this whole area of the reform of commercial law and we are working closely with them with a view to reforming the law in these areas. This would include reforms in relation to the Law of Bankruptcy, in relation to Consumer Protection, Sale of Goods and areas of that kind. The Law Reform Committee which was set up has a wide mandate to look at all these areas which were referred to them from time to time.

Now, the question was raised by the Honourable Member for the City about what she perceives to be the fragmentation in relation to law areas. The appointment of judges is the area of the Supreme Court which falls under the Prime Minister. That's where it always has been and there is where it remains and that is by virtue of the provision of the Constitution. The Supreme Court falls under the Ministry of Justice, Apart from the appointment of the judges, all aspects of the Supreme Court and all the other courts fall under the Ministry of Justice. So, I don't think one can really say that there is a lot of fragmentation. The areas which fall under the Ministry of Justice are essentially matters for a Ministry of Home Affairs; the Prime Minister retaining responsibility for the appointment of judges. The Attorney's General functions are essentially the functions of an Attorney General.

Questions were raised by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, I believe, about the problems of land acquisition, about the extent to which money was still owed to people whose properties have been acquired. That does not now fall under the Attorney General. Some time ago a special unit was set up under the Ministry of Housing so that that has been for some time the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing. If you look under Head 37 you will see....

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: The actual negotiations are in fact done by the Ministry of Housing. The whole acquisition process is now done by the Ministry of Housing but what this note indicates is probably a little misleading. What does happen is that in the final analysis, the ultimate responsibility is that of the Attorney General and once the Ministry of Housing completes its works all references are made to the Attorney General who eventually makes a final pronouncement on the matter.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph had made a plea that there should perhaps be a fund under the control of the Attorney-General with the purposes of paying monies into court to meet claims as payments in where litigation would have to have been started. That is a position with which I agree. There were two positions put on it: one was raised by the Leader of the Opposition which makes the point that the fund should be sufficient to cover all claims for compensation and thereby anticipating the situation where a decision has already been made whether it is by settlement or whether by order of the court and that once the order for payment has been made then the Attorney's General Chambers should have a fund out of which those payments could be made.

If I could just conclude on this, Sir. I am not so much concerned about that, from the point of view, that in the final analysis, where payments out are to be made, usually there is the approval of Cabinet required for the payments out of the funds, an important point being that irrespective of where the responsibility for the fund is, the submission would have to be made and whatever delays there are would not be as a result of the process of getting the funds out.

The other point which the Honourable Member for St. Joseph made about the availability of funds to meet payments into court where litigation has been commenced – is one, in fact, which I always thought was necessary for the effective management of this aspect of the business.
3.30 p.m.

Since you have indicated, Mr. Chairman, my time is up, I will pause at this time and let some other Honourable Member contribute.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I will not be long. I would just like to raise three or four matters with the Attorney-General. I will raise them very quickly since the debate has ranged far and wide. It has covered most of the concerns of Honourable Members on this side.

I would like the Attorney-General in looking at the whole question of law reform to include in his review the Public Trustee Act in so far as it relates to the Public Trustee as the person who looks after small estates mainly for the people who are indigent and are not in a position to retain counsel to look after them. I see it on a regular basis that a number of small estates with small bank accounts in Bridgetown many of those accounts remain in the banks because the people who are entitled to the estate cannot afford the legal cost of taking out letters of administration.

The provision for the Public Trustee to look after that interest is a useful one but sometimes it takes a lot of time. The process is not as simple as it could be. Therefore, I am suggesting to the Attorney-General that a look be taken at the Public Trustee to act on behalf of small estates whether it can be simplified and avoid the number of problems that occur and that are being experienced.

Another point I would really like the Attorney-General to look at is the question of the collation of legal opinions in the Attorney-General's office. Two things are happening. One is that Members of the Attorney-General's Chambers are historically writing the same opinions over and over again. There are certain situations that arise in terms of Government Departments mainly in the area of tort much more so than contact. With every new intake of people in the Attorney-General's Chambers there seems to be a different person writing an opinion that has been written on several occasions before. I think it would be useful, not only from the point of view of saving a lot of time in those Chambers, but for persons who have claims against the Government to have their claims dealt with expeditiously if, indeed, the opinions are collated and can easily be found.

There are two other areas, Sir. Everybody has been mentioning the areas that need an urgent look at for law reform. The Attorney-General himself mentioned some. They were comprehensively dealt with by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas – what have been pending, indeed, where they have been draughtless. Some have been left from the time I was Attorney-General. That is six years ago but they have never reached this far.

One that I want the Attorney-General to take a special look at is the Bail Act. It is extremely difficult for legal practitioners to give any intelligent and informed advice to their clients what would happen to them if they came before the court in respect of bail. It is a very capricious system that is being operated at the moment. Those of us who are practising would know that it becomes more and more capricious as the weeks, not as the years, go by. You can almost tell from who is a particular judicial officer what kind of difficulty he is likely to experience.

I would have thought that, perhaps, in the absence of a Bail Act there would have been practice direction from the Chief Justice for the Magisterial Bench but that has not been forthcoming. That makes it even more compelling that we get a Bail Act so that you can advise clients in a

responsible way as to what is likely to happen to them. I suspect that a lot of people are being deprived of their constitutional rights by the way in which the bail applications are being treated in Barbados.

The Honourable Attorney-General is not the only person who has welcomed the Home Affairs aspect. I thought when I was Attorney General that they could have been moved from my department too so you could get on with the constitutional role as being the principal legal advisor to the Government. I think that now you have a greater opportunity to look at these areas that you could, perhaps, spend some time looking at that. These are the only two I have to mention, but we have, in the long list from the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and, indeed, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the question of Indecency with Children Act.

The Offences Against the Person Act and the Laws relating to Sexual Offences do not adequately cover the kind of offence that is currently being committed against children in Barbados. You well know that the Offences Against the Person Act require that there be some physical contact just as you know the new Bills that are currently pending before Parliament, for example, the Domestic Violence Bill does not adequately cover a lot of situations that have arisen in recent years.

Indeed, it has now become common knowledge that fairly senior people in the Public Service have been investigated for certain conduct in relation to children, the type of conduct that all of us would consider absolutely morally reprehensible. The offences that they committed were not under the umbrella of the existing Criminal Law in relation to offences of a lewd nature in relation to children. That is absolutely essential at this stage. I hope the Attorney-General will give that his urgent attention. I said I did not want to be long, but I must mention also the question of....
3.40 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: No, it does not cover the Indecency with Children Act. If you take a few school children and take them into a building in Bridgetown and get them to do things with one another and take photographs and all that kind of thing, that is not adequately covered. Mind you, I do not mind what is pending, but in my view, by looking at the Act, it does not.

Anyhow, I am moving off that because I want to get over this very quickly, because we want to move on. I want to raise the question of Treasury Counsel.

We had a situation a few short years ago where a legal officer was assigned to the Inland Revenue Department to work on an ongoing basis with that Department to provide legal advice on a constant daily basis in tax matters. That Counsel had developed an enormous amount of expertise and, with those who had to deal with these things, realised that the contribution of that particular Counsel could not be paid for, to the value that the Government and others were getting.

There has been a movement away from the concept of Treasury Counsel and I think the difficulty lies in the traditional constitutional position of the Attorney-General; that the Attorney-General, as the chief legal advisor to the Government, takes responsibility for all legal advice to the Government. Therefore, to put Treasury Counsel or Counsel to Inland Revenue who would advise those Departments, and the Departments act on the basis of their opinions, would be in a way to derogate from the constitutional authority of the Attorney General. I believe that that is an area that needs to be reviewed too. It needs to be reviewed on the Constitution in so far as it applies to this overall role of the Attorney-General and the grant of legal advice.The development of Barbados at this stage requires that there be a wider understanding of the development nature of the law. And all the areas that are new, for example, the area of offshore financial activity would require at this stage that a lawyer who is an expert and trained in that area be available on a continuing and permanent basis to be giving advice without having reference to the Attorney-General and sending files back and forth all the time. I think it has to happen. You cannot just sit back and rely on a lot of old constitutional norms that have obviously outlived their usefulness in the context of Barbados in the 1990s and where you are trying to go. These things need to be looked at. There are a lot of small things. The collation of legal opinions in the Attorney-General's Office is a minor thing that the Attorney-General can deal with by telling the people in his department that as from next Monday I want such and such done.

But the point I am making in relation to the role of counsel in certain Government departments is one that has a constitutional import and requires a certain amount of study. I am sure that since the proposed suggestion is coming from this side, we would be here ready to talk to the Attorney-General, people in the Government, in Parliament, in Committee, so that we could bring the experience that we had in these areas to bear on any decision that is necessary in the circumstances.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, a couple of points of response in relation to the comment made by the Honourable Member for St. George South. Let me just take up the last point he has made about the availability of counsel to advise particular Government Departments and he mentioned the Department of Inland Revenue and of the fact that an officer has been assigned to deal with Inland Revenue problems. That officer was a member of the staff of the Attorney-General's Chambers.

There is no great difficulty about dealing with a matter of this kind. I think that ultimately the Attorney-General has to be responsible for advising the Government in a whole variety of areas. There is no difficulty from the point of view of assigning counsel to particular departments to deal with issues concerned with that department. In fact for instance, the officer who had been dealing with matters relating to Inland Revenue developed an expertise in that area, was terribly interested in that area and spent time dealing with the problems, the legal issues required to be dealt with by the Department of Inland Revenue. But the officer was still an officer of the Chambers of the Attorney-General but was regarded as the expert in that area.

The point is that even in the Solicitor General's Department where specific officers write opinions on issues, it is not every opinion which is written by a lawyer which comes to the Attorney-General. The lawyers function as lawyers and advise and I am sure that a lot of opinions which are written, a lot of advice given by officers in the Solicitor-General's Department, a lot of those opinions do not even reach, and are not seen, except on review, by the Attorney-General.

The point I am making is that the assignment of officers to various departments is no big thing, I think, and can be dealt with administratively. It is only a matter of having the people available of sufficient quality and numbers whom you can rely on to deal with the legal problems of departments by themselves. That is a matter which I think can be addressed administratively.

The Honourable Member for St. George South made some proposals in relation to legislation relating to indecency of children. I am not too sure of the full extent to which the Honourable Member contemplated legislation in this area. But towards the end of the last Parliament, there was a Protection of Children Act which was passed by this Honourable House which seemed to cover the example which he gave, for instance, about somebody taking a group of children into a building in Bridgetown and photographing them and so forth. That is now an offence under the law by virtue of the Protection of Children Act which was passed in the last days of the last Parliament.

If there are other areas.....Then there is the Sexual Offences Act which has been laid in this Honourable House which will be the subject of debate in due course. I do not want to anticipate what will happen with that legislation. That is perhaps an area where, if there is still further any lacuna in the law in relation to that, it can be adequately addressed.

As a consequence of the laying of the Sexual Offences Act in this Parliament for debate, there will clearly be some consequential amendments needed to the Offences Against the Person Act because the provisions of the law in relation to the Sexual Offences Act covered by the Bill which is now before Parliament, the existing provisions, are in the existing Offences Against the Person Act. There will be need to review the Offences Against the Person Act as a consequence and that is one of the bits of legislation which is now before the Law Reform Committee which I have established. An amendment to the Offences Against the Person Act should shortly be before this Parliament.

The Honourable Member made reference to the Bail Act as well. That too is one which is to be considered. But I also make the point having said that a Bail Act is in draft and is one which the Committee will be considering as well that sometimes you wonder why bail is not something which could properly be left to the discretion of the administering justice. I understand the problem which the Honourable Member is concerned about and which the Honourable Member has raised. But essentially it would be so much better if there were no need to set down strict and fully regulatory conditions in relation to bail and whether judicial officers could administer and administer the applications for bail in a manner which would meet the requirements of the profession.

If I may just quickly refer, Mr. Chairman, to the Protection of Children's Act which was passed on December 14, 1990. The long title defines it as:

> "An Act to provide for the protection of children from exploitation by preventing the making of indecent photographs of them and for matters related thereto."

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Making indecent photographs? I am saying that that was the example which you gave. I also made the point that I was not too sure of the full extent to which you were concerned about this matter and that in any event if this does not address the concerns which you have, I am saying that those concerns can, I am sure, be adequately addressed when debate on the Sexual Offences Bill takes place in this Honourable Chamber.

Reference was made by the Honourable Member for St. George South about the collation of legal opinions in the department. Clearly with modernization of techniques in departments, with computerization coming more and more into use and into vogue, clearly it would be useful to have all the opinions computerised so that they can be referenced and pulled out quite easily.

3.50 p.m.

This is not an area on which there is any difference of opinion and it is certainly an area which from the point of view of modernising legal offices which is the direction, clearly, in which we should all move is something to be aspired to.

Reference was made to the Public Trustee Act and the need to amend that, for instance, to make it easier for small estates to save themselves the burden of having to undergo expenses to get small sums of money out of bank accounts. There is some legislation in fact on the statute book which does make some provision for this, but clearly that legislation I suppose needs to be reviewed a bit because certain administrative difficulties do arise which tend to cause frustration to a lot of people trying to get small amounts of money out of bank accounts, so, I give the Honourable Member the assurance that is one of the areas which will be addressed in due course.

I have not spent any time, Mr. Chairman, responding to the comments of the Honourable Member for the City in relation to the location of the judicial centre because as many persons as there are, there can be as many opinions on this issue of the....

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Yes, *tot homines quot sententiae.* As many persons there are, there can be different opinions on the location of the judicial centre. We have taken a decision to locate the centre on an area, it is a clean area, no big lot of demolition, no relocations. The work of the Supreme Court as presently located can go on without any disruptions whilst the new judicial centre is being constructed in a new area, and in addition to everything else the existing buildings where the Supreme Court is, can provide accommodation for a lot of the work of the Magistrate's courts which still needs to be done and which still takes up a large percentage of litigation in this country. So, that area will still be a judicial centre, it will still be a centre from which the administration or justice takes place and from which a very large section of the administration of justice will continue to take place.

The work of the Supreme Court – there should not be any great difficulty moving from your Chambers to the Supreme Court building to do Supreme Court cases and I am sure that not an awful lot of lawyers – far more lawyers are involved in appearing before the Magistrates, and in doing magistrate's court work, than would be involved in the Supreme Court.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: The member for St. Joseph is not concerned about that, we all know that. The others maybe, but certainly not the member for St. Joseph.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, I was not making that point at all from my chair, Sir, I was merely saying that now that the distinguished Honourable Member for St. Joseph is in the Inner Bar he will not be butting about the Magistrates' Courts and therefore that question would not arise.

Hon. M. A. KING: Some lawyers have the view you don't even need Chambers. I remember when I started to practise one of the old time lawyers said to me: What are you worrying about Chambers for you can see people under the tree you know, you don't need to have Chambers to see them. The point I am making, Mr. Chairman, is that is the area of the location of the judicial centre. I don't think we will get anywhere pursuing a debate on the location of that area. We have taken the decision on it, we would wish to get ahead with it because so many governments have from time to time talked in terms of providing a judicial centre. We have talked about it, and talked about it and nothing has been done and I would like to express the hope that certainly during the currency of this administration that a judicial centre on the new site will be completed. I think that is all I need to say, Mr. Chairman.

The question that the sum of $728 941 under Head 29 – Ministry of the Attorney-General stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY – $29 489 035

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: The Ministry of Justice and Public Safety is a new Ministry created after the last elections and has responsibility for the Police, Prisons, Fire Service, Government Industrial Schools, the Immigration, CERO, the Magistrates Courts, the Supreme Court, not of course including the appointment of Judges and the Law. The estimate is for $29 489 035. I beg that Head 28 stand part.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know it is a new Ministry and a new Minister who has just come out of an election campaign and he cannot be expected this year to be as familiar with the details of his ministry as perhaps we would expect next year. Since he began by saying it is a new Ministry and he was appealing for some light, Sir, he will hold some lashes next year, not this one.

I am more concerned, not so much with the everyday matters, because this is a Head, Sir, that comes up every year and because there tends to be a preponderance of lawyers in the House, everybody has a go at this Ministry and talks about his own interest and predilections and so on. I am not going to, not this year, get into a long debate about what is wrong with the Magistrate's Court and the Police Force and the Prisons and so on. They repeat them every year.

What I am more concerned about is given the fact that we all accept, on both sides, that something needs to be done in terms of modernising the physical structures that support the administration of justice, to what extent is Government able in 1991/92 fiscal year to meet some of the

concerns of the various departments under this Ministry in terms of the provision of enhanced physical accommodation.
4.00 p.m.

In particular, Sir, broadly the police in the last three years became very militant because they are wanting immediate attention to remedying some of the physical deficiencies within the Police Department. In the address of the Chief Fire Officer in December 1990, he was very critical of the then Attorney-General's ability to deliver on number of promises which had been to the Fire Association in the previous December 1989, promises which really involved the expenditure of small sums, comparatively speaking – $180 000, $160 000, $89 000 here and there dotted about at the various fire stations. He complained that after a year the problems had not been certainly redressed even if they had been addressed.

I think that it is essential that an attempt be made to move some way towards satisfying some of the legitimate and reasonable demands of these various Forces, but you cannot do all. You cannot do all in one year nor in five years, not all for the Police, Fire Service, and all for the various other departments such as Registry, Process Serving, and all of that. It has to be a consistent programme.

Now I am not sure, Sir, if the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety has a block vote and a structure where the Ministry itself can now spend its own money on the capital side without relying on MTW. You will never get it done. MTW is not that bad. They are worse. I started that, Sir, in 1986. In 1987, we voted in $1 million in here so that we could set up our own building department and do it from in-house. It was discontinued by the Democratic Labour Party and then after two years they recognized that waiting on MTW you would never get it done as a client Ministry and they therefore had to do it. A lady was appointed as a Buildings Officer and various people. I do not know how much money is allocated and how the Minister proposes to disburse this money among the various departments. In other words, I would like to hear first of all what is the total capital – I think it is $7 million; I suspect in looking at it the other day that I did see some figure like $7.5 million - and how he intends to spend this money and whether he has established a programme of priorities.

Now the Prime Minister on the Second Reading did say that they were going to do the Holetown complex. So presumably the bulk of the money will be spent there. Some will be spent on finishing the Police Band Headquarters. Those two I can identify from previous experience. But what you are going to do about Districts B and C. Horse Hill is bad too and also Belleplaine. The Process Serving Department is renting from the Hunte people and it is about time that we look at a separate department for them. Registry needs constant maintenance and then we have all of the Magistrates Courts other than Oistins to consider in terms of a plan for the gradual rehabilitation of the justice system.

The Notes do not particularly help in a resolution of the questions that I have raised other than under Police Services opposite Page 46, Subprogramme Zero.l. Provision is included to complete the capital work at the Police Band Headquarters, District B, District A, and Central. Now District D has a particular interest for me, Sir. It has nothing to do with this Minister but District D was allowed to become dilapidated. Between 1985 and 1986, the year that I was Attorney-General, either $23 000 or $25 000 was then spent to do necessary work in terms of repairs of floors and repairs of the whole of downstairs at District D to put in cupboards, fix up the kitchen, and paint. There are two buildings near to the station, an out-house and the Sergeant's Quarters, and stables. The stables are now overgrown by vine. There is no roof there. In fact, the best thing that could be done rather than harbour rodents will be to push it down and clear the site. It will be a breeding ground for rodents.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I think though that perhaps I really have not gone into the Sergeants' Quarters for 18 months. It is becoming more and more foreboding, but I think the Minister should look at it to see if that can be saved and rehabilitated in any way. If not, that should be cleared too. But it is a pity that the former Sergeants' Quarters have been allowed to fall into such a terrible state of disrepair throughout the island. I have always felt and spoken publicly and fearlessly about it, Sir. The Sargeant's Quarters provided accommodation that could be used once rehabilitated for helping us develop our corrective systems. There is no reason why the Sargeants Quarters could not be renovated and be used as remand homes or attendance centres, expand the system of CSO, and places where the Probation Department could meet and carry out community service. It is criminal neglect to have allowed those buildings which were of substance – I am not saying they were all in top class shape, but they were structurally sound – to allow them to go into the state of disrepair that has attended them in the last 5 years.
4.10 p.m.

I don't want to get on to the corrective and rehabilitative services and where we should be going in terms of penal reform. I have written about that, Sir, and Members on the other side know what I have written about it. I talked about it in the election campaign and I am not going to bore Members at this time. When we debate the Sexual Offences Bill or something like that, perhaps, I will have something to say on it then. However, I would urge the Minister in his assessment of properties available to this Ministry to look at what is the position with the old

sergeants quarters at all the stations. The Police want to restart the Police Boys' Clubs and they may be useful in those programs.

There was one other matter that I wanted to raise.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, I would prefer then, Sir, to let somebody else speak and come back for another fifteen.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, we spent a lot of time on the Magistrates' Courts and I wouldn't want to dwell on it, only to ask in respect to them before I go on to another topic, if the Government proposes ever to start to build the Magistrates' Court at Glebe, St. George? The Prime Minister has a way of talking about people going back. He doesn't like anybody to go back because when you go back there are too many reminders that are uncomfortable.

There was money in the Estimates of 1986 for the construction of a Magistrates' Court at the Glebe in St. George as part of the development of the central St. George area. A lot of money was spent up there on moving people's houses and building a new school, a new polyclinic and a new playing field, and the police station and the court in central St. George on the site of the old St. George Primary School was to have been an important part of that development for two reasons. One is that the modern concept of policing in Barbados is different from what it used to be. You will notice, Sir, that the police stations in Barbados are on hills – Bissex, District E, St. Thomas, Boarded Hall. The reason why they were placed on hills is because the slaveowners wanted security on the hills to tell when the slaves were coming up from the valleys to the hills to riot and misbehave. They wanted to be able to look down and see that they were down there behaving themselves. That is past. The new concept is to carry the police station in areas where the people live. Central St. George is an area that has been built up tremendously in the past fifteen years or so. There are big areas like Rowans, Walkers and Valley. The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central has even been given a visa. He is now up there, Sir. So, there is a big area in central St. George where there is high density population, and it was part of the plan to have the police station in an area where the people live.

The Commissioner of Police is always, from the time of his commission, talking about community policing, the close interaction between the police and the people. The court was to have been built there also and the old police station at Boarded Hall was to have been used. This falls under the new, cohobblopot Ministry. This Ministry of Justice and Public Safety has a little bit of everything. I have never seen so many unconnected and unrelated topics thrown together in one Ministry as I have seen in it.

The Fire Service is under the Ministry of Justice. The plan was also to put a fire station at the old District B police station.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, one thing has got to be understood, and that is, representatives of constituencies do not determine and carry out Government policy. A representative of a constituency can't go into his constituency and build a fire station.

They were to build a fire station at the old District B police station. Every year hundreds of acres of canes are burnt out of the St. George valley. Sometimes it ranges from almost at Edgecumbe at the corner of St. Philip to almost right down to St. Michael, and the idea of locating a fire station at District B was to give the fire officers a lookout so that they could spot at any time of day or night the beginnings of a fire. All this business of community – The Honourable Member for St. John is not here; he has a lot of work to do. It is amazing in Barbados how a cane fire would start and nobody in the District would think of calling the Fire Service.

The construction of a fire station at Boarded Hall would give the Fire Service an excellent lookout over the St. George valley so that when they see some smoke during the day or a little purple in the valley during the night they can move with despatch to prevent all the destruction of the canes in the St. George valley.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I didn't get up to speak on the police or the Magistrates' Courts or anything like that. I just had to enquire and I hope I get an answer in respect to the Magistrates' Courts. What I wanted to talk about was the Immigration Department. I want, Mr. Chairman, to let the Minister of Justice, who has as part of his cohobblopot the Immigration Department, to know that it is my considered view that it is one of the most inefficient departments of Government. There are a lot of good and efficient departments of Government but that cannot be counted as one of them. I do not make that criticism lightly. I have to deal with them on a regular basis and I despair at times of what is going on in that Department. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am giving the Minister of Immigration some advice. As the Honourable Member for St. Thomas says, you have only taken over the Ministry this year so this is not the period for licks. Next year is when we will ask some very searching questions. However, to be in a position to deal with those searching questions in a commendable way, I would suggest that the Minister of Immigration goes down to Immigration as a start. Go, like you are cleaning out the Augean stables. Get the same Fire Service that falls under your department to use the Careenage to pump the water and flush out that department properly.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: If the Minister goes and investigates he will know where to start. I believe the Minister is going to take what I say to heart. I have no subjective interest in the department. I will tell you an area in which they operate against the interests of the Government itself. The Barbados Labour Party in its wisdom, set up the offshore financial services of Barbados as another prop for the economy. It has worked very well and it is making an important financial contribution to this country. The problems of acquiring a work permit for people who come into Barbados and bring a lot of money in the offshore business are like getting a camel through a needle's eye. This is the kind of thing that should be dealt with in forty-eight hours. You can't ask an international company or offshore bank or an exempt insurance company to go through all the problems of searching out Barbados, having lawyers set up the company and being constantly in touch with you from overseas – those who are practising law would know it – and then when they are ready you are embarrassed to tell them that the big things have been dealt with but the minor thing like a work permit for the Chief Executive Officer is taking up to six weeks.
4.20 p.m.

You get two work permits for two years. When you are applying you have to put in Police Certificates from wherever you have lived. Some of these people have to send all the way to Hong Kong to get a Police Certificate, great trouble. You have to get certified educational credentials and all kinds of foolishness. When you have gone through all this, you have to get a Medical Certificate to show whether you have V.D. and all kinds of things as if this makes any difference as to how you are going to run a business.

In two years when your work permit has expired and you have to re-apply, you have to get the same Police Certificates again even though you are living in Barbados for two years. Two years ago you provided Police Certificates wherever you were living all over the world. You live in Barbados for two years and you are required to get Police Certificates again and all the other things like you are applying for the first time. Something is wrong in the Department.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: All over again. Do not tell me "No." It is part of my business. I deal with it. You have a situation in relation to this work permit now for, obviously, what the people in the Immigration Department consider lesser mortals. If you are a Vincentian, a Guyanese or a St. Lucian, as far as that Department is concerned, you are at a lower level of life.

You have people coming from the Eastern Caribbean, like Guyana and living in Barbados for eight years. They have second homes in Barbados living with a Barbadian woman even if they are not married to them, and have children from them who are Barbadians. When they apply for residence and they have a problem the Immigration Department in a most high-handed and arrogant fashion wakes up these people out of their houses, rushes them to the airport, puts them on a plane and sends them back to the country without allowing them a chance to go through the legal process that is provided for them under the law. These things cannot be right.

I am not suggesting in any way, Mr. Chairman, that people who come here and behave in such a way that is against the national interest should be allowed to stay in Barbados. I am not suggesting that. Some of them need to be deported. It cannot be fair that people have come here legally, stay on and nobody harasses them. Barbadians do that in the United States every day. Every single day Barbadians get on airplanes, fly up to the United States, blend in with the crowd and stay.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I am not suggesting to the Minister of Immigration that we set about to condone blatantly the breaking of the Laws of Barbados. We have to exercise those laws with a little bit of humanity. That does not seem to be a commodity that exists in the Immigration Department. I see money here for all kinds of things, vehicles, files, filing cabinets and all that. They should include in here commonsense and humanity among those things because they are needed more in the Immigration Department than any filing cabinet.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Retrain them. Put in some money for them. You may be able to do something if you include this.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, I will come back. I do not want to appear as someone who has been a Minister of Government for 10 years and worked with public officers and do not know the importance of protecting and defending public servants if you are supposed to get the maximum assistance out of them. You have to work well with them, develop good relationships and protect them. There comes a time when to protect them – in fact, I do not have anybody to protect now except the humble people in St. George, the southern part of St. George too. I am not a Minister. I do not have anybody to protect.

I am not making any wanton criticisms of the Department. I am not singling out any division. Obviously in the Department there are a number of good people. Like most things, the bad ones are the ones who give the Department a bad name. I would appeal to the Minister, because my time is up, to really take a look at that Department, suspend a few policy decisions until you

apprise yourself of the workings in the Department. If you want to know the other things that are not worth saying on the Floor of the House of Assembly, talk to me outside and I can give you some stories that, perhaps, can assist you in the work that you do down there.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that if the Minister remembers we must not see anything that the Honourable Member for St. George South said as any isolated attack on the Immigration Department. Hansard will show that about two years ago I complained about the performance of the Immigration Department. The Deputy Prime Minister who then had responsibility for it said in here that he was satisfied that it was the worst Department of Government.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will find it for you before night fall and read it into the records. From way back then Government has acknowledged that the Department of Immigration was not functioning properly and was inefficient. I had a lot of things to say. I brought a lot of examples of conduct then. I am not going into that now, Sir, because we have agreed that the Minister needs time to settle in.

In relation to Districts "B" and "D", there are two matters that I did not finish when my time ran out last time. District "B" at the Glebe had reached the stage in 1986 where architectural plans and designs had been submitted to the Ministry. Athelstan King Associates were paid for drawing the plans before Mr. King died. It was at the stage where all that was necessary was to get a contract out and decide when it would be started. In the light of that I am a little surprised that nothing has happened.

The Attorney General had said some years ago that in the scale of Government's then priorities, it had been decided to do Holetown first rather than District "B".
4.30 p.m.

That was the right of Government to prioritize its work as it saw fit, although I would have thought that if you had a plan in existence for one area and no plan for the other you would complete the one with the plan first. The Government had chosen to go to Holetown first. But there is enough planning that has gone into District "B" for the Minister, assuming funds are available, upon the completion of Holetown, to move from Holetown to District B. But as you are passing there while you are trying to get to B, stop in at St. Thomas and let us get the proper station there, Sir. You have to do it.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We can do two together. When you leave Holetown, before you get to the Glebe in St. George, you have to pass through St. Thomas.

Sir, a matter that is going to cause much concern in the next couple of years is the position of District D after you move out the police. Everybody accepts that District D has no satisfactory accommodation. Few policemen, a vehicle or two sometimes and it is starved of all of the facilities which a police station should have. District D in St. Thomas, Rock Hall behind the community centre. You are moving the police from there and carrying them down to Holder's Hill. I understand also that the community centre is going to be turned into the court.

I have some advice for Government first of all, Sir. When you move out the Skills Training people from the Rock Hall Centre before you can put any court in there, you need to completely renovate and repaint and decorate the whole place. It is in a terrible state, awful and bad. I do not know what will happen by way of contingency planning for the Skills Training work that is presently going on there. Where is that going to go once you take over the centre for the court? It will mean of course that we will not have, in St. Thomas, any focal point by way of a community centre.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are going to use the centre for a court. So we have no community centre. But we were hoping that perhaps the St. Thomas Secondary....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Pardon.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do what up there? The Honourable Minister of Education wants a community centre....Do you want the people of St. Thomas to have a community centre on an open pasture to get wet? You can hold a fete....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you mean like the little pavilion? Use the little pavilion.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We will be prepared to assist Government by using the pavilion from time to time provided Government changes its policy and ensures that that pavilion is open all day until say 10.00 o'clock rather than 3 days a week. It is open 3 days a week. That has been so for 2 years and I talk in here all the time about it. No change. Redman's Village, up there and Holy Innocents.

If you are going to say that the people of St. Thomas will have to find alternative accommodation for their community activities, use the pavilions as temporary structures, fair enough. But you will have to divert some funds then to ensure on a temporary basis that these structures are kept open all the time.

But I am concerned, Sir, that within St. Thomas which as you know... He knows. I know, Sir. We have spoken about it.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What I am concerned about, Sir.....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Deputy Speaker is here. I am going to finish, Sir. Before we take the little break, what I am saying is that St. Thomas is developing in terms of housing at a fair pace with the Venezuelan Project down in the bottom at Cane Garden, up in the hills, the middle class people in their big houses up in Edghill Heights and Edghill Terrace and so on. We have also seen in the last 5 years a gradual increase in the amount of recorded crime to District D. Residents have been expressing concern to me that you are now going to move the police presence completely out of St. Thomas that if you have a report to make to the station you have to go all the way down to Holder's Hill. That is not to be sniffed at. You have a problem, let us say in Welchman Hall or in Airy Cot or in Hillaby and you have to find yourself down to some house in Holder's Hill to make the complaint.

I would be grateful if the Minister would tell me to what extent Government has exhausted the options for housing the police station within the parish of St. Thomas, not necessarily the constituency because you have over on the Warren's Crescent side, that is in the parish of St. Thomas but the constituency of somebody else, St. James or St. Michael, one of them. Because I think it would be more feasible, certainly more convenient if we can find a building within the parish of St. Thomas temporarily to relocate the police. Because I do not know, the Minister will probably tell us when he replies, but the demolition of District D and the removal of people and so on will have to be fairly soon. The restoration will not be complete certainly for another 18 months to 2 years. Because you have to do your planning, you have to get all your drawings done, you have to find the money. Is District D approved?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know it is going to Welchman Hall. Do you have the architectural drawings and so?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All of that. When you start to build you cannot be complete for 2 years. We are talking about the Government. We are not talking about a private house. Two years is the time.

We need somewhere to operate temporarily as a police station in St. Thomas or easily accessible to the Thomasonians for the next two years. Those are the kind of contingencies that I want the Ministry to look at. I am willing to assist by asking around plantation people and so on if they have any old plantation houses, not old and breaking down but not used. Like in Vaucluse yard, there are lots of buildings in there. I am not sure that all of them are used. Some of them are used. All of them certainly are not used. There are one or two other places I could take a drive on a weekend and look around.

But we really are making a case, Sir, that as soon as it is humanly possible that we relocate. I understand the temporary situation. St. Thomas people are very reasonable and understanding, Sir. That is why I got so many votes and your fellow did not get very many. They understand where I come from.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You scrambled home.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Did you get 1 500?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Did you have such a big majority? You are catching me. Well the Simmonses beat them badly.

But, Sir, we understand the temporary situation but it cannot persist. I think when you look at it from your other perspective of crime prevention, crime control, accessibility of police to community, community to police, that you will see the need urgently to try and find something temporary closer to St. Thomas than in Holder's Hill.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
4.40 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I move that this House be suspended for fifteen minutes until 5.00 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken this House was in Committee, to that it should return.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Committee is resumed.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I am not winding up Mr. Chairman, I just want to respond to some of the queries made by members who spoke before me. The Member for St. Thomas was particularly interested in the question of the physical accommodation of staff under the Ministry, and in particular, police stations. I would just like to say that I visited all of the police stations in the North, the South, and the only police stations to be visited now are those in St. Michael, likewise I have visited the Prisons, all of the Magistrates Courts in the country districts. I have visited all the fire stations, including the one in St. Michael, so I have a good idea of the state of the accommodation.

One of the problems which the police are facing in particular is that most of the police stations are old buildings, built at the turn of the century or even before and in those days there was no damp course, plus the fact the materials which built the police stations, were either lath and plaster system or soft stones as a result of which even when you try to paint them now the dampness comes through, so you paint one week and the following week it is though nothing happened at all.

For example, I could remember 1948 my father was at Holetown and ever since then Holetown was supposed to be rebuilt. It is now 1991, 43 years after, and they are rebuilding it. Of course the other thing is that with the shift in population we have to look at where we site our police stations and as the member for St. George South said, District C, District D, and Boarded Hall are now situated in the less densely populated areas of the parishes. Of course we cannot move all of them at the same time, so it has to be a systematic plan to relocate police stations.

More specifically as far as District D is concerned, District D is one of the oldest stations and has fallen into such a state of dilapidation that it will be too costly to repair it. Plus the fact, I think since the last Government was in office there were plans to move to Welchman Hall and we have already selected the firm of architects and the structural engineers to plan the building for Welchman Hall and I would say too, that taking the advice of the Commissioner of Police it would be what he called a shop front station. Not a big station as in the past because most of the police officers are not now living in the police stations so it is pointless building huge buildings and then nobody is there, so a shop front station will go there. Possibly $350 000 to $400 000 and it will most likely take a year to fifteen months to construct, depending on who gets the contract. In the meantime, however, the personnel from District D will move to Holders Hill, the old St. John the Baptist Boys' School and I believe they are spending about $150,000 to renovate that and it should be completed in about five weeks time, if not before, so that we are well advanced in the renovations of the old St. John the Baptist School.

Besides the District "D" personnel, the office in the North will also go to St. John the Baptist and the personnel from Holetown will go to District "E". District "E" has been brought up to standard and all that is left to be done at District "E" now is to paint the outside.

I would like to mention too that the Member for St. Thomas mentioned the Sergeants' quarters. What has happened, with the expansion of the police force is that most of the Sergeants' quarters have been taken up with accommodation – District "E", District "B", District "C" for sure, not District "D". I think what has happened, District "D" Sergeants' quarters were so far from the station so to speak, you know that was at the entrance and it was far, so that was never used and has gone into a state of total disrepair. Nothing can be done to that. Plus the fact we are moving from there, so it is pointless spending money on that to bring it up for another few months and then for them to move out.

As far as the horse stable is concerned, as I understand it, the police just wanted horses at Districts "C" and "B" so that was allowed to run down. They want horses in the South and the North and District "A", so that was not used any longer for horses, that is why that went into a state of disrepair.

At the present moment we have completed repairs to nearly all of the stations and I must say that the Attorney General left me on a very good wicket. Although he was criticised, apparently a lot of work was being done so I came in at a good time to reap all the so-called praise for the standards of the police station, so that all that has to happen now, really at Belleplaine, that was built in 1952, the toilet facilities were placed the wrong place, they placed them in front of the station and all of the water was dripping down. That has to be renovated probably $50 000 to build on quarters for policewomen as well, that more or less is in train.

Crab Hill. At one time Crab Hill only housed two policemen, two families, but St. Lucy is expanding at such a rate that we have to expand that police station to hold more people. District "E", more or less completed for the men to move from Holetown to District "E". Holetown Police Station, the new Holetown complex should start, I say, within 8 weeks because they have to move out to St. John the Baptist and when that move is completed it will start there but all the architects, the people on site, housing etc. are there and the temporary accommodation for the Library, the outpatients clinic, more or less finished. It is a prefab to be at Trents and that is well on the way.

As far as the fire station goes, the station at Four Cross Roads, the plans are ready and we should start any time at Four Cross Roads to renovate that, extend it again to accommodate female staff and enclose it.

I should have mentioned that the Magistrate's Court at District "D" is going to, as you said, the Community centre. Before the decision was made, the Chief Community Development Officer was asked about the use of the Community Centre and we were told at the time that very little community activities take place there. That most of the activities take place at Barker's Corner playing field pavilion. I was there and I checked. I am the person who suggested that and therefore I checked. I always felt myself that it was not used because I remember when I used to operate in that area very seldom people used it except for a dance. So we took the opportunity – it will be renovated properly. The plans have been decided upon by the Chief Magistrate now and I think the Registrar saw the plans as well and they have a very nice court when it is finished because the police station will move from there. We are conscious of the fact that special security must go in, so the proper fence and security systems must be placed so that if anything happens it can be phoned in to the police station at Holders Hill etc.
5.10 p.m.

The Fire Stations – the main fire station needs a lot of renovation and it has started already. Fortunately, as you know, the firemen are very skilled and a lot of work which is done at the fire stations is done by the firemen themselves. That will reduce the cost. As I can remember, with the tower in the yard, I think the wrought iron grills might have gone up already. They are putting bobwire around the top of the walls and moving out the Chief Fire Officer. Where in the back of the fire station there was the repair shop or something, well that will be converted into offices and the mechanic shop will go up to Grantley Adams Airport so that all the work can be done there.

As far as the Magistrates' Court at the Glebe is concerned, I have not seen anything of that at all. My impression was that the Magistrate's Court and Police Court at St. George will have to remain there a little longer until we get all of those other things into place. Because again there are limitations on the funds so we cannot move all at once. But what we are trying to do is to make sure that the accommodation as it is now is upgraded to a standard which can be considered acceptable for the police officers.

What I have done is that I have had a meeting with the Commissioner of Police and the Association and I think we meet next week to decide the priority of how we will go on with the work. We have looked at all of the stations. We know what money we have got. We know what stage they have been brought to and from the beginning of next financial year we will move into the stations as agreed by all parties concerned. So we are on good footing.

I want to take the advice of the Member for St. George South about the Immigration Department. As he said, I am new here so I do not want to make too many comments on the Immigration Department. I will take your advice. I will try to look into these weak areas. As you said, most likely one or two officers are giving the whole department a bad name. Well, it is left to the Chief Immigration Officer as to what action he will have to take on it but at the same time I will monitor the situation. I have not met the officers yet so I do not want to comment too much on that. Possibly one area we will have to look at for them is training. It is a possibility that they have not been constantly trained for the job for which they have been employed. This is human relations. So we have to put in some element of training to make sure that they know how to handle the people.

I think those are more or less all of the answers that I can give to the queries as made by Members so far and as they come I will try to respond. Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Andrew.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a few brief points under Legal Registration Services. The points relevant to the offshore business sector and the problems at the Immigration Department have already been dealt with by the Honourable Member for St. James South. He did admit that although it was mentioned in this House at sometime earlier – or rather it was the Honourable Leader of the Opposition – of the inflexibility of the Registrar of Companies in delaying the Registrar especially when it comes to actual names of companies. I believe that the Attorney-General, even though we are not on law reform but this is relevant to what we are dealing with at this particular point in time, could look at some means where the relevant legislation will be simplified for the benefit of that Registrar so that companies which appear to her to be outside a particular area, especially when you are dealing with the international business companies where people would like to retain names are able to do so. Also, the fact there is some delay in excess of a month in some instances in getting a Certificate of Registration.

I am not particularly clear, and perhaps I can be guided by the Honourable Minister, but I see Registration of Deeds here under this section. I know that in the past the Registration of Deeds included the Registration of Titles and they were all handled in the same place. But I think that it would be quite appropriate for me to make the comment here. You may recall about two years ago we had the coming into force of the legislation referring to Registration of Title. I think it was in September 1989.

I must say as one who is dealing in this area of law that I am somewhat disappointed that up to now we have not been able to obtain any Certificates of Title notwithstanding the fact that thousands of registrations have been made. I do not know what is the reason for this, but I said that I would be guided by you. I thought that I would mention it here under Item – Land Registration Services. It is also relevant here anyway the Registration of Deeds. Formerly, we had the Registration of Deeds both at the same place. I do not know if the Registration of Deeds is taking place at one place and the Registration of Titles will be taking place in another place because I am somewhat confused as to what I see here. But I am referring to what we have here. At the moment we have a system where when you have completed a transaction the deed is recorded at the Registration Office and subsequent to that if it is in a registered area it is again registered. Maybe this is an area that you can look at as well because it means that where the actual property is in a registered area you have to first record the deed and then you have to turn around and register it. Sometimes clients, and you would know as an attorney yourself, are somewhat puzzled that you are charging them for recording a deed and then you are turning around and charging them once again for registering a deed when they thought recording and registering is supposed to be one thing. I think this is also an area that should be looked at so that in registered areas there should not be any need to actually record the deed. You do one registration. I thought that I would mention that here because of the fact that under this Head Land Registration Services I see registration of deeds.

On that same breath, I noticed that recently there has been a suspension of the land registration in the areas outside of the registered area. I do not know what is the reason for this because the suspension should have occurred before they actually had started to register the titles in these areas outside of the registered districts. I wonder what will happen to those transactions which have already been registered. These are areas of concern within the area of the legal profession of those people who deal with conveyancing and I would hope that the Honourable Minister would address these problems as soon as possible. I do not want like my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. George South, to go into the problems of the Department at the Land Registry. Maybe the Land Registry might not be as bad a Department as that Department, but I think that certain areas need to be mentioned. As I said, I may be under the wrong Head, but it is because of the wording here – Land Registration Services, registration of deeds.

5.20 p.m.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew raised a number of issues in relation to the Land Registry which really falls under Head 37 – Ministry of Housing and Lands. I suggest that that matter may be addressed when and if we reach that Head. His reference to land registration services under Head 28, I think the Honourable Member may have read it in error. It is "legal registration services" and not "land registration services," unless I am reading from the wrong section, but it is Programme 3 – Legal Registration Services.

Mr. Chairman, I rose really to respond to one issue raised by the Honourable Member for St. George South in relation to the court at the Glebe, since it was in my time that that decision at the time not to proceed with the construction of the court and the police station at the Glebe was taken.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has made the point that I had indicated in this Honourable House some time before that we had to take a decision as to the priorities in relation to construction of court houses and police stations. It was our perception when the decision was taken to proceed with Holetown and the building of a modern complex in that area, that it was more important to proceed with the development of Holetown because it was necessary to provide adequate services for housing the Northern Division of the Police Force from which that area could be administered. The Southern Division had had a new complex and had its administration centralised from there.

From the point of view of the distribution and organisation of police services, there was the Southern Division, the Central and the Northern Division, Central being operated from the Bridgetown area, and we thought it was important that facilities be provided for the central administration of the Northern Division. It was our perception that in terms of priority it was more important to proceed with getting the facilities for the administration of the Northern Division in place, and it was against that background and in that context that the decision was taken to proceed with the building of what has been generally described as the Holetown complex, including a magistrate's court, police station, Rates and Taxes Division, adjustments to the Post Office and other Departments of Government.

It did not mean, Mr. Chairman, that the programme for the building of the police station and the court house at the Glebe was abandoned. That was, and is still, part of the

Government's programme, but, as you will understand, it is the question of the availability of funds to do the capital works which are required in these areas. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has made the point that on the way from Holetown to the Glebe we should perhaps stop off in St. Thomas. The St. Thomas' court and police station has been a problem. It is not fit for human habitation and a decision has been taken to proceed with the building of a court house and police station at Welchman Hall, St. Thomas to replace facilities in the St. Thomas area. I suspect that that will take priority over the Glebe as well.

I think the Honourable Member for St. George South must understand that in the context of what is necessary and desirable some planning has to go on. It is a matter of ordering your priorities in the best way possible. Clearly, I cannot determine the priorities for the Minister of Justice. I am sure if the Honourable Member for St. George South can persuade him that it is better to proceed with the Glebe before St. Thomas, that is a matter which may involve some negotiations between the two Honourable Members, but the fact is that police stations and court houses are required in St. Thomas and at the Glebe. It is only a matter of ordering priorities in the context of the availability of funds and proceeding as time and the finances of the country permit.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I would like the Attorney-General to know right off that I do not believe in any trade-off between constituencies. The fact is that the people of St. George were promised they would have a new court and police station.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: This Parliament, because a figure was put in the Estimates for 1986–87 that was passed by this Chamber and when the money was passed the people were told that they were going to have a police station and court. This Parliament, by voting the money, told them that.

Aside.

Certain remarks made by Mr. L. R. TULL were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the record at this stage.

Mr. L. R. TULL: It is almost like when you are dealing with children. You cannot promise children something and then change your mind, because it is a little hard for them to take. I am not going to get into this business about the Glebe any more. If the Government feels like opting out of a commitment made to the people up there, it is perhaps for the Honourable Member for St. George North, in whose constituency the Glebe falls, to take up his cudgels. I will talk about it in other places.

I got up on this occasion, Sir, to talk very briefly about the Government Industrial Schools. As I said, they have a real cohobblopot. The Minister of Justice has a piece from Education, a piece from Legal Affairs, a piece from the Prime Minister's Office, a piece from International Transport, he has a piece of everything. The one that troubles me most is the Government Industrial Schools. The reason why I consider it very important is because it represents a fundamental change in thinking in respect of the Industrial Schools.

The name "Industrial School" is not by accident. There is a separate law – I think it is the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act – Cap. 169, I am advised – and everything in that Act suggests that Dodds and Summervale are schools, as distinct from penal institutions. The fact that they have now been taken, after all of their history almost, out of the control of the Ministry of Education and transferred to the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety is a fundamental, philosophical change of position, and it tells us now that the young people who go up to the Industrial Schools are no longer errant students, perhaps needing errant teachers to teach them, but it is a change that cannot be taken lightly.

We know that the Minister of Justice is a hardliner when it comes to keeping people in line. When you go to school, Sir, you talk about teachers disciplining children, but when they go into the Ministry of Justice it is the wardens beating them. The result is the same in the end, but it is a psychological adjustment that has been made here. The Minister cannot think that I am going to get over this just like that.

5.30 p.m.

Even here in the Schedule of Personal Emoluments, under Corrective and Rehabilitative Services, Industrial Schools, there is a principal, S.7, who is on the same category as the headteacher of a primary school and the senior teacher, Z33-24, qualified teacher, special grade teacher, teacher. The Government, in other words, Mr. Chairman, is a little bit confused over what they are doing. They have to make up their minds now whether this is now becoming a straight penal institution that goes against all the honourable and well-thought out positions on penology as are constantly articulated by the Honourable Member for St.Thomas who speaks on these matters on this side.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Ministry of Education, as I said, is responsible for the management of those schools for a long time, and it resided in the authority of the Minister of Education to make certain policy decisions in relation to education, training and upbringing of the young people who are put in the institution. Where it is now located, Sir, I think is a very unfortunate move on the part of the

Government. It shows that the Government has given little or no thought to the implication of its decision. I also want very quickly, Sir, to come off Dodds. If they feel like taking the advice they take it.

With regard to prisons, about two or three weeks ago a Resolution came before this Parliament in relation to the acquisition of land on the periphery of Glendairy. I am not reflecting on any vote. I am just using that as a point of reference. At the moment – and the Minister of Justice would do well to look at this too. On the western perimeter of Glendairy Prison is a narrow road and houses on that road and it is a fact, Sir, not speculation, that people throw objects over the wall on the western side....

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL:...and the prison officers have to go on mornings before they let the prisoners out of the western wing of the prison and into the farm to search. A lot of things go over the wall. It hasn't stopped. At one time they used to throw over cigarettes and marijuana. Nowadays, they are throwing over knives and the occasional gun. The Minister of Justice doesn't know. He had better talk to the people up there. I know that it is expensive to do a relocation of houses in that area. It costs a lot of money. I am not going to be so irresponsible as to suggest that the Government embark on a programme of moving all the people in that area to provide a buffer zone between where people live and move and the prison. I believe that some adjustment has to be made in respect of that area because novel things are going over. The Government may laugh at it until such times as the prisoners who work in the farm in that section hold up some prison officers down there with some guns one day and hold them hostages and they will see the seriousness of the point I am making. Something needs to be done about it and on the southern side, I believe that is easier because no relocation of houses is required. That is the side towards the Bridge Road.

I believe that a considerable amount of acreage on that side should be acquired by the Government and a perimeter fence constructed to prevent close proximity between the movement through the gully there and the wall. But there is also another benefit to be derived from it. The prison population is growing apace. I believe that there must be in the vicinity of 450 prisoners in Glendairy which is a considerable increase in recent times and also means that there is congestion in the prison, to the extent in which three prisoners are sleeping in one cell and believe me, the size of a prison cell is hardly big enough for one person to sleep in. Why I mention this, Sir, is because apart from the fact of this congestion, outside the perimeter there is need for more space for farming. The prisons as we see here in the estimates are costing a lot more than they cost four or five years ago. This is because of the larger number of people. They have to work for their own food. The farm area in the prison is busy and full. There is a good chicken and livestock farm and there is also a good kitchen garden, but the area is too small. If the Government could acquire land on the southern side of the prison it would be able to serve the two purposes.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: There is no perimeter wall to it and there is no farming. I don't know whether they acquired the land. If the Government has already acquired the land, that makes it easier. However there should be a perimeter wall...

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: It is owned by the Government. I am suggesting that as another area to be used for farming for the prisons.

I also want to make another security point. There has been no incremental increase in the staff of the prison to meet the increase in prisoners. I don't want to say this, because it is the kind of security point that if I mention it, it may be put in the newspapers and people will know more than they should.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South is asking me to be irresponsible, but even with his invitation, I will not be irresponsible.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: There is an additional point, Sir, which relates to the deployment of men or lack of, in the prison yard during the night. I will say no more on it but to suggest that the Minister have a word with the people in the Prisons Association because they would have a lot of information on it. I am sure that they will be able to explain to him in some detail the kind of problems that they have to undergo in the hours after dark in that prison.

One final point, Sir, and that relates to the question of imprisonment of people for civil debt.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Two minutes can do it, Sir. Imprisonment of people for civil debts – this has been talked about for a long time and I am not making a new point. It is not born out of my creative intellect.
5.40 p.m.

Increasingly with the congestion in the Prison, and you only have to walk through the Prison these days to see what one is talking about, people who have gone up there for nothing more than owing money are thrown into a situation of very close human affinity with some of the old lags and this creates some problems. I believe that is a matter that can be looked at.

Thank you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Just one or two points, Sir. The point that the Honourable Member for St. George South was making I think was largely taken care of because we built with Prison labour a separate area for prisoners in for civil debt. They are not close to any of the old lags. There should not be the need for them to be looking over behind them at night. They have been separated out. That is what you were trying to explain. After the Agard incident that was something we had to deal with.

Now, Sir, I did give the House the assurance earlier that in 1988 the Deputy Prime Minister had joined in a condemnation of the Immigration Department. I did not wish it to appear that the Immigration Department got criticism today for the first time. On May 24, 1988, at page 2583, Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I quote:

> "I do not want to deal with the point on Immigration here. That is a sore point with me. I am in agreement with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas on that particular point. We all are.
>
> I addressed a small meeting exactly a week ago last Monday of Immigration Officers, and I told them precisely how I felt about the Immigration Department and its functioning. I said I am not happy with it, and I am repeating here, Sir, that I am not happy with its functioning. I am not happy with the time in which applicants receive responses to their applications."

I like this part, Sir, since we were talking about the commodity of commonsense that should be in that Department. The Minister then said this, Sir:

> "I am not exactly happy that decisions or recommendations are always made consistent with commonsense. These are some of the problems which I have addressed, and we continue to address in the Department in an administrative way.
>
> I do not wish to raise the matters in Parliament at this time. If I do not get the results I am aiming at, I probably will have something further to say more publicly."

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We have it from both sides, Sir. The Prime Minister likes consensus government. He has it from both sides in respect of the Immigration Department.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I wish to put on record that notwithstanding all that has been said about the Immigration Department, there are some officers in the Department – I do not know of too many....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am putting on record my appreciation. I have a lot of persons in this constituency that I represent who fall into the category of those at the lowest end of the economic scale who are also "foreigners", people who came to this country in good faith and who remained here for some considerable time, in some instances. I want to say that most of them through one or other....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There are some senior officers in the Immigration Department – I will not be invidious in identifying them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: These asides across the Table will not be accommodated.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There are some senior officers in the Immigration Department who have demonstrated a tremendous amount of sympathy and empathy towards these persons, many of whom have really had no cause to be treated badly by some other officers in the Department who seem to feel that they are persons who should be ill-treated.

I just want to make a general point. In the Ministry that I have responsibility for, we have had to go out and recruit nurses into this country. All over the world there is a shortage of nurses. When we come to the Head we will discuss it in some detail. When those nurses have come into Barbados legitimately, given contracts with a hospital, many of them have had tremendous difficulty finding places in school for their children or getting assistance for their husbands who need work permits etc.

Now, when a nurse leaves Barbados and goes to the United States or Britain, her family goes with her. Usually they are treated or used to be treated when nurses used to go from Barbados, in a humane and reasonable manner. They were welcomed because the nurse was bringing a scarce skill with her. We are probably the only developing country in the world that has been able to attract nurses into it to work. When those nurses come here they are coming to nurse Barbadians. There is an attitude which I have discovered in some areas of life in Barbados which is hostile to those persons. That is like shooting yourself in the foot.

No woman who comes here to function as a nurse is going to be able to go home and sleep comfortably in the knowledge that her child cannot get into a school. Meanwhile if a mechanic comes from Britain everybody runs to see how fast they can get the child into a school. If you come from Guyana – I want to say that there is no Guyanese nurse that comes into Barbados who is illegitimate, who is unqualified because they can only

function here if they are registered with the Nursing Council. There are registered with the Nursing Council either by exam or by virtue of where they were trained.

As for those who wonder if the ones coming in are as qualified, most of the ones coming in are more qualified than the ones who leave. The persons who come in here have a right to expect to be welcomed because they are bringing a skill with them, a skill that is dearly needed by us as Barbadians. I hope that those persons who function officially, whether in the Immigration Department, the Department of Education, the schools or wherever will recognise and remember that a nurse's children or a nurse's husband form part of the nurse's capacity to perform for Barbadians in whichever institution she is working. I need say no more except that if a person is harassed because that person is a West Indian coming into Barbados, much of the rhetoric we throw around about unity and togetherness, all of that will fall to the ground. We will get to the Head, Sir.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I do not propose to make a terribly long intervention but I do wish to make this particular point. It is always very easy for persons to make comments when those comments are derogatory and when, in fact, the particular situation may need to be examined more fully. And it is in this regard I want to make the first observation that common sense is not as common as it may have appeared to be when certain comments were made in this direction earlier.
5.50 p.m.

Sometimes we take for granted that because a person has been doing a job for a particularly long time that it follows that that individual feels comfortable in knowing what to do, when to do and when not to do. That should be so, Sir. But very often there are elements of interference or non-guidance or non-training which when all added up together cause severe problems.

I recall that I had reason to ask a question of an Immigration Officer on one occasion very politely, because I wanted to be guided. The first response I had was one that suggested that it was felt that I was trying to interfere. It occurred to me that although I may have resented that initially that this may have a basis in the feeling that there was interference, in the feeling that they were not clear on the level of training which they should have and on a set of policy directives which they ought to be able to follow in a given set of circumstances.

What I am suggesting in regard to the Immigration Department, Sir, I am suggesting equally well for the entire public service and generally that if there is not a particular businesslike approach and professionalism at the centre of any particular institution then that is not going to find its way through the sinews of that particular institution. What we are seeing very often is the effect of management policies that are conspicuous by their absence. It is quite possible that when we are speaking about problems in immigration or any other areas in the public service or in the public sector for that matter then what we are talking about, Sir, is a particular lackadaisical approach by those who ought to manage and control their departments and their various institutions. It is very possible that that level of management can in fact be from the highest level right through.

There is not much point, Sir, in our looking at people who spend 6 weeks to do a job that can be done in 6 hours and reflecting on that unless we recognize that somewhere somebody must be responsible for ensuring that that work should have been done. Because by and large, work at the lower levels is not work that is considered to be enjoyable or uplifting. It is considered by many that work is a burden and many people try to avoid it when they can. So that if we pay for supervision and we pay for direction and control, we should have in place the kinds of systems which would ensure that that direction, that supervision and control is in fact being given.

In that regard too, Sir, it would be necessary for us to ensure that when people are advised that there are performance appraisals at the end of a period, end of a year or whenever, it should be necessary for us to be able to recognize the relationship between those performance appraisals and the ongoing development of that person within the institution. But if the performance appraisal is going to be relegated to some exercise that is boring, unwholesome and a waste of time and reduced to the waste paper basket, at the end of the period I am suggesting to you, Sir, that we will continue in the same frame that we are in and we will come back here Estimates after Estimates, debate after debate and we will complain about situations and nothing will be done about it.

It seems to me that where we have problems we must be prepared to face them. We are too small a country. We are too dependant on the level of our productivity and the importance of our output not to recognize that we are marginalizing ourselves very significantly by turning the other eye where we find inefficiencies and merely by saying that these things have been so for years and years.

We have to be prepared to manage the one resource that we have in any significant quantities and that is our labour. If our labour is not managed effectively and efficiently, Sir, then I am suggesting to you, Mr. Chairman, that Barbados would be so marginalized that we would not be able to make the progress which we are hoping to make.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I think I can wind up on this Head now by responding to some of the other queries made by Members on the other side and in particular, St. George South. The Honourable Member for St. George South spoke about the Government Industrial School. I can understand some of his concerns. But one of my concerns is that having visited the place that we have youngsters ranging from 10 to 18. I think there needs to be a separation of people of age groups. Because after 16 school is not compulsory in Barbados either. I think the age range is too wide as well. We need possibly another institution for the older ones and then we can really look at those of school age.

Sometimes you put institutions, because of our size, in areas where bigger countries would have them separated so that they go to their rightful places. I can understand this position. We are looking at that as part of our whole penal reform. When the time comes, possibly the younger ones will go back to the Ministry of Education and the older ones will probably go to a borstal or something and have that sorted out.

As far as the prison is concerned I have met with the Superintendent of Prisons and the management so to speak and I have also met with the Association. I am aware of their concerns and we are addressing them. I believe that in a couple of years they will be quite happy with what we are going to do. I have not fully completed my plan for the prison but sooner or later I will be coming back here no doubt and informing this House and the general public as to what we want to do with the prison. Because of the large numbers and the scarcity of space, it has reached a stage where very little can be done at the prison.

As far as the area outside the prison is concerned I think it was 1975 or 1976, that 2 or 4 more acres were purchased I believe to the East of the prison, the back I think. But praedial larceny is a big in the area so I do not think that that was continued.

The prison is looking at putting some of the animals down in the section which you call the south, what I call the gully area which is owned by Government. Because they have a large animal population there, I guess about 200 or 300 sheep, 200 pigs, rabbits, *et cetera*. We have to look at something different from that operation as well at the prison.

I think we have to understand too that over the years with modernization, a lot of the work which the prisoners used to do they no longer do. For example, in 1940 they used to cut soft stone. Up to about 2 years ago or 3 years ago, I am not sure, they were cutting wood to stoke the fires but now it is gas. Every time you modernize the prison it means there is less and less work for the fellows to do. We have to look for areas in which they have been working. This is something we have to address.

Again similar to that, I think the Member for St. Thomas cleared up the point about those there on civil debt. There is a separation between the so-called hard criminals and first offenders, people on remand and people on civil debt. But I still do not like people going to prison for civil debt. Some means must be devised to make them pay, if they owe somebody, other than having to go to prison. Because when they go to prison the debt is still there and the person to whom you owe money or whatever it is wants the money, not prison. That does not satisfy the person however long you go to prison. So that has to be looked at as well.

6.00 p.m.

I want to get back to this question of immigration. Barbados has an excellent civil service. The Immigration Department is only part of the civil service and therefore I would think that the majority of people in the Immigration Department are like any other civil servant. Of course in the whole civil service you must find one or two who are not as they should be and I would rather think that it might be the administration's fault rather than workers' fault that he is not as competent or performing as committed as other civil servants are.

I believe the problem is a lack of training and that is one of the first areas I am going to look at. I believe the Member for St. Michael Central mentioned, sometimes you put people in a position and they are not trained. You give a man the keys to your house, and he is the watchman, and sometimes you can't get in the house because he thinks he owns the house, so you have a problem. You get a man to drive your car, sometimes you can't find the car because he feels he must take charge of the car and drive it where he wants to drive it. So, you have to train people because when you train then... you are satisfied it is sufficient training, well then Barbadians are intelligent people so I have to look at training first, before I can criticise.

I would like to say in closing, Mr. Chairman, that since I have come to this Ministry I have had the fullest cooperation from all the heads of departments, heads right down to the bottom, and I am satisfied in my own mind that if that type of cooperation continues I will have no fear. Thank you.

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

HEAD 19 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AS AMENDED – $67 638 045

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, before I move that this Head stand part I would like to say that on pages 20 and 21 the figures of $280 975 076, on page 25, $38 000 000, and on page 26, $3 493 844 from the figure of $23 071 244 should be deducted from the $390 106 965 and that is how we arrived at the figure of $67 638 045. Those

figures that are to be deducted could not have been included in the figure here because they are not usually and normally debated. And, one of them for debt management and the other for pensions and gratuities and the other, statutory contributions. With those words, I beg that Head 19 stand part, as amended.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: There are several items, Mr. Chairman, in this Head that will no doubt provoke discussion. I want to start, Sir, with the head relating to Customs in Barbados. I understand that there is to be a new Common External Tariff. We were told that an order has been made to implement this. I would like to hear from the Honourable Minister as this is the first opportunity since that order has been made, a summary of its impact. It is a very important piece of taxation. I well recall that on previous occasions when there was a change in the common external tariff many people did not appreciate the impact that it would have had on taxation because there was no real explanation given, no real analysis provided.

One must not forget that the Government is at a considerable advantage in this area because these changes do not come about overnight, these changes come about as a result of a considerable amount of work carried out by officials of all of the countries and after the provision of a number of papers by officials and a number of ministerial decisions at conferences at the CARICOM level.

I have been given to understand, Sir, that there has been some radical changes in the structure of this taxation from the tariff running right across a number of important areas. I think it is very important, therefore, Sir, that the public be taken into their confidence and no attempt should be made to foist this down the throat of the people without some measure of analysis being given to them so they can order their affairs to take into account the new structure of the tariff.

Normally, there is always a compromise between those who are in favour of protection and also one must never forget that in this like in so many other things, there will be a considerable amount of lobbying to ensure that the impact of the tariff upon particular types of economic activity presently being carried on be as minimal as possible. In other words, it is always the other guy who must pay the cost and not me.

Already we have seen some statements made in some journals, Sir. I don't believe is quoting newspapers, Sir, or relying too much on them, Sir, because they do have a reputation for inaccuracy. But, I really would like to know, Sir, whether it is a fact that that area of economic activity, namely the importation of food has been treated in the manner in which it is being represented to be treated recently, Sir.

I know, Sir, that it has always been the policy that the duties on food, particularly those that are not capable of being produced in the Caribbean region, because we all accept that there are certain food stuffs that we are accustomed to using which are the products of temperate countries rather than tropical countries, that there were relatively speaking moderate duties on those areas. Has there been a radical change in that direction?

I know too, Sir, that there was always a conscious effort being made to give by way of tariff protection, products that are capable of being produced by Caribbean agricultural activity a measure of protection. I remember the bitter criticism that was heaped upon the shoulders of the then Governments when they decided that the cattle industry, for instance, should be given a measure of protection by the increase of the duty on the imports of beef.

Now, what is the philosophy behind the new common external tariff in these areas?

6.10 p.m.

I know the World Bank and other institutions have a theory that developing countries have been giving too much protection to their manufacturers, agriculturalists, and others. They propound the theory that it is better for these countries to import particularly from countries who export subsidized products. We know too that very often the very low prices of which these products can be imported into developing countries is as a result of the fact that they are the subject of subsidies in the production. They are in surplus in the countries, and they are not always of the same grade that are consumed in the countries of origin.

Mr. Chairman, we would really like to know. Surely, this is a matter that one should have some kind of explanation from the Government, Sir. It is really remarkable there has also been in our community very little discussion at least publicly on this matter. I do not know anything of the consultations that have taken place recently, because I think that I heard the other day that there were some 50 businessmen who had a special consultation with the Minister of Finance. I have had a look, Sir. I think that the one that has been laid here has now been printed and I believe that if we look at it we will see that it is a formidable document at least by its size. We have not had the benefit of seeing it, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: The Government Printery does not print that and certainly not that size. We do not have one.

Secondly, Sir, I would like to know whether there have been any fundamental changes in the classification from the one that was in existence before. I seem to

remember as to the Council of Ministers implementing a new international classification, Sir. This is the size of the document, Sir. We are dealing here, Sir, with a Ministry of Finance that is not averse, as I understand it, over the last five years to introducing taxes on peas and things of that kind, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am saying that it was a mistake of the civil servants.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, if the Honourable Member will give way. Having been one of the persons, Sir, who at the time indicated that it was a typographical on the best advice available to me, Sir, I will happily tell the Honourable Member that there was in fact a time when all kinds of vegetables as ackees, corn, and potatoes were in danger of having a 5% tax on them. We were able due to the collective responsibility principle as adumbrated earlier to ascertain that the very keen eyes of the Honourable Member for St. Peter, having been fed an early version, we were able to correct the situation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Are you continuing?

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir, we are really at a very serious disadvantage and I feel that this is an important matter that has to be discussed because it has great ramifications here. It has ramifications not only for consumers, manufacturers, distributors, agriculturalists, and the whole community, but it has grave implications for the integration movement in the Caribbean. I am a strong believer in the viewpoint that the integration movement has drifted and that it is in need of serious attention at the present moment, Sir.

So that I would like to hear from the Honourable Minister what the real position is with respect to this. I believe that a former Minister of Finance introduced a Common External Tariff and had a windfall to a very large extent and, when the matter was raised prior to 1976, the Honourable Minister said that it was not his fault that other people did not pay attention to legislation as it passed through the legislative process in Barbados. Well, we do not want that to happen, Sir. That is why we are going to raise it, Sir. We will have the opportunity to look at it in relation to the Budgetary measures that are going to be introduced here, that is, the new taxation that is going to come down.

So that bearing all those matters in mind, Sir, I would really like the Honourable Minister to enlighten us in this respect. We also have to discuss, of course, whether there have been any discussions about harmonization of fiscal incentives. Now we have been operating in Barbados and in the more developed countries against the background of an agreed regime for the operation of fiscal incentives which have expired. I would really like to know, Sir, what is the current position and the current Government's thinking about a harmonized regime in this area. I believe that it is indispensable if I may say, Sir, for the proper operation of a Caribbean Common Market that there be not dissimilar incentives given in this area to manufacturers because one will have the situation where each island in their bid and zeal to induce investors will go overboard in trying to outdo each other. That was the whole object of the original harmonization exercise and that has now expired. What is the position now?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will conclude in two minutes.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, with those remarks in respect of those two matters, I will be back, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I normally allow my other colleagues to speak on this Head in the Estimates debate in the knowledge that I will have more time in the Budget debate to speak to financial policy. But there are a number of issues, Sir, some flowing from the discussion started by the Member for Christ Church South which I would want to deal with, Sir.

In relation, Sir, to the Common External Tariff, I have a responsibility to clear up a point that has been raised in a newspaper to the effect that the introduction of the Common External Tariff is going to cost the Treasury $33 million this year. That came out as a headline I think in the Advocate Newspaper, Sir, and it is entirely erroneous. The fact of the matter is, Sir, that last year it was estimated that the yield from import duties will be $144 million and this year the Government has revised the yield from import duties in the light of the economic performance to $118 million.

6.20 p.m.

This year now the Government is setting a new estimate for the import duties at $111 million. The reduction from the yield from import duties between what was estimated at the start of the year and what is now set as the end of the year best forecast has absolutely nothing to do with the introduction of the Common External Tariff. It really is inaccurate and grossly misleading to the public for anyone to say that the introduction of the Common External Tariff is going to cost anywhere in the vicinity of $33 million.

Mr. Chairman, my attitude towards this matter of the Common External Tariff is that it was intended to be one of the chief financial instruments available to CARICOM countries to protect their domestic production against competing goods produced by extra regional countries. The

fact of the matter is that the Common External Tariff ought to have been put in place by 1981, but in fact by 1975 it had cost the Democratic Labour Party the Government in 1976. The Government of Barbados in 1975 chose not to phase in the Common External Tariff but to bring it in at one lump, raise the price levels in Barbados by about 40% and it might have cost the Democratic Labour Party a Government, but that is history.

A lot of the controversy in the Caribbean region surrounding the implementation of the Nassau Accord and so on has to do with the fact that Caribbean countries have not in fact complied with the spirit of CARICOM by ensuring that the Common External Tariff has been implemented in accordance with the timetable that has been set in the initial stages of integration.

My contribution to this debate, Sir, is to say that since the early 1970s so much water has flowed under the bridge where the introduction of new financial instruments in the Caribbean is concerned, that the import duty alone may be becoming more and more meaningless as a means of providing protection. Other countries can adopt a common external tariff as set, but to have now the discretion of using consumption taxes and stamp duties in a way that was not at all envisioned in 1974 to either give their producers more advantage relative to other Caribbean producers than was envisaged when this whole matter became a matter of concern to Caribbean policy makers.

My contribution to the whole debate on the Common External Tariff is that one cannot, in discussing the question of protection for Caribbean production as a whole, focus narrowly on the rates of import duties charged. We have now to look in terms of the harmonisation not only of import duties, but the harmonisation of consumption tax structures and of stamp duties. When Caribbean countries are moved to that level of harmonisation, we will be talking about having a uniform system of protectionism in the region, but to the extent that there is no agreement in the Caribbean on appropriate levels for consumption taxes or appropriate levels for stamp duties, to work towards a common protectionist policy in the Caribbean is meaningless.

A lot of the argument about the incidence and the severity of this present set of new policies as embodied in the Tariff might just be another case of much ado about nothing. You have to see the thing in its totality and bring consumption taxes and stamp duties within the ambit of a harmonised approach to taxation so as to provide protection for Caribbean industries.

I am not going to be talking too much on policy, but I really feel I have a responsibility to refer to the working of the Department of Statistics. The Government had been using the excuse to this House and to this country that one of the reasons why we cannot employ statistics, why we cannot be told officially that the rate of employment is between 23% and 24% is that the Department responsible for the collection of that data is so busy with the population and housing census that they do not now have the time to do the household sample surveys which serve as the basis upon which the unemployment statistics are generated.

What is significant about these Estimates, and the House has to take note of this, is that funding for the conduct of the population and housing census is provided separately from funding for the Department of Statistics. You have one set of resources therefore being provided by this House to allow for the conduct of the population and housing census, which is separate from the resources that this House is being called upon to, and will, vote to support the Department of Statistics. It therefore is an excuse which has worn thin for the Government now to continue to say that it cannot provide unemployment statistics because the resources of the Department of Statistics are being taken up with doing the population census.

We are voting resources for these two functions separately and I really believe that the Department of Statistics has to begin to comply with the law which requires it to publish unemployment statistics on a regular basis, and stop using the excuse that its staff and its computer facilities are so taken up with the population census that it cannot provide us with one of the most important set of data required for general economic planning in this country.

On that point, Sir, I really would like to say that the Department of Statistics seems to have yielded its statutory responsibility in relation to the provision of a wide range of information to the Central Bank of Barbados. The First Schedule to the Act, Cap. 192, establishing the Department of Statistics requires that that Department should regularly publish information on at least 27 different topics, including areas such as trade. The country has not for a long time benefited from any publication from the Department of Statistics, not only from the area of unemployment and employment, but in the area of production, trade, banking, insurance, transport and any of the other matters that the Department is required by law to keep the public informed on.

It is a very serious omission on the Department's part, because it is very often the case that the Central Bank is having to adjudicate on economic matters. They provide the country with estimates and forecasts on economic indices without itself having either a statutory responsibility to collect the relevant information, or itself going through the process of collecting that information. I am very concerned with the way in which the Department of Statistics has allowed itself to be devalued where its primary function of the collection, collation and presentation of statistics is concerned relative to the Central Bank.

This House, Sir, needs a regular series of reports from the Department of Statistics of the Central Bank of Barbados in relation to the composition, the direction and the pattern of Barbados' trade. We need to have those quarterly digests from that Department of Statistics about production in Barbados, but what is happening now is that everything is going through the Central Bank and, in my view, it is a dangerous concentration. The Central Bank ends up very often giving us forecasts about economic subject matters which do not fall properly within the province of the Central Bank to comment on. The Central Bank really should be commenting on monetary and financial statistics. That is their province, but the broader area of providing the country with social, economic and other forms of statistics does not fall within the purview of the Central Bank of Barbados.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the last time I have seen any reports at all from the Department of Statistics was a production digest published some time in 1984. I have not seen any in the last five years and all I want to make is the point that the role of the Department of Statistics as the primary institution in this country responsible for the collection, the collation and the publication of statistics as prescribed by its first schedule, is a role that should not be compromised. I know that the Minister of Finance, is going to want now to say that it happened under the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, particularly in relation to its responsibility for the collection and publication of unemployment statistics, we have now seen a very dangerous trend where the department believes that, despite what the law states, it can surrender its responsibility. I am saying that in these estimates, Sir, it is very clear that the Government is not in a position to call upon the excuse that it is too busy dealing with the housing and population census to provide us with data on the level of unemployment and therefore, Sir, I would expect that at the very earliest opportunity, meaning the first quarter of 1991, the Government will be giving us unemployment statistics. Having said that, Sir, it would be very inappropriate at this time for the Government now to be trying to publish information on unemployment for 1990. There is nothing worse than anybody now doing a survey to go back to people to ask them if they can remember if they were at work in December 1989. Any data on unemployment so constructed that calls upon people to test their memories as to when they were at work during a particular month is fraught with danger. We have already called attention to the fact that the last time the Government published unemployment statistics was December 1989 when, indeed, that precise technique was used. You were asking people to cast their minds back six months previously and determine for the benefit of the surveyor whether or not you could remember whether you were at work. That technique, Sir, should not be used.

It is a very sad state of affairs that for a whole year, the Democratic Labour Party Administration has not seen it fit to ensure that its Department of Statistics has published any information. Mr. Chairman, unfortunately, we can only guess as to what the rate of unemployment might be. We are here now, Sir. We can be satisfied that enough resources have been provided this year for the Government to be able to continue the work on the census as well as allow the Department of Statistics to do what it must do and I therefore believe, Sir, that there can be no good reason advanced in the future as to why we will not be able to speak on the whole question of unemployment without Members being put to the necessity, to which they should not be put, of having to guess as to whether the rate is 24%, 23% or even 25%, as the case may be.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I first want to deal with the aspects raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who raised some philosophical questions about the Common External Tariff, asked some questions, wanted to discover whether in fact the philosophy had changed. I was not aware as he spoke that he did not have a copy of the document which was published with the Common External Tariff in the Order.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have seen it and therefore I assumed that and when I was responding I assumed that since the order was laid in the House that it had been circulated. I do not know why it has not been circulated. It must have something to do with printing but I hope that that is a matter that will be corrected. I am sure the Minister will be able to deal with that.

What I wish to say to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in particular, Mr. Chairman, is that the principle of the Common External Tariff, as I understand it, has not changed. When we negotiated that in the 1970s, I had the responsibility for trade at that time and we negotiated the Common External Tariff as part of the one of the three principal instruments for bringing a deepening and a widening of the CARICOM. In fact, they were four, bringing CARICOM on stream in July 1974, I think, and Barbados took the very bold step at the time of implementing the Common External Tariff almost in its entirety. In its magnitude, it was like the decision to tie the Barbados dollar to the U.S. dollar, which has been done, I think, boldly. So, I was amazed myself when I saw the newspaper article which purported to suggest that we were going to lose $33 billion by the implementation of the Common External Tariff, because we had implemented the Common External Tariff for all practical purposes in 1974 and what we have brought on stream now could only be an

adjustment to accommodate the negotiations and discussions for compromise that had occurred from then right through until the present.

The impending EEC arrangement of 1992 has brought forcibly to bear on the minds of many of the Ministers in the so-called less developed countries the fact that you cannot postpone forever certain decisions. What has happened over the years between 1974 and the present is that many of the countries which are signatory members to the CARICOM treaty have continued to postpone the inevitable day when they should bring on stream the principles of the agreement which was reached at the CARICOM table for the CARICOM treaty. Barbados has been consistently, between 1974 and the present, through two Administrations, the one country or the first country out front fulfilling its obligations, sometimes at great inconvenience to Barbados. The truth is that, as the Honourable Member said, the implementation of the Common External Tariff could very well cost the government of the day the election, but in a sense it doesn't matter. If what you believe in and what you say is true, that you wish to see a deepening of the CARICOM movement, then there are certain actions which must be taken if it is your responsibility to take those actions. The fact that the Democratic Labour Party Administration benefited from a slight increase in the revenue at the time....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ... the fact that we benefited substantially form a slight upsurge in the revenue was just by the way. As the Honourable Members will recall that immediately after the Nassau Accord they also were the beneficiaries of an equivalent slight increase in the revenue. These are the vicissitudes of administrative techniques in the system of Government we have. This Common External Tariff will redound to our credit in the sense that we have taken the lead. In truth, one can say to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that nothing has changed. The answers which he sought can be found in the same philosophical cushion which informed him when he was responsible for these matters and took the steps that were necessary.
6.40 p.m.

If I may turn to the other area raised by his colleague on his right – the Statistical Department, the statistics, the publication and the usurpation, as I understand it, of the functions of the Statistical Department by the Central Bank. Usurpation is my word. I wish to say this is not a matter that started yesterday. He may be seeing the culmination of that matter and may have been a beneficiary, or victim depending on his point of view, of the results.

The fact is this all started back when the then Honourable Member for St. Thomas was Prime Minister at that time, not this present Member. Some Honourable Members who were in the House at that time will remember a year, I believe it was 1977, when the Economic Report came into this House. I used to sit where the Honourable Member for St. George North is now sitting, or thereabouts. The Speaker was on that side of the House. We went around the back because I had discovered that the statistics as published in the Economic Report showed a logical inconsistency that was incapable of explanation by way of a typographical error as, perhaps, we were able to explain the 5% tariff on peas and other such vegetables.

I recall when I went behind the Speaker's chair that the then Prime Minister, who was Minister of Finance, rested his hand on my shoulder and said, in the language which I explained to my colleagues subsequently, "you must not worry about these things." From then we have not been worrying about these things in the Statistical Department because they have never really been able to reconcile, hence the vacuum. There is a saying nature abhors a vacuum. The vacuum which was created at that time was gladly and hungrily filled by the Central Bank, a Central Bank which, at that time, like Napoleon was looking for worlds to conquer, a Central Bank that had every single resource that it was possible to be put at its disposal by any administration and by all administrations that Central Bank has had.

I will never deny them the right and the comfort of having that because I have said before and I will say again, the Central Bank is one of the most efficient organisations of its kind anywhere in the Caribbean and possibly in the hemisphere. It is a very efficient organisation. When compared with any other organisation in Barbados, it has had advantages that have not been the good luck of any other organisation. It is the only organisation that was established and given a completely free hand. I am talking about the administrative aspects of it. It has been given all of the resources that it needs. It has been allowed to fix its own agenda by way of salaries, conditions etc. It has had the opportunity to recruit from as wide and as far a spectrum as it wanted. In fairness to the first Central Bank Governor, he established a magnificent administrative structure.

The Central Bank has, by virtue of what was given to it, been able to do things that other departments, even though they might have been designated by statute to do, have not been able to do. It is unfortunate that we, as a country, have allowed a number of things to happen over time where statutory requirements have not been insisted upon. Therefore, you can point to almost any department of Government that has a statutory responsibility to file a report by a particular time and find that years go by and such reports are not filed.

The Central Bank swallowed up the IDC. It went out and performed functions which were clearly the responsibility of the IDC.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There was an area of overlap when the Honourable Members were bringing the financial services on stream. There is an area of overlap when you are promoting business for Barbados, there will always be an area of overlap. One does not decry that.

The Central Bank under Courtney Blackman emasculated the IDC at one point. So far as the people outside of Barbados were concerned, they started dealing with the Central Bank in areas of promotion of industry, etc. that up until then used to be the preserve of the IDC.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will conclude in two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not criticising. I am just making statements of fact. When we come now to the point where the Honourable Member is raising the question of the Central Bank putting out statistics and doing primary work that is really the responsibility of the Statistical Department, the fact is that the Central Bank information became reliable and punctual. At one time it was the only information available hence the call for a return to the Statistical Department to do its duty is a call which may be heard, if you would pardon the expression, in the breach.

The mere fact that the monies are voted by this Parliament will not without more guarantee ensure that the statistical information will be reported on time. As I said, and as I close on this occasion, if you will go around to the various departments that are supposed to file reports, you are likely to have this difficulty. Now, the question arises. Do we stop the Central Bank from publishing their own statistics? No.

The Central Bank has been known on occasion to use as a source the Statistical Department. Whenever the Statistical Department brings up-to-date and current statistics the Central Bank will not go out and get them. It always manages to fulfill its mandate to send the report to the Minister on time. Whenever it has to, I have no doubt it will go out and get its own statistics. May they not listen necessarily to the Honourable Member for St. Peter and decide not to get the statistics because we may find ourselves in the same position that we were in back in 1977 when the then Prime Minister said we must not worry about those things. I hope we do not find ourselves in that position.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Before we go on to another point in respect of this, Sir, I would ask the Honourable Minister to tell us quite clearly in here when will that Order come into operation? I am unclear as to when the new tariff will come into operation. The principal Order was laid in here but they have not yet formed part of the papers that have been circulated to Members, neither the principal nor the other one. We do not know when they will come into operation. I want to know whether the Honourable Minister can give us a timetable for all of the other countries in the Caribbean so that we would be able to know whether this is yet another occasion in which a number of countries will be going forward in unison and others will be staying where they are.

6.50 p.m.

Now, Sir, I think I should, in all fairness, give the House the benefit of my experience in dealing with the various departments that have been mentioned here and on economic information. I want to say that the Department of Statistics has the prime responsibility for national income statistics, the determination of national income in Barbados. They have never ceded that to anybody else. The Economic Report that is published in here prior to the Budget is the responsibility, not of the Central Bank, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance. I always recall that with respect to any difficulty a Minister has as to which statistics to use, the Director of Finance and Planning always advised that the responsibility for this matter was the Department of Statistical Services.

To help Honourable Members – if you look at the economic and financial statistics in Barbados, you will see that Table H which is visible trade right down to Table I that the source given by the Central Bank itself indicates very clearly that they are the statistics as given to them by the Barbados Statistical Services. So it is not a question of anyone crossing the territory. Whatever may have been the intention the fact of the matter is the territory was never ceded. It is true that because of the information services that the Central Bank had in the form of the computer and things of that kind, that they may have carried out work from time to time in the data processing area for other departments. But the responsibility is definitely that of the Director of Statistical Services. I take it that we will get replies from those.

But we also have another very important thing. In the reply I would hope that Government would undertake to use its information service to prepare a short summary of the relevant changes that have taken place with respect to that. We are entitled to an explanatory memorandum.

We can go on to different subject on the same Head, Land Tax. I do not know if many people recognize this but once again the Ministry....

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Oh yes, that would be fine.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, just a short intervention in relation to the two points raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. As I

understand it the Prime Minister has stated publicly that the implementation of the CET as far as Barbados is concerned will take effect from April 1, 1991.

You would appreciate the fact that this was a matter which has been going backward and forward for many years. Negotiating the CET and the implementation of the CET was not an easy matter. I believe that Honourable Members who have had responsibility, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who have had responsibility for CARICOM affairs know the kind of difficulties which are experienced when one sits down around a table to negotiate and to discuss with the other members of CARICOM a common approach. After having agreed that the date would be the 1st of January on which the CET would come into operation, very soon after the respective Ministers got back to their countries, all sorts of problems started to arise. Obviously I suppose that pressures started to be brought to bear on them. This is one of the problems which I believe that we experience here in the Caribbean where the business seems to be very resistant to change and they are so wedded in their approach that any attempt to change that, one has almost to be dragging them kicking and struggling into this new situation in which we find ourselves.

The point has to be made that the world is not waiting on the Caribbean. We are seeing the globalization of trade taking place in the world with the various trading blocs taking place and we in the Caribbean seem, despite the many efforts which have been attempted over the years, to be moving very reluctantly into that area. The fact of the matter is that even after adjustments were made what you found was that when the point came for implementation, you heard the Chamber of Commerce in Jamaica pressurizing the Jamaica Government not to implement it because of a number of points which they raised. In the OECS a similar thing happened. In Trinidad and Tobago a number of things happened. But the whole strategy which was supposed to have been done and which was done, I am told, was for the respective delegations the Governments to go back home, sit down with the business community, hold seminars and to explain to them the whole rationale and approach for the implementation of the CET.

But that would not have been the first time that contact was made with the business community. Ongoing discussions, ongoing contacts were made with the business community, certainly here in Barbados, inputs were invited and these inputs were taken on board at the national level and also at the regional level. Even after that in Barbados, for example, we had a seminar here I believe in November of last year which was attended, I am told, by over 200 members of the business community where officials of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce along with representatives from the CARICOM Secretariat sat down and explained to the business community the whole approach and the way in which the Common External Tariff was structured. It is true that we have not had the kind of resistance, up to this point, until I believe the article which came up on Sunday which I have not had the privilege or pleasure of reading, as some of the other territories have had.

We are dealing with a situation which I think we all know about where it is very, very difficult to get a united approach to this particular problem. In an effort to reach some kind of unanimity on this matter and I would say for the record, I think it is generally understood that this has not been achieved, that we have the situation where the CET will be implemented by different groups at different times.

We have had to arrive at a situation where a time frame has to be established for the harmonization of the structure. There is a Booklet which has been put out by the CARICOM Secretariat. It is an explanation of the scope and operational features of the Common External Tariff which we will get some copies and make available to Members because it is a public document which will explain some of the concessions which have been granted, the way in which the Tariff has been structured, for example, one would find that....

Aside.

7.00 p.m.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: For example, one would find that the tariffs are grouped in a number of areas where inputs for primary goods which are non competing, which are Group A, they will carry a tariff of 5 per cent. I don't want to go through all of the details. Intermediate goods 10 per cent in Group A, Capital Goods 10 per cent, final goods 10 per cent, which is the basic category and concessions were made in the tariff for a number of items. Items in respect of which there is a minimum rate which would be applied and these are basically items of particular interest to people – basic items. We also have a list for items on which special rates would apply and these are the items on which the cost of living consideration was taken into account. Items like corned beef, and cheese, tea and herrings, sardines, mackerel, pitch pine, mahogany, linoleum and a range of things. Health items, preparations for use in hair, preparation for oral and dental hygiene, life jackets and life belts, contact lenses, spectacles, lenses of glass, sports and culture, wigs and false beards, eye brows and eye lashes, these are items where a special and lower rate would apply because they would be considered as items that would have cost of living implications.

Educational items have also been identified for special treatment and also items relating to national security. So, what I am saying then, is that we have a situation where the four MDCs were supposed to have applied the CET from the 1st of January 1991.

Now the point which has been explained by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, where Barbados has always been in the forefront of implementing decisions taken at the level of CARICOM and then we found ourselves in a situation where other people just sat back and did not apply. Barbados adopted the position, and indeed it was generally agreed that efforts would be made to make sure that they came into operation at the same time and when we recognised that other people started to stall we took the decision that we would get the order ready, but we would not implement until we were satisfied that a sufficient number of countries were committed in the same way that Barbados was committed. And, as I understand it, Trinidad and Tobago has implemented the CET now, Jamaica has, Guyana I believe has also implemented it, St. Vincent has implemented what would apply to them as a member of the OECS and St. Lucia, although I heard a report out of St. Lucia recently which would seem to suggest that there might be some particular problems there in the implementation, but we have made a firm commitment that we would implement from the 1st April.

The arrangement as I understand it, would be that the OECS will come in under a phased arrangement for the implementation of all of the items. They will implement some which will take effect from when they are put into operation and then on the 1st January 1993 the OECS member states and Belize will apply the CET rates on a number of items listed in Part 1 of List B and on the 1st January 1994 or on introduction of the commodity based tariff the OECS member states will apply the CET rates on the items of Part II. It seems to me, that as far as the arrangement is concerned by January 1994 all of the CARICOM member states should have implemented the CET. It is a classic case of CARICOM affairs where one has got to try to pull and push.

As far as Barbados is concerned we would be pressured and we try our best to see how we could get everybody to move with one approach but it is an extremely difficult thing. When you have to deal, and I don't want to comment unfavourably on some of our colleagues in CARICOM but I think that Honourable Members understand what I am talking about. It is a difficult situation and I think that out of all of the difficulties this is the best situation which could have been arrived at. I hope that explanation would, at least, for the time being satisfy Honourable Members but I would want to give Honourable Members the assurance that the explanatory notes and the information which they request, and which they are entitled to, will be made available to them. I thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think that my colleagues, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy have adequately covered most of the points raised by the other side, but I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I would not like the impression to be given that the Opposition, if they were the administration, that they would not be implementing this, because Mr. Speaker....

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Precisely, but the way how the Honourable Member for Christ Church South started off it could very well give the impression that we are doing something that if you all were running the administration that you all would not be implementing it. That is precisely the impression you all are giving.

In fact, when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South began to speak I went to my colleagues and I mentioned that when the Caribbean Common Market was established the idea of a common external tariff was part of the establishment, that formed part of the annex to that and in fact in 1984 at the Heads of Government Conference, it must have been either attended by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South or by the Prime Minister at that time, or both, because I think you were Minister of Trade then, and therefore you must have agreed that you would implement this as well. You must have agreed. You were asking a lot of questions, the point is, that as far as this is concerned, I am telling you this, you were at the meeting as Minister of Trade and the Prime Minister of the day he was there and you all agreed to implement this. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West answered and told you that there has been no fundamental change from what was agreed to. I just want to respond. Mr. Chairman, whenever....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You realise how it is, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The asides are too loud.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, would you believe me that I sat in peace and in quiet and listened to the Honourable Members from over there including my friend the Honourable Member for St. Peter, but each and every time I stand here to speak, Mr. Chairman, he cannot keep quiet. At no time.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter mentioned that the important thing today is that there is no unanimity as far as consumption taxes and stamp duty is concerned and that is true, and that is precisely the reason why there are some suspensions in certain of these things because the respective Ministers realise that since there is no unanimity in these other taxes that certain countries will have to have certain suspensions and that is why for certain commodities you have, a list, and you can call it List A, you have that List A which is the minimum, you charge a minimum rate and then the respective Governments will be able to charge

above that minimum. And they have also taken into account the fact of the amount of revenue that you make on certain items. That is why they are certain items that you can suspend and in fact only recently Trinidad has come out and has asked for suspension on a number of items. Jamaica has done the same thing because they realized that, although they wanted to implement the whole thing up front, they would have a loss in revenue and, therefore, you have that condition that you can ask for a suspension if it affects your revenue. That is what has happened.
7.10 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter as well mentioned the population and housing census and he mentioned the point that the Government should not at this time use the excuse that persons are being utilized with this census and, therefore, they could not come out with certain other statistics. He also mentioned the fact that under two separate Heads or something like that we have this population and housing census.

Mr. Chairman, I have looked at this situation and the point I am trying to make is this. I have seen where the amount of funds allocated to the population and housing census has gone down from $1 146 000 or thereabouts down to $167 000. The further point that I am going to make is that if you have ten persons working in the housing census no matter how many Heads you put the funds under there will still be the same number of people who are working. That is the only point that I am trying to make. If I have misunderstood what you are saying, well I apologize. The point I am trying to make is that if you have ten working whether you put the money under two or four Heads, there are still ten people working. That is the point that I am trying to make here.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Peter that the Statistical Department should be putting out the statistical data and that it should not be put out by the Central Bank. I agree that the Central Bank, if anything, should be commenting on the data. I agree with that.

Now one other point was made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter as well. He said the last time we had statistics on unemployment was sometime in 1989. Now he went further and said that he hopes that when the statistics come out now that the statistics will not be statistics showing that in July 1990 the unemployment rate was such and such a thing. That is what you have said. Right. You want us to pick up from now.

Mr. Chairman, it is a good point. But if this Administration were to do that, can you imagine what would be said by the Honourable Members from the other side? They would say that unemployment for the past two years was at that level and that they always knew it. You see you have to understand when you are dealing with certain people how to operate.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is imputing improper motives. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I spoke with reference to what is a scientific practice. All I am saying, Sir, is that you cannot in conducting a scientific survey on employment and unemployment ask people to tell you about their employment status on the basis of recall. To ask a man if he was employed in December 1980 is to jeopardize the integrity of those statistics. Let us have a clean series, Sir, starting now. I am giving the House, Sir, the lead that I have gone on record in advance in telling Government to let us pick up the series from now and keep it consistent herein after. Having said that, unless he is confusing me, I am not in the Dems, Sir....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member rose on a point of order but he is making a speech.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am still going to make the point that I was making.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am going to make the point that I was making, Mr. Chairman, and the intervention of the Honourable Member for St. Peter is not going to divert me from the point that I was making. Throughout the last part of 1989 and the entire 1990, they were saying that the figures we were giving for unemployment were wrong. That is what the Opposition was saying. Now if we were to go and do not give any figures at all for last year, I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that the Opposition will say that they were always right and they cannot give you the figures for last year because they knew that last year the unemployment was 28 and 29. That is what the Opposition would say. I know what I am saying.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You do not have to get them accurately. But the point is that we have to operate here.

Mr. Chairman, I think that most of the other points that were raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South were adequately covered by my two colleagues. Now let me just mention the impact of the tariff as mentioned by the officers. In the newspapers, you would have seen $33.5 million which we know could not have been the right figure anyhow. The recent figure that was given is that it might be a decrease of about $18 million instead of the $33 million. The effective date of the Order is April 1, 1991, Mr. Chairman. The Common External Tariff is already in effect in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. Dates have been announced for St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Dominica and by May all countries are expected to be using the Common External Tariff.

The objectives of this tariff are identified on Page 2 of the document which is marked on an explanation of its scope and operational features. With those remarks, Mr. Chairman....

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not going to go over anything more on the Common External Tariff because we will obviously have an opportunity after we have studied it and after we have had the benefit of the explanatory memorandum. Whether it has been prepared by CARICOM or prepared by the Government Information Service in Barbados, we must have an opportunity to study it in relation to the document, Sir.

I want to move now, Sir, to the question of the Land Tax. I am not going to do the Land Development Duty yet, Sir. We will have full opportunity to deal with that. Sir, regarding Land Taxes in this country, the Government has been the beneficiary of the increased revenues derived from the increase in the Land Tax valuations in Barbados. The Government not having taken the opportunity of reducing the rates of the tax across the board to the tune of some $8 million to $10 million, almost a 30% increase in the yield of land taxes the Government is the beneficiary of. Sir, this is impacting very, very heavily upon the depressed productive sectors in Barbados and the long suffering households in Barbados, Sir, will be doubly hit. Sir, I am not quarrelling with the valuations. The system of valuations that we have is a system which is based upon the improved value with certain allowances, of course. But it was always recognized that where you had a significant increase in the improved values that the impact had to be mitigated by an adjustment of the rate. There has been no adjustment here, Sir. I have not seen an order....
7.20 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Just one minute. All right. Tell me what adjustment in the rates has taken place in respect of commercial properties. The Honourable Member says there has been an adjustment in the rates. I would like to know the percentage of adjustment that has taken place in respect of industrial properties, in respect of residential properties and in respect of agricultural properties. For us to understand this and make an intelligent judgment on it, we would like to know how much is the total increase in valuation and roughly in what categories the increase has been greatest.

Aside.

I know the Honourable Member had an acquaintance, and still has an acquaintance, because the name Franklin & Franklin is renowned as valuers in Barbados, so the Honourable Member would know the impact upon the clients of that firm of the new valuations. This is a very important thing, because there is no doubt at all that the Government are past masters at the art of tax extraction. This Government has displayed more skills in that area than any other Government in the history of Barbados. They are past masters at gathering in taxes without any mercy, so I would like to know the impact of this latest effort in that direction. It is very important, because we see that the revised estimates disclose that there is some $8,500,000 more and that actual revenue in 1989–90 was $34 million, which is the reason why we say that it is somewhere in the vicinity of nearly 30%. That is what we would like to know. Perhaps if we can get the explanation on this, then we will be able to move on, but I am really hoping that there is a little leeway for some relief in this area.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I just have a couple of things to raise under Head 19.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Unless I am reading this document wrong, the revised estimates 1989–90 for land tax show $45 million and the estimates for this year show the same $45 million.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of explanation, Sir. It is well known that the new tax bills have not even been finished sending out yet, and this is the last month for the payment of the 1990 land taxes.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. We are debating the Estimates, we are not debating what....

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

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN took his seat.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: On a point of order, Sir. I am going to repeat it. The estimate for 1990–91 was in truth and in fact $36.5 million, but the revised estimate was $45 million. The estimate for 1991–92 is the same $45 million. The Honourable Member cannot say what is likely to happen, we are discussing what is in here.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, the Honourable Member has forced me to rise again, because the difference between what you got in 1989–90 and 1990–91, whether original or revised, was over $8 million. Therefore, you have tax gathered $8 million more in one year. That is all I am telling you.

Asides.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get into such confused areas. They were talking about 45 and 45, but I see under Programme 9: Pensions, page 25, a reduction by $3 million in retiring benefits. I

want that explained. Last year $41 million for retiring benefits, this year $38 million. Do you expect so many pensioners to die?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What did you remove? Because you increased pensions last year and you are budgeting less this year. I am asking if you expect a lot of people to die after the Budget, or is this false accounting? I do not know, but I would like it explained in due course, not now. They can make a note, get the answer and give me later on.

Sir, I must say that I have always had a good relationship with the people who work in the Land Tax Department, but it needs some careful investigation now. The Land Tax Department is a Department of great unhappiness. There is thorough dissention and dissatisfaction in the Land Tax Department. Some of the practices, aided and abetted by the Public Service Commission, may well end up in court when I have a little time in the next two weeks, but there are factions and groups.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. It will lead to litigation. Disciplinary matters are exempted under the Administrative Justice Act, but this is a non-disciplinary matter. Supersessions and that kind of thing can be carried to court on an exercise in discretion.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It really is not fair for Honourable Members to interrupt the Honourable Member. The interventions are too loud.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On Election Day itself certain things had to be said, certain people had to be assured that their appointments would soon be coming through, and thereafter with that inducement they went to vote. It will reach the law courts shortly. It is a Department that needs looking into and straightening out. That is all I am going to say. A word to the wise is enough.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will tell you in detail, chapter and verse. I said that the Department is full of dissention, factionalism and unhappiness and that it is likely to lead to litigation. It is being studied now by one of my juniors. I want to come, Sir, to deal with page 26, Head 19, specifically, to deal with Caribbean Aircargo. I am not going into the question of debt. It is at $60 million. I want to deal with the human side of it.

7.30 p.m.

Caricargo, two years ago, gave a month's notice to many of the flight crew and sent them home without any further remuneration. Now, these are people... I believe I may have said this in here already. The flight crew, all of them, as far as I recall, were persons who had kept the airline flying in good times and in bad times; had even broken international regulations at the airline's insistence, in order to try to earn revenue for the airline. These matters were all documented and reported to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago which is a partner, but summarily....

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is in here, on page 26.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. I am hearing the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They will behave, Sir? Or do you want me to deal with them?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want you to address the Chair.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. Well then, tell them to stop talking.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have been trying to.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I am very unhappy that these people who gave seven, eight, nine years of service to the airline should have been treated like that. The Government knows about it, Sir. Representations have been made several times for proper termination benefits for the flight crew and nothing has been done. I think the Government is aware that some of those members of the flight crew are suffering in other countries. I wouldn't go into the details of all of the cases because...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, I considered him a flight engineer and member of the flight crew. A couple of the flight engineers as well as the pilot have not got any...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Severance pay? They are languishing all about the world. They have tried to enforce claims and they have met with the most uncaring and uncharitable attitude from the Government of Barbados and from Caricargo itself. I believe the Trinidad people are doing their own thing because the ombudsman in Trinidad, his son was one who was very badly treated and I think they are taking up their business....

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, that action is going to come here – the ombudsman in Trinidad, Evans Rees. He was a pilot.

But, at the heart of it is a feeling that the pilots were victimised and therefore offered no satisfactory termination benefits because they had had occasion to draw to the attention of the Government of Trinidad and to some extent to the Government of Barbados. Correspondence was written to both Ministers, Ken Gordon and the Minister in Barbados, and there is a feeling that they were victimised because they were disclosing certain infelicitous conduct within the airline. I have asked before, Sir, that the responsible Ministry in Barbados carry out a proper examination into the allegations, because the allegations tended towards the ultimate demise of the airline and at any rate, they should with Trinidad decide to pay these people proper termination benefits and come to the respective parliaments for the equivalent 50% of the termination benefits to pay the workers in recognition of their long service.

All kinds of technical points will be raised; that they were based out of Barbados, in Miami; but the contract was made here. They had a Barbados pilot's licence, every one of those pilots with Caricargo. Their salaries were sent from Barbados to Miami. So, what are you telling me? On some flimsy ground that because they worked in Miami... They worked in Miami without work permits because Caricargo, the company itself... I had better not say what I was going to say because it has international implications. Let me just say. They worked in Miami without work permits for eight or nine years and they were led to believe that Caricargo was going to get their status regularised beyond that of bare visiting pilot where you would have, I think, twenty-one days normal stay. Some of these people made arrangements on the faith of representations made to them by Caricargo to purchase property. They brought their families up and then all of a sudden Caricargo dismissed them and they were thrown out by the immigration authorities of the United States and are now, as I said, languishing all about the world.

I don't believe that a government-owned enterprise ought to be setting those standards of industrial behaviour. What do you expect the ordinary fellow to do? I think it is a scandal.

Other Members want to speak on this Head. Sir, I will come back to this. There are a couple more things I wish to raise.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I don't have time now to deal with the Department of Statistics. I made a statement in here last week. Not one of the Members on the other side challenged what I said.
7.40 p.m.

Two days later the head of the Department, a civil servant, who was not in here at the time, made a statement in reply to me, a long thing in the Press. Before these Estimates are published I will reply to him. He was not in here but he replied to a statement made by me in here which was not challenged by any of the Members on the other side including the Minister responsible. I will deal with him later on this week.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who has just taken his seat raised some matters relating to CARICARGO which I think an effort should be made to put a different perspective than what had been submitted to this House. If representations had been made to these pilots eight or nine years ago, they would not have been made by me as Minister. I do not know what was made to CARICARGO by CARICARGO to these pilots eight or nine years ago. This is a matter that need not keep me here for more than 2 minutes.

The matter, as I see it, Sir, is reasonably simple. CARICARGO has been – I am not so sure, I cannot remember the facts. I am a bit hazy on the facts. I do not have the files with me so I cannot read the facts here at this moment. I do recall some things pertaining to this particular matter. I cannot recall why the pilots' services were terminated, whether they were dismissed or whether they were made redundant. That bit I cannot now recall. Let us assume, Sir, they were made redundant. What I do recall is this. These pilots claimed they were not resident in Barbados. They claimed they were not resident in Trinidad. They contributed nothing in terms of National Insurance to our funds here in Barbados. Not one cent they paid in National Insurance here in Barbados.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The Honourable Member just asked if we deducted it. Well, then, answer me this question. Who would deduct their Income Tax? They paid in this country not one cent in Income Tax insisting that they were not taxable in this country because they were not resident in this country. You cannot have it two ways. Certainly, they are to pay their Income Tax. To emphasise the fact they were not resident in Barbados, they paid no Income Tax. They paid no National Insurance.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: It is not their fault they did not pay Income Tax? The Laws require every working person in Barbados to pay Income Tax. How you can say it is not their fault not to pay Income Tax? How can they

make arrangements that they should not pay Income Tax? You can make arrangements with working people in Barbados not to pay Income Tax? That would be an illegal arrangement. Who would have made that kind of arrangement? They paid no Income Tax here in Barbados, Mr. Chairman. They paid no Income Tax in Trinidad. I do not know what they did in the United States of America.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: They were not here. They were flying the aircraft from Miami to Barbados spending a couple of hours and flying back.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Probably from 1980. The arrangement would have made before. I made that clear from the time I got up. Therefore, Sir, one cannot have it both ways. Let me say this. We in Barbados have all kinds of safeguards. It they are entitled, I am sure they will be paid. It is very simple. Let the court decide whether they are entitled.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He got more than he should have got. It is not his fault.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am still having great difficulty with the asides and responses to those asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Let the court determine it. If the court says they are entitled, they will get it as soon as possible. They have a redress. Let them do what they should do.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not really addressing these specific matters. Earlier in the day the Leader of the Opposition did raise some questions relating to training. He asked whether the cuts were indicative of a policy of not employing temporary persons. There was a reduction in the vote for other Personal Emoluments relating to temporary posts.

I would just like to explain less this be taken as an indication that there is a policy for laying off people in the Public Service, hence the reduction in the vote to which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West referred. Far from indicating any laying off of people was the direct result of the establishment of over 300 posts during last year. When these posts are established, they would no longer be paid from the temporary vote but they would be paid from the vote of the respective Ministries. I want to spell it out very carefully so that no one would come to any conclusion that because there is a reduction in that particular vote it was because of an effort to reduce the number of people.

Thank you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Although the Honourable Member has gone back to a former Head, I am glad he has given the explanation because I really do not accept it. The reduction in the vote is $1 254 297. Now, the increase in the Statutory Personal Emoluments which would be the fixed charge in a permanent post is $135 277. Will the Minister please explain the difference in the $1 million?

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Just above it. Item 101, Head 16. The increase in the Statutory Personal Emoluments where if you are permanent you are a fixed charge it is only $135 277 but the decrease in the other vote is $1 254 297. If the Minister has been so advised, he had better send the civil servants back to the drawing board because he cannot be right. There must be a decrease in staff. The Minister must know that.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You are now saying there must be a decrease in staff.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It looks like it. I am not sure if my honourable friend has the facts straight. The posts are not necessarily in the training administration. They are throughout the Service. You cannot look at the vote under Training and argue because the vote under Training for temporary staff is cut that you should see a corresponding decrease in the permanent establishment. It is for posts throughout the Civil Service.
7.50 p.m.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again. Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the sitting be now suspended until 1.00 p.m. tomorrow.

Now tomorrow we will begin, it is clear, later than we have been starting our sittings here on days. As we start at 1.00 tomorrow, what I would expect Members would do would be to have an early lunch and we begin here at 1.00 p.m. and at some point later, we will break for dinner and carry on until about 9.00 o'clock tomorrow evening roughly.

Let me state, Sir, lunch will be available here from 12.00 o'clock onwards. Those of us who will want to have lunch they can have lunch here, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that motion that we will have lunch at 12.00 o'clock and meet at 1.00 o'clock, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmtive without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly at 7.55 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. The House was in Committee of Supply, to that it should revert.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I have had the benefit, overnight of seeing some documents that were placed on record in this House, namely a statement by the Minister responsible for Civil Aviation concerning Caribbean Air Cargo and that was dated 21 November, 1989 and also, Sir, I had access to a debate in the other Chamber and it is reported in the Session, Senate Debates 86 – 91 page 731 and the speaker was Senator Morrison and in both of those documents, Sir, they set out the operational history of CARICARGO, Sir, and I wish to know, Sir, now Sir, what was the position subsequent to the information given in those statements. That was the year 1987. Since then we have had '88, '89 and '90.

I would like to know, Sir, how much of this money is going to be loaned or advanced to CARICARGO, Sir. And, I say this, because CARICARGO is a company that was a joint venture between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and it was formed to carry out an essential public service function, namely, to provide cargo services for manufacturers within the Caribbean who wish to export both intra-regionally and extra-regionally. It was therefore an important instrument in the economic development of the Caribbean region. And, we all know that for some reason or another the fortunes of that company changed dramatically and I say that they changed dramatically because the Honourable Senator Morrison at that time stated at page 735 the outturn, and this is what he said, in 1983 they had an operating profit of $2 957 506, a net profit of $771 205. In 1984, a net profit of $1 070 752. In 1985 there was an operating profit of $1.3 million, a net loss of $2.9 million. In 1986 there was an operating profit of $2.3 million and a net loss of $385 000. This is what he said, Sir:

> "That, Sir, is the position with CARICARGO. We are expecting that it should come good in the new financial year, because the returns of the first four months are looking very healthy."

So, that is the information that was given to the Honourable Parliament, the other side. If the Honourable Member wishes to disown that statement he is at liberty to do that. I am not worried. You see, Sir, I am not trying to make partisan politics out of this because the position is very clear. As a Caribbean person I understand and the other side, if they don't understand, it is better that they understand it, that when it comes to the provision of transportation whether, for cargo or for passengers there is no third country or no third party, public or private enterprise that is going to do your work for you. You had better put that in your pipe and smoke it. Nobody will do it for you. The nature of the transport industry is such that in all countries of the world, periodically you will get periods of boom and periodically you will get periods of losses.

We have witnessed the impact of deregulation in the United States of America where the number of airlines have shrunk from seventy and it is now predicted that they will only have four or five mega giants. If any of you think that they are going to come down here and do your work for you at a loss, you are badly mistaken. You must make up in your mind that on a regional level, because you cannot do it on a domestic level, that some mechanism has to be found to be able to get an entity in existence and it can only be done by cooperation, in my opinion, between the public and the private sector to be able to do this work.

You cannot export some goods without having cargo facilities. You cannot bring passengers here without having airline seat facilities, so that what I am concerned about with Caricargo is this, this is the point. I am concerned about the dramatic change in the financial condition subsequent to 1986, that is what I am concerned about, and, I am concerned about it because it represented a symbol of cooperation between the Governments and also it represented a statement of faith by the Governments, in the need for inter-Governmental cooperation in order to effectuate the objective which could not be effectuated on an individual island basis. It was a typical example of functional cooperation.

It also has another message and it is this, that in the structures that we set up to carry out these objectives there must be a permanent monitoring mechanism in existence so that we can't necessarily be misled or kept in the dark about what is happening. You cannot tell me that something dramatic did not happen when an Honourable Senator could get up and say that in the first four months of the Financial Year 1986/87 that things were looking very healthy, and now we know according to the other statement, and this is very important, Sir. The other statement now, Sir, the statement made in this House, Sir, when the Honourable Member said that the losses between 1987 and 1989 were very great. That is all I want to know, Sir.

I want to say this, people who become Directors or operatives of companies of a public nature must understand

that they are accountable. They must understand that. They cannot expect the glories which flow with the post and not expect the responsibilities which flow with it. I am positive the Government owes the West Indian Community, particularly the taxpayers of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago an obligation to have some kind of inquiry into this dramatic change. This is what you need to do.

Precedents must be established, there are a host of students up there at the University of the West Indies who must understand that when they come out of there or come out of other institutions and they are placed in responsible positions in management that they have, whether they are working in the public sector or the private sector, they have to understand that they are accountable. The standards of managerial and other conduct must constantly be the subject of scrutiny, otherwise we are not establishing any precedent even for the students to learn from.

It is a tragedy what has occurred but it ought to be a good lesson. Sir, the report of the inquiry should be one of the case documents that all of the students of management and economics and other disciplines at the University should be using. This is the experience of inter-governmental effort, something that turned sour. A little on we will deal with CARSICOT. I will say this, Sir, the Honourable Members on the other side have provided a number of precedents. CARSICOT is another one, that is multi-facet. But, nevertheless, Sir, this is what I want to know. I hope that people understand, Sir, that everybody in the community understands that we cannot go forward without transportation. All of the years, in the sea transportation, you have had to battle with WISCO, and that is the position, Sir.

Now, there are other lessons that we should learn, Sir. According to the statement, Sir, that was issued by the Honourable Minister, it appears that the other partner as a Government was sometimes tardy.
1.10 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, look at this. I am dealing in a high diplomatic area and I am choosing my language very carefully and the Honourable Members accused me of being tough with my statements. Now they are telling me that I am too weak with my statements. Look at how you learn. That is the value of precedent. The Honourable Members now know what we had to deal with. Now the position is this. We have to let the public of the Caribbean know how various partners behave. It is time that we do that because that is the only way you will also improve. I am a strong believer that if you make a commitment that you must honour it. I may be old-timish but that is the position, Sir.

So that I know there are one or two other things, Sir, I would like to know and I am serious about. This is a very serious thing. I well recall that there was a commitment to lease as part of the assets being put in by the Trinidad Government a building for CARICARGO. I want to know whether that lease was ever signed. That is an important thing. There was a commitment to lease.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not know whether it is finished. I mean I do not know. You see the statement here does not tell me this, Sir, because I know there were assets. You see I know that CARICARGO had a number of assets and the warehouse was an asset. I am telling you. Money was spent on improvements. You check the correspondence. Well, all of these things we want to know. We want to know all of these things. That is why I say that this is such a matter of import that we have to have these things because in the future it may be a lesson that may arise from this situation that is that you do not trust anybody at all. You do everything in writing. I know a little later, if we get the opportunity, we will talk about the Multilateral Clearing Facility and I am going to lay some facts in here. I feel posterity should know these things because we are moving towards an era of greater and greater cooperation and norms of behaviour must be established not only for individuals but for Governments. Just as managers must be accountable, the Governments must be accountable in the Caribbean community. I appeal to the Honourable Member to let the Caribbean public.

I also would like to know, Sir, about the role of the Venezuelan Government. Negotiations were taking place.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes left.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Two minutes, Sir. Well, Sir, I just want to know about the Venezuelan Government because in April 1986, note the date, the Government of Venezuela stated that the country was interested in becoming an equity partner of Caribbean Air Cargo.

Now Sir, I just want to say that. I just want to know whether the other side, Sir, just forgot about that or whether they pursued it. That is all I want to know and I want to know the results of the discussion. In short, Sir, I want to know a number of things. What is the position with it now? What is the Government's intention about the future and things of that kind, Sir?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I would like to be able to respond in full to what the Honourable Member who just took his seat said. Unfortunately, I cannot do that because I will have to get the information ready. I would have normally expected that this would come under the

Head of International Transport. But the Member has elected to bring it here on this particular occasion and I am sorry, Sir, that I did not have that opportunity for this.

But there are certain matters, Sir, to which I think I can respond. CARICARGO is an unfortunate case of this so called cooperation between countries. I have to say so called because it is only on paper. It does not always work out in point of fact.

CARICARGO was set up, Sir, as a corporation owned jointly by Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados. Trinidad and Tobago has 50% shares and Barbados has 50% shares. I think, Sir, that was the first mistake. However, Sir, that has been the position. CARICARGO has been operating now from 1980. Unfortunately, one of the important things about CARICARGO, it was set up under capitalized and the equipment that CARICARGO was made to use was the old disused converted aircraft from British West Indian Airways. Well, that is one of the big problems. They have been and continues to be fuel guzzlers and the older they get, Sir, the more fuel they consume. That is one of the problems.

In 1987 or thereabouts, the United States authorities required that the aircraft should be fitted with noise abatement mechanisms. We call them hush kits. They were very costly. I think about $2 million. When that happened, Mr. Chairman, the consumption of fuel skyrocketed. Sir, we had even greater commitments to the expenditure that had not been the case when the Honourable Member was the Minister. They laid the seeds at that time for CARICARGO's expenditure to escalate. From time to time, Sir, the older the aircraft got, the more aged they became, the requirements of the U. S. Department of Transport and the manufacturers were that the aircraft were to be maintained at more regular intervals.

Sir, I understand there is something called the "C-Check" and every few months, Sir, these aircraft have to go into a maintenance facility in Miami in order, Sir, to be maintained. They were exceedingly costly, Sir. They cost millions of dollars, Sir, to be maintained on an annual basis.

Now the Honourable Member has asked the questions of reasons why CARICARGO continues to lose more and more money. From 1986, Sir, the amount of losses CARICARGO had regardless of what the Honourable Member mentioned just now was about $20 million or thereabouts. I am speaking from my head, Sir. I cannot now remember, as I said, and I will get the information. This document was passed to me while I was on my feet. So I have not been able to read it. Sir, the amount of money owed was $20 million or $25 million. I do not remember but somewhere in the area, Sir, of $20 million or $25 million was the amount of losses that CARICARGO had accumulated in 1986.

Now the Honourable Member asked the question, Sir, about the facility in Trinidad and Tobago which is part of the assets of CARICARGO.
1.20 p.m.

I do not know anything about any improvements being made to any of the facilities, those improvements would have had then to be made during the time when the Honourable Member who spoke on it just now was the Minister. All I have heard was that Caricargo was leasing a facility in a place called Trincity in Trinidad and Tobago, which was not even at the airport. What is more, Mr. Chairman, my understanding too is that equipment, costing thousands and thousands of dollars, which had been sent in to Caricargo from 1984 at the same leasehold property, had been left outdoors to weather away; completely useless then to the company. I do not know who is responsible for that. That was 1984.

There were all kinds of problems, Sir, with Caricargo. We have been trying, over the past two or three years, to salvage Caricargo. One of the efforts made for the salvaging of Caricargo has been the offer to Venezuela of an equity participation in Caricargo. I took this matter to Cabinet and we agreed on the level at which Venezuela would participate. After some considerable period, we got the Trinidad Government to agree to the participation at the level recommended by the Barbados Cabinet, but the timing was bad. That coincided with the period when President Luscinchi was demitting office, which was unfortunate, because President Luscinchi was very interested in participating with Trinidad and Tobago and with Barbados in this particular venture. When the matter reached Venezuela for the Venezuelans to agree, it was only a matter of a couple of weeks before President Luscinchi was to demit office. That was not our fault, Sir.

At that particular time as well, problems arose in Venezuela. There were riots and the Venezuelans could pay no attention to the proposals we had placed before them. Then there was a change of Presidents. It is as simple as that, Sir. The Government which succeeded Luscinchi's had other matters to attend to, this was not one of their priority areas, so it was put on the back burner. We have not heard anything from the Venezuelans to this day, whether they are prepared to participate with Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago in this particular venture. Our assumption, therefore, is that there has been a change of heart.

I would welcome any commission, Mr. Chairman, to enquire into Caricargo, because I believe it would tell us what we ought not to do. I have no problems with that. Barbados has been making tremendous efforts, Mr. Chairman,....

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Putting more money into it is not the answer. Barbados put more money into it than it should have put to ensure its continuation. We did more than we should have done. The money owing to the Barbados banks is somewhere in the area of $50 million, the money owing to the Trinidad banks is less than $3 million, so you can understand the efforts Barbados has been making in order to keep Caricargo alive. I would have to say that those efforts have not been matched by the other shareholders. I regret to say that. The fact that our banks are owed $50 million and the Trinidad banks $3 million, in itself tells that story.

We have been making efforts over the past several months. People like to use the word "privatise". We have had discussions with persons who would be interested in taking over the management of Caricargo, which is what we would dearly love to happen, but there have been stumbling blocks, not from Barbados' side....

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: You can say what you want. You can liquidate, but there are still problems. There is still the question of the debt owed to the people of Barbados through their banks to be solved. We have not been able to get a resolution on that.

So these are some of the problems with Caricargo. Maybe there are others, to which I would like to respond either during this debate or in the debate on International Transport. I will have to look through the files.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: We will allow the Honourable Member to be briefed, Sir, because straight away there are a few problems I would like him to be briefed on. The Caribbean Development Bank, a big bank, well skilled, lent the money for hush kits. Bankers do not lend out money of this nature without proper pre-feasibility studies. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North will tell you that. You have to have proper documentation showing the feasibility of the project before the banker lends you the money. Whatever feasibility was put, it was sufficiently attractive in nature to encourage the bank to lend the money. The hush kitting was paid for, to a large extent, by the Caribbean Development Bank, so I find it a little difficult to understand how the CDB would have been persuaded to lend the money and then to hear that it was a non-viable operation. That is why I am so convinced that this is a classic example....

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, I want the students and the Caribbean people to know the level of competence that is in existence among these big institutions in the Caribbean.

Certain remarks made by Mr. H. B. St. JOHN were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the record at this stage.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I have no problem with that, but this could not be struck from the record, because I heard distinctly the Honourable Member say that the hush kitting of the planes led to further losses, because they necessitated more fuel.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member said that. He said it led to an increase in the use of fuel. From my memory of the fuel price movement in those days was that after 1986 there was a period of time when the world had a bonanza with low fuel prices, so 1986, 1987 and 1988 were periods of low fuel prices. Quite apart from that, Sir, these are the little nuances of the explanations that have been given which I feel should be further investigated.

This is what I am worried about. Here is a precedent that we have to establish. Whether we like it or not, there are going to be certain areas within the Caribbean economic community which are dependent upon inter-governmental co-operation, and whatever we may say about the private sector, I am not one of those who believe that the private sector is going to take the initiative in areas which are needed until they are satisfied that a cast iron profit is going to be made. That is the position. Therefore, I want proper norms established. I am not criticising the Honourable Member in this context, I want the Honourable Member to do justice to the Caribbean Community, and justice will only be served if a whole expose took place as to how this occurred. You know, had it not been for the investigations into the South Sea Bubble Company, the whole pattern of company law would not have taken the pattern it took. So, therefore, we must learn, precedent by precedent.
1.30 p.m.

The Multilateral Facility is going to be the next one. Precedent by precedent, we must learn to be able to establish norms. I look forward to listening to the explanation of the Honourable Member, including what this money is going to go for, because I do have some constituents who have been laid off and who have... I'll say this, the Company has behaved very properly. They have written them letters saying they are due severance pay but they have no money to pay. Look to the Severance Payment Fund. They have written the people letters in response to the originating application to the Severance Payment Board to determine the severance. They have received replies, saying we owe you severance payments but we have no money. I would like to know whether any of this money is going to go to pay those people severance pay now that they have become redundant and which fact has been accepted by the company. That is one of the questions I would like to ask.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: There is no any-of-which money he is talking about. Where is the money he is talking about that will go to pay? Oh, from there? I don't know what is the purpose of that but let me say this. While the Honourable Member was speaking, I was able to do some research because as I said before, Sir, the files were not available to me. The Honourable Member had it in his hands and I must thank him, Sir, for passing it to me. Yes, that's right . This is the statement that was made by myself some years ago in this House, Sir, and I have to read sections of it:

> "The company's debt profile at the end of 1986 shortly after this administration took office shows $20.5 million due to the BNB, $2.1 million for the National Commercial Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, $6.3 million to the Caribbean Development Bank, $10 million to other creditors."

Now, Sir, that looks like $35 million to me.

> "$10 million to the other creditors including over $649,000 to the Airport Manager. As at the 30th September 1989 this debt stood at $51.1 million to the BNB, $1.7 million to the National Commercial Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, $7.7 million to the Caribbean Development Bank and $16 million to other creditors including $1.67 million due the Airport Manager, Sir."

This shows, Sir, that up to about 1986 about $35 million was due. But, Sir, it goes on:

> "The major contributor to this debt has been the high cost of maintaining two aircrafts."

As I said, before, Sir, they were two old aircrafts that BWIA was discarding, and what better thing to do but to offload them on the new company in which the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados each had 50% shares? The breakdown for respective years is as follows:

This is the high cost of maintaining two aircrafts. Between 1981-83 – $2.8 million; 1984 – $2.2 million; 1985 – $6 million; 1986 – $7.2 million. And after the hush kitting in 1987 it jumped – This is maintenance only, Sir – from $7.2 to $12.5 million. The next year, Sir... These are old aircraft – $16.9 million. These are maintenance costs. In 1988 – $16.9 million and in 1989, up to July which is almost half of the year, it was $7.6 million.

These statistics show that maintenance costs after 1984 have risen at an astronomical rate. Sir, this has been the problem with Caricargo. In the first place, Sir, in my opinion it was badly structured and a company like Caricargo should never have owned aircraft, not as young a company as Caricargo. That is the main reason, Sir, for the losses that Caricargo found itself in to this day.

Now, as to the question as to what these monies are being used for, I cannot answer the Honourable Member. It may be, Sir, that some of it is to pay some redundancies. It is very possible and if so I would welcome it myself, because there are several persons out there who gave good service to Caricargo over the years who have been laid off through no fault of their own and found themselves now in a position where in fact they should be compensated, and that has not been the case.

Now, the compensation, Sir, is not a commitment of Barbados only. But, I think we will probably have to look after our own people.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: It is not as simple as that. So, we may have to look after our own on this particular matter without looking to any contribution towards it from our partner in the venture. If that is the case, so be it. However, that cannot be the case in terms of the monies owing to the Barbados National Bank.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Briefly, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was asking about the contribution to Caricargo and of the figure. $4,656,624, $656,624 has been approved for Caricargo in order to satisfy the debt repayments to the Caribbean Development Bank and these are payments which were guaranteed by the Barbados Government and the Trinidad Government in the ratio of 50:50 so I take it for granted that if we are paying $656,624 that Trinidad should balance it with $656,624.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Head 19, sub-programme 10 is that source from which Government from time to time makes capital investments in enterprises ranging in the past from Arawak Cement Plant through to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. This year some $23.1 million approximately is being provided by Government on this Head to make capital investments and contributions to financial institutions. I want to raise a number of queries, Sir, in relation to this particular matter, specifically, to ask the Government insofar as it is not otherwise shown in the estimates, by what means is Government intending to provide equity and capital for its new initiative in the Caribbean Cotton Industry Ltd.?
1.40 p.m.

I am asking this question deliberately, Sir, because we have ourselves to blame as a Parliament if we allow Government to make investment into new enterprises as was the case in CARSICOT without satisfying ourselves that the enterprise is going to be properly capitalised.

The Committee will recall that on the last occasion the question of Government's equity in CARSICOT became a controversial issue leading to the matter, I think, being

farcically resolved in the Senate. In this particular instance, in so far as the Government is now at the point of going into this new enterprise, I believe the Government has a responsibility to tell the House what is going to be its equity injection into the new cotton enterprise. To the extent that is not shown elsewhere in the Estimates one would expect it to be shown under Head 19, Subhead 10, Government's equity investment in the new Caribbean Cotton Industries Ltd. We want to know how Government is providing the equity.

On the last occasion, Sir, we were told that Government was providing the equity by contributing lands formerly vested in the Agricultural Development Corporation as part of its equity to the enterprise. That matter ended up in the Senate and came to nought. In this case, Sir, we want to be sure that this new enterprise is properly capitalised from its very inception. The only way in which Government can satisfy us that it is capitalising that enterprise properly is by specifically making provision for it under Head 19, Subhead 10. That is the omnibus vote from which Government makes contributions from equity into its enterprises.

Unfortunately, there is nothing in the notes attendant to Head 19 Subhead 10 that would indicate that Government this year is proposing to make an equity injection into the Caribbean Cotton Industries Ltd. There is no other place in the Estimates where that is shown. There are no other previous Estimates that would show Government making a contribution towards the equity of the Caribbean Cotton Industries Ltd.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This is the vote. It is not under Agriculture either.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. If the Honourable Member wishes to discuss CARSICOT, he will have to wait until we come to discuss CARSICOT. He cannot sneak it in here. We are not going to sit here and behave as though we are idiots. If you want to discuss CARSICOT send us a note and we will arrange for you to discuss CARSICOT. It is not here.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, the Honourable Member has asked me not to treat him as an idiot. Head 19, Subhead 10 is that vote. It is an omnibus vote from which Government....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. Since the Honourable Member is discussing the Estimates, since the Honourable Member himself was a participant to making that particular Head, he knows that particular Head was used for injection in the first instance. CARSICOT is now an entity. If you want to discuss it you have to discuss it under a substantive Head. That has nothing to do with investment now.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: First of all, Sir, I am not discussing CARSICOT. I am talking about the new cotton enterprise. I am talking about an initial injection. Precisely what you want me to talk about I am talking about. I am talking about it under Head 19 where Government's injections in places like the Arawak Cement Plant, the West Indies Sugar Corporation and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation are provided for.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Therefore, if it is not there, it is not there.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, that is precisely the point that I want this debate to establish. On the last occasion this House was never exposed to the financial planning of the CARSICOT project. As a result, Government went ahead and undertook equity obligations without providing for it in those parts of the Estimates where it should be provided for. We are trying this time around to make sure that if Government is going to commit itself to an investment in a new enterprise, that it should be reflected in the Estimates and that the matter should be approved by this Parliament as is Parliament's responsibility. We are not going to come back here about guaranteeing loans....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member might very well ask if we are going to put anything in Cave Shepherd or if we are going to put anything in DaCostas. If he uses that technique he may range far and wide. I am appealing to Your Honour that if he wants to ask a question he may ask a specific question. Will the Minister tell us where it is intended? You cannot go on to debate something that is not there. That is the only point I am making, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understood the Honourable Member to be asking if it is not there, where it is.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Government has already announced that it has established a company and how much profit that company is supposed to be making.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member is putting it that way, he will then have to await a response to determine which Head to discuss that entity under.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am very clear on the point. Head 19 Subhead 10 is the vote. It is an omnibus vote.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And you have not seen that entity in that vote?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I established early that it ought to be at Head 19. Government's investment in any new enterprise has to be at Subhead 10. I am saying that on the last occasion this Parliament was not properly informed about Government's intention to make investment in an enterprise called CARSICOT. Parliament was not called upon to take any decisions in relation to that project. I believe that the whole Government was brought into disrepute in relation to how the matter of Government's injection of equity in that project eventually had to be resolved. All I am trying to do is to avoid us having to go back through that experience which, I believe, has darkened the parliamentary experience.

In relation to this Head as well, Sir, the Government is also proposing to make an injection into the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. Again, this year, we now have the situation where the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is to get three subventions through the Estimates from Government. It is getting a grant of $2 million. It is also getting a subvention under Head 19 Subhead 10. It is also getting a loan under Head 19 Subhead 11. This year, again, the Caribbean Broadcasting is getting these three subventions. We want to know what is Government's total subvention to the Corporation, particularly under Head 19, Subheads 10 and 11. I think it is very disgraceful that in a year when the Government is committed, for example, to having to close down the Indian Ground Day Nursery in St. Peter, that the taxpayers of Indian Ground, St. Peter, will have to be called upon to contribute to three subventions to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. It must strike the Government as peculiar that the only state enterprise in Barbados that is at present receiving three, not only two, but three subventions through the Budget is the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

It gets an on-budget grant under the relevant Ministry of $2 million to cover a loss of $1.5 million as the Prime Minister told us. So it gets a grant of $3 million to cover a loss of $1.5 million. I do not know why. Then it gets an injection of new capital. Then it gets a loan. One wants to understand what is there in the nature of the operations of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation as to entitle it to this financial largesse at a time when all the other state enterprises in Barbados and the rest of the Government sector as a whole are being called upon to show some restraint.

1.50 p.m.

I also want to read Head 19, sub-programme 10 in relation to Government income from property as set out in the Memorandum of the Estimates on page (ix). We now have a situation where Government's income from property for the next financial year is to yield $11.4 million whereas Government this year is making investments into enterprises to the extent of $23 million. That disparity must be becoming a source of concern to the Government. There are some entities included in those properties from which Government receives income whose contributions to the revenue have started to drop. They were days of course, Sir, in the early 1980s when Government could expect in any year for example to receive $6.5 million in contributions from the Central Bank. There were times when the Hilton Hotel used to contribute at least $1 million to the Treasury. Entities such as the Super Poultry Limited have never contributed substantially.

But the point I am making, Sir, is that the Government each year is being called upon to inject about $23 million into these enterprises either in the form of new investment or to help to cover losses. But the property income that Government is receiving from its enterprises is not keeping pace with the claims that these enterprises, as a whole, are making on the Treasury.

I want to highlight the point because I do not think that we should create the impression that we can be happy with situations where enterprises are making absolutely no contribution to the Treasury. We cannot contemplate giving CBC three subventions but then do not see CBC showing up in that column called "Property Income" as making a contribution to the Treasury. How do we justify that to the taxpayers, Sir? How can I tell the people of Indian Ground whose day nursery is to be closed that I can support Government giving CBC three subventions. They are making no contribution to the Treasury. They have never made a contribution to the Treasury but yet they are closing their day nursery.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are other enterprises which we cannot encourage to believe that they must not make a contribution under that Head of Revenue on page (ix) of the Memorandum. As I said, the Hilton Hotel formerly made a fairly substantial contribution to Government income. It is no longer doing so. We are not seeing the Barbados National Bank's contribution to Government income. The Barbados National Bank must be told that at some stage Government's investment in the property must reflect itself in terms of the payment to the Treasury. We are not seeing any contribution at all to the Treasury ensuing from either Heywoods or the Hilton. It cannot be, Mr. Chairman, that we are contemplating that those enterprises will only be owned by the state indefinitely but will never make a contribution to the Treasury. The Insurance Corporation of Barbados has remained faithful in its annual contribution to the Treasury, always in excess of $1 million, as well as the Barbados Mills and the Barbados Feeds. As well the Government has realized satisfactory rates of return on its investment in the Barbados External Telecommunications.

But the time has come for us to bring back some balance and to maintain a balance between what Government is investing in these enterprises and what they are contributing to the Treasury. The situation now is that in the next financial year that discounting other loans and advances that Government is providing under Item 11,

Government's other subsidies as contained elsewhere in these Estimates, Government's injections are twice the amount that all its state enterprises are making to the Treasury.

I want therefore, Sir, as I close on this point to really state that perhaps the time has come when we really need in this House a special committee for state enterprises which will have the responsibility of satisfying ourselves of the viability and the feasibility of any new investments that Government intends to make of a commercial nature to prevent lemons such as CARSICOT and other such bad investments taking place. The House ought to be satisfied, in advance, of the feasibility of any new commercial investment that the Government is going to commit this country to and ask the taxpayers to fund by way of its vote through Head 19, subhead 10. I believe that the proper purposes of a special committee of this House on state enterprises would be first, not only to monitor the performance of the state enterprises on an ongoing basis, but I really believe that the time has come that before the Government commits us to any additional commercial enterprises that the House in every instance has to be satisfied on the viability of same.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in Head 19 in the Estimates, there is no typographical error. So if you see nothing in there, that is what it means. So are we going to set up a committee to examine why we have not got anything in there? I do not understand.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not able to discuss what you wish to discuss under this Head.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well. So do not ask us to discuss something that you want to discuss when that is not what we want to discuss here. We can discuss what is here. When you get to a Head where there is something you can ask us, you will ask it.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We are not hiding it.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well all right then. You call the Head next then.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, just one small intervention.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Peter spent a lot of time on CBC. I believe part of the answer to some of the questions he was asking, the answer was given by the Right Honourable Prime Minister to the Leader of the Opposition when the Right Honourable Prime Minister was speaking.

In this $23 million here, Mr. Chairman, $2 million of that has been assigned to CBC as loan funds to assist the corporation in meeting its debt obligation to the Bank of Nova Scotia with respect to the non-revolving loan of $8.5 million. That is all that is there. That is what is here.

I take the point that the Honourable Member was making. I too believe that it is about time that CBC make some profit. I personally believe that as well. But the point is I can only explain how much funds are here for CBC and what the funds are for. It is $2 million and it is to help them to repay a debt to the Bank of Nova Scotia which we guaranteed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I think the confusion may have come because the Honourable Member for Christ Church West raised questions relating to CBC when we discussed the Prime Minister's Head under which it falls. This is the fund from which the money to be used specifically in the assistance of the loan which CBC got, I think it was about $8 million to build the Headquarters at CBC. This is specific to that. That is my understanding of it. That is the information we have.
2.00 p.m.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member is trying to be helpful but he is mistaken. Under Head 13, Sub-Programme 04 there is $2 million provided in the Estimates for CBC for use, and then under Head 19, Sub-Programme 10 there is a contribution to CBC which is obviously by way of equity going into CBC, the amount of which is not specified because the $23 million being granted is for contributions to be given to the Arawak Cement Plant, the West Indies Shipping Corporation and CBC, and what we are asking is, how much of that $23 million which the House is approving under this Head is going for CBC?

Now, Sir, also, under this Head, and I hope he will be able to give us out of his head on page 26 under Sub-Programme 11 – Lending. It is proposed to lend money, borrowed from foreign agencies to assist with the capital programme including the Industrial Credit Fund, the Barbados National Oil Company Limited, advances to Caribbean Air Cargo Limited and loans to CBC and the

National Petroleum Corporation. So, CBC is again getting a loan from money borrowed from a foreign agency to assist it with its capital programme.

Now, last year, the same happened, Sir, and it seems to me that CBC from the figures that I have seen got something in the region of $6 million to $7.1 million last year and has been receiving public funds in the level of between $6 million to $8 million a year, which is one of the heaviest subsidies to be given to a public corporation. So that I hear that CBC is showing an operating profit before depreciation, as the Prime Minister says, but yet it is obviously very inefficiently run. It is being inefficiently run, let us face it. It is a total financial disaster and if it did not have the public purse or the public pocket to put its hand into, it would have folded up if it was being run for commercial purposes.

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I would not even hear the asides because I would have to say as the Latin says, Sir, it is said *sotto voce*, Sir and anybody who is familiar with the Latin would be able to interpret that as far as economic sense is concerned, Sir. But the point is that one has to ask whether or not any proper standard of efficiency is being brought into Government Statutory Corporations.

I think it was Prime Minister Bob Hawke, a Democratic Socialist, who, recently speaking on the question of divestment said, that people became wedded to ideas without recognising at times that their times had past and that you had to demand of the public corporations a certain standard of efficiency in managerial excellence that normally you would demand of any small trader.

The Honourable Member would not like to see that the small traders in St. James South were finding themselves in this economic disaster every year, Sir, and coming to him outside of the election period and asking him to put his hand in his pocket to subsidise them. I am sure even during the election period he must have run from some of them, Sir. But, the point is, this is really a very serious position and we really want to know what are the amounts being advanced.

I would like to know, Sir, of the moneys being voted how much is going to the Industrial Credit Fund, how much to the Barbados National Oil Company Limited, how much to Caricargo, and how much to CBC under this Head, just as I have asked for the amount of contributions under the earlier Head, under Sub-Programme 10.

There are two other comments I want to make, Sir, because we have been on this Head for some time and we would like to discuss some other Heads. I want to deal with the Head dealing with pensions, Sir, and to draw the Government's attention to a position which I am sure other Honourable Members might have come across in dealing with their constituency cases, Sir.

Under the Casual Employees Pensions Act, CAP 20, a casual employee who has worked with Government for ten years is entitled at age 60 to a pension but, Sir, they have to put in 220 days in any one year and from those 220 days are excluded work on Sundays.

> "Section 11 – The following provisions of this section shall have effect for the purpose of determining the length of an employee's service
>
> (a) employment for 220 days or more in any year including bank holidays and days on leave with pay, but excluding Sundays, shall be deemed to be a complete year (or 12 months) of pensionable service;".

So you can get in a year that a person has worked on every Sunday in that year, but those 52 days are not counted for the purpose of pension.

Now, Sir, we also get the second situation where the person has not got the full ten years but continued to work after the age of 60 and that person is not allowed to count any period of time after the age of 60 for qualifying for pension. Under Pensions – Sub-Programme 01 on page 25, retiring pensions. I am not talking outside of the Head, Sir.

Now, when we are talking about casual employees we are talking about the people at the lower socio-economic end of the ladder in this country. We are talking about the maids, we are talking about the watchmen, and I have come across numerous cases of persons who are now being asked to go home at the age of 60, they are not yet eligible for a National Insurance Pension, so they can't draw National Insurance. They may not have completed the 10 years full service as defined under section 11 so they will probably get a small gratuity and no pension. The gratuity is used up in paying their rents to the National Housing Corporation or daily living in a year or two, sometimes less than a year, and that person finds himself or herself without any work, without any pension and without any possibility of probably getting other than a National Insurance Pension at age 65.

Now, this is archaic, this legislation was passed a long time. It has been amended from time to time. It is the Casual Employees Pensions Act, CAP 20, but I am talking about real cases. Let me say for the Accountant General's Office that it is one of the Departments that you get a very prompt response from and very good cooperation when you ask questions, and the employees, when you ask them questions, sometimes you can feel in their responses, their regret at not being able to help because the legislation is as it is. This is totally unsatisfactory and I am saying that we must very early ask the Government to tell us what plans they have in hand for relieving this problem that is

occurring for those of our citizens who are not by any means people with any signs of wealth. They are the poorest of the poor, the poor workers in the community.

I said I have many cases that have been referred to me in my own constituency so I am talking with the knowledge of matters that I have come across, Sir, and I believe there is a very urgent and strong case for this situation to be put right.

That is only one of the anomalies of the Casual Employees Pensions Act, they are several anomalies in here that are penalising people and unless we can put a provision to allow them to have some advance, some way of the State paying them some form of pension until they qualify for their full pension under the Social Security legislation. Some should be allowed to work. There was a rule that they were being allowed to work, but I can tell you, for instance, because the Honourable Member might want to know, the Geriatrics Hospital in Beckles Road from where persons have gone home at age 60 and have suffered under this provision in the last couple of years. I am not talking about any situation that I do not know, Sir. I believe that when you get a case like that the person should be allowed to work beyond age sixty. They are casual employees. Well, I have cases where that has occurred so I am raising the case. I know, Sir.
2.10 p.m.

Sir, I do not want to delay, as I said, our debate under this Head.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. We take the point that the Honourable Member is making. We have no difficulty with the point. The law, as it stands, obviously will find some people falling between the stools, as it were. As far as I know, the Minister of the Civil Service has been paying special attention to this as it effects persons in the public sector. As I understand it, decisions have been made to take care of some and decisions are being made to take care of the rest. In other words, I think it would be fair to say that the intention is that no one should suffer because of the law. I am unable to give the specific policy position. But I know that the decision was made respecting the issue raised by the Honourable Member. I give the Honourable Member the assurance that as soon as the details are available we will make them known to him.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I take the Honourable Member's assurance, Sir, because I have been looking after even some of the Prime Minister's constituents in this regard, Sir. I intend to send him a couple of the letters that I have to write on their behalf. We are making sure that we will look after the other Honourable Member too, Sir.

Sir, I just want to go back on a point not to reopen the debate made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You just have two minutes to do that.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Yes, Sir. Last evening we got a copy of the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order which was laid in the House but which has not yet been circulated to ourselves. I would hope, Sir, that we will get an opportunity to debate this legislation but I am rather concerned that under Section 25 of the Customs Act that there is only 40 days if you wish to annul the legislation. We do not want to annul it. But if you want a real debate, you may have to bring a Resolution to note it or to annul it to get a proper debate on the matter outside this set of circumstances. That 40 days will soon elapse. It elapses, as I see it, on March 28th, although even then the legislation will not be in effect until it is published in the Gazette. It is going to be published in the Gazette to come into effect. If it has to come into effect by April lst, it will either have to be published in the Gazette on April lst or specific provision will have to be made in a supplementary statutory instrument for it to take effect as from April lst.

It seems to me that there are various things reasonably wrong with the legislation. Let me tell the Honourable Member for St. Michael West that I have only had the benefit of seeing it for a short while. Among the things for which conditional duty exemptions can be granted are: drugs and supplies imported by or on behalf of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Inc. to be used exclusively at the St. Joseph Hospital at Ashton Hall in the parish of St. Peter on a certificate to that effect of the Resident Sister.

Now this is legislation which has really gone through the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, the Attorney General. It has gone through the Honourable Member for St. Lucy from his Department. It has gone through the Prime Minister. I am only giving you one example.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not know. That is a well spent force. The other one is a difficult bad draft and they are going to lead people to be really attacked in some ways by it from the things to be exempted from duty and I think it is unfortunate drafting if these are not intended. Among the articles to be exempted from duty are: "articles imported for the use of the Prime Minister." Now I think that is unnecessary.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: "Articles imported for use by Her Excellency and articles imported for use by the Prime Minister." Now I do not believe that any legislation should be framed in that way because it may be concluded that you are bringing articles for the Prime Minister's personal use. I am inviting the Government very seriously if they do not

want to have those sort of allegations being made to have a proper look at redrafting the section. It should be for the use of the Government and there is a provision for Governmental authorities. Also, even if it is for the use of the Office of Governor-General, it is imported by the Government. It really is unfortunate that the legislation is drafted this way. I do not know why it has come in this form and I would seriously advise that before the legislation is implemented that the criticism that I have made, and I have only had a chance of reading 807 pages...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired but I will give you a further two minutes to wind up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Yes, Sir, just for one minute. I would seriously ask that the matter be looked at and, in the light of the criticism which I have made, I will find the particular section and I will draw it to the attention of the Government. But I look forward to the opportunity for a wide debate on this legislation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, may I just indicate in response to the last point made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that we are aware that there are some errors in the Customs Tariff which need to be tidying up. I think the Honourable Member, as a former Attorney General, will understand the process through which legislation of that kind passes and the role which as an Attorney General one plays in relation to all of that. But certainly on perusing the instrument it was fairly evident that there are some errors and that some tidying up has to be done. The assurance will be given to those problems which he has raised and there are a number of others which he has not identified. But there are a number of others which will be addressed in the fullness of time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Yes, Sir, I raised the question yesterday and I really do not want to prolong this too much. But I really would like some answers on Land Tax, Head 19, because I am still at a loss, Sir. The position is, Sir, and I will repeat what I said, Sir. I said, Sir, that in the financial year 1989-90 some $34.7 million was collected and that in the financial year that we are now in originally the estimate was $36 million. It has been revised to $45 million. So that in effect nearly $9 million to $10 million is being collected by way of additional land taxes. So that is the point I am raising. I am saying that arose because of the increase in valuations. I would like to know, Sir, whether on this occasion a new Order will come down to relieve the public of the devastated impact of this rise in taxes. No wonder the tax bills were delayed until after January 22nd.

Laughter.

2.20 p.m.

You only have to go to 1986 and you will see that an order was made in which the impact of the valuation was reduced because you changed the first number. From the time we introduced the modified form of taxation on the improved value, you have had periodically to reduce the rate of tax because of the rise in valuation. That is what I would like to know, Sir.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, with regard to the question raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the facts are as follows: On properties with improved values up to $300,000 the rate has been reduced from 0.4% to 0.35%. On properties with site value only, the tax was reduced from 1% to 0.95%, and on agricultural land which is being farmed the tax will be 0.35% regardless of the value. That is how it is, so there has been reduction in two of the categories.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Will the Honourable Member be good enough to say what is the anticipated loss of revenue consequent upon those minuscule reductions?

The question that the sum of $67,638,045 under Head 19 – Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, as amended, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 34 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(as amended) – $142,745,134

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the amount being asked in Part I for the Ministry of Education under Head 34 is $142,745,134. This, as we know, since we cannot really debate statutory emoluments, however does make up part of what is seen in the original notes at page 14, where it gives the figure for 1990-91 as $258.2 million. What is interesting to note is that if we were to use the same principle and total these figures, we will find that for 1991-92 the figure comes to about $247.8 million, a difference of $10.4 million. Sir, that $10.4 million again equates to the previous Heads which were under Education and which have been transferred from Education. I am speaking specifically of other areas which are now under the Ministry of Community Development, such as the Libraries, Archives, etc.

Earlier in the week when discussion was being held on the Appropriation Bill in some areas we heard the word "squandermania" creeping back in occasionally. We also heard talk of cuts and about who were the winners and the losers. The facts are that if we were to look in terms of the differences as shown on each Subhead – and I will use a few examples so that the point may be made – if we were to take the Subprogram 01: General Management and Co-ordination Services, it may be pointed out that it went from 5.4, or 6.0 revised, to 5.9, but we may also take note, Mr. Chairman, that if one were to take the 100 series of

Subprograms and Object numbers and just total those subprograms, we will note that the 100 subprograms within the group represent $5.2 million in that area.

If we were to utilise the same analysis right through the programme, if we move, let us say, to Subprogram 02: Primary and Composite Schools, again the 101, 102, 103, 104, we will note that out of the figure $62 million which is being paid, that represents a significant increase. When we come to Subprogram 03: Primary Schools (I.D.B. Project), we will see the reverse, or a negative, which can be explained due to the fact that the overlapping of construction of certain schools will no longer apply within the year 1991-92 and there will only be specific projects handled within that time frame. Therefore, we are bound to have a difference which represents a smaller figure. The same is true in the area of secondary schools.

Mr. Chairman, if we look at the Project Implementation Unit, Subprogram 02, we will have to explain to this Committee, no doubt, how the money is estimated to be spent within the financial year 1991-92. Indeed, under the Project Implementation Unit I should like to give the information to this Honourable House of an update, as well as the planned expenditure in terms of work by the Project Office in the year 1991-92.

I have had occasion in this House before, Mr. Chairman, to report on the completed work within what was Phase I of the last project – the Cuthbert Moore School, the Roland Edwards School in Speightstown, the St. Matthias School and Selah, all in the area of primary, and also just completed, the Mount Tabor School, Bayley's which is almost completed and the St. Mary's School soon to be completed. Therefore, as I said earlier, Mr. Chairman, the apparent reduction in dollars will therefore represent the fact that most of the work is completed and there is no need to carry it over into 1991-92. However, in package 3 in 1991-92 tenders have been submitted and the evaluation process is just about complete for the award of contracts for construction of primary schools at Turner's Hall, Hillaby, to a local Barbadian contractor; for the Black Bess, St. Boniface School and for the St. Stephen's Primary School, as well as the planned extension of work at the Springer Memorial School.
2.30 p.m.

If we move to a quick review also, Mr. Chairman, to sub-programme 01: Erdiston College. Just a few comments on that, Sir. Erdiston continues to play the key role in the training of teachers and it continues to train teachers in the area for the primary and secondary schools. We have carried on the full time programme of the secondary in service two-year programme, as well as the primary in service two-year programme, and we have actually done some work and continue to do work in the area of early childhood physical education, remedial education. Then, there are several general interest areas which are being carried out.

We move over to pre-primary. As we know, there are three pre-primary or nursery schools and there we will see that the amount requested will continue the work in the pre-primary schools. We are at present looking at the possibility of expanding the pre-primary schools and I think I had occasion to mention in here already, Mr. Chairman, that once we will have completed, for instance, St. Stephen's new school, that it is our intention to convert that school into a pre-primary or nursery school and that, of course, falls right in line with the ongoing work within the Ministry, whereby we permit all of the schools where there is room, where there is equipment, to admit students in the three to five age range and then we will provide the teachers.

We move on, Mr. Chairman, to the next sub-programme and we may look at primary schools under the IDB sub-project. I think I mentioned those already.

We move then to secondary schools. Under the secondary schools programme, we have continued the work in the secondary schools. I must say if one looks at page 59, it will appear as though they are divided in two. I personally do not agree that it should be that way but the experts say that they need that for later future analysis, so if it is going to be that way, well, so be it. However, we will find in that area, Mr. Chairman, that work continues and I will make a comment right here although it is already tied to the IDB project office in terms of secondary that we have completed the secondary school at Queen's College which the Honourable Member, my neighbour from St. George South referred to as a four-star or the five-star school and then, we have just completed what he referred to as the two-star at Wotton which is the Deighton Griffith. I think he did that in terms of his knowledge of the dollars and the costings for the construction of those schools and one can clearly understand why that comment may be made. Yes, indeed, Queen's College figure was I think, approximately $11 million and indeed, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas using the same argument will probably state subsequently that St. Thomas may be a seven-star because the cost of that is about $16 million, be that as it may, Sir.

In the area of the sub-programme 06: Computers in Education, we have indeed moved, Mr. Chairman, whereby we are at present reaching the point where 17 of the 21 secondary schools will be fully equipped with a computer network in order that they may be, not only training, but also it is our intention that as we move and the teachers and the students become more familiar with the work and the utilisation of the technical equipment that we will have totally computerised networks and all the works within these schools. We have also moved where you may look at the figure and say that it may be a little less. The reason for

that is that we have placed such emphasis on that area now that instead of just having someone voting dollars for someone to work in that area, we have now actually put an education officer directly on that project so it is not now within the special sub-programme but it is part of the total structure within the staffing of the group.

On the same page, we have IDB sub-project, which I just mention in terms of secondary schools. I would also like to say with regard to that figure which is smaller than before, again the rationale is that we have completed Queen's College, we have just completed the Deighton Griffith at Wotton and the only dollars we will be utilising in the project office in the secondary area in the next financial area for the extension and the work to be done at the Springer Memorial School.

The other areas, we have had several debates on, the same principle holds true, Mr. Chairman, and I would just like to add that in an effort to upgrade, especially in the primary school area because there have been several complaints over the years that successive governments have not done enough to upgrade what they refer to as the one-room schools. Now, I am sure that no government, either the last or this, within any ten or fifteen-year period, could do a cost conversion of those one-room schools into what people are now becoming to expect and accept as the modern plants in which the children should be learning, and in an effort to upgrade that area, those plants especially – and I know that the Honourable Member for St. George South would like to hear this – in the rural areas, we are looking at possibly getting involved in another project which would deal with 18 more schools.
2.40 p.m.

Before I move the Head, we will in a matter of days be announcing the membership of NACE which will be holding public hearings, as we requested, on the whole question of the movement from primary into secondary schools which has become quite a topic in the country.

With those few words – I know we will have quite a bit of discussion on this topic as usual – I therefore move, Mr. Chairman, that Head 34 stand part.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, there are on this side a number of concerns in relation to education in this country. The Honourable Minister of Education and Member for St. George North just said that some consideration is being given to the expansion of pre-primary schools. Then he went on to indicate that the policy of admitting three year olds in the category 3 – 5 in schools is working smoothly. However, it is our understanding that there are some concerns being expressed among members of the teaching profession who are saying that even though they do not object in principle to three year olds coming into schools, that some of the schools are not appropriately designed to admit these three year olds, and that in any event, even though many teachers receive general teacher training, they did not receive teacher training specifically geared to require them to handle children between three and five, some children between three and five being mere babes in arms. This is a concern both of the teaching profession in this country and those of us who have the honour to sit on this side of this Honourable Committee.

In relation to a number of other issues raised by the Honourable Minister, we recognise that the whole business of computers in schools has become an area of enormous interest. With respect to the Minister's indications of the role of Erdiston College, we are of the view that even though in this modern age we must necessarily have a system of computer education in school, we still must raise the question to what extent are the teachers themselves in schools trained to pass on computer education?

On the whole question of teacher training it cannot be denied that the vast majority of primary and secondary teachers are trained teachers and that the total number of teachers entering Erdiston in this day and age are small compared with 5 or 10 years ago. We are suggesting that in an era where there is still some space at Erdiston College, that the Minister and Ministry look closely at fashioning a programme at Erdiston College with the view towards intensifying computer awareness. Some teachers will tell you that even though there are 17 of 21 schools with computers, some computers lie idle because the teachers who are supposed to operate them are not trained and that sometimes all that happens in some schools is that the computers are used by the children for playing games.

There are also some other concerns too, Mr. Chairman. We on this side in the year 1986 had become aware of the fact that we were moving into an era where increasingly more and more attention is being paid to technical education. We recognise that the vote this year for technical education seems smaller than it was last year. We are suggesting that where we need to diversify our curriculum and where we need to encourage our people as far as possible to assimilate technical training and technical education that, perhaps, the Government should look closely at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic with the aim towards ensuring that we equip the youth who attend there in areas of study that will give them the opportunity to grasp jobs on graduation.

Sir, when we had commissioned this study in 1986, it was a CIDA funded study. That study had been carried out with the view towards recommending appropriate changes in the curricula of schools in this country. Somehow when we demitted office in 1986 that CIDA commissioned study was swept under the table and has not been heard of. I would like to encourage the Honourable Minister, if he can

find it, to look at it closely to see if Barbados is not being left behind in this changing world.

Two very significant trends in Barbados now are where several youngsters are interested in enhancing technical training and, at the same time, there is evolving in this culture a particular spirit of enterprise. If you were to follow the suggestions of ordinary working class Barbadians you would, no doubt, be aware that there is a new spirit of entrepreneurialship evolving in Barbados. I am suggesting that my friend, the Honourable Minister of Education, look at the school system to see if we can incorporate elements of entrepreneurialship in the curriculum, perhaps, blending it with established subjects like Principles of Accounts, Office Procedures and Principles of Business so that the creative instinct and that spirit of enterprise of our young people can properly be tapped to permit them on graduation to establish various enterprises of their own.

Another concern of those of us who sit on this side, Sir, is that we have seen particular stresses confronting education in this country. I well recall the Honourable Minister himself saying that education is under siege. We have seen a drug culture evolved in this country. We have seen a spate of lawlessness. We have seen some restlessness among young people. It is my suggestion that against that background we need to approach this business of guidance and counselling in a concerted fashion.

I am saying when you have a particular background of lawlessness, high crime, violence and drugs then it is the onus of those of us who have an interest in education to encourage better and more established programmes of guidance and counselling. Some people take the narrow view that guidance ought to be career guidance equipping one to go out there and work. It is our view over here that essential to the times now it is not only a question of career guidance but general counselling and pastoral care so that we can assist those children who fall under our care in becoming proper citizens in overcoming the temptations and the vibrations out there that might incline them to the wrong way of life.

I am aware, Mr. Chairman, that at the moment the secondary schools have established guidance programmes. If we examine the background against which guidance and counselling was established in Barbados, we realise that, perhaps, through budgetary constraints, perhaps, through a shortage of funds, over the years, one or two universities in the Carolinas used to render help to Barbados by offering personnel who would supervise courses at Easter time and in the summer vacation for teachers passing on skills in psychology, skills in guidance and counselling and such like to permit teachers to go out there and practise guidance and counselling.

2.50 p.m.

But I believe that the time has now come that we look at the University of the West Indies. There is a department at the University of the West Indies that does some social work under a Dr. Jones. Perhaps the time has come for us to encourage the University of the West Indies to establish a guidance and counselling department with the aim of having teachers go there to assimilate guidance and counselling to go back in the schools.

Another concern we have too, Sir, is this: that somehow we are allowing there to be guidance and counselling in secondary schools but I am not aware of any primary schools having guidance programmes yet. I am saying that in view of the type of culture, in view of the stresses facing the culture in Barbados we will have to look at that very seriously. Because in the primary and composite schools you might very well get some students between 10 and 14 who might be at that strange age in life who themselves might need assistance from teachers trained to help them ride the rough, Sir.

I have said and I am not taking it back that an examination of the Estimates for 1990-91 indicates that originally $22 003 850 were allocated to the UWI supplemented later on by another $5 million meaning that in the last financial year over $27 million were allocated to the UWI while for this particular financial year $22 003 850 are allocated which ironically is the same figure as the original figure last year. So that if you examine the total vote to the UWI in the last financial year it would have come to $27 million. The vote here for this financial year is strangely a reduction to $22 million. I am wondering if later on they are going to find it necessary to vote more supplementaries or I am wondering if there has developed any trend at the UWI, Cave Hill where it has not become necessary for a figure of $27 million or more to be voted for it.

Interestingly, successive administrations in Barbados have done very well in terms of meeting their obligation to the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill and to the wider University community, in circumstances where there are some recalcitrant governments that do not support the University of the West Indies with the same vigour and enthusiasm that we in Barbados do. I heard rumours in Jamaica July last year that UWI, Mona was literally begging graduates for money to fund particular projects. I hope that the day never comes when UWI, Cave Hill is so struck by financial stresses as to have to come out with a till or little kitty asking around for money.

Other concerns too, Mr. Chairman over this side. We see a reduction in the vote for transport of pupils. Originally in 1990-91 it was $3.7 million. It has dropped now to $2.6 million. We are asking the question: What is responsible for that drop? Is it a contraction in the total number of pupils benefitting from this subsidy? What is it?

It seems too that we are seeing a reduction in capital expenditure from about $70 million in 1990-91 to $32 million in 1991-92. On the question of capital expenditure it is not by any means a cheap exercise to maintain schools, to build new schools and such like but to some extent there has always been an element of wastage in some schools occasioned sometimes largely through the recklessness of some of the students. We over this side do not mind making appropriate suggestions to the Government, in the interest of Barbados. Some students abuse the furniture sometimes because the furniture is so weak as not to be able to withstand abuse or because sometimes even when the furniture is good....

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND:... the children still manage to get it mashed up. But if you are providing weak furniture and I know the Honourable Member for St. Michael West would laugh because, for instance, even in this House sometimes it is weak as far as the arms go and not as far as the seat goes. I do not know of any Honourable Member since the late former Right Honourable Member for St. John who has fallen from his seat in this Honourable House in recent times.

Anyway, Sir, I am suggesting that the Ministry of Education look at this question of the abuse of furniture in schools in this way. Many of our schools have Industrial Arts Departments. Perhaps should we not look at so equipping our Industrial Arts Department and so training some of the very pupils who abuse the furniture that we can cut down on some expenses by having some of those children learn the skills by which they repair the furniture which is often destroyed? It would save the taxpayers. I am suggesting this to the Honourable Minister.

Aside.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Yes. I hope it is done universally through Barbados. Before I wind up, Sir, we have a particular area of concern here on the question of security in schools.

Is my time up, Sir? How much time do I have? I will come back later, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that the last suggestion made by the Honourable Member, I think that the Honourable Member should be aware that there is one school – I am sure the Minister will respond – but there is a school in Barbados where this philosophy is very alive and well. At the St. Leonards Boys' School not only are the St. Leonards boys repairing the furniture but they are in fact, in some instances, repairing parts of the building as part of the teaching. So that they are teaching them to put up a wall or structure instead of going and putting it up as some teachers do in the middle of a room or on a piece of pavement outside, they are in fact doing what is described as applied arts. It is working very well. I am told that it is happening in other schools. But I can vouch that that philosophy is abroad and well at St. Leonards School.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I am very glad that the Honourable Member got up and made that intervention. I would have expected that St. Leonards Boys' would have led the way. After all, they were among the first of the new type of schools in the Barbados Labour Party. Long before 1961!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for the City.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I listened with great care to the Honourable Minister of Education as he introduced this Head.

In the Estimates I looked back at the overall capital expenditure. When we look at the front pages, Statement of Capital Expenditure for a 10-year period running from 1980-81 to 1989-90 we will see that in Education and Culture in 1980-81 the capital expenditure for that year was in the region of $18 676 387 and over the years has moved up and down sometimes quite dramatically. At the end of that 10 – year period, in the financial year 1989-90 for Education and Culture, the capital expenditure was $35 564 893. Easily doubled. Then on the next page 13 – that was on page 12 – when we look at the statement of current expenditure as opposed to capital over the same 10 – year period we see for Education and Culture that in the financial year 1980-81 we were spending in excess of $90 million. And, again over the years a dramatic increase over the years so that in 1989/90 it is in excess of $195 million. We are still spending the largest chunk of our national budget on education.

3.00 p.m.

What concerns me greatly, Mr. Chairman, is that the Honourable Minister reported, and not very fulsomely at that on what essentially is the second World Bank school building project, a tripartite arrangement between the Barbados Government, the IDB and the World Bank. The Minister sometimes sounded like a foreman contractor, and over the past three years that is all that we have been hearing from the Ministry of Education, you know, in the manner in which a building contractor would report. It is very important that we get a report on that.

I look back at the Manifesto 1986 of the Barbados Labour Party which is already a document of the House, Sir, and I see that in this school building and refurbishing project, known as the Second World Bank Project the Barbados Labour Party has listed, for immediate amalgamation, several schools and although starting up late

in time what this Minister of Education has been doing, really, is simply supervising the implementation of this project. But, this project was more than school building and school refurbishment both at primary and secondary level, this project had a serious training component in it and we really have not heard anything from the Minister on this matter.

They have been faithful, almost 100 per cent faithful, to the plans of the Barbados Labour Party. They are amalgamating St. Mary's Infants and St. Mary's Primary, the Infants and the Juniors at the Junior. What concerns us greatly on this side, Sir, and I looked back at the Estimates Debates of 1986 and saw where we have been careful to point out the size in terms of student roll for all of these places provided for these schools. It is a matter for deep concern, for instance, that in a crowded place like the city of Bridgetown where many parents still for their own convenience are selecting to have their children at primary schools in Bridgetown rather than in the country or in the suburbs where they live for ease of dropping off and picking up and for other domestic reasons as well, and where it is known that the Westbury school is much overcrowded, even now that the Wesley Hall school is also most overcrowded. In fact all of the primary schools in the city of Bridgetown are overcrowded. The new school at St. Mary's is really a matter of great concern and there would have been a cut back because World Bank Schools are built either with a capacity for 360 places or 420, or 640.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you. He knows that sort of thing. I am a little concerned that at the new St. Mary's Primary School there should have been a cut back so I am not so sure that anything is going to be done to relieve what overcrowding that exist still at the primary level in the city of Bridgetown. But, they went on. They cut back St. Mary's just like they cut back the Pondside Housing Project.

With great foresight and wisdom, the Honourable Minister, naturally, his schools, the ones in his constituency were the first, St. Augustine Boys and St. Augustine Girls, nice looking. The St. Stephens Junior, and the St. Stephens Infants, the St. Matthias Boys. I am reading from the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto, Mr. Chairman. Don't let us be under any doubt. The St. Matthias Boys and Girls the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is smiling like the cheshire cat there. Speightstown Boys and Girls, the Honourable Member for St. Peter if he were here would be smiling equally. Even the Honourable Member for St. John, he got his little thing up at Mount Tabor.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: He is saying he got a big thing up at Mount Tabor, although I see there are plans afoot to cut back at St. Boniface. The proposed amalgamation of St. Boniface and Black Bess, Selah and St. Swithins, well done. But, Hillaby and Turners Hall is a subject of much concern to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because we had selected a site there at Farmers for the building of a three-sixty school and I believe according to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas there are some proposals to vary this, but the point is, as I said, that the second World Bank Project, Mr. Chairman, Sir, was more than about this and I would want to hear the Minister on that.

At the primary level, before I leave it, because I am going to go to secondary, post secondary and I am going to deal with pre-primary too.

We are glad, Mr. Chairman, that the Government is not afraid to let us debate education in the way that they are hiding agriculture.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, I give the Honourable Member the assurance, Sir, that as soon as she is finished this, we are going to do agriculture. Now, are you going to stop talking. As soon as you are finished with education, if you let us pass the Head now, you can have agriculture. So, it is up to you.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am so pleased for that assurance, Sir. As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, at the level of primary, there are other matters to which the Honourable Minister of Education made absolutely no reference and one has to do with the Common Entrance. We were much abused, and criticised for the introduction of a general paper, which was mainly social studies and science, into the Common Entrance.

In 1986 when the Democratic Labour Party assumed the Government they told us they would remove that paper and it would be replaced by something else. They were true to their promise, Mr. Chairman, in that they removed that paper. In fact, the Right Honourable Prime Minister was the one immediately responsible for that. But, today, and this is now 1991, nothing has replaced this and I see that the teaching profession and educationists both here and abroad are much concerned about the lack of the social studies and the science component at the level of the primary schools.

Okay, so you quarrelled with the way in which the Barbados Labour Party Government sought to deal with it. The answer cannot be that you simply remove it and leave it there. This is to put primary school children in Barbados at a great disadvantage, certainly when compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world, even within this region and outside of it, and this was a statement made very firmly, very categorically by the Democratic Labour Party. I don't think you can just go on failing to make reference to it and hoping that people have forgotten, or that people don't care. There are some of us who do care and we would want to hear the Government's policy on this whole

business of science and social studies in the primary school curricula and if, and what are the Government's plans in respect of the Common Entrance. Because, thanks to the foresight and the wisdom of the Barbados Labour Party upon the completion of the second World Bank project we have finally reached the situation in Barbados where there is a place at the secondary level for every 11+ student in this country. That's where we are at.

So, finally we have arrived at what the Democratic Labour Party touted as free education for all in the 1960's, all through the 1970's and all through the 1980's. It will only now become a reality and unhappily may become a reality at a time when Barbadian students may find, as they did in the last financial year, that the Government is now disposed to cut back on the Education Budget in the sum of several millions of dollars. Last year we were told mid-financial year that the Education Budget had been cut by $20 million. That is not $1 million or $2 million.
3.10 p.m.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I am very sorry that I have to interrupt the Honourable Member. But she was obviously not in this Honourable House for sometime when this was debated last year and other years. It is true that most of the questions that she is raising prove that. But regards the specific area about the $20 million, I stated then, Sir, if Your Honour may recall that there was no plan of the Government to cut any capital expenditure by $20 million or reduce it.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I never said that. What the Honourable Minister is saying then is that the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education was really quite wrong to say that the Government's Education Budget was going to be cut by $20 million.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member has been a Minister. The Honourable Member has been misquoted in the newspaper from time to time. The Honourable Member knows all of the difficulties attendant upon public speaking. She is misleading the House, Sir, when she suggests that a Permanent Secretary made a statement while discussing with colleagues and she is now elevating it to the level of policy, Sir. She knows that it is not so.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am deeply concerned, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that one Minister can get up and elucidate something that another Minister has said. Let the Minister of Education elucidate for himself. If he is misquoted, let him say so.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as I was saying, at the level of primary we really do want to know what the Government's plan or policy is, if it has any, in respect of the Common Entrance now that we have enough school places at the secondary level so that competition at the Common Entrance time will not be for any physical seat in a secondary school. It will be a competition now in respect of excellence and merit.

I am also interested in knowing, Mr. Chairman, Sir, what are the Government's plans for teacher training, especially in the face of the rapid change in new technologies and at a time when Erdiston needs to be looking at these things. There was never any plan to shut down Erdiston. The Barbados Labour Party expanded Erdiston. There was never any plan to shut down Erdiston. There was a plan that Erdiston must take cognizance of the new technologies and begin to retrain and retool teachers so that we might be able to deliver these new skills in the 1990's. I am interested in hearing that and unto that end the Barbados Labour Party spent hundreds of thousands of dollars expanding and upgrading Erdiston. So we are very interested in hearing what are the Government's plans in that connection.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, perhaps I will leave pre-primary until my next intervention. Let that suffice for the time being. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Joseph.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are at least three persons on this side who are very well equipped to speak on educational matters – the Honourable Member for St. James North, Honourable Member for the City, who was herself a distinguished Minister of Education, and the Honourable Member for St. George South...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:...who can make a contribution in that field and I have no doubt that they will spend a considerable amount of time on the details of a lot of the programmes provided for in the Estimates. But I want to make a contribution, Sir, at a general level...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:...more as an informed layman than as a specialist.

The first point that I wish to make, Sir, is that the allocation to Education which this year stands at some $245 million is, as it has been always, in the context of Barbados the highest allocation for any subject. It has fallen a few

percentage points because it used to stand at about 20% of the Estimates. It has now fallen to 18 per cent. But whether seen in absolute or in relative terms, it is a huge amount of money in the Barbadian context. It has tended in absolute terms to grow from year to year much like top seed. What I want to address is whether the Minister is satisfied that we are getting value for money in the first place, whether the educational substance is relevant to the needs of our population living in a rapidly changing world in so many respects, and whether the delivery of the educational service, if I may put it that way, is effectively done. I do not know whether any statistics exist but the anecdotal evidence in my own observation would seem to suggest that we have a larger number of dropouts now, people who seem not to be benefitting from the system than ever before and whether that is the result of other societal problems or not. It seems to me that the school system is one of the prime institutions for dealing with this situation. I would like to know what is the hard statistical evidence and what is the Minister doing about that situation.

So that the first question which I want to ask in a broad way is whether the education is relevant, whether the system is efficient, and whether we are getting value for money. It seems to me that if this was a department in a large corporation that the board of directors would be concerned perhaps every five years to have an independent audit to make sure that they have a good feel for the answers to these particular questions. I am wondering whether the time has not come for us to do a periodic review bringing in outsiders and using a lot of our own people to ensure that there is somebody that really reviews this educational grant in the delivery of our educational services with both experience, independence, and detachment so as to guide us as to whether we are not wasting a lot of money or whether we are going in the right direction or otherwise.

It seems to me to be necessary for another reason. That is there is considerable wastage and fat in the educational system. I often hear stories of highly specialist teachers, for example, in the secondary school at the sixth form level who may be teaching only six or eight subjects in a particular area when in truth and in fact it might be possible to devise the system, as I have heard argued by the Honourable Member for St. George South, to use that particular specialist across the larger area of the educational system. But that is just one illustration of the extent to which there is fat and wastage and in which there is an obvious case for perfecting economies.

The second general point which I wish to address, Mr. Chairman, has to do with what I consider tendencies in the educational system. One is to put excessive emphasis on structures or buildings. In reference to this, the Minister is behaving like he is a foreman contractor. The reference to the Minister behaving like he is a Foreman Contractor is in a sense a reflection of the fact that so much of the estimates on capital have to do with the fact that we have been putting up new buildings apace, and I wonder whether we are striking the right balance between structures and substance of the educational system. In putting up these new buildings, and this has been going on for the last 10 or 15 years, there has been a tendency to replace small schools by very large schools. There are some schools in Barbados I believe where you have some 2,000 students.
3.20 p.m.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I might have overstated it, but they tell me that between 1200 and 1300 may represent the maximum. Even at 1200, the school, in my view, is far too big. I remember a few years ago canvassing in Christ Church East and coming across two teachers at these large secondary schools. I asked them whether they were familiar with other members of staff, whose names I called, and they said they heard that they were teaching there but that the staff room was not big enough to hold all the teachers and as a result they had never come across them. I sometimes question students as to whether they had ever spoken to their Headmaster and they tell me no, they had never spoken to their Headmaster.

It seems to me that we in Barbados are in a position to achieve some relationship of intimacy in a school setting and there is no reason why a Headmaster should not know all his students in a way that used to obtain in the past, and why the schools in Barbados ought not to be big enough to produce still that intimate atmosphere. It seems to me that that is one of the big errors we have made in the last 25 years in this country, building schools to hold 1 100 and 1 200 students, and then claiming that we have achieved economies because rather than have three Headmasters we have only one. It seems to me that that is a false economy and it is about time that we recognise that.

It leads to another problem, all of this talk about the need for counselling, even at the elementary school and at the secondary school. Perhaps there is the need arising out of what has happened in recent years. When I was at Foundation, for example, Mr. Chairman, we had teachers like Frank King and Dalton Prescott, who along with their specialist subject areas took a keen interest in all the children and they would be able to tell you "we have recognised certain tendencies, certain aptitudes and we feel that you should consider X or Y career," and they did the counselling at the school, and did it very successfully indeed. If they saw that the children were behaving in a particular way, they instantly picked up that there was something wrong in the household if something was not physically wrong with the child, and they would get in touch with the parents and ask them to come in and have a chat.

All of that is a thing of the past and it seems to me that part of the problem relates to the fact that the schools are so big that there is great impersonality. Whether a child is behaving differently or not, very few teachers may ever observe it. That atmosphere of intimacy has been lost.

I want to deal with another matter. It has to do with the whole question of security at our schools. As I understand this drug subculture which has emerged in our country, the drug pushers have been targeting the young people at the level of school age children. They have, either themselves or through their agents, been able to penetrate the precincts of many of these primary and secondary schools. If that is true, and that is certainly the anecdotal evidence, I would wish to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we have a responsibility to provide security at the schools. While it is true that when the children leave school they may yet attempt to reach them on the road from school to home, in so far as they are at school the Government has a responsibility to ensure that the school place is safe and free from the influence of these drug pushers.

I would wish to know from the Honourable Minister of Education whether the Ministry recognises it as a problem or whether the anecdotal evidence does not square with the hard evidence which they have. If indeed it is recognised as a problem, I would wish him to tell us what is being done about it. What are the plans? It seems to me that it is a matter of serious concern and that it ought to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

The next issue which I wish to address, Mr. Chairman, has to do with the whole question of adult education. I am not talking about the programme of continuing education, which seems to be different from adult education, because as I understand it this question of continuing education is really designed to help the people who did badly at 'O' Level get somehow a second or a third bite in their early twenties to get 'O' Levels. I am not concerned with them so much, I am concerned about the people who left school 25 to 30 years ago, and even longer. The world has changed drastically and they want to remain relevant citizens of this world. They are not particularly interested in any specific programme in plumbing, electricity, carpentry or whatever, they want to have some general notions about the world in which we live and how they can arrive at some understanding of what is happening around them. I want to know what programmes we have going or contemplated for people like that. It seems to me that apart from lectures it should not be difficult to organise it, because the school places are there for the most part closed for two-thirds of every day. That is certainly a big problem in Barbados which we have never addressed, how we could get more out of this colossal investment which we have in school plant.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I would really wish to know from the Minister whether there are any plans to address, on a serious basis, islandwide the whole question of adult education as opposed to education designed only to give those who have done badly at 'O' Level the opportunity to get a second and a third chance.

There are one or two other issues which I would like to address, but I will have to do that when I get back up on another occasion.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I felt that I should use the opportunity of this debate to indicate the considerable pride that I myself, as the representative for St. John, and certainly the Government of the Democratic Labour Party had in completing the Mount Tabor Primary School and opening it only recently. The construction of this Mt. Tabor School was developed around some early controversy when a previous administration had in fact acquired a cemetery to build the school and then, subsequently, the former representative indicated in 1986 that if anybody wanted to buy a cemetery, Government had one for sale. It was quite a hilarious debate but there was some controversy in the initial stages but eventually we were able to identify a site.
3.30 p.m.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I said you had acquired a cemetery. It was only when the officials went and looked they recognised that the area that was acquired was in fact the cemetery. So, subsequently....

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It was a technical error. I didn't say you are a surveyor. You don't have to get agitated about those things. It's a technical error.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, Sir. I am saying that a technical error produced the acquisition of a cemetery and subsequently Government was able to acquire an area that was large enough for the construction of the new Mt. Tabor Primary School.

The reason why this particular project is of considerable pride to me, Sir, is because in fact it was one of the first major capital works projects to be completed in St. John in a period of eighteen years other than the construction of new tenantry roads in some areas and this is the first major capital works project to be completed in an inordinate period of time for any one constituency. So, its completion was something that was long looked for and I

am hoping that over a period of time that we would be able to expand and/or develop additional facilities in some of the rural areas in Barbados.

Now, the reason why, Sir, I am also proud, is because the completion of this construction in fact complements some of the other developments that will take place in that particular constituency, for example, the completion of the new polyclinic shortly at a cost of $6 million, the development of a sites and services programme....

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It will complement those other developments which I am most proud of. What I want to find out from the Minister and perhaps he might be able to give us some enlightenment on this relates to the disposition of the Cherry Grove School, consequent on the completion of Mt. Tabor because Cherry Grove was previously in St. George South. It is now back in the constituency of St. John and during the course of my movement in that area people were anxious to know what would happen to the old Cherry Grove School as a result of the expanded facilities at Mt. Tabor. I also know that the Ministry is looking at the possibility of the construction of a new school at Society, St. John, to replace the old one which is poised very dangerously at the edge of a cliff and which over time has deteriorated. Even so, it is true that the Society School overall seems to get better results and has also been able to incorporate the pre-primary or nursery programme and over time the school roll has in fact increased.

There is one point which is a corollary to all of this and which is of considerable concern. It may very well relate to the point raised by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph about adult education. However, I have noticed in recent times that the standard of the results of the Common Entrance examination seems, whereas overall it might be better, in the rural areas there is some truth in the assertion that the standard is lower than some of the other areas. I think when we went through and looked at some of the results last time it was a cause of some concern to me that this trend had developed over a five-year or perhaps even longer period and that the fact that a lot of people living in rural areas prefer to take their children to schools in the urban areas and the fact that....

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am going on to explain what I am saying and the fact that the better teachers would probably prefer to teach in the urban areas means that there are problems in relation to the delivery of the educational product in those rural areas and standards are not as high as they should be and certainly not at the same level as in some of the other areas. So, this is something we have to look at. I remember recently doing a case in a District Magistrate's Court, a preliminary enquiry in a murder case in which there were 21 witnesses, 14 of whom were illiterate and they were between the ages of 18 to 30. I am not giving any details on the case. The point is....

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It's a pity they don't print asides. I don't think you should say that the people in St. John are illiterate. That is a totally untrue and unfair assertion but is characteristic of the view of some people of the people of St. John and I can't help that. I believe that they have a higher standard of appreciation of politics than many others; but that is just my view. But, it did concern me that a lot of these young people could neither read the oath which might be a problem because they might have been tense or nervous but then when I went on to do some more investigating they are genuinely illiterate. Other than being able to sign their names, there is basically nothing else they can do. Those of us who have constituency clinics who may ask people to fill out simple forms, name, address, date of birth, I.D. number etc. have probably discovered it is better to fill out the form while the person is in front of you than to give them the form to fill out. This is something that is of concern to me and I don't think it is a factor exclusive to the rural areas, but I am interested in ensuring that attention is paid particularly to those areas and that a closer examination is done on the delivery of educational services at the primary level in the rural sector. If you were to look, for example, at the schools to which most people from my constituency go, and if one were to apply the usual criteria that the Ministry of Education applies to the disposition of children, you would discover that the large majority of them would score marks no higher than would get them into Grantley Adams Memorial School or Princess Margaret or whatever. The rest of them may give their address as Lakes Folly but they end up going into the urban schools and some of the rural schools are underpopulated. I am certain St. John's Primary right now is underpopulated. I don't think Society but certainly St. John's Primary. Anyway, as I go to these graduations, I recognise this and it concerns me very often to think that you go to one of those graduations and discover that the best student in the school may be a student who has placed in the Garrison or a school that according to the Ministry of Education does not rank at the highest level.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: According to the society then. However you apply it. According to contemporary Barbados they are not reaching the highest levels of educational opportunity and your best student in that class you are usually giving him a prize and he is a student who might be going to Garrison or at highest Lodge School.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No. I am not criticising. I am saying that according to how the society views the ranking of schools and according to how the Ministry allocates students that obviously their pass mark could not have put them in the highest category. You know that and your asking that question, as elitist yourself, and you have admitted to being elitist in that regard, should not upset you the fact that I have drawn that to your attention.
3.40 p.m.

There is an outstanding job being done by some of the primary schools with the nursery and pre-nursery programmes. I hope that it can be expanded. I know that the facilities at Mt. Tabor will provide the opportunity for children from St. Joseph and St. John now to enter into that programme at Mt. Tabor. I look forward to its greater development.

Now, the fact about adult education that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph raised is a very critical point. If we really recognise the distinction he makes between continuing education and adult education which may be a distinction for his own purposes but, in fact, probably have some relevance, there are a number of adults who need even very basic and remedial education. I believe that our system has to now start accommodating those people. It is not a matter of giving them a skill like a training skill as an artisan or whatever. It is not a matter of giving them an idea of what the world is about. It is a matter of giving them basic education which they may have missed out because they dropped out of the system or because the standards in a particular school were not high enough or they were not registering results that were desirable.

I want to end by saying that it is a great achievement that the Mt. Tabor School has been completed. It will redound to the benefit of the people of St. John and St. Joseph equally. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph I know only omitted to congratulate the Minister because he forgot. I do not think he was at the opening but he forgot that such a lovely school has been constructed. I know that he will want me to speak on behalf of the people of Venture, some of whom are in the St. Joseph constituency, in thanking the Ministry for this development, most of all for thanking the Ministry for not constructing the school on top of a cemetery which would have been a major unmitigated disaster.

With those few words, Sir, I should like to extend my congratulations to the Minister for the work he has been doing in his Ministry.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. John in his own inimitable style starts every debate by misrepresenting a few things. Sir, before you stop me, let me just say what I mean. It was never the intention of the Government during the period when the Barbados Labour Party was the Government of the country to build a new school at Mt. Tabor. Therefore, to get up and start by saying that the Government of Barbados acquired land in a cemetery at Mt. Tabor is just not true.

The Government of Barbados under the Barbados Labour Party intended to construct a school in the Four Roads area that would accommodate the Cherry Grove School and the Mt. Tabor School. I do not know why the Honourable Member is always rushing down into these things. The cemetery was, at least, 3 miles away.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. James South can ask....

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am on a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. George South clearly does not know what he is talking about. It is a fact that a cemetery or an area housing a graveyard, if you wish me to use less sophisticated language, was acquired and identified by Government for the construction of a primary school. I am surprised to hear the particular denial. I remember the Honourable Member for the City herself telling me that the Mt. Tabor School was part of her major projects for the development of primary education in Barbados.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am not going to go on with that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. In the Estimates Debate of 1986 at page 3 470, the Minister of Education was at the time outlining the Second World Bank Project:

> "Also, we are hoping to amalgamate Mt. Tabor and Cherry Grove in the Parish of St. John with a capacity for 390 at an independent site both of Mt. Tabor and of Cherry Grove neither of which is today suitable for locating a modern primary school."

That is what was said in 1986.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is, obviously, not a point of order though.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I said it. It is patently untrue.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am making my point of order. It is untrue to say that ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I said it was not a point of order.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Let the Honourable Member take his seat. If Honourable Members continue to talk through the period that the Chair is addressing the Chamber, then the remarks will not be allowed in the debate.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member is reading all the debate. I only ask her to read the Debate carefully because there is direct reference in the 1987 Estimates to a discussion of the acquisition of Mt. Tabor where the...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Neither is that a point of order because I have ruled on that. Let the Honourable Member for St. George South continue.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I am going to speak in the debate on Education later on this evening. I do not want to spend a lot of time at this particular juncture until other people talk and hear what other outlandish statements such as that made by the Honourable Member for St. John made. I want at this point, however, to raise a question that has been causing a lot of public debate. In fact, it has been the subject of a lot of ignorant public debate and it relates to the Education Act.

There are a number of people, for political reasons and others through ignorance, who have said that the Education Act of 1981 is responsible for taking away the discipline of headteachers in schools. All kinds of things flow from that. I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that there are very few people in Barbados who are as knowledgeable about the Education Act of 1981 as I am because I went through it at every stage with all the organisations relating to education in this country. There is nothing – I checked it again last night – in the Education Act that the authority of headteachers to exercise discipline in the schools is in any way diminished. That is one of the great myths that has gone abroad mouthed first by people with political axes to grind.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You referred to people with political axes to grind and then you are making gesticulations. That really should not be.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I can handle myself. Mr. Chairman, the Government has a political axe to grind. I do not see what is wrong with that. What is so unparliamentary about that. I do not understand. People with a political axe to grind have put out that the present state of indiscipline in the schools and the present state of lawlessness in Barbados has nothing to do with the Government of the last five years. They are not in control when it comes to that. It has its genesis with something in an Education Act. I have never heard such arrant nonsense in my whole life. Members of Government have been able to get a lot of people in this country to believe it.

I am asking the Minister of Education in this debate to get up once and for all and tell the people of Barbados what section of the Education Act has diminished the authority of headteachers in schools. I want to hear because it is not fair for the people of Barbados to be fooled by a handful of people who are bent only on mischief. The situation before the Act, Sir, used to be that headteachers could use a strap. They can still use one. The situation in respect of suspension was that with the old Governing Bodies the headteacher reported to the old Governing Body before a child could be suspended or expelled from school. The new law is that the headteacher must report to the Board of Management for suspension and they can agree on suspension. But in the case of expulsion it is referred to the Minister of Education. I want to know where, which section of the Act takes this power away? I think it is time that we buried that once and for all. I drive home and I listen to sessions on my car radio. I lie down in my bed and listen to discussion and I hear people who are even in the schools making these mischievous statements about the diminishing of the authority in headteachers in the schools. I just want to get that particular one off my chest. I want the Minister of Education who is not like a number of Honourable Members on the other side, he says things as he sees them, and I expect him to say it as he sees it in this particular matter.

3.50 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am not interested in getting into the debate as this stage as I said but I wanted to answer one or two other things that one constantly hears.

I was in the Ministry of Education and I always heard this talk about schools are too big. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Joseph with it again this evening. Who gives anybody to state, with any divine right, what is the size of a school? Who must determine whether the school has the right amount or not? That is a purely subjective thing. Eton College has 2 400, Marlborough College has 2 200. I have not heard anybody say they are bad schools. What is the high school of science in Manhattan? The leading high school in New York City, the Manhattan City for top students in science has a roll of well over 2 000. The question has nothing to do with how big the school is, but the structure of the administration of the school. The structure of the administration of the school is what is critical. I keep hearing this business about these numbers and so on. It is the public at large who consistently make these statements.

I am going to sit down now, Sir, because I want to talk later. But I only want to ask three questions that I raised the last time we discussed education in here and I got no answer. One relates to the policy of the Ministry of Education....

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I do not know, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes. And they did not go to school in our time. Three questions, Sir. One relates to the situation in the University of the West Indies Hospital at Mona. I have asked the question and I have not got an answer and I am going to ask until I get an answer. You are going to give me an answer. I want an answer on the record. The second related to the question of training at the University of the West Indies in Educational Management and Administration. I want to know from the Minister how many ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The interruptions in this debate are very severe. If I am forced to I will invoke the penalties under the Standing Orders.

Mr. L. R. TULL: So long as I have the Reporters. That is all right. I mean Parliamentary Reporters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will conclude in two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Two minutes, Sir? I just started. The other two questions, Sir, in my two minutes. One relates to the question of the number of teachers who have been trained since the start of the programme in Educational Management and Administration. I want to know the numbers. The third question I had asked the Minister relates to the question of the study done by the USAID/UWI Study that was started by the Ministry of Education in 1985. I want to know what have been the results. We have not seen any reports. What are his recommendations? To what extent have those recommendations been implemented? And I also want to know in relation to that, the Community College's Report in relation to CXC also of a period of 1985. I know that a Report was given in relation to technical education. I want to know also, since the Government refuses to make these Reports public – I do not know why, there is nothing confidential about them – what are the recommendations and how many of those recommendations have been implemented so far? That is all I want at this stage, Mr. Chairman.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, my intervention will be one of a general nature as well and I think it is prudent for me to take this opportunity to identify some of the problems in the constituency that I represent, that is, in the area of St. Michael East, some of the concerns of the parents of children attending schools in that constituency.

One of the initial concerns that a lot of the parents have and it relates to the contribution made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph where I think he suggested that we have placed a lot of emphasis on structures in the educational system and up to this point have not struck a balance in the system. I think, Mr. Chairman, it is all well and good not to reflect on the system as it relates to our development. But I think what is very important is for us to appreciate that it is necessary, from time to time, to improve and uplift the quality of facilities that are available to our students. You will appreciate that there is a very small Head for the coming year of $1.4 million under subprogram 02 for primary and composite schools.

I am aware that the Minister has identified the St. Giles Schools, both the St. Giles Boys' School and the St. Giles Girls' School as two schools which I have been told many Honourable Members of this House attended from time to time, over the years. I am assured that he is aware that these schools are badly in need of repair. Surely the Honourable Member for St. George South would have recognized it when he ran into the polling station on Nomination Day at the St. Giles Girls' School. He should have paid attention to the fact that the school, during his tenure and until now has never been properly maintained. I think that this is an area that we would have to pay some attention to.

On that note, Mr. Chairman, I would again like to refer to some of the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph where he reflected on the question of security in schools. Everyone of those schools in St. Michael East, the St. Michael School, the St. Giles Girls' School, the St. Giles Boys' School and the Belmont School are all open. They are all unsecured. There is no proper enclosure at any of those schools.
4.00 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: No, I would not forget that. He is aware, he has told me he is aware but I am taking the opportunity to make sure that he is fully aware.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say something on the question of security and drugs in school. Drugs in this society, Mr. Chairman, are a total menace. I absolutely abhor the use of drugs in our society. I think that collectively, on both sides of the House, we have to take a responsible position in dealing with the question of drugs in

schools. I do not think that we, in the future, should make any political weather on the question of drugs in the society. I think the time has come for us to recognise that it is a problem in the society and I think that collectively, the parents of children attending these schools must share some responsibility in this regard.

I am suggesting, Sir, that operating in the atmosphere and environment that we have to operate in I think it is a matter of priority that all schools are properly secured and I certainly would hope that it will not be too long before the St. Giles Boys' School and the St. Giles Girls' School and the Belmont school are secured.

Mr. Chairman, I have one other concern and that is in the placement of primary school children into the areas that are located in St. Michael East. Much of the complaints from time to time from parents is that children are brought in from outside other areas into schools within the St. Michael East Constituency in Government Hill and so forth.

I think that in all fairness to the residents of the Government Hill, Ivy, My Lords Hill, Howells + Road, etc., I think that they should have priority to some extent when they are allocating places to schools. I have been told that there have been practices where people come in from all over Barbados, including St. Joseph and from the City. They come and they attend and they are allocated spaces in the Government Hill schools and many of our residents are having difficulty in placing some of their children into the areas that are contiguous to their dwelling place. I think that practice is not fair and I am asking that....

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I think that these are areas that we need to reflect on and I would really like to see some improvement without delay in the constituency of St. Michael East. Thank you very much.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make a call, indeed a plea for the inclusion of labour education, or labour management relations on the curriculum of secondary schools in Barbados. Indeed I have made this plea in other for a before, for the last ten years, but it has to a large extent fallen on deaf ears.

No one can deny, Mr. Chairman, that over the past 30 years we have had a very stable industrial relations climate in Barbados and this to large measure is due to the contribution that trade unions have made in teaching labour education to the workers and I believe that it is time that we go one step further. Why wait till the school leavers are in jobs at the age of 22, 23, to be exposed to labour management relations when this could be done at the age of 16 when they are still at school.

Only last year the then Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community Development mounted a programme for 400 or so school leavers from a wide cross section of secondary schools on the whole question of the world of work and I think that this was a step in the right direction, but indeed the time has come when the whole question of labour education, the whole question of labour management relations must be included on our curriculum.

I think, too often, people for one reason or another, especially at the higher levels of society want to sweep under the carpet, the whole question of labour education, the whole question of the 1937 riots and where we came from. They seem to be afraid of discussing the past and I make that plea today.

Mr. Chairman, the two major trade unions in Barbados have been carrying this type of training to the secondary schools. Indeed I have been invited to a number of secondary schools to deliver lecture discussions or to lead lecture discussions on trade unionism in these schools and I have also offered my services and last year I probably went to about six schools doing this type of teaching. I say all this to say that against that background I would not expect the training subvention which is granted to the National Union of Public Workers should be drastically cut. It is under a block vote so we don't know that it has been cut. You cannot see from the Estimates that it has been cut.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order please.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: I would expect in order to continue the training that we have been doing in the various schools and in order to continue the significant role we have been playing in national development at that level that we would continue to get reasonable training subvention.

As far as the question of structures are concerned I also would want to make a plea for the constituency of St. Michael South Central. We all know that constituency, for a long time, has been not properly represented, or it did not get the best of representation. That is about to change.

The Carrington Village primary school has served us well for the last 30 years. As a matter of fact I think two sitting members of the House of Parliament are products of the Carrington Village Primary School and therefore I think that the whole question of a new structure – I think it is earmarked for Tweedside Road, Carrington Village – I think that must be a priority and whatever is done in the coming financial year, I am making a call to the Minister of Education for the erection as soon as possible of the new Carrington Village Primary School. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have just a few questions. I have to get into St. Thomas early, Sir.
4.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am still concerned about interruptions.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister of Health cannot help it. He cannot help it, Sir. Beginning first, Sir, with Farmers. Now recently there has been evidence of considerable disquiet among the parents whose children attend Turners Hall.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Did you say when it is going to start? Well, Sir, I do not want to trespass on any ground that has already been covered. I just want to know when the new school which will harmonize Hillaby and Turners Hall will start. It was to start in 1987....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...in a matter of weeks. All right, Sir, I accept that. Sir, I do not know if the Minister spoke of Sharon also. Right. Then we can start on Sharon. The Minister is aware from previous statements that I have made in here, Sir, and discussions that I have had with him that Sharon, even though it is a comparatively new school, I think it is what they call a 4-2-5, is bursting at its seams primarily because St. Thomas is developing as a residential area and that whole area will effect you too – I am putting in one for you, Sir – all around Jackson Terrace and Canewood. The children from our two constituencies are looking for admission at that school. I remember, I think it was year before last, when it was realized that there would have to be some extension, the Minister responded with a temporary wooden structure to the north of the existing school. I think the time has come when we must look at constructing a more permanent structure larger than the present temporary structure or whatever to answer the needs of these additional children who will want places at Sharon. So I would like to hear from the Minister what plans the Ministry has to cope with this problem.

Sir, some work of a basic remedial nature was done at St. Thomas Mixed School last year when I pointed out that it was in such a state of disrepair that it could not adequately fulfil its role as a hurricane shelter in the event of a hurricane. We had some hurried temporary repairs but there is a lot more to be done to St. Thomas Mixed. I would be grateful if the Minister would approach the repairs to St. Thomas Mixed as he did in respect of Welches. He did a very good job in responding to our pleas for renovation of Welches. There are still one or two things that need to be done but fundamentally the Ministry attacked the problems of Welches in a very planned and forthright way. I am saying that the Ministry has to be complimented. I cannot hide that and stifle my conscience. I asked for things to be done and he responded well as the Ministers always did. This Minister is carrying on an old tradition, Sir.

I mentioned St. Thomas Mixed and Welches in the same breath, Sir, because there is a little problem that I think that could be solved.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Oh, Lord! Why do you not behave yourself? Yawn and go to sleep for Christ's sake. Sir, both schools have little garden areas that are improperly fenced and looked after. What I am asking the Ministry to do is to let the gardener or whatever you call it....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you have him? No, no, no. I am very glad. I suggested it before in here and I am glad that the Minister has responded that he has got the one person serving the two schools. No, they have not told me and I spoke to Welches up to week before last. Well, again the Minister has responded well in that regard and we shall be able to see the result of this shared work in a couple of weeks, Sir.

I did ask in here in the last Session about the provision of School Warden Service for certain of the schools in St. Thomas which are adjacent to main roads and which are dangerous. Now we had in the previous regime committed ourselves to providing a School Warden Service at certain of the schools. The Question Book will show, Sir, that the Minister when he answered the question in the last Session accepted that it had been our policy to have wardens placed at these schools and gave an assurance that in due course he would try and attend to the needs.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I suppose the representation has to come from the Ministry of Education to the Police. But I am saying, Sir, that St. Thomas Mixed, Welches, and Holy Innocents are schools which need warden services just as we have there in the Belle below where I live, Sir. There is a gentleman there every morning who does a very good job. I think that in due course, and I mean allowing a reasonable time for planning from the start of the next academic year, provision should be made to have this service. I do not need to dwell on the humanitarian aspect of it, Sir, or the potentiality that exists for children to be knocked down and seriously injured. I think that is obvious to everybody.

Now Sir, Coleridge and Parry. I will leave St. Thomas for the time being and go to St. Peter. There has been a persistent problem at Coleridge and Parry between the

Headmaster and the Board of Management, principally the Chairman of the Board of Management. It has proven to be virtually intractable. It has reached the stage where correspondence to the Ministry is obviously put in File 13, because there are no replies coming back to the Headmaster in regard to his several complaints and the several letters that he writes, making it clear that he and the Chairman are not going to be in dialogue. Sir, it cannot continue and I see a simple solution to it especially earlier on in the five-year term, Sir. Shift the Chairman from one school to another. The problem is not going to go away because the two spirits – I mean the human spirit not the kind that the Prime Minister was seeing at Ilaro Court – are of such a nature that each one of them is going to hold his ground, Sir. The Minister has to intervene in the interest of the good government and functioning of the school.
4.20 p.m.

It is easier by the stroke of a pen to make an adjustment in that area of management, Sir. It has to be a political decision, for reasons which are obvious to everybody. I have made my proposals, but I fear that if something is not done this is going to end up in court, and for the last two and a half years we have been trying to keep it out of court. I do not believe that matters of education should find themselves litigated if there are other solutions. You are not sending anybody to Siberia, but you may be saving substantial money. I don't think the Government wants to pay out another $341,000 as they did to the ex-Headmaster of Lodge School. I don't think the Government or the people of Barbados want Coleridge-Parry and his dirty linen engaging the attention of the High Court, but I will say it can lead to that because there is one matter which can be litigious. If the Board of Management purports to remove a perquisite of office, a facility, to which the Headmaster had always been accustomed as part of his terms and conditions – that is one part of it – Sir, the court has power to deal with that under the Administrative Justice Act, because you are interfering with the legitimate expectations without giving the man a hearing. He went away on leave and when he came back it was gone, something that he had been accustomed to, he was given no opportunity for a hearing. You should know from administrative law the implications of that.

Sir, the Minister will obviously have said something in my absence about St. Thomas Secondary School. If he has not said it, Sir, it was due for opening in September this year, but that cannot possibly happen. We were told that at the ground breaking. I do not know if the Minister can tell us what is the architect's programme....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Okay, January next year. If you could just put it in the record though.

Finally, Sir, in relation to the UWI, having regard to the amount of money that was disbursed to the UWI last year, $27 million I think it was all told, it looks this year as though there is going to be a cut to $22 million. I just wish the Minister to tell us whether in fact there is going to be a cut, because we picked it up in our meeting last weekend.

I am much obliged, Sir.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the sitting be suspended for 15 minutes, until 4.45 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed.

His Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, like others before me, I want to express a couple of concerns which I have, and by and large acknowledge the fact that the provision of educational services in Barbados is nothing particularly easy, either from a philosophical point of view as outlined by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and the majority of Members on this side, or from a question of cost with provision of those services. I will concentrate primarily, Sir, on the provision in respect to primary schools which I have in my particular constituency. Sir, whenever I visit the primary schools in my area I am not only happy but at the same time I am sad. I am happy because, Sir, I can see....

Asides.

His Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You wouldn't understand these emotions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think I will be able to understand everything you say.

His Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I am happy because I see little children making an effort to learn and an effort to become meaningful and productive citizens, but I am sad because at the same time I recognise that they are operating under trying conditions, trying circumstances, and in the totality of the educational plan, they are operating at by and

large a disadvantage to the pampered few, some of whom sit on the other side as Honourable Members. Those who go to special private schools. That's makes me sad. However, I do not believe that outlandish criticisms ought to be made to the authorities that provide for education in Barbados, because as I said, the bottom line is the question of cost. When I speak of sadness and that gladness which I experienced, I can only go into schools like St. Christopher's Boys and Girls and see the efforts made there by the school teachers and the students themselves not only to improve their surroundings but the very walls and the boards are filled with items of learning. However, at the same time, I am distressed when I see schools in need of repair, when I know for a fact that areas need a well or two to accommodate better drainage, when I know, as is a regular complaint in the Christ Church East that there is dire need for access roads to the St. Christopher Boys' School. There is a need for roads and we can provide all the schools we want to provide but unless there is proper access to them and I have seen it in other areas too, then students getting to school on mornings will not be too happy because a shoe will be mashed up here and there and a foot will be hurt. I think we have to look at it in its totality. We must provide proper access. The old primary schools, St. Christopher Girls' and St. Bartholomew School and the Providence School – I accept and acknowledge the fact that those old rubble walls and those old almost two-feet coral stone buildings are difficult buildings to maintain, because to tinker with two feet of it virtually disrupts another foot of it and you go on and on. However, at the same time, I believe that the provision of repairs should still be structured in such a way that the unevenness should be made less uneven and that every student should not only get a chance in the sense that there is a chance in going to school but there is a chance in respect of enjoying the services in proper and almost equivalent surroundings and circumstances.

Now, Sir, I was extremely glad this morning to look in the newspaper and to have seen also in the media before, a science exhibition done by primary school children. I believe that if this country, Sir, is to have people in it who are technologically oriented and minded, who are not afraid of sciences, who are not afraid of arithmetic and mathematics, which I dare say, Sir, is anathema to the Honourable Member for St. Peter. I believe that we have to move in that direction. I believe that our primary school student ought to be exposed to technology which can be used to the benefit of this country. I remember years ago there used to be an exhibition at Ellerslie often on solar power and the use of solar energy – science. I believe that this sort of attitude towards our education needs to be expanded. If we are to have a country which can make full use of our waves in terms of wave energy, full use of our solar power – because I don't see why in Barbados today we cannot have people, even though they are students experimenting with the entire maintenance of a house by solar power – electricity for cooling, for heating. I can't see why, even on an experimental basis, we cannot go down that road. All I am saying, Sir, is that if we are to explore fully the potential of our people in terms of advances in sciences, which I don't think we need to be afraid of, I think, Sir, we should start in the schools and I give great credit to the Ministry of Education and to every headmaster, headmistress and schoolteacher who is prepared to take the time and the effort to ensure that it starts from early and that from that early age there is no fear of arithmetic and sciences.

Now, Sir, I am not sure although I see a provision of some $3 million towards the assisted private schools. My own position is that if the Ministry of Education has taken a view that these schools are integral to our educational plans then I pray a little bit more could well be done for them, or if they are merely adjuncts to them... It is all right to pay a salary or two or give bursaries to these schools but I would like to think, Sir, that if we consider them necessary, because I don't know, that there could be some sort of loan facility by the Minister of Education granted to these schools in which... Is it there already? Can they get a loan from the Ministry? Private Schools?

Asides.

His Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I am saying, Sir, that if we are to have equivalent educational opportunities for all, in addition to the bursaries and the salaries, I believe that the Ministry could possibly look in a larger way to assist the private schools that are assisted by Government. If we are to have an educational service given to the citizens of this country that is somewhat equivalent, because I believe that is the most we can do. I do not believe that we can pamper some. I do not believe that we can ignore others. I believe we must try our utmost to make the educational service as equivalent to as many citizens as humanly possible.

I do not want, Sir, to get into the old question of the philosophy of whether or not our educational plan is providing adequately for the needs of the country. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke in great detail about whether or not the educational service as provided is not contributive to the drop-out rate as a consequence the rates of crime and other forms of unsocial behaviour. That, Sir, is a question I do not believe that will ever be answered. It is too open-ended. One school of thought will say obviously, yes, another one will try to include other forms of social behaviour to come to a particular conclusion. I do not believe, Sir, that the educational system should be faulted on that point because like every other country in the world, we regard education, the elements of reading and writing, the elements of being able to be functionally literate as the cornerstone of the educational system here. Even though it is accepted that everybody cannot be particularly academically oriented. I believe that the Government in its limited resources was trying through skills training programmes, through the polytechnic and

through other institutions of learning, through the adult educational programmes to catch everybody and to provide adequately for everybody. I am not saying, Sir, that more cannot be done, but I think again the bottom line is the question of cost. I believe, Sir, that when it comes to answer that particular question it is one that will remain unanswered until the end of time.

The whole question of pre-primary education too, is one that concerns me a lot, because I look around my particular constituency and I don't see any particular provision for it. Again, I would encourage that there be some thought for the people of Christ Church East in this regard. I said sometime during my speech that I am happy and somewhat satisfied as under the present circumstances a good enough job is done as can be done under the prevailing circumstances, under the cost parameters that are set to us. I think, Sir, that....
4.55 p.m.

I must give credit to every headteacher and school teacher in this country who would go beyond the call of duty to provide in sometimes trying circumstances that education which is required not only in terms of strict academic but in terms of the very counselling and outreach which they do in terms of families and PTA's. There are very active PTA's in Christ Church East. I know for sure that they do a great duty in terms of providing that very element that is so required in the educational service in this country for the constituents in that particular area. I do not think it is necessary, all things considered, to be too critical at this juncture of our development. I think a lot has been done. A lot more will continue to be done. I think that credit ought to be given where credit is due.

Thank you, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, I have in my hand a document which is a document of the House already, a Report on Education in Barbados for the period lst September, 1978 to 31st August 1982. It is a matter of concern that the Ministry of Education is one of those Ministries particularly which is not reporting on a regular annual basis. When I went into the Ministry and found that the latest report was the one for September 1977 to August 1978, instructions were given that it really had to come up to date like the Chief Medical Officer's Report.

It is important to all of us in Barbados that we should have the kind of information which you would ordinarily find in an education report. It took the greater part of two and a half years, or even more, to produce this document. I believe there has not been a report from the Ministry of Education since 1982. I know that the Chief Education Officer and his deputies are very busy people. They carry the biggest Ministry but this is important. Even though we have not had a report – it is not only true of the Ministry of Education. There are so many other statutory corporations and so many other Ministries which do not report as they ought to do. Even though this report takes us up to March 31, 1982, it still allows me to give the lie to another popular myth that I heard noised abroad in here today, mostly by the noisy ones. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West and the Honourable Member for St. John both said that there was an attempt by the Barbados Labour Party...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I crave your protection. I am sitting here as quiet as I can be. She says noisy ones like the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. Surely she must be mistaken.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member knows that we will not allow noisy Members who are not on their feet....

Miss B. A. MILLER: This allows me still to give the lie to that popular myth I heard noised in here today that the Barbados Labour Party was planning to close down Erdiston because this report shows...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Sir. I was accused of noising abroad that particular view. I did not even make reference to Erdiston because I thought during the period when she was Minister the place was completely shut down and obliterated.

Miss B. A. MILLER: He is now trying to perpetuate it in his usual style. This report discloses that the enrolment of teachers for training in a full-time course at the primary level in 1979 was 99 – 78 passed, 19 referred and one failed. That candidate only failed because he did not complete the examination. The final examinations 1980 you had full-time at the primary level 101 entered, 88 passed, none failed. In 1981 full-time at the primary stage 107 entered, 93 passed. Final examinations 1982 at primary....

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have not got to secondary yet. This is a part of the Education Report that referred to the Erdiston Teachers' Training College, a two-year training programme for teachers of primary schools to be found there, a two-year training programme for non-graduate teachers of secondary schools and a part-time one-year training programme for young teachers preliminary in-service course.

This report further gives the lie because you will see reference in this report to an extension of the College where under the first World Bank Education Project extension of the College was begun and completed and that....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. Let the Honourable Member continue.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The record is here. I want to raise a query about the Barbados Community College. In the second World Bank Project there was a component for the Community College. I am reading again from the Barbados Labour Party's 1986 Manifesto where it talks about extending the Community College to provide advanced vocational studies in Industrial Electronics, Health Science, Applied Arts and Crafts, Design Technology and Business Studies.

I know, Mr. Chairman, that this has been implemented. This part of the project has been executed. The truth is that the second World Bank Project is coming to an end. We have not heard one single word from the Minister either in here or outside of this place as to what is next on the Government's agenda in respect of education for the 1990's. The 1990's is going to be a critical and crucial decade, not only for education but for a host of other things beside. It is really most important. We have just come through a General Election where Manifestos were published, nothing coming from the Democratic Labour Party on what we could look forward to in education for the future.

I also want to ask a further question to do with training. It was also a part of the Second World Bank Project and in this respect the Democratic Labour Party Government has failed and/or neglected to carry out the component to do with skills training.
5.05 p.m.

We hear a lot of talk, the rhetoric is easy on people's tongues and of course it does not cost anything, preparing people for the workplace and this and that and the third and the fourth. Built into that second World Bank Project along with the new primary schools and the secondary schools and the teacher training and the Barbados Community College component and the SJPP component not to mention the new Ministry of Education Pedagogical Complex was a very important component to do with Skills Training, to erect Skills Training centres at Sayes Court, Passage Road and The Glebe, St. George where it was felt that the curricula and training programmes of these centres will make use of the expertise already available at other institutions such as the said Community College, the said Polytechnic, the Barbados Defence Force, private sector training bodies and BIMAP.

In this most critical particular, Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government has been largely negligent. Not one Skills Training centre, except that I gather that something is alleged to be happening at Sayes Court.

The thing is, and I hope the Minister will enlighten us, exactly what is it? Is this Manifesto still relevant in 1991? When you are finished implementing what is in it I still want to know what is going to come next?

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Will the Minister say what is planned for the Skills Training centre or whatever is to replace it in this project at Sayes Court, at Passage Road and at The Glebe, St. George. It is most critical.

We have heard it said a great deal in the past two days and a lot of it coming from this side too about the youth and Skills Training and the lack of skills and we give a lot of lip service to all of this talk about the new technology. But not even in some of the old technology is this Government dedicated to doing anything to lead us to believe that they are serious and genuine when they talk about equipping people for the future.

We had an excellent Skills Training Programme in place which Skills Training Programme is no more. It is perhaps as the Honourable Member for St. John is agreeing with me, the worst Statutory Board in our existence in Barbados today, Mr. Chairman, Sir, in an area that I would have thought would be a first rather than a last priority. We have a Chairman of that Board who reports nothing on a regular basis. We hear the same thing coming from that Board that we hear from so many other departments of Government. Studies are being undertaken, endless studies, endless surveys.

But the real underlying truth is this, Mr. Chairman. The rate of unemployment in Barbados is said today to be standing at 23.9%.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Does the other side want to claim that it is 25%?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member cannot just come and say, it is said that. The Honourable Member has to either quote the statistical information and produce the source or not make the specific statement and speculate. It is speculation. The Honourable Member said 23.9%.

The official statistics published by this Government is 14%. The Honourable Member is obviously misleading the House.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have good and reliable reason to believe that the unemployment rate in Barbados today the 21st of March, 1991 is 23.9%. If Honourable Members know it to be otherwise, let them say so. The whole of Barbados wishes to be enlightened.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: On a point or order, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Is the Minister going to give us the percentage now?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Yesterday it was lamented in here the fact about statistics not coming out last year.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the basis of your point of order?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am giving the last unemployment figures that have come out. The Honourable Member said that she firmly believes that it is about 24%, 25%, 30%. That same statement was made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter yesterday.

I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that the unemployment survey resumed during the months of October to December 1990. The recent information is available. The rate of unemployment at the end of December, for that quarter October to December was 14.7% compared with 13.7% for the same period in 1989. The labour force 124.8 thousand persons, employed 106.4 thousand, unemployed 18.4 thousand, the unemployment rate 14.7%. That was the last statistics.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I will not be misquoted by the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. I never said that the unemployment in Barbados today is any 25% or 30%. I said I have good and reliable reason to believe that it is 23.9%, at a time when we are the height of the tourist season.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is contrary to the Rules for a Member in the face, unless the Honourable Member will challenge the information given by a Minister....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is persisting in making a statement, the evidence of which she has not produced. We want the source.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I accept the Honourable Member's comment in relation to her own perception. I do not think that she has quoted any source.

Asides.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member has not enlightened us any. He quoted a lot of figures for 1990. I am in 1991.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The only thing is that the Honourable Member's time has expired. But since there were some interventions, I will give you another two minutes to conclude.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I will move with speed, with dispatch. Today the 21st March, 1991 the Honourable Member for St. James South did not even get into 1991. He left us somewhere with figures he said down in October 1990. He is not interested in that.

What I am saying is this, Mr. Chairman, Sir. At a time when we are allegedly at the peak and height of the 1991 winter tourist season, at a time when we are supposedly at the peak and the height of the 1991 sugar crop, Mr. Chairman, and at a time when we are just less than 3 months shy of another possibly 3 000 to 4 000 young people flooding out of the schools on to the street, still in 1991 – we are talking about an Agreement signed before 1986 even – not a word from the Minister on these Skills Training Centres. It was a very important plank in the second World Bank Project. It was a very important plank in the Barbados Labour Party's programme for young people for preparedness.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is an area of cut. It cannot be a priority for cut in expenditure in 1991.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will close now.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I really am disappointed that an Honourable Member who has had experience as a Minister in at least two Ministries that I recall, it is true that in each of them she has the dubious distinction of being the worst Minister ever but nonetheless the experience is there.
5.15 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We have been going quite well but I think we are tending to drift along the wrong path. There will be no heckling in this committee.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member has experience in ministerial capacity and she knows that there is something fundamental....

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: She ought to know. The Honourable Member does know that it is wrong in the face

of information given by a Minister, by which the Minister stands – the convention requires it for the Honourable Member – to get up and say that she has good and sufficient reason to believe that the unemployment rate is 23 per cent is a travesty on the system.

The Honourable Member said that up until the end of December 1990 the unemployment rate as discovered by the same group that always discovers what the unemployment rate is, it was 14.7 per cent. The Honourable Member says 23 per cent. I submit, Sir, and the Honourable Member is being goaded by others who ought to be able to assist. I am not able to call them nuisances, Sir, don't push that in my head. The Honourable Member should know better than to be goaded into talking about a different era. The only difference in era that we have is that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is of a different era from the rest of us. That is the only change in era that we might be perceiving at the moment. But the Honourable Member for the City should know better. And then she gets up and reads a document that has been steadfastly, completely and absolutely, rejected by the people, she gets up and reads from that document into the record and then wants the Minister to tell her how he is going to implement that programme. Utter rubbish. Rejected by the people and the Honourable Member wants to know, she is asking the Minister to implement the Barbados Labour Party Programme.

The Barbados Labour Party programme, Sir, talks about a skills programme in Passage Road. Now, where in Passage Road, Sir, would the Barbados Labour Party have put a skills training programme? But, we don't even know what is in the document. We have done what most of the people in Barbados did, we ignored it completely.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is misleading the Committee, Sir. I have seen the Honourable Member beg for a copy that was laid in the House and read it on numerous occasions, Sir. So he obviously knows what is in it.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But look where Richie is now. That is the whole point. When the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas went across the Golf Club pasture. Sir, you are not aware they went across the pasture to discuss the programme of the skills training?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, at that time I saw the Honourable Member for St. Michael West leaving and I had promised to give the information to the Prime Minister ... Don't let me talk, hear.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I don't know what the Honourable Member rose on.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not going to allow the Honourable Member for Christ Church West to make me say things of him that he wants me to say, Sir. But, quite seriously, to come back to the Honourable Member for the City, I was disappointed, the Honourable Member picked up a document and read some figures from 1982 to demonstrate that the Honourable Member did not have plans for closing down Erdiston College.

I, Sir, wish to give this Honourable committee the information that at the point where she left off – she stopped at 1985, she read a document and said 1982, '83, '84. But, Sir, the enrolment statistics between 1984 and 1990 for Erdiston Teachers College continued as follows:

1984 – 85 186
1985 – 86 87
1986 – 87 79
and then 1987 – 88 151

and it started moving in the other direction, and I state categorically that I was told by an official from Erdiston, whose name I cannot call because of the rules of this Chamber.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will write his name down and send it to you if you insist, Sir. The Honourable Member has had meetings in the Ministry of Education to discuss the shutting down of Erdiston College.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is getting into the realm of grossly misleading this House. I was careful when I read from this document of the House only to deal with primary. When you add in the secondary and other people it is 140 and 150. This is only grand-standing. He is adding nothing to the debate but there is absolutely no truth in what he has just said about any plan to close down Erdiston.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will not move from the position. I will not resign from that position and the public is fully aware and the information is here, Sir, the enrolment at Erdiston, and further more, if anyone analyses the methodology that was used, if one wanted to examine why yesterday when we talked about training to indicate what had happened, Mr. Chairman, how do you explain movements from 186 in 1984/85 to a mere 87...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member just hold a minute. It seems to me that some Honourable Members are not too comfortable sitting in the Chamber. If you continue to disobey the Rules of this Chamber then I will have to invoke the penalties.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, it is that they get excited, Sir. It is that when certain Honourable Members are speaking

other Honourable Members get excited and one understands that, it is because they do not wish certain truths to be put into the market place.

The Honourable Member got up here and discussed the World Bank programmes after having accused the Minister of behaving like a foreman. She then got up and precisely proceeded to repeat the same schools outlined in the programme and then accused the Government of continuing the programme of the Barbados Labour Party Government. She accused, and I want to say this, always in this country we have agreed that both Governments have continued programmes of Education from time immemorial. Always in this country....
5.25 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Lady, I sat and listened to you painful as it was.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is saying that I accused the Minister. I complimented the Minister of Education on implementing the physical part of the World Bank Project. Even in the case of individual schools, I said to him that he had done a good job. What I am concerned about are the other aspects of the Second World Bank Project, which the Government has not yet implemented and which the Government even to this day has not indicated to us what its intentions are.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No doubt that is a point of order. No doubt whatsoever that is a point of order and not a speech. But the Honourable Member then got up and started giving a litany of schools where they had determined what should be amalgamated and where they had to be sited or not to amalgamate, or the numbers had been changed. If the Honourable Member was complimenting the Minister, may she never compliment anybody else because no one needs compliments in the vein in which the Honourable Member spoke. I am making the point that education in this country at least until it was assaulted by the Honourable Member in her capacity as Minister has always gone without any major interference.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, we did not put them in Court. We never put them in Court even though they crucified us. We did not put them in Court. We did not threaten to lock them up. The point that is made which the Honourable Member for St. George South alluded to and which needs to be made, because the Honourable Member for St. George South was at pains to discover what it is the people are saying and I will help him and the Honourable Member for the City to understand. They are saying that much of the attitude of the youth in the country has been informed by the attitude of the Minister of Education at the time when she decided that she was going to take the Head Teachers of certain schools to Court. That is what the people are saying and the people are saying that the school system in Barbados reached its nadir....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT:...under the Barbados Labour Party. The Barbados Labour Party had ceded the rights to discuss education in moral terms especially if that discussion is falling from the mouth of the Honourable Member for the City. The Honourable Member for the City is the very last person in Barbados who will discuss and have an audience that is appreciative. Let her not come therefore and question the Democratic Labour Party's performance in the last five years.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, you would not know about that. The point is, Sir, that the education system in Barbados under the present Minister has taken a decided turn for the better. That is something that has not been questioned by not even his worst enemy, not even those who would campaign against him in the recent election could find it in their heart to do other than compliment him for his performance as Minister. We do not have to say anything when we are discussing the World Bank projects. What is disgusting and what I object to, is that if you put abroad in the community that the reason why someone continues a project under the aegis of the World Bank that it has something to do with their inability that you are creating an unnecessary skism in the minds of people who do not understand these things.

Mr. Chairman, the fact is that if any Government comes in and finds a World Bank project or an IADB project or some project of that nature, unless the project is diametrically opposed to what is good for Barbados, the chances are that the project will be continued with slight variation here and there. So there is no great kudos that someone was responsible for negotiating the particular project. We can point to a number of instances where a project was negotiated by one Government and was implemented by the next. That is the nature of the beast. That is the nature of the administrative system.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude in two minutes.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is strange that they would talk about our now having for the first time a full complement of secondary school places. There was no plan by the Barbados Labour Party for a secondary school in St. Thomas.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I am not discussing, Mr. Chairman, whether having the school there is good or bad. What I am discussing is the temerity of the Honourable Member for the City to use the fact of that school as part of her argument...

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, no, no, Mr. Chairman, I will not be misquoted. When the school at Wotton now named the Deighton Griffith School was completed, it was always intended that that secondary school would have a heavy vocational content and I am pleased to see that it is still supposed to have it, we would then have had a full complement of school places for all 11 Plus students. The St. Thomas School has nothing to do with that. Do not try that one on me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I just want to remind Honourable Members of Standing Order 32(1)(a) which states: "No Member may interrupt another Member except by rising on a point of order when the Member who is speaking shall resume his seat and the Member interrupting can simply direct attention to the point of order which he desires to bring to notice and submit it to the Speaker or Chairman for decision."

Members are just rising and going into a speech and it is not allowed by the Standing Orders. Let the Honourable Member proceed and in one minute please close.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I am merely making the point that that Honourable Member today in this debate under this Head said that she had noted that the Minister was now saying that with the completion of the schools we will have for the first time in Barbados....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ...and we are making the point that without St. Thomas you could not possibly have enough places for all the secondary schools. The Honourable Member will continue to be the Minister of Education in waiting. Let the Honourable Member remain. The Honourable Member said it and all I am doing is correcting it, Sir, because it has to be put on the record.

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

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to spend two minutes to give the record for the National Training Board's Training Programme over the last 10 years to assist with this debate. In 1982-83 there was no training according to the statistics given to me by the Director – no apprenticeship, no skills training, no work example. 1983-84 – 7 apprenticeships, 393 skills training for a total of 400 persons with some type of training programme. 1984-85 – 36 apprenticeships and 419 skills training for a total of 455. 1985-86 – 93 apprenticeship programmes and 464 skills training for a total of some 557. 1986-87 – a new programme was introduced. You had 39 apprenticeships, 374 skills training, and 654 work experience programme. This is the programme in which they tried for the clerical people to give them exposure, a total of 17 in plant training making a total of 1,084 persons who had some training. 1987-88 – 63 apprenticeship programmes, 799 skills training programmes, 159 work experience, and 19 in plant for a total of 1,040 people. 1988-89 – 101 apprenticeship programme, 708 skills training, no work experience programme which was stopped, 15 in plant, for a total of 824 persons. 1989-90 – 79 apprenticeship, 640 skills training, and 36 work experience for a total of 755 persons. The last available is 1990-91 of 55 apprenticeships, 658 skills training, and 58 small business which was a new programme because the Board discovered that persons who were trained could not find jobs easily and they introduced this programme to put them in business on their own.

Mr. Chairman, if you took the average of the three years and forget the first year, the three years under the Barbados Labour Party there was an average of 45 apprenticeships programmes, an average of 425 skills training, no work experience. Over the next five years for the Democratic Labour Party there was an average of 67 apprenticeships as against 45, 636 skills training as against 425. The introduction of these other two programmes in the small business programme – this year it is expected that the apprenticeships and the skills training programme would be increased as well as the small business programme. So, if you will notice you will see that the National Training Board has continued the momentum left and has carried on further under the Democratic Labour Party. Thank you very much.

5.35 p.m.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am a little surprised at the tone of this debate. I don't think that anybody seriously would dispute the contribution to education that was made during the period of 1976-86. This foolish argument over who built a school and who didn't build a school and this kind of thing, I really don't think that these things don't go along with any education debate. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West whom I have known for practically all of my life has always been enamoured of his own voice. He likes to hear himself talk and it doesn't matter what there is, he will talk. One of the reasons why the figures in relation to training at Erdiston

Teachers' Training College fluctuated is because you can only use the place if you have people to train. The backlog of the untrained teachers in the primary school had been met, practically. In 1976, when we got into government there were large numbers of untrained teachers in the primary and, what was then named, the newer secondary schools, and a progressive programme of training had trained practically whole backlogs of those teachers. So just to mention numbers is to trivialise a serious discussion and the Honourable Member is good at that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. I don't mind the Honourable Member abusing me because at the end of the day, the Honourable Member and I will still be friends, but the Honourable Member must turn to his left, that is where it started. Don't look across at this Honourable Member. The trivialisation was begun by the Honourable Member for the City and therefore we have to respond to foolishness, even if we have to say foolishness.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I really have to respond to foolishness but....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order, so there will be no response to it.

Mr. L. R. TULL: There is another reason why, in considering this business of how many people were trained at Erdiston, you have to look at other things. I wish people wouldn't rush in where they don't know and understand.

In the period 1976 to 1986 the then Ministry of Education started a programme at the University of the West indies. They started a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree but they also started a Bachelor of Education degree. It was started by the Barbados Labour Party. I was the Minister, so I know what I am speaking about. They started another course for the first time in Educational Administration and Management and it was started because of the problems that I am hearing about. If there is a big school with a staff of 85 and 1 200 children, the head-teacher there would have to be trained in how to administer and manage an educational plant of that size. We started this course at the University of the West Indies to train headteachers and deputy headteachers and senior teachers and so on, so that they would be better able and equipped to manage schools of that size. So, a lot of them were trained up there, and in addition to that, we started a certificate course at the University of the West Indies for training of teachers in an in-service course. I don't remember the exact details of that particular course.

So, to pick up some outdated report and say: "Ha, look at the figures, they have gone from 110 to 70," without giving the background information nor adding in the number of those teachers who are now going to Cave Hill, is an insult to the intelligence of those who would listen. In addition to that, because this is another myth that must be exploded. The Democratic Labour Party Government got away with a lot of murder over the last five years because they had three Members in Opposition who were not in Cabinet and who were not seised with all the information in every Ministry.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. L. R. TULL: Protect me, Sir. One of the myths that need to be exploded and which you constantly hear is again like this matter of discipline earlier. There is this notion that teachers were not being trained in the latter part of the Barbados Labour Party administration. They say that all the time. Even Teachers' Unions say that, because it is convenient to say that. I am saying here on the Floor of this House of Assembly that no fewer than 70 teachers per year were given training leave right up to 1986 to study overseas at the University of the West Indies at Mona and the like. I keep hearing this thing and nobody seems to be willing to listen and hear what the facts are. I was Minister of Education when I took a decision that no fewer than 70 teachers must be allowed to go away on full time leave every year. So don't come in here and tell me this.

We also had teachers, Sir, – I don't know whether the system still exists, because of a lot of dark corners in the last five years. Teachers who were going on exchange with the U.K. We had teachers who were leaving Barbados and going for a year and teaching in schools in the United Kingdom, in schools where there were Caribbean students.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I don't have to ask any questions. The people on that side, instead of getting up and giving this House information....

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You know, Sir, one thing I can say, Mr. Chairman, is that the only Honourable Member on that side who was going to school when I was Minister of Education is the Honourable Member for St. John, so the lack of understanding, the obtuseness that is being emitted by all those Members, I am not responsible for. It is fortunate that they weren't educated when I was Minister and the Honourable Member for St. John, well, I have to apologise to the people of this nation for him.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Don't worry about me. I want to wrap up because we want to discuss other Heads, but I want

to say a few things that are maybe not as controversial as what we have heard so far.

I have, Mr. Chairman, a very keen interest in education in this country. I didn't have a keen interest before I became a Minster of Education, but having become Minister and dealt first hand with a number of the problems, I developed an interest and even though I do not follow development very closely, my interest is still there. A lot of disturbing things are happening in Barbados in respect of education.
5.45 p.m.

The education system is constantly being attacked and criticised by all sorts of people. I have had occasion on many occasions to say that everybody in Barbados is an expert on education. If you talk about labour a handful of Honourable Members speak. If you talk about agriculture, a handful speak. If you speak on health a handful speak. When you get into education everybody is an expert. Everybody has his or her solution. It is good that people get involved but the problems in education are not easy.

One of the things I have been watching and seeing over the past few years is the fact, Mr. Chairman, that people in Barbados believe that the education system is responsible for all the ills in society, nobody else but the education system. If people are out there robbing old women, it is because of a fall in the education system. If young people are out there breaking up every dance that is held in Barbados, it is the fault of the education system. We hear this over and over again.

The education system is a part of the overall national system and you cannot expect that alone must bear the brunt of criticism for everything that has gone wrong. The education system has, however, a very important role to play. It is on trial not only in Barbados. Education is on trial in all parts of the world. Its relevance is being questioned – the Honourable Member for St. Joseph quite rightly questioned whether our education is relevant to Barbados. That is a continuing point about relevance.

The question is also raised by teachers, by parents and employers. It is raised by all the consumers in the education industry. Questions are raised, for instance, in this whole business about the difficulty of our value system in the society and they throw that in the lap of education. There is the discussion about our way of life. There is the dichotomy between humanism, for instance, as the Honourable Minister of Tourism talks a lot about humanism and scientific analysis. All kinds of things are being thrown in the lap of education.

I would have thought that in a debate such as this that the Minister of Education would have come in here and in introducing this measure before Parliament would have taken the high road and addressed some of the major concerns in education in this country, some of the problems and come up with some kind of statement about how the Government is setting about to deal with these increasingly complex problems that are facing this country.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: If I sound like him, I am glad that in his old age he is picking up some wisdom. I am glad to hear that. There are a number of things I am concerned about and I will rattle them off very quickly because I have no doubt that I will soon be told quite rightly that my time is up.

I am concerned, Sir, about teacher influence in the community at large. The influence of teachers in the community has been declining at a very rapid rate. It is difficult, if you want to build an integrated Barbados or community to delimit the role of the teacher to a classroom and after he has finished school he has no say with the people, either the children or the parents in the school. I want to hear what you are doing about that. I want to hear about the integration of the schools into the community.

Someone made reference, Mr. Chairman, to the fact that there is a great need for continual or adult education. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central raised the question of training of labour relations in schools. With the greatest respect I do not agree with that. You cannot burden the syllabus in the schools with everything somebody ask for. They have asked for tourism, industry, trade unionism, co-operatives and environment in schools. If you pick up every interest group and put them on the agenda of primary and secondary schools there will be no time to teach the things that are the core of education at primary and secondary level which are numeracy and literacy.

I think the Honourable Member for St. John made reference about some case where young people cannot read the oath – "I swear by Almighty God I will tell the truth" etc. We who work in the courts see that every day that young people, people in their late teens and 20's, cannot read the oath. There is no point getting around teaching them and jamming the school curriculum with all sorts of useful things but there is a limit to a school day and a school week.

I am submitting, Mr. Chairman, what is required is that hundreds of millions of educational plant that lie idle for practically 60% of the year, if not more than that, because when you close down these $15 million, $20 million and $30 million establishments at 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon and they do not open until 9 o'clock the next morning, you are wasting them. Equally, the people who are best equipped to train people in adult education and continuing education, and indeed, some of the school

children in certain specialists areas, are people who are employed in other jobs during the day and are, therefore, not available to give the benefit of their experience to the others because by the time they finish work in their regular jobs the schools are closed.

In a time when the Government is coming here with a cut in Estimates and saying that times are hard in Barbados, if I may add, parenthetically, because of the inept management of the economy by the Democratic Labour Party Government, but a time when you are having cuts and you are telling people they have to tighten their belts and they have to cut back expenditure, the Government should be coming up with creative ways of using its existing resources to maximum and optimal advantage. That is not happening.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member can conclude in one minute. You have overstayed your time for the moment but have one minute.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I appreciate the one minute. If there is anymore talking I will come back because I have a lot of things to say, Sir. What I would have liked to see instead of the Government putting a cut in the vote this year for adult and continuing education, because they are not referring to that but they cut some money on it....

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Heckle me as much as you like. Instead of seeing an increase because of the peculiar circumstances confronting the society at this stage – you see when you are talking sense they do not want to hear.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the Honourable Member must close now.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I will finish now, Sir.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, most of the concerns on this Head have been dealt with very well by the Honourable Members on this side. I am going to divert a little and deal with one or two areas of concern in the constituency of St. Andrew which I represent.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It really is not fair that Honourable Members must be interrupted by cross-talk. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I cannot say that I am in any way unhappy about what I heard the Honourable Member for St. John speak about when he spoke about the progress which has been made in the field of education in the constituency of St. John. I cannot say that I am jealous or angry. I certainly do not even take any comfort from what I heard the Honourable Minister of Education saying when he spoke about a new primary school for the people of Turner's Hall.
5.55 p.m.

As you know the Turner's Hall Primary School has been a sore point with this administration and the Honourable Minister of Education can certainly attest to that. In 1986 when we demitted office we had certain plans for the Turner's Hall Primary School. Those plans were shelved by this administration.

What has happened since 1986 is that the present administration instead of coming up with any concrete proposals for the Turner's Hall Primary School, what they have been doing is sending officials from the Ministry of Education year after year. I also understand that they have also been sending the former representative sometimes on a monthly basis to inform the PTA at Turner's Hall that a new school is coming and as a result, you could hold on for the repairs.

What has happened at Turner's Hall during the past month should never be allowed to happen at any primary school in Barbados. I do not think that many of us realize the problems that a number of the schools in the country face. Some of us talk about the difference between the urban areas and the rural areas. I know that the Honourable Member for St. John would want to even emphasize this point. But it seems to me as though there is a further distinction when we are dealing with the area of St. Andrew. It seems to me as though this is a forgotten area. Because if you can separate the urban area from the rural area and then you are going to place St. John on a pedestal well then you cannot speak of areas in St. Andrew in the same breadth. In this respect, I think that the Minister of Education, if he is really serious about the rural areas, about the people in areas like St. Andrew and to a lesser extent St. Joseph would really endeavour to do something about what is going on in St. Andrew and the country schools so to speak.

No wonder at these schools when you have a brilliant student, a student who is supposed to be the top student in the class and he is actually passing the exam to go to the Garrison Secondary School... That is your top student. Whereas....

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member but this is the second time we have heard reference of that kind.

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

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order. The Ministry does not dictate who goes to which school. The student who may be the top student in a particular school

has nothing to do with who may be the brother, sister or neighbour who would have gone to the same school that other Honourable Members complained about.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister of Education understands what I am talking about. I am speaking about the circumstances which prevail at these schools, the environment at these schools is different. The facitities at times dictate what entails where the results at these schools are concerned.

When you look at – if the Honourable Minister wants me to take Turner's Hall Primary School as an example, I can do that. Turner's Hall Primary School is a school where you have teachers at times and the students using the same bathroom facilities, not because there are not bathroom facilities for the students but because the bathroom facilities for the students are inadequate. You have toilet bowls that are not functioning properly. You have filth all over the place. You have an open school where people from outside could come inside the school at any time. You have situations where the benches in the school are not even fit for, I would not like to say people tending animals. You have situations where the lunch room is in such a condition that it cannot be used, as a result of which, on occasions the maid at the school would have to go outside and borrow things like a washpan and a table from neighbours. These are things that prevail at the Turner's Hall Primary School. You have situations where, on a daily basis, a minimum of two students have to leave school because of illness.

I do not want to speak about the demonstration at Turner's Hall School because I do not know anything more about the demonstration at Turner's Hall School than the Minister of Education. As the representative for the constituency, I am well aware of what is going in the constituency. I know all the parents at the Turner's Hall School and it is fairly obvious they would let me know what is going on. I must say that with respect to that demonstration at Turner's Hall, the teachers were at pains to join in that demonstration. I must say too for the Minister's guidance, that I was the moderating influence at that demonstration. But the circumstances which led to that demonstration should never be allowed to happen again.

I myself was there and I was somewhat scared when I saw the attitude of teachers, barging into the school. They had problems, serious problems at the school for the past four and a half years, constantly being told by officials from the Ministry of Education – the Minister of Education did not bother to come down – I believe he sent down the Chief Education Officer and officers from the Minstry of Education. I would not like to say that the Minister of Education is a coward.

Asides.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: And then they represented him. I said I would not like to say it, Mr. Chairman.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would you like to....

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: I withdraw those remarks, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: But then, Mr. Chairman, we had a situation whereby they were coming down with plans, they were coming down to the school with plans, showing the parents and teachers plans for a new school. We are glad to know that there will be a new school at Turner's Hall. But at the same time, we want to know what will happen in the interim. The parents at Turner's Hall are becoming very angry. The teachers will join in the demonstration next time. I have been trying my best to make sure that things do not get ugly at Turner's Hall. But I think it is one of the worst cases we have with respect to facilities at primary schools in Barbados at this present time. It is no laughing matter.

I believe the Minister of Education should go down there himself and see the conditions and speak to the Parent Teachers Association. We do not want him to send down the Chief Education Officer. Come himself and see the conditions.

It is just that the situation at the Turner's Hall Primary School is somewhat worst than at the other schools in the St. Andrew area. I am really surprised and in some respects ashamed of the Honourable Member for St. John when he speaks about the conditions in the rural areas and at the same time applauding what has happened at Mount Tabor School. Maybe I probably should take him down on one of these occasions to show him what happens at Turner's Hall.

But it is not only the Turner's Hall School. All the schools in St. Andrew. One is appalled that during the past four and a half years you would have a representative who would sit in this Chamber and not even mention the conditions of those to this Honourable Chamber and to the Honourable Minister of Education. St. Silas Primary, the teachers and parents of St. Silas Primary are only not demonstrating because they have heard that situations at other schools within the constituency are worse than at the St. Silas Primary. At St. Andrew's Composite, conditions are real bad.

6.05 p.m.

All of this is part of the policy of this administration to neglect the people of St. Andrew and they are always complaining about roads, we can't get down there. Turner's Hall Road, a road leading from the Turner's Hall district to Belleplaine has been in total disrepair for the longest time,

so they can't get to St. Andrew's composite. They can't get to Turner's Hall Primary. I think this problem, Mr. Chairman, is becoming very serious, especially when you look at the teacher morale at the Turner's Hall Primary School and teacher morale at the schools in the St. Andrew area.

I would like to encourage the Minister of Education to have a meeting with those teachers before things get out of hand, because right now we are talking about lawlessness among young people, and we are criticising the young people at all levels. If we are going to isolate certain individuals within a certain community, within a certain part of this island, and if we cannot understand that the parents in certain areas have got to pay taxes like anybody else too, if we cannot understand that the people in the St. Andrew area, the people in the Turner's Hall area, people in the Orange Hill area, people in the Belleplaine area are entitled to these facilities, well, then we cannot complain when the young people rebel in all forms and fashions.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I think I have to respond to some of the remarks made by the last speaker. What is rather interesting is that we find out that in five years all of these buildings just turned from beautiful new buildings to dilapidated buildings and I think the point which the Honourable Member failed to make, and I am sure that the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for the City and other Members on that side, who spoke before and who have not spoken before, be totally aware that we have to be concerned as the Honourable Member for St. George South, a point he was making, we cannot put all the blame that you want to put on the educational system.

Who is destroying the property in most of these schools? They say the children are not doing it in those same rural areas of which you spoke. Who is breaking into them at night. The police, they have numerous records of complaints of break-ins, those of you who practise in the law courts know of these numerous complaints of the break-ins. These break-ins are not being done by the students of the school.

The point you made about Turner's Hall, yes, Hillaby/Turner's Hall was supposed to be amalgamated. Yes, it will be. You were probably not here when I started but I made the point that the tender has already been opened, but what I found rather strange, Mr. Chairman, is that the Honourable Member knows that he was on the spot with the other people on that particular day of the demonstration and that was the same day people were on site repairing that school. A contract which was issued and people were on site repairing that school.

We have spent in the last year, Mr. Chairman, over $742,750.42 repairing some 92 schools and the plumbing to another 93 schools and we go on and on. We are spending money. I only want the Honourable Member, I know in his eagerness, anxiety and....

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Not innocence. He said that we sent the previous member to St. Andrew. Now if the previous member who represented a constituency is going to wait until somebody sends him to the constituency to speak with people.....

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Now the last point I want to make. You also went on and you started to make reference to other schools in St. Andrew. We have done repairs to several other schools in St. Andrew, before he was a representative, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: No, I am not quarrelling. We have also done repairs and done significant repairs following the work to the Alleyne School. You know that I know St. Andrew. I have seen you down there too. You know that. I am just saying to the Honourable Member, you are getting a new school. Do not now go and create an additional problem, because your statement is liable to make the people feel that now they have a supporter and they can go out and further instigate. Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George South caught my eye.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I want to mention again a number of other things that trouble me. I am not getting up again. The last time I was speaking, Sir, I was speaking on the need for the Government to make the maximum use of the existing facilities that they have in Barbados. I am charging the Government with not having come out with a single creative programme in the last five years to improve the returns from the educational plant in Barbados.

These are hard times they tell me. I was saying, Sir, before I sat down earlier that the educational plant is shut down for most of the year with a lot of expensive equipment in the labs, in the computer rooms and so on. I did not see the Government at this particular juncture when they are putting cuts in education, to make sure that the money that is being spent, they are getting value for it.

Now, I want to know, Sir, about this text book loan scheme. I see here in the Estimates that the Government is dishing out $1.6 million in this coming financial year for text book loan scheme. I want to ask a question that is allied to it and I want the Minister to listen because I want an

answer. What is the Ministry of Education doing about the development of their own teaching aids in Barbados? Well, don't tell me a lot, give me something more than that. What are you doing about teaching aids in Barbados, locally devised and created, that would cut down on the tremendous amount of money that you spend on a lot of material that you get from overseas, that have a very short life span, incidentally? And, if things remain as they used to be, the system of the text book loan scheme is one that is structured for waste because the teachers in the schools, as used to be the case, and I am not making any accusation now, because I am not up to date, so I am asking a question on it. But, it used to be the case that teachers would change the text books according to their whims and fancy. If one teacher is teaching English Literature today and is teaching 'As You Like It', and you bring a new set of 'As You Like It' books into Barbados and spend this $1.6 million on it and the next year you have a teacher who prefers to teach 'Julius Caesar', out goes the 'As You Like It', out in the bin and a new set of books come in. So, I want to know, and I say at this stage I am not critical because I am not up to date on it. I want to know, Sir, if that kind of situation is being changed by new policy on behalf of the people in the Ministry of Education.
6.15 p.m.

I also want to raise the question, Sir, about the priority of training at the University of the West Indies. I asked that but I do not get any answer. The fact is that there are large numbers of graduates of the University of the West Indies who cannot find jobs in Barbados. I said already that there are some people with a university degree for a much as two years and cannot find a job in Barbados. At the same time everyday I see in the newspaper or in the Gazette that there are applications for Work Permits for non-Barbadians to fill jobs because they cannot find qualified Barbadians to do the work. I am asking is the Government guiding the people who are going into the university in the right directions that are needed for national development, areas where there are shortages of people? Is the Government sitting back and feel that it can spend $30 million a year on university education just like that without setting any priorities in terms of what people study? I want the Minister not to give me any cursory answer but to give me some figures and a comprehensive answer on what they are doing in that particular area.

I also want to mention the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. A lot of talk I hear from the other side, Sir. That Polytechnic was built to accommodate 2 800 students a year in a multitude of disciplines. I cannot remember how many but certainly well over 20 different disciplines. I am hearing, and the Minister can put me right if I am wrong, that the Polytechnic has not been delivering in many areas of specialist training for which it was set up and devised. They have more applications for places in some disciplines but not in others. I want the Minister to explain and tell me these things because a lot money is being spent on that Polytechnic if you look at the figure here in the Estimates.

I want very quickly, Sir, to mention one or two things that are troubling me about this Ministry of Education that I hear is doing so well. I am going to mention them quickly, Sir, because I do not know when the time will run out as I keep saying.

I want to know if the Ministry of Education has started to do a rigorous screening of teacher applicants that come into the service. For a long time there was a primary concern with whether a person had enough "O" Levels. Nowadays they are primarily concerned if they have enough CXC subjects. But they were not subjected to the kind of scrutiny that will determine whether they had the personality or character to be in the classrooms with peoples' children. CXC Certificates alone do not work that out. It is very well when you are working in the post office selling stamps. But when you are dealing with children, particularly little children, I want the Ministry of Education to do the kind of psychological screening to determine whether people are suitable to go in the classrooms.

I want also to know why the Ministry is not going more and more into assigning teachers to schools in their own communities. If you get a man from St. Peter teaching in St. Philip, he is going to get the 3 o'clock bus and go back down to St. Peter and what he has to contribute in the community in St. Philip is lost because he is only around there for a few hours of school time. I think that that is necessary. You keep talking about youth delinquency and discipline and all of that. All these are critical factors that must be considered.

I want to know, Sir, why the Ministry of Education, and I hear that the Barbados Labour Party intended to close Erdiston Teacher Training College according to them, has not got into training teachers in non-academic studies to better equip them to be all around role models, teachers, and guides to young people in this country. I am talking about training in areas such as leadership skills, community development, citizenship, patriotism, and whatever. I know that there is always talk about counselling. Every single classroom teacher should be exposed at some stage to the basic principles of counselling. You cannot separate counselling from teaching and this business that you get one counsellor per school who does all the counseling cannot work and organizations cannot be allowed to say that they are teachers and not counselors, and that they will teach and do nothing else. I think that we have got to deal with that.

I am also asking why is there the continual quarrelling between the professionals, the Education Officers, in the Ministry of Education and the teachers in the schools and the teachers unions? Something has got to be done. It

requires leadership. This is where the Minister comes in. It requires leadership. You are going to have the Education Officers constantly at war with the teachers in the classroom and the teachers unions. I am not assigning blame. I am not saying one side is blame-worthy. But I am saying that it is going on and that it has reached the stage where it is causing a lot of people in the community some concern because they cannot understand how people can be involved in the same activity to be constantly and publicly at war. What is being done about that?

I believe that the Ministry of Education and the Government, if they were worth their salt instead of making the kind of facile arguments they give in here, they should try and set up a proper resource centre for the teachers to operate as professionals separate and apart from union members, because the Secondary Teachers Union and the Barbados Union of Teachers are essentially workers unions rather than professional bodies. The Government should be trying to encourage that.

I am also asking the Minister of Education – what is he doing to explode the myth that we are hearing that the primacy of head teachers in their schools has been eroded by the Ministry of Education? Now this is a very serious thing. Ordinary people talk about it. Whether it is right or wrong, it does not matter. It is the perception that matters. There is a widespread perception in Barbados that the primacy of head teachers has been badly eroded and that they have not got as much status as they used to have, influence, and so on and that the Ministry of Education usurped the traditional role of head teachers. What are you doing about it? Where are your public statements? What are you doing to assure the people of Barbados that this is not the case? What are you doing to assure the teachers that this is not the case? All of these are problems that are undermining the integrity of the school system in Barbados. I want to know from the Minister....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: In two minutes I will ask you about what are you doing because you have done nothing and that is one of the indictments against this Government. More and more primary teachers are going to the university and getting degrees. What is the Government doing about trying to keep those teachers when they get degrees in the primary schools? What incentives are being provided for them? Many of them are excellent primary school teachers, good at teaching young children. They go on and get a university degree and they feel that they must go into a secondary school to get on. What is the Government doing as an incentive to keep those teachers in the primary system where the need is far greater?
6.25 p.m.

I want to make the final point, Mr. Chairman, Sir. When we are talking about saving money, I don't know what the Government is doing. The education system is a very reactionary one. It doesn't like change and you have to force change on it. We have a system here, where there are sixth forms at four or five different places, Harrison College, Queen's College, Combermere, Lodge and the Community College. You have specialist teachers in the sixth forms at these schools who in some cases teach only a handful of students. I give an example. You may have a teacher, say at Combermere, who teaches five children 'A' level geography, at Harrison College you may have four children, at Lodge School two, but you have a specialist geography teacher to teach two, or three, or five, or nine as the case may be. If the Government is interested in economising and getting the maximum value for the money we are spending, would it not make much more sense for the Government to start moving away from all the traditionalism? All we are hearing is that headteachers don't want anybody to come into their schools because they are their schools. Only in some senses should that be so. Why can't you have peripatetic specialist teachers? So that if you have an excellent maths teacher in the sixth form, as indeed, there is in Barbados – all of us who have children who go to the secondary schools and do mathematics know that there is a specialist maths teacher that everybody wants to go to school with, and if they can't, they want to go to lessons with him after school. Why can't you get a specialist teacher operating on a peripatetic basis where he can teach six hours a week at 'A' level at one school, get into a car and go to another school, inasmuch as they are not far apart, and give him travelling allowance, instead of using a man or woman with those kinds of skills to teach just a few hours in sixth form in one school and spend the rest of the week teaching students in junior schools, quite often in subjects that are not even the ones in which they specialised?

We are talking seriously about saving money and economising. This is what we want to see in the estimates. We want to see the kind of creative planning in all Ministries and in particular in this Ministry which spends over $240 million a year. To show that we can deliver no worst education and perhaps a lot better quality of education for less money by a judicious and intelligent allocation of the existing resources within the school. These are the things we want to hear about.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am not going to talk anymore. Thank you, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Looking at the estimates on page 60, head 34, Education, subprogram 06: Computers in Education. I know that the Honourable Member has a particular interest in this matter of computers and I have seen in the newspapers over the past year a great deal about how the Government is committed to this and so on and so forth. That is why I find great difficulty in understanding

why this vote has been cut or is proposed to be cut. I see half a million dollars in the estimates for 1991-92 whereas....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister will have the opportunity to respond.

Miss B. A. MILLER: ... whereas the year before, it was $573,315, so this is a cut in the area of three-quarters million dollars. This is the subhead which the note says: "This sub program's function is to provide computer equipment for Secondary and Primary Schools." I really don't understand why that should be cut.

My final question, Sir, has to do with the textbook loan scheme. There have been a lot of complaints made out there in the private sector by the booksellers that some of them have not been paid by the Government for in excess of six months. The Textbooks Loans Scheme is in arrears of payment to the booksellers. It is not fair to a lot of them. When I am talking about arrears I am talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars. This is not just a few thousand dollars. Yet, they are expected to order books for the coming school year and to have these available but the payments are not coming down. I believe that the last time any of them saw anything was in November-December, last year, but that was in respect of the year before, so they are still owed since July of last year and further back in time beyond that. This is untenable, especially since they cannot get the kind of overdraft facilities they need. I would like the Minister to let us know what the position is on that.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John adverted to a situation with which he was familiar, where he said that he was disturbed by an occurrence where a sizeable number of young persons were unable to read and write and were presumed illiterate. Sir, in relation to this whole question of literacy, I would like first to ask the Honourable Minister of Education if in Barbados there are any established methods by which the problem of dyslexia is ever ascertained. It is my view that there may be a problem in reading in Barbados and part of that problem may very well be occasioned by a lot of undiagnosed dyslexia. I am aware that in more developed countries tests are done in schools which can determine whether those who can't read and write have a disability like dyslexia or whether they have other problems that lead to such a disability.

While talking on the question of literacy, Sir, I am asking the Honourable Minister whether reading has been isolated and treated as a special area of concern for the reason that both at primary stage and secondary stage we are encountering in Barbados large numbers of persons who are literally barking at words. Only yesterday, I saw a youngster fourteen years old who is a member of a secondary school unable to determine what H-A-V-E meant and in a statement that was presented to him for his reading the only word he got correct, fortunately for him, was G-O-D. He made that one right but the rest of the statement he could not read it.

Sir, somehow, over the years, at primary stage we have seen a system where if I am in Infants A, it is automatic that in the succeeding academic year, I will move on to Infants B and if I am in Infants B, next year I move on to Class 1. In Barbados over the years, we have had a process in some schools of automatic promotion upwards in circumstances where some of the children promoted were not really ripe for such promotion and should have been looked at to see what the problems they were encountering in terms of learning. I am aware that there may be a type of peripatetic in the Ministry at this stage with some responsibility for reading but I would like to see the Ministry look at this problem, because even though it is true, Sir, that over the years we have made a proud boast of having achieved 98.2% literacy or so, the experience of election day itself, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East will tell you, shows up that a far more significant segment of our population may suffer severe problems of reading. The problem in our education system, Sir, is that somehow we take a very narrow approach to education where we motivate our students to do well and pass exams to achieve a measure of subject matter confidence in given areas without further inspiring them to love learning for its own sake....
6.35 p.m.

The point I am making is related to the question of functional literacy and functional illiteracy where it is likely that of those who are now considered able and capable to read and write there is not much more you can do with that. In that regard I must support the submission of my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, who suggested that in relation to tertiary education, continuing education at the post secondary stage, we may very well have to consider for the future special areas set up for adults who may need to be retrained to cope with the stresses and demands of the changing times.

Another area of concern which I have – it was, I believe, raised by the Honourable Member for St. George South – is the extent to which our schools are properly and usefully integrated in the community. There was a time when schools were formally closed at 3.00 p.m. but thereafter the schools would be available to the community at large for a number of youth group activities. We appreciate that in this day and age acts of vandalism have sometimes occurred on school premises after 3:00 o'clock. We believe that with the appropriate mechanisms put in place, our schools could be made to play a more meaningful role in terms of what I would call post curriculum development to permit persons to use the school plant.

We on this side have sometimes expressed concern that large amounts of money are injected into education and at the end of the day we occupy school premises, perhaps, 39 weeks a year, perhaps four, five or six hours per day. There is a lot of time when the school premises are lying idle. In that respect I would like to urge the Honourable Minister of Education to look at the notion of further integrating the community into the whole school system.

Sir, a very important consideration was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East who briefly referred to the question of security at a particular school. If you would permit me, Sir, I would like to look at security generally in our schools. At most of the secondary schools, if not all of them, the Ministry of Defence and Security assigns security personnel to schools. I do not know if any primary schools have a system of security in the way secondary schools have.

I think that since this drug culture, lawlessness and irresponsible gangs have emerged, perhaps, the Ministry of Education may very well begin to think of training special security officers who would be responsible to the Ministry of Education, assigned by the Ministry and made to work in the schools, specially trained to detect things like drugs coming into the schools and to detect the activities of wayward people who infiltrate the school premises. We have situations in Barbados where certain idle elements frequent schools at strategic times, at the end of the day, end of the term and such like. Their negative activities often impact on the school culture.

Another thing that I would willingly suggest to the Ministry of Education by way of policy is this. In all schools the security officers are often very much inside the school and part and parcel of school activities during the school day whilst points of entry into the schools and points of exit are left unprotected and unpatrolled. A security booth at the entrances of schools and at exits with other security officers on the premises is very much in order along with a system that is consistent where we will get around the existing problems.

Some schools do, in fact, have more security officers assigned to them. A particular school may have three or four. Another school might only have one. We have to look at this question of security very closely for the reason that even though some of us might want to say that it is for that side over there to govern, and it is for them to be able to meet their mandate and fulfil the responsibility given to them by the people, my concern as a Barbadian is that some problems in education must be tackled now. That is why I am suggesting to the Honourable Minister of Education that I would not want him to wait until 1995 or thereabouts for this side to have to implement a policy by which there is a security post at the entrances and exists of schools and proper security inside and by which too a special cadre of security people directly answerable to his Ministry with special training in detection especially would be put in place in the interest of saving our youth.

Sir, with these proposals with which my learned and noble friend from Christ Church East is in complete agreement, I take my seat and urge the Honourable Minister to act on them.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I would like, first of all, to thank Honourable Members for their contribution during this debate. From what I have here I think if I start and answer every question, I will do it if I have to but we would probably be at it for about two hours. Speaking as a former teacher myself I always recall that as a society we recognise that there were slow learners or people who were not able to develop as fast as others in the society. Years ago we never put down those people.

I think what is developing in the society – I think the Honourable Member for St. George South keeps making the point that we are dealing with a societal problem. We tend to make too many references to the negative and every time we speak we speak of those who are slow, those who cannot really grasp in terms of their spelling or what have you, and yet, we as a people, those of us who are supposed to be mature, do not accept the fact that we are not really in a position to criticise or cast any aspersions on those youngsters because we do not know what is in their heads. Years ago, as I said, the teachers would take what we call the slow learners aside, treat them and deal with them. Invariably most of them came along in the society and no one referred to them as slow.

The Honourable Member for St. George South has made, I will be bold to say, some significant points in his contribution. I know from the time he spoke earlier today when he made the very first point that the society has been making the point that the various changes in the Act whether or not it was the 1981 Act or the recent changes none of those changes came about because of that. I have had the pleasure to try to put that point across to the general public on numerous occasions that in none of those changes anyone attempted to take away the authority of the Principals of schools.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St. George South. We as legislators have to pass the word to our own constituents and by that we will pass it then on to the whole community, that it is not so. Again I agree with him, Mr. Chairman. There are only a few select groups, special interest groups and special interest individuals who continue to try to pass this view around. I have had individuals in an educational environment and with others who are not in here but with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in terms of dealing with schools, the problems in communities, repairs to schools and some of the things mentioned by other Honourable Members. We have sat and

spoke about the situation and related to what was going on within the community around those schools.
6.45 p.m.

I have dealt with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I have spoken on numerous occasions to the Honourable Member for St. George South and schools in our area. I will only say this. I hope that in the very near future when the National Advisory Commission on Education holds its public hearings that we will get some people who will come out and really speak their views. You know what they say about us. We say one thing in the corner but when we get outside, we do not want to be up front because we do not want anybody to say that we are the ones who said it. If you are going to a war, fight the war. Do not go to the frontline and then turn your back and get shot in the back because there is no problem with that at all in a war.

Mr. Chairman – Do I still have half of an hour? – starting with the Honourable Member for St. James North. His first comment was on the question of the three to five year olds. For reasons better known to us, I will have to be brief. I cannot give you all the details. But yes, we have been expanding that programme. The point I made in my introduction was that we said, where there is room, where there is equipment we will provide the teacher and that it is available in all of the other new schools which we are building. In other words, we do not have the wherewithal to start building X number of nursery or pre-primary schools which in itself having completed the building and the cost of furniture and features and what have you, we will not be talking about $245 million, we will be talking more about $445 million. So as I said, once the schools are equipped the teacher will be provided once we have the space.

Computers in schools. I did mention that some 17 of the secondary schools will be fully equipped with networks. There has been an ongoing training programme for teachers from each secondary school and indeed all the primary schools because we are also involving the primary schools. Indeed we have a programme which is going to be linked from Canada right through schools here in Barbados. That is at the primary level.

There was a question asked about whether the teachers at Erdiston are being trained on the same computers? Yes. We have 31 computers up there, two different networks. Each teacher who is going through Erdiston now on a training programme, one of the subject methods is hands on training on the computer because they are supposed to be going back into the school and this is over and above the specialist teachers who are being trained in that area to work on the systems. We are making sure that all the teachers who go back out into the system will have some exposure in the area.

The question as to whether or not the vote in the technical education is smaller. The reduction is really in 623 structures. We are not building in 1991-92. If you take note within the Estimates you will see that there is line item 623 which deals strictly with structures.

Guidance Counsellors are at all 21 secondary schools within the last four years.

The next question which was repeated by several Members, the question of drugs and alcohol in the whole school system. And the last point of the Honourable Member for St. James North, which we referred to, the security people at the schools. We have an officer in the Ministry who is now having sessions with people having dialogue with them and showing them how to detect signs of drug problems among the youth and indeed any other people, who may come on the school site. So something has been done there.

Furniture. I turn now to the Industrial Arts Department and the repairing of furniture. That is being done. It may not be done on as large a scale as we would like it but that is being done. You heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West make reference to it. We also have made provision for an artisan at the secondary schools who can perform some of the same functions in terms of the repairs of the same furniture.

The Honourable Member for the City, the growth of the Capital expenditure. She said the capital recurrent expenditure with maximum growth. As I pointed out when I started the difference between the $258 and the difference of the $10.4 really had to do with a movement of the various subheads which were formerly under the Ministry of Education moving over to another Ministry. If you take the $10.4 which moved out and you reduce it by the same $10.4 you will find that as it turned out, would work right on minus about $.003 or something like that.

For the benefit of the Honourable Member for the City, the training component from the second training project has been implemented.

The future of the Common Entrance. One of the things that will be done is that public hearings are NACE. We will finally settle that. Yes, we know again.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: That is right. You will get one. I can assure you, you will get one. The number of people in the schools and you said the individuals and you know personalities, people feeling for their personalities. Then he went – this is the Honourable Member for St. Joseph now – to speak in terms of the drug culture. As I mentioned earlier there is now an official in the Ministry who is looking at that area of detection and security staff *et cetera.*

Adult Education. Yes, we brought back in the Adult Education. We did not bring it back in full. We brought it back but as we specifically stated in this Honourable House it was then a pilot programme. It is our intention to expand it. We must remember however that continuing education in itself does embody not only education for people who have just come out let us say at age 16, 17 or 18 but indeed there are classes which are going on for other people within the community. Once the subject matter is selected and the numbers are there, that particular class will go on. So you have the combination. When we say continuing, you will find that that is a terminology being used right from the university right through. It embodies what was originally referred to as adult education.

I made reference to the Honourable Member for St. George South. Just to answer some of the questions of the Honourable Member for St. George South. Yes, there was a problem with the UWI at Mona but that problem has been solved and the hospital has been saved. Numerous teachers have been trained in Education Management. They studied for the USAID/UWI Study. The Report is here and the results.

If there are other specific points which the Honourable Member should like to raise I would be glad to reply. I just want to let him know that a Report is in fact available.

Problems in places and schools raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East. Yes, we are aware of this. I have made statements on this. We are hoping that we can help to solve that problem with the Carrington School. And also once the principals carry out their authority and their direction and their responsibility, because they are the ones who are supposed to say to the people that we will accept students from this particular area. Because we can no longer have parents from right in St. Michael East as we have had within the last two years where a parent went and actually – the lawyers know about this – was hollering at a particular principal because she allegedly could not get her child in that school, saying that it was full and there was no room in that area. Those who come from the constituencies in the parishes out of that area we say to you, try to keep them in your area. No more said at this point.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas – Sharon. Yes, we are looking at Sharon. But I said I would give you a little further because you were not here at the beginning. Yes, we are looking at doing something about that temporary unit and probably another section to that. But we are also looking at another area. In the few minutes before I close I will tell you how that will impact on Sharon and you will now have the Cane Garden area that we have at the whole future of development in that area.

The private schools. We will continue to support the 14 private schools in terms of the payment of the teachers and also the subsidies and the bursaries which they have. I must state here that I am hearing that all is not well because in their negotiations for salaries, they are worried about the cost they might have to pay for their teachers and this is something we will have to look at.

6.55 p.m.

Now, the Honourable Member for the City has good ears. I think she heard me whispering something to someone and her ears are very, very good, apparently. Mr. Chairman, we have had Project 1 and 2 and I can give this Honourable House the assurance that we are at present looking at a third project and we are considering the involvement will be some 18 schools. I will read the names of some of the schools here now and if they impact on your particular constituency you will know.

The Honourable Member for St. Andrew I will get back to him later. He is reaching up, Turner's Hall/Hillaby is already there so you don't have to sit forward. All Saints Boys and Girls, St. Matthews, South District, Carrington's Primary, Holy Trinity Primary, Beulah Primary, St. Christopher Boys', St. Christopher Girls', St. Bartholomew Boys', St. Bartholomew Girls', St. Albans Infants, St. Albans Junior, St. Clements Infants, St. Clements Junior, St. Pauls Primary, St. Jude's Primary and Society. There will be a combination of refurbishing, amalgamation, additional structure and also some new structures in those areas.

Teaching Staff: To the Honourable Member for St. George South, on the teaching staff in the secondary schools. The query was about the 1 244 teachers in the secondary school. For the secondary school population as at October 30 the population was 18 393, with 132 teachers in training in various areas within Erdiston right now, not to speak of those who are overseas and others who are at the University on training leave.

The question was also asked about the teacher influence in the community. Yes, we have a problem with that because we find that too many of the teachers do not teach in the village or in the district in which they live. Many by choice do not want to teach around there and many of them don't want to teach around there because they believe that any school near to that area is not inhabited by children from that area.

Integration of the schools in the community: There are numerous schools being used by members of the community. The problem we have in a few areas is that we have some continued vandalism and then where the principal of the school is really responsible in conjunction with the Chairman of Managers whether or not it be the priest or what have you but they are the ones who do the determination up front, based upon the historical record of the use of the schools.

Using schools at night: Some are being used. I can think of two that I know of now and I think if more Honourable Members can get involved with their communities you will find that more and more schools can be used at night.

The influence of the teacher: I don't know if you have a problem with the principal. He probably did not like you.

I answered the one concerned with technical training which was asked again about the cutting of structures. I think I understand the problems of the Honourable Member for St. Andrew in terms of the demonstration but you should have held a little strain.

The text book loan scheme: That has been computerised, which in itself created a great saving in that area. And, the last question, also on the text book loan scheme by the Honourable Member for the City, I have been duly informed by the officers that there are no outstanding payments to be made in that area. There was really no cut in computers, as I pointed out it was only a cut in the personnel department which you now see as the 593 which was at one point the 738 and also the 694 but we don't have to provide for the personnel people.

Screening of teachers in non-academic areas: In answer to the Honourable Member for St. George South, it is a good point which we should see if we could introduce in terms of the service commission or the other commission in terms of the interviewing of those people.

Training in areas of leadership and skills: There are several things going on in that area as well as the general interest courses. If I may just mention a few quickly which covers both areas, the ceramics, tye-dye and batik, basic counselling techniques, the abnormal psychology, child rearing, graded crafts, introduction to psychology, etc. So there is some training going on in those subject areas.

The last point in terms of keeping the teachers and having them moving around from school to school, the Honourable Member for St. George South knows, as well as I do, that is something that can work but we have a third party called unions, which will no doubt play their role in deciding or influencing. But as I said, and I did make the point here, you made some good points.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I do move that Head 34 stand part.

The question that the sum of $140 114 134 under Head 34 Ministry of Education stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 8.00 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Committee is resumed.

HEAD 25 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND FISHERIES (As Amended) $35 047 669

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, under Head 25, Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries, there is a slight amendment. It is to be changed to $35 033 686 which should be corrected to $35 047 669. Mr. Chairman, in introducing this Head, I in my deliberate consideration think the time might be right for an overview of the Government's policy over the last four years particularly that I am not now responsible for this portfolio. I invite this House to examine this very critical portfolio objectively and I hope that we can look at it and remove the emotionalism that was attached to it over the last couple of years that had led in my opinion to some very unfortunate incidents leading up to the last General Election. But it is such an important topic to the people of Barbados that I think that time should be taken and the record should show what has been the Government's intention over the last five years and history will record whether or not these intentions were achieved or not.

There is no way, Mr. Chairman, that one can speak of agriculture without starting with cane and cane agriculture, since for obvious reasons it has dominated the agricultural sector for so many years that whatever happens to the cane sector has a direct effect on the well being otherwise in agriculture. I watched a programme the other night, Mr. Chairman, and I saw Dr. Colin Hudson giving his views of what he would like to see in Barbados. He went up to the Gun Tower and he looked over the St. George Valley and he lamented the fact that where once canes grew there are now lovely houses and industrialization, *et cetera, et cetera.*

The thought came through my mind that he did not say when he was painting that picture that if at the time he was reflecting in that picture and he looked over that same St. Thomas area that he would have seen only one substantial structure, and that would have been the plantation house, and nestled between the sugar canes would have been small wooden houses and on the outskirts would be small spots of land where the farmers of those days and the employees were cut out in their niche. I reflected on it and asked myself whether or not we wanted to revert to the time he reflected and, therefore, have our people retrogress to that standard of living, where as I said in a speech last Saturday that from Sunday to Sunday they were in the cane fields and no time for leisure, and when they got home in their very modest abode they were too tired to even sleep without any internal toilet facilities. They just would wash their face and hands and went to sleep. I want to put agriculture in 1991 against this background and look at it objectively.

I had some training in land economy and that training in land economy dictates like any other resource that land must rise to its highest and most productive use. We have in Barbados some very competing demands and, therefore, we have to strive for an objective and realistic policy for our agriculture, acreage, *et cetera.*

What has been the Government's plans over the last five years for sugar? The Government has quite rightly or in some people's opinion wrongly decided that they would like to see sugar return to between 90 000 to 100 000 tonnes of sugar produced from about 23 000 acres of canes with a productivity of about 3.8 tonnes of sugar per acre which would then give you roughly between 90 000 to 95 000 and, therefore, see that stabilize at that particular area.

The Government's objectives and target area of 90 000 to 100 000 tonnes for sugar was set against the following background: (1) the markets for sugar which is dictated by our LOME arrangement of 53 000 tonnes (2) our domestic supply of 15 000 tonnes to 68 000 tonnes, and (3) our molasses component of about 70 000 to 75 000 tonnes. We said, therefore, that we can keep up to a maximum of 25 000 tonnes for the world market. The reason we decided that we would not go for more than 25 000 tonnes for the world market, whose prime objective of putting sugar on the world market was for the foreign exchange component, was that within the last 10 years or so the price of sugar on the world market has been so low with a few exceptions. Last year it averaged about U.S. $242.00 per tonne which is about Bds.$484.00 per tonne.

That deliberate policy restricting that from the world market was the fact that every time you put a tonne of sugar on the world market you had to subsidize it, because your production cost of sugar in Barbados is based on the very lowest figure provided by the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited which is $1 305 per tonne and that is the very lowest figure that they have ever provided. It means that if you took a world market price of $500 per tonne and then your production cost was $1 305 for every tonne of sugar you put on the world market, the Barbados Government had to provide a subsidy of $800. Therefore, if you put 25 000 tonnes of that on the world market, you are looking at roughly $20 million subsidy. But the thing that we also have to look at is that you are putting this 25 000 extra tonnes on the world market for the expressed purpose of getting foreign exchange, but by so doing you are providing a subsidy of about $20 million which in itself is going to generate demands on foreign exchange. So you put 25 000 tonnes on the world market or approximately Bds.$400 per tonne which gives you only something like $10 million. You then have to subsidize that by Bds.$20 million which in itself when it goes into the system is going to generate demands on foreign exchange either by people wanting to buy houses, cars, *et cetera.* You, therefore, put an additional thing and, when we did a study, we were coming out with the point that the additional demand for foreign exchange created by the subsidy to put sugar under foreign exchange almost was wiping out what you were getting for foreign exchange. Not only that, it also meant that that subsidy had to be by way of a tax or levy by the people of Barbados into the plantation system. We well know what has been the history of the plantation system. Therefore, we decided that we would keep it at about 85 000 to 100 000 tonnes of sugar.

What has been the problem with sugar over the past couple of years? Sugar is the only agricultural crop that has reduced in yield per acre when every other agricultural crop has been increasing the yield per acre. Nine years ago you got approximately 4.2 tonnes of sugar from an acre of land. Two years ago when we had the unfortunate event of dropping down to something like 66 000 tonnes or thereabouts we got 2.8 tonnes of sugar from an acre of land. 8.15 p.m.

If you subtract 2.8 from the 4.2 we had been getting before, you will find that we had almost 1.4 tonnes of sugar, or nearly 33% fall off in the yield of sugar over the year. You had a fall off in the yield of sugar over the years and this fall off has been attributed to many things.

The first thing I want to talk about is the variety of canes the plantations continue to insist on using. There is a variety of cane now that is over 25 years old, and about 75% of the total acreage of canes in Barbados is of that variety. It also means, Mr. Chairman, that despite the fact that we had one of the best sugar cane variety stations in Barbados, they had not been taking advantage of the new varieties that have been proven and passing into the system. It is only now that they start to take some new varieties.

We have a different problem, that with the introduction of mechanical harvesting, we have been having a lot of compaction of the soils. We had a ratoon stunting disease as a result of the variety and in my opinion we had

the distinct problem of a lack of good agronomic practice in the sugar industry, which saw the sugar industry reducing their fertiliser content and not following the proper fertiliser regime that had been in place. Therefore, as a result we have had the situation with sugar.

Let me tell you now what the Government had tried to find out. The owners of the sugar industry for years have had the problem that their main market, which was the European market under Lome, had a fluctuation of the ECUs against the Barbados dollar and there was no certainty at all in the sugar industry of what the outcome and the price per tonne of sugar would be. One year it brought them as low as Bds. $600 a tonne, another year it brought them as much as Bds. $975 a tonne, so there was this uncertainty of the value of the ECUs when we receive them in Barbados for sugar.

When I studied it, as Minister of Agriculture, I decided that this was one of the biggest areas of uncertainty to the sugar industry, and if the sugar industry was going to be allowed to plan, you needed to remove that uncertainty and therefore the Government came up with a guaranteed minimum price for sugar, which meant that we were saying to the people producing the sugar "do not worry too much about the movement of the ECUs, if it is higher than what we promised you, you will have it. If it is lower, you will have help." We started with $975 a tonne for the first year, then to $1,000 a tonne, then $1,025.

This was the subject of long discussions and I know the two sides have a divide on this. That side is of the opinion that the sugar industry should be given what they asked for, the sugar industry started with figures of $1,805 a tonne, then they came back to $1,605 a tonne, then they came down to $1,467 a tonne and the final figure they gave was $1,305 a tonne. In their final negotiations held with the Prime Minister, I understand that they asked then for $1,137 a tonne.

At that time when we analysed it, we were of the view that if the sugar industry got down and started good practice, have the yields going back up and introduced proper varieties, that at $975 or $1,000 a tonne they would not be out of pocket. It was a fit sum, because after we examined the global sums of money that the Government had available to it, we could not give a commitment for more than that, because we would have had an open end situation where the subsidy could be anywhere from $400 a tonne up. You could well imagine if you had that situation on an 80,000 tonne crop, you would be asking for a subsidy of $32 million. Therefore we could not do that, but we sat down and had numerous discussions with the sugar industry, we told them that this was the position and we figured it was the best we could do. That was part of a package.

The Government also said to them that in order to guarantee the viability of a plantation system as a system, we were going to give them some crops and a minimum price for them. Some of the crops we started to talk about were potatoes, yams, pumpkins, cotton, cherries and one or two other basic root crops in Barbados. Up until the time I left the Ministry the agriculture sector never had to take that up, because they always got more than they had for that, so the Government's policy on sugar was that we would assist and we started to discuss one of their big problems, that was a rationalisation of their debt service. These discussions are still going on.

I would like to say that one has to understand that the sugar industry, at the last time I looked at it, was owing the banking system somewhere in the vicinity of $192 million. The sugar industry, as owned and operated in Barbados, has a sensitivity about it that one has to be very careful of. This industry, as I said, is owing the banking system in the vicinity of $192 million, which is not a small sum of money, and this came about from about 1981. Up to about 1981 the sugar industry was owing the banking system fairly small sums of money and that debt built up very rapidly over those years.

These discussions are going on, and as part of our policy we decided that there would have to be some rationalisation in exchange for improved management in certain facilities. I have seen a start in that direction, in that there is now a rationalisation of the sugar situation where there are now four trailers with a fifth, instead of the 40 trucks they had before, and this is the first step in the rationalisation of the sugar industry in the area of carrying the sugar to the depot.

They are also looking at further rationalisation in the area which I think the biggest saving can be, the area of harvesting. I am of the view that this is also an area where the sugar industry as an industry has to look at a comprehensive harvesting situation. Instead of having these small tractors on the road with very badly loaded trucks and trailers they also have to look at a systematic system of introducing proper transport for the canes as they are doing for the sugar in order to rationalise that. I am of the view that they are now looking at it, they have reduced the factory situation to four and this is also very critical, because with the present capacity of the four factories, for them to do a 100,000 tonne crop they would have to be going between 22 and 24 weeks, so whatever we do in Barbados, unless we are going to put down an additional factory, the acreage of cane is going to be the constraint by the capacity of the factories.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has five minutes to conclude his presentation.

8.25 p.m.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: The importance of the sugar industry to Barbados and the agricultural sector is not only that it employs the largest acreage of land, but it is the biggest generator of foreign exchange. So, the Ministry having realised that there is going to be or has been over the years a falling off in foreign exchange earnings from the sugar industry has, as a matter of policy, to look for additional foreign exchange, agricultural pursuits, to add to sugar.

The Government turned, in the first instance, in this pursuit to the cotton industry. Very quickly, the cotton industry was revived some time in 1980 as a result of an offer by the Japanese company. It then went into abeyance and then was revived. The harsh reality of the cotton industry, Mr. Chairman, is this: We cannot survive in Barbados – and I want to put this on record – with the present cost of production as only a primary producer. I say that because despite the fact that you are getting a premium price of US$4.50 per pound for cotton lint, which is nearly three times the price on the world market for the nearest quality lint which is Geisha 45, where you get US$1.86 per pound Phima, where the average is US$1.74 a pound. You will realise that the premium between US$1.86 for the second best cotton and US$4.50 is more than 100% premium and therefore it is hardly likely that you will get any additional price for it as a raw material. Our farmers in Barbados have been telling us that they cannot grow cotton profitably unless they get something in the vicinity of $2.82 per pound for lint and since it takes about 3 1/2 pounds of lint to do a pound of yarn, if you convert $2.82 by three you are looking very quickly at about $8.40 alone to the farmers, and when you add an additional dollar to the stream for ginning, you are talking about $9.72 and therefore if you have a selling price of $9 you are already out. Obviously, having examined that and then looking at what was happening in international markets with the value added, the Government of the day took the decision that they have to explore for the continuation of the cotton industry in Barbados the process of some value added in Barbados and that was the genesis of the CARSICOT product as conceptualised as today. This is history. It could have been premature. I suppose that in looking back in retrospect that one could have concentrated at that time on protecting and ironing out the bugs in the primary production but one learns as one goes along.

Mr. Chairman, I see time is up but I suppose the way I am going to have to do this is to let the Opposition put their points and at some time we will discuss them. I beg to move that this Head stands part.

Mr. H. B. ST. JOHN: Sir, I certainly do not intend in debating this Head to speak as though I am the Chief Agricultural Officer and sole determinant and my opinion is the sole opinion that is valid in relation to agricultural production in Barbados. The fact of the matter is that part of the resources of Barbados and a number of acres of land which must be utilised in agricultural activity and the utilisation of that land in agricultural activity has not been consistent with the rest of demands for land in Barbados. It is a myth to suggest that there is not enough land available in Barbados for carrying on reasonable agricultural activity and at the same time having land available for industry, for housing, for recreation and for any other purpose that land is necessary for. I think one of the points that we must understand is that we must approach this matter objectively and we must disabuse our minds of a number of the concepts that I heard the Honourable Minister expressing here which are based upon an historical objection to the way how agriculture developed in Barbados. That could only be the explanation. Two or three times there were phrases used which made that clear. There is no doubt that the economy of Barbados is dependent upon the export of some agricultural crops to bring in foreign exchange. There can't be any doubt about that at all. The Government has also, and the Government is in a position, because of the commanding position that it is in having regard to the debtor relationship with a Government institution and having regard to the fact that the Government itself has available to it a lot of land, the Government is in a position to exert maximum pressure to see that its point of view is carried into effect.

Another fact that we should bear in mind is that Barbados' agriculture has been studied and restudied on numerous occasions. All of Barbados' agricultural activity. As a matter of fact, I well recall that there was so much research done on Barbados agriculture that at one stage a request was put forward for special help to have the amount of research properly collated because they were in the Ministry of Agriculture and it was found that they were researching things that had been researched a thousand times already. We must be able, having regard to all of that work that has been done to reach some conclusions and among the conclusions that have been reached, as I understand it, is that a scientific point of view that growing sugar happens to be one of the uses that having regard to the soil characteristics in Barbados and pattern of knowledge in relation to agriculture that we should definitely pursue. At the same time, it has been repeatedly pointed out that the fact that we pursue the activity of sugar growing in Barbados is not inconsistent with diversification, that you must diversify your agricultural activity around sugar cane growing. Now, if you accept those facts, the question that you have then to decide is what is the diversification that you are going to pursue and what is the best way of doing it and what is the best way also of trying to increase the maximum yield that you can get for that amount of land that is put for sugar. Now, Sir, the Government recently had a study done, the Landell Mills, I believe and we are here talking in 1991 and that study is probably about three years old and we are still to have a definitive position as to what of that study the Government is going to implement.

8.35 p.m.

I would have thought, instead of having this dissertation as the Honourable Minister gave, he would have told us quite clearly, the Government has had this study done, the recommendations were this, a, b and c were accepted and this is what we will do.

One of the things that always strikes me as being peculiar in respect of this matter is that Government itself has access to land to carry out all of the ideas that the Honourable Member said should be carried out. Up to now one can find no evidence that the Government is able to demonstrate by way of example through the utilisation of its land that what it says should be done is profitable and it is the best that should be done. This is part of the problem. Now, we regard it on this side as being a matter for grave concern that the Government in the last five years has had such a sorry record in this respect.

I have here the Economic Report of the Central Bank for 1987. We see that the real decline started then in 1987 in the overview. The 1987 sugar crop realised only 83 432 tonnes, 25% less than the 1986 crop and the lowest level of production since 1949.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: It has absolutely nothing to do with the rain. It had to do with the amount of distrust which has arisen between the farmers, big, small, medium and the Government, particularly because of the kind of speeches that the Honourable Member just made. There is a communication gap. There is distrust.

I do not want to hear any interruptions, Sir, from the Honourable Member for St. Michael West because he knows that I know something about him and the sugar industry that is a little private thing between us. I do not want to tell the others what we know because when the Honourable Member had to make a certain choice at a certain time in a certain place he would now concede that he made the wrong choice. Let us get back.

The position is that the Government because of this commanding position is in a position to take a lead. I believe that if you accept that agricultural activity is important to the economy, that you have to do everything in your power to see that the agricultural industry prospers on conditions which are reasonably efficient. I do not blame the Government for asking for efficiency. Every agricultural activity all over the world is an activity in which the Government, if it is called upon to put taxpayers money behind its operation, it is accepted that it has to determine some minimum standards in order to protect the taxpayers. We do not quarrel about that. That is accepted.

Now, Sir, it is our belief that it is possible that if the Government had given the commitment, or has given the commitment, or does give the commitment that some progress can easily be made in stabilising and improving the condition of agriculture in Barbados. I believe that. The Government, however, must not seek to demonstrate in the same manner in which they attempted to demonstrate through the formation of CARSICOT and its successor body, that it is capable of doing better because the Government will only become the laughing stock. That is the trouble.

The Honourable Member was so anxious to prove that everybody else was wrong and they knew all the answers that they indulged in a bit of activity in the formation and execution of CARSICOT which has had the effect of only demonstrating one thing, the Government's sheer incompetence in executing a scheme. If ever there is an example of doing the wrong thing and doing it in the wrong way at the wrong time and with the wrong people CARSICOT is. There cannot be any doubt about this. I do not want to go over this because it is sad to me. I did not imagine that the Government would have acted with such folly. I am not going to go over that.

I am going to say this, though. If the Government continues to ignore all of the experience of Barbados and continues to pursue the line that it is possible to grow crop cotton in Barbados on a large scale in large acreage as they are doing again with a new company that once again they will create in this country a very serious problem with the land that they own. Everybody now recognises that the action that has been taken this year once again is leading to very serious consequences for soil erosion and for the Government's pocket.

The position is very clear. They expect this year that of the over 400 acres that have been planted by the Government that possibly 150 will be lost or more. I am not going to go into that. The yields will not reach 500 pounds an acre. I would like the Honourable Member to tell us whether his studies have revealed that 500 pounds of seed cotton per acre could be profitable.

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

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, there is one last point I would like to make and it is this. Barbados has to look at its agricultural activity in relation to its CARICOM obligations. This is a very serious problem that insufficient attention has not be paid to it over the course of the last five years.

A new agricultural marketing protocol was agreed to as long ago as 1984. Agricultural planning has been taking place in Barbados without reference to the provisions of that protocol which, if the Government seriously intends to carry into effect, will mean that certain decisions have to be taken on the crops that are to be grown and that Barbados should specialise in those crops for which it has a

comparative advantage. Our farmers should be educated along the lines that they cannot expect that Barbados can adopt a protectionist attitude in relation to certain crops. That is a very important thing. These things are not being discussed frankly.

As far as we are concerned, we believe that it is possible to devise a mechanism programme to resuscitate the sugar industry so that we will grow the maximum amount, 100 000 to 120 000 tonnes. There is one thing I disagree with profoundly with the Honourable Member and that is, you just cannot say you are going to grow 90 000 tonnes. The experience has shown in Barbados that you have to aim at a higher target because with the fluctuations in yields, if you aim for 90 000 tonnes you might end up getting 70 000 tonnes sometimes. Therefore, you need a reserve. We believe that agricultural policy in Barbados should be informed along the lines that we should grow sugar, rotation crops and some other specialised crops of which we have great advantages, the old root crops, the yams, sweet potatoes, eddoes and peanuts. We have great knowledge about them.
8.45 p.m.

Barbados is good. What we should be doing is fighting the Trinidadians and the rest of the Caribbean and letting them understand that the agricultural marketing says that we should be able to export to those islands.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: If they want to export to us we have to be able. Unless we decide in our minds – I am going to finish, Sir – that we are going to look at this matter not only in the context of the domestic but in the context of CARICOM, we cannot start to have a policy. The others will talk, Sir.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the sacred statement that has been made in this House in the course of the week has been the sacred statement made by the Right Honourable Prime Minister in his introduction to the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill when he declared that agriculture is in good shape. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that that is indeed a very strange statement and that on any objective criteria we will find that agriculture is in crisis and that the statement made by the Right Honourable Prime Minister is simply insupportable. To begin with....

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order. I submit, Sir, that the Member for St. Joseph is distorting the statements I made. I have never said anywhere either in this House or outside of this House that agriculture is in good shape and I challenge the Honourable Member to substantiate what he is saying. I am asking that those words be withdrawn because he is setting that up in order to lay the foundation for some kind of argument.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Right Honourable Prime Minister has taken objection to the remark on the basis that he has never made those remarks.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I have heard his objection and I am delighted that he has taken the opportunity to depart from the statement that I have made which is a reflection, as I remember it, of what was said which was illustrated by statistics relating to output in non-sugar agriculture over the last year. I remember taking a very careful note....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In the absence of certainty as to the statement being made by the Right Honourable Prime Minsiter, he has taken objection to it and has asked that your remarks be withdrawn.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Very well, Mr. Chairman but I can continue my submission along the same lines.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are the remarks withdrawn?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That is your decision, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Pardon me?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That is your decision.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. You have to withdraw them. I can have them struck from the record but you will have to withdraw them.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I understood your position to be that in the absence of the record as to what was said, that you were prepared to strike it from the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. I said that you should withdraw the remarks. If you do not withdraw the remarks then I would have to have them struck from record.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I am not interested in unnecessary controversy. I am happy to withdraw the remarks if the Right Honourable Prime Minister tells us that he did not say that. I certainly interpreted what he said to be precisely as I articulated it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Proceed.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The point that I am making, Mr. Chairman, and I am glad that there is no divide among us with respect to this is that agriculture is in very bad shape in this country and that on any objective criteria, it can be demonstrated to be so.

To begin with the morale among the farming community could not be lower. That has arisen in part because of the distrust as has been said by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that has developed between the Ministry and the farming community and because too of the lack of leadership provided by the former Ministers of Agriculture in the last five years.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Not the last 15 years. In the last five years.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That is not what the record will show.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Where there should be a decision in the Ministry of Agriculture all we are hearing about is discussion. The Ministry of Agriculture needs to make important decisions and make them soon. The idea of all of these discussions and studies will not help the future of agriculture in this country.

The second criterion that I wish to suggest we need to use and determine....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:.....is the plight of the small farmer in this country. Up to seven years, up to 10 years ago in this country indeed up to 1986 when the Barbados Labour Party left office the small farmers were making a significant contribution to non-sugar agricultural production in this country and they were making a 15% contribution to the output of sugar in Barbados. Their contribution in sugar agriculture arose in part from the fact that the Barbados Labour Party under its sugar support policy....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Asides are very loud.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: ...gave the small farmer defined as the person who produced less than 100 tonnes of cane his price support as a gift. They never had to pay it back. The farmers relied very heavily on that subsidy in the face of rising costs. The failure of the Government to agree with the sugar producers in this country, the sugar farmers with respect to a price support policy has served to destroy morale in the sugar industry and in the farming community and has excluded....

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order. I think the Honourable Member is misleading this House. He is saying that the failure of the Government to agree on a price support policy is not true. Far from agreeing the Government went further, the Government not only agreed on a price support policy but stated up front on the sums of money that would be given in that policy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no agreement as the Honourable Member has been at pains to point out in his speech, with respect to a new price support price. In the last five years, the price support insofar as it has come, it has not been timely nor has it been consistent. That needs to be said.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order. I think that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is misleading the House.

Let us talk about timely. Let us examine. Prior to the system that we offered the farmers, the farmers never knew until the month of December what would have been the final payment for sugar. Because it is only in December that they got the receipt and BSIL then decided what would be the final payment. It was only when that final payment was worked out that BSIL decided whether or not they would go to the Government for price support. In the policy that we offered even before they planted their crop we told them up front on a three-year programme what per tonne they were going to get for sugar.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I do not know, Mr. Chairman, why the Honourable Member is now denying precisely what he has told us that there has not been any agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture and the sugar producers with respect to a new price support for sugar. Even in the past when price support has been given the support has not been timely and in many respects it has not been adequate.

The point that I am making here is that if a government could borrow money, borrow foreign exchange, that is what they are doing, they are borrowing it in excess of 10%, then they could give the money that they will pay by way of interest to the farmers to earn the foreign exchange. That is a point that we must not miss, that if you can borrow money, foreign currency in excess of 10%, then you can use that money which you would pay by way of interest to support your farmers to earn your foreign exchange.

8.55 p.m.

The third criteria with respect to the crisis in agriculture has got to do with the fact that in the last six

years in this country over 10 000 acres have been taken out of production, some of the best arable land in Barbados.

As a result of the land use policies pursued by the Ministry of Agriculture, St. Joseph has become a wasteland, St. Lucy, St. Thomas, and much of rural Barbados has now become a wasteland because of the policies pursued by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Now, as far as sugar is concerned, the point has been made by the last Honourable Member who spoke that if you are targeting ninety to one hundred thousand tonnes you must aim for production in excess of the hundred thousand tonnes. I notice that in indicating the many markets for Barbadian sugar, no mention was made of the US market, but, at 23 000 acres you cannot realise easily, if at all, 100 000 tonnes in Barbados, because there is a fluctuation of 30 per cent in our rainfall pattern. This year you may get good rainfall and you may get 30 per cent less next year. The yields, for reasons explained by the former Minister, the yields are falling, and to that extent it will be important to put something like 30 000 acres under sugar production if you are hoping to realise an output of 100 000 tonnes.

It seems to me that the Government's tonnage target is informed by very false assumptions and unless they increase the acreage under sugar production we will not realise the 100 000 tonnes or so of sugar which is our aim.

The Government's plantations held by BADC, their performance over the last five years point in part to the crisis in agriculture. In 1986 they produced 45 000 tonnes of sugar from the Government plantations. 15 000 tonnes were produced in the last year, a decline of 30 000 tonnes on the Government plantations. I am talking about sugar cane – their contribution to sugar production. They have moved from 45 000 tonnes to....

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Cane. ....15 000 tonnes. But the diversification programme is also in trouble. We have suffered a tremendous set back in that, not only with respect to cotton but with respect to onions and with respect to a lot of other crops too.

I just want to say, Mr. Chairman, that this attempt to manufacture cotton and cotton products in Barbados has been a serious mistake. It was important that we upped our production of cotton before we reached that point and up to 1986 when I left the Ministry of Agriculture, we could not realise 500 acres of cotton production and given the yield, we had not reached the point where we could have proceeded to put in a manufacturing facility.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I was surprised, Mr. Chairman, to learn, no sooner than we had left the Government, that the Government was embarking on a refining and manufacturing facility when we had not got the production beyond 500 acres.

My question, that I would like to leave with the spokesman, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, at this point, is to tell us how many acres of Government owned lands were devoted cotton production in the last year and what has been the yield per acre?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, those of us familiar with a work called the Duchess of Malfi by Webster would remember a character called Bosolo who was a fantastical scholar who could tell you how many hairs there were in Hector's beard and the modern equivalent to that, Sir, of course has been the Minister of Agriculture who can dazzle the house from time to time, and his colleagues, Sir, with ratios and statistics among which of course was the number of houses that could have been built with the funding used for the Central Bank.

This afternoon, Sir, we were given a lot of details by the Minister, strung together to impress the Prime Minister who obviously had never read on agriculture and is easily impressed by ratios, Sir. But, no question can at all reside in any person's mind who has heard the Minister, Sir, that it was in part a sociological excursion, backed by some ratios thrown together, intended, I submit to the House, Mr. Chairman, to camouflage the true and deep problems now conceded by the Prime Minister, which confront Barbados' agriculture and which the Prime Minister agrees confronts Barbados' agriculture.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Prime Minister is not in his place. The Prime Minister never at any point in what he said indicated what the Honourable Member is saying. He is misleading the House.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the truth of the matter Sir, is that when we look at the bottom line, Sir, agriculture is indeed, Sir, in a very sorry state and this is borne out when one looks at the collection of facts before us. I also want to say, Sir, that the Ministry of Agriculture was run in the last five years, Sir, into the ground, and there are a lot of unusual things that happened at the Ministry of Agriculture in those last five years. There are still a lot of unusual things, Sir, that have to be cleaned up at the Ministry of Agriculture which we really must thrash out in this debate, Sir.

I must start, Sir, by saying that the problem in agriculture is not only reflected by the fact that sugar production has dropped to the stage, Sir, where Barbados, last year, had to import molasses to produce rum and had to import sugar, Sir. We know, Sir, that sugar has fallen from 110 000 tonnes in 1986 to approximately 60 000 tonnes

today. The problem, Sir, is pervasive of all of agriculture and it is borne out in the fact and here I must cite the Central Bank latest Economic and Financial Statistics, that whereas between 1981 and 1986 food import bills in this country fell every year – and I am citing, Sir, page 71. The food import bill fell every year between 1981 and 1986 because it was being substituted by domestic production and I cite, Sir, 1981 Barbados imported $179 million worth of food. 1982, Sir, $161 million worth of food, 1983, $156 million worth of food, in 1985, $165 million worth of food, Sir. That in each year since 1985, Sir, our food import bill has increased.
9.05 p.m.

This Government found a situation where Barbados was reducing its food import bill by substituting domestic production for our food import bill and now we are in a position where this country, Sir, with idle land and idle hands is importing $213 million worth of food, Sir. But in each year the food import bill has increased as Barbadian agricultural production, Sir, has decreased. You can call the Minister of Agriculture, Sir, therefore a $60 million dollar man to begin with because he has presided over an increase in Barbados' food import bill by as much as $60 million a year. To say nothing, Mr. Chairman, Sir, of the $15 million deficit that now confronts the ADC, to say nothing of the fact that the General Manager of the Agricultural Development Corporation had to be dismissed under circumstances which I think, Sir, should be properly explained to the House, to say nothing, Sir, of the resignation of the Chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation....

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: On a point of order, Sir. The General Manager of the Agricultural Development Corporation did not resign.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, if you want to say, he resigned under circumstances that should be best explained to the House, Sir. Recently, we have had the resignation of the Chairman of the ADC under circumstances that should be best explained to the House, Sir. We have a situation in agriculture in this country, Sir, where the fishermen of this country have a fishing agreement worked out by the Minister of Agriculture which in their judgment, Sir, is not in their best interest. We have a situation, Mr. Chairman, where in his Budget of 1989 the Minister of Finance pledged to put $3 million into agriculture to bring back unused land into production, Sir, and to this day not a penny has been spent, Sir. We heard the General Manager of the Agricultural Society speak in terms of the importation of at least ten tonnes of vegetables into this country in 1989 and he was not putting a case on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party. I read that into the records of this House already, Sir. The General Manager of the Agricultural Development Corporation spoke in terms of at least ten tonnes of illegal vegetables each month into this country, Sir, to say nothing of the white flies. We are now, Sir, to be regaled by the Minister of Agriculture as regards how well agriculture is doing.

I want to submit, Sir, that the Government should undertake a very serious inquiry into the matter in which incentives schemes are provided and administered. I want to say to the House, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that the administration of the scheme that allows agricultural vehicles to be brought into this country ostensively for agricultural purposes have been subject to much abuse and there are a number of persons, Sir, who are getting and making use of that facility, Sir, on the basis that they are ostensively supposed to be involved in farming but it is being abused. It is part of the mal-administration of the affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture.

We have a situation in Barbados, Mr. Chairman, where because of the Government's lack of action in relation to the sugar industry for the last three years it has had to issue new bonds and at the last issue of bonds they have gone very poorly on the market, confronting this country with the real possibility that what was intended to be only a contingent liability to the Government may become a real liability. As the House knows, Mr. Chairman, when this matter of the redemption of bonds was brought to this House, this Opposition brought it up to Government that the Sinking Fund arrangement, Sir, was not being properly administered and that the Government had obviously a lack of policy in relation to how those Sinking Funds should have been replenished. We have a situation now in Barbados, Mr. Chairman, where despite the rosy complexion that the Minister would want to attach to agricultural activities that the sugar industry for three successive years have had to issue new bonds as they fell due for redemption, Sir, and that the market is beginning to tell the sugar industry – "Look, the problems of debt management in the sugar industry, Mr. Chairman, has reached the stage where it is now crucial." Yet whenever you press the Government for a position in relation to the matter, no action is coming forward from the Government. The general malaise that has overtaken the economic policy formulation, Mr. Chairman, has obviously crept into agriculture. The same lack of action and urgency, Mr. Chairman, in dealing with things like the Phillips Report on small businesses or the report on the National Insurance Scheme. The same lack of urgency that has attended decision making on those particular matters has now crept its way into agriculture, because the Government had the recommendations of the Landell Mills Report, Sir, for over two years and a large sum of money was spent to study the problems of the sugar industry. It is to my certain knowledge that the sugar industry has responded to

Government in relation to the recommendations of that report and just as in the case of the NIS Report nothing has been done.

I therefore, Mr. Chairman, have to look at these Estimates not from the perspective of the rosy profile that has been presented by the Minister of Agriculture, but with the recognition that despite the fact that there might have been some growth in agriculture because the industry was coming from a relatively low base and that is what has happened. We have had a number of bad years and the growth now is coming from a low base, nothing more than that. Sugar has not returned, Sir, to pre-1985 days. The domestic production of a whole vast of agricultural commodities, Sir, has not gone back to pre-1985 days. Barbados used to have a peanut industry in this country, Sir, and a tandew industry. Those things have vanished from the face of this land. We have to understand these things when we are discussing agriculture, Mr. Chairman. I am requesting, therefore, that these Estimates invite the thrust of what Government now wants to infuse into the agricultural sector. From what one can discern, Sir, Government has decided to throttle down agriculture in these Estimates. Because the most important statistics in these Estimates is the intended cut by Government in its subsidies and incentives to agriculture from $8.7 million to $2.6 million.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You must read the Estimates. I am not going to deal with you. Read the Estimates because you have not read them but it is from $8.7 million to $2.6 million. Now this House is to be convinced by the Government that it is really serious about giving a boost to agriculture in the context of a situation, Sir, where the Government is to cut incentives and other subsidies to agriculture from $8.7 million to $2.6 million. I have to ask the Government as well, Sir, as we peruse these Estimates what really is Government's position in relation to the Rural Development Project?

These Estimates, Sir, as compared to other Estimates reflect the fact that there is no longer any provision for the support of the Rural Development Project.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: We need, Sir, given the important role that project has played in maintaining small farming agriculture in the southern parts of Barbados including small farming agriculture, Sir, in St. Philip in the former Minister's constituency what is the Government's position in relation to rural development? We also notice, Sir, in these Estimates that there is going to be no expenditure on the Springhall Land Lease Project. If the Government is intending not to support that project, we need to hear that as an explicit statement of policy. But things, Sir, bring a yawn to the Minister of Health who would understand the lack of concern for the people of the North as best represented in the idleness that he has shown in getting the St. Joseph Hospital's budget off the ground. I am not surprised, Sir, that when matters pertaining to the North are raised that the Minister of Health reacts with such an exaggerated sense of boredom. But the point we are making, Sir, is that the Minister has given us a lot of detail about a lot of technical things. We are now all prepared to concede, Sir, that Barbados' agriculture has serious problems that have to be addressed ranging from a high food import bill in the context of unused land and idle people which is the basic problem in agriculture as far as I am concerned. It is both a problem as well as an opportunity of $200 million worth of food imports, unused land, and idle people, Sir, which when put together can create the basis, Sir, for an equal opportunity.
9.15 p.m.

We have a situation, Sir, where there are serious problems in relation to fishing to be resolved. We have a serious problem where debt management in the sugar industry should be resolved. We have a serious problem where the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture itself, in relation to the management of its incentive programme, stands to be resolved, and all we are hearing from the former Minister is a set of ratios about which yield you should choose from in relation to what other yield, and what agronomic practices at the level of this plot of land relative to the other plot of land can give rise to great yields and output.

I am obliged to you, Sir. I shall be back.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, it is remarkable that the Honourable Member who just sat down – I don't think it makes any point dealing with the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, because I thought that after a five year hiatus, he would have....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Why don't you deal with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South? You are the Leader of the Opposition and I have not heard you on any subject at all for the last two days. Don't talk to me. You can only speak from your seat. Try and get up, like the Member for Christ Church South. He is older than you and he has demonstrated much more power than you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Address the Chair.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is actually ranting and raving.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not my impression, that is not my understanding. Let the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I would say that the Honourable Member is panting. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph, as I said, after a hiatus I thought he would come back in fresh and ready to discuss agriculture in a different term, but he has come back with the same old story, so there is no point dealing with him at this stage, but the Honourable Member who just sat down has been in here during the last five years and I am amazed to see that he is taking....

There are two points I find remarkable. One, that in the early aspects of these Estimates the Honourable Member for Christ Church South indicated that there is no money, that we have to cut, that it will not be long before there is a massive dose of taxation, and they went down the road. Now, in the latter part of the Estimates, it seems that they have gone on the other tact where they are discovering where attempts have been made to reduce expenditure, which is what they have been calling for for the last, God knows how long, and they are now discovering that we have cut this in expenditure and we have cut that in expenditure, and the Honourable Member who just sat down, who has been one of the major exponents of the theory that we have been spending too much, is now quarrelling with the Government for not putting enough money in the Estimates for certain Heads.

That is not all, Sir. He accused the former Minister of Agriculture, he went on the border line on just barely what you would allow him to say, and then he accused the Honourable Member of using statistics. Then he gets up and trots out the import bill. Well, if he would go back to the same years which he quoted, he will note that there was a massive increase in the number of visitors to the country. The number of visitors who come into the country bear a direct relationship to the amount of importation of food. (LAUGHTER). How can that be a source of amusement to Honourable Members?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What local production? The Honourable Member got up and trotted out information about food imports, and I am making the point that if he puts the relationship between the food imports and the massive amount of foreign exchange that was being earned at the same time from the massive increase in the numbers who came into the country not only in terms of long stay visitors, but in terms of the cruise ship passengers who come through the country, then there is some partial explanation for the increase in imports. I think it is just short of intellectual dishonesty.....

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir...

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am asking that the Member withdraw the remark that I spoke in a manner just short of intellectual dishonesty. I am asking that those remarks be withdrawn and expunged from the record. I am waiting for you to rule, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will withdraw it, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: And that it be expunged from the record, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will withdraw it and you may have it expunged from the record, even though it is not unparliamentary. I think if the Honourable Member finds objection to it, I have no difficulty.....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Lady!

Miss B. A. MILLER rose.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Member has withdrawn the words. He cannot now be reflecting on your ruling by saying "even though....."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is not my ruling, because I did not rule it as being unparliamentary. He said "just short of".

Miss B. A. MILLER: All he is doing then is adding injury further to the insult.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did not so rule.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am calling upon the Chair to rule on the matter.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: You are not the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member for St. Michael West proceed.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, I am not finished, I am paying no attention to this silly intervention which comes from time to time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do you see what I tell you?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is also misleading the House when he seeks to impute that an increase in tourists in Barbados cannot be consistent and be accompanied by a decrease in the food import bill. If the Member were to look between 1983 and 1986, he would in fact see that there was an increase in the number of tourists to Barbados, but at the same time there was a decrease in the food import bill, which destroys the whole basis upon which he has called me intellectually dishonest.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: As a matter of fact, Sir, in 1985 there was a decrease in the number of tourists coming into the country. I don't have to look at it, I know that by heart. So do not get up and talk about between 1983 and 1985, I stand by what I said. I am saying that the Honourable Member, in giving his statistics, did not take the trouble to include the fact that there had been an increase in the number of visitors into the country. I am saying that he had a responsibility, while making the argument that he was seeking to make, to give the full picture.

Certain remarks made by Hon. B. M. TAITT were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the record at this stage.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I wish Honourable Members, when they are about to discuss the facts of life in agriculture, will pay attention to the real information and stop trying to give the impression.... If one listened to the debate that we have had so far, one cannot believe that there has been any increase whatsoever in non-sugar agriculture, when the facts indicate that there has been a substantial increase....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What difference does it make against what base? This is a new-fangled argument now when they are coming in. Both Honourable Members said it. I thought they were making sport, but I now understand they are serious.
9.25 p.m.

They are now saying that if you can show an increase you have to go back and show where you were coming from. All of the arguments we have had in the past, all the discussions about growth and development we should throw them all out. According to the argument of the Honourable Members, we should throw them all out. We should never talk about any increases because if the increase is coming from a position that was below a certain point, then it is no real increase. What foolishness is that, Sir? What argument is that? We all have accepted that where there is an idea and there is a movement upward that that is an indication of growth.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: In agriculture. The Honourable Members are going to direct now how I must discuss this argument. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph discussed Agriculture? He discussed the planters. The Honourable Member came in here and started to discuss the planters and to say that... Imagine an Honourable Member who has been a Minister of Agriculture, who himself, in 1982....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want Honourable Members to recognise that Standing Order 33(6) is still the standing order by which we must be guided.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Imagine a Minister of Agriculture, himself – the fact that he is from Belleville is merely incidental – is coming in here and talking about the Minister did not provide leadership and therefore the planters in Barbados have low morale. I cannot believe it, Mr. Chairman, that in 1991 I can have someone coming in to this Honourable Committee and saying that the "planters have low morale".

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The planters are not farmers. I withdraw that, Sir. I withdraw "planters". The reapers. Planters are not farmers any more.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West doesn't want me to say "planters" anymore. The plantocracy is not part of the farming community anymore. When the Barbados Labour Party come in here and start to defend the plantocracy and say that we have given them low morale, blessed be the day, when anybody in this Honourable Chamber, as presently constituted, can give the plantocracy in this country low morale. When the Barbados Labour Party managed to transfer the entire debt of the sugar industry onto the backs of the people of Barbados, they could be of low morale?

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes. We cut up the plantations and gave people like you and the Honourable Member... I

beg your pardon, Sir. We cut up the plantations and allowed some people in Barbados to have plantations and sub-plantations and to go into agriculture and housespots. You never cut up anything ever. The Barbados Labour Party never cut up a piece of land yet. It was the wicked Democratic Labour Party, according to you, who... What do you mean stay on the subject? We are discussing land and the cutting up of land and agriculture. The Barbados Labour Party has given the people of this country who continue to reject it a whole bill of goods about agriculture. They came in here aided and abetted by the National Democratic Party in a conspiracy. They had a vote of no-confidence. They discussed all that the Honourable Member for St. Peter just discussed. They tried to run down the former Minister of Agriculture. They have gone through the whole Cabinet, now we come with the Estimates for 1991, this motley group, the Honourable Members on this side....

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Members on that side, Sir, have come back in here with the same old reduced boot arguments about agriculture and are trying to make this Government to go on some defensive. The Honourable Members know better. You should instruct those Honourable Members who have been out for some considerable time not to come back in here talking the old reduced boot foolishness. I beg your pardon, Sir. The Honourable Member got up and indicated a philosophical framework within the policy regarding agriculture as he perceived it was outlined and the Honourable Members are getting up and starting to raise questions that were raised and re-raised again. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has stated categorically that he does not think cotton is a possibility in this country.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has said....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I think the Honourable Member misunderstood what I said. I said the growing of cotton on a large scale area and not as a rotation crop is not the best way in the context of Barbadians to grow it. That's what I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made. Time.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, in the one minute I want to make it clear that there is no Honourable Member over there who will be able to silence me with any topic. I hope the Honourable Members understand that. The point I am making is that if he says now with rotation, the Ministry of Agriculture at no point indicated that there would be no rotation of cotton and coupled with the argument by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that the manufacturing concept of cotton will not work, we understand that there is a divide between the Barbados Labour Party in the context of a vertical and horizontal industry for cotton and the Democratic Labour Party. Let it be.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the point has got to be emphasised that central to the crisis in agriculture is the present land use policy of the Government. It is really nothing short of sinful, certainly scandalous, that in the last Democratic Labour Party administration, thousands of acreage as has been indicated, went out of production and that several plantations were allowed change of use that constitute the heartland of Barbadian agriculture.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am hearing voices that make it difficult to hear the Honourable Member.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am referring to plantations such as Cottage, Cliff, Wakefield and many other plantations that must be regarded as constituting the heartland of Barbadian agriculture. When the Honourable Member who introduced this Head referred to reaction to, what I regard as a cry of Colin Hudson as he looked over the St. George Valley, I think he misappreciated what Colin Hudson was saying. I don't think that he was trying to deny the modernisation process in Barbados and trying to deny Barbadians owning bungalows in St. George and St. Thomas. I think that what he was reflecting on, with considerable pain and anguish, was the fact that we have pursued a policy in the last five years that is depressing, that is inconsistent with the stated policy of the Government trying to increase output while at the same time taking some of our best lands out of production and that must be regarded as a misguided policy.

In recent years, we have heard that a lot of the applications for the change of use in agriculture have been made by the firm of Franklin & Franklin. We have heard that and that it was the responsibility of the Minister who was a member of that firm to comment on and to state his position in relation to those applications.
9.35 p.m.

Certain remarks made by Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM were ordered to be expunged from the records by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I think it would be important, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the remarks, if the Minister could find the opportunity to give assurances in the terms which I have indicated.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we are hearing that there is likely to be further misuse of the good arable land in Barbados. There is talk that Bath is about to be made a nature trail.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I will not even allow the Honourable Member to go down that road. The nature trail at Bath is through the hills at Bath, through the Man Jack Mines right up through the railway lines right up to Foster Hall. Could you change a whole plantation to a nature trail?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The Honourable Minister will have an opportunity to set the records straight and indicate to the public of Barbados the extent to which they will be trespassing on the good agricultural land at Bath in relation to the nature trail which is being proposed. That is all, indeed, that I wanted to hear from him. I wanted to have his assurance that Bath will not go out of agriculture.

Furthermore, we have been hearing of late – I think this is a move in a desirable direction – that in the short-term...

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I only paused because you were in discussion with the Clerk. I was making the point that there is also word that a few plantations are about...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am hearing voices that are not those of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: There is also talk, Mr. Chairman, that a few plantations are about to be converted into golf courses. There is one view that Hanson Plantation is likely to be made a golf course. Also that Apes Hill and others are likely to be made golf courses. My point is...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think the Honourable Member has concluded. I gave an indication that I wanted him to hold for a moment because there were too many noises. You have two minutes to conclude.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: My point, Mr. Chairman is that we must be most careful with the use of our good agricultural land in Barbados. If indeed we are going to have golf courses, I think they are very much needed in Barbados to strengthen our tourism infrastructure. We must make sure that for the most part some marginal and sub-marginal agricultural lands are used in that respect.

In my view River could well be taken out of agriculture and used as a golf course. The lands at River are most sub-margin. We have had an estimate given a few years ago that it would have taken over $2 million to mechanise it. We know too that the soils are particularly difficult to manage at River. The view has been expressed by knowledgeable persons that River would make a particularly good golf course. My submission is that if we are going in the direction of creating the golf courses which are very much needed to supplement tourism infrastructure, that we should ensure that those who are interested be pointed to our most marginal and sub-marginal lands.

I would like to turn, in conclusion, Sir, to the whole question of the BADC. When the Barbados Labour Party left office, the BADC was owing the bank $2 million. That is consistent with the latest figures which I saw. They tell me that the debt is now $17 million. If, indeed, the debt has risen in that order of magnitude, I would like the Minister to explain what has happened in the last five years that has been responsible for the deterioration of the condition of BADC's estates? What has been responsible for this dramatic and astronomical rise in the debt situation at the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation? I think that is an important question which the public of Barbados would like us to have answered. I would be glad if the Minister when he comes to reply could account for the horrendous debt which has grown up over the last five years with respect to the BADC.

I would like him to tell us too why is it that we have not had any reports on the functioning of the BADC since 1986, the last year that we were in office. Why is it we cannot get the BADC's report so that we can analyse for ourselves what has gone on and what particularly might have gone wrong?

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, this question about Franklin and Franklin raised its head.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He spoke on it. I am only responding to him.
9.45 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member would give way for a moment, there is Standing Order 28. 10. (a) which reads thus:

> "No reference may be made in debate to the character or conduct of any person except in his official or public capacity."

The other section 10. (b):

> "Any Member who desires to refer in debate to the character or conduct of any person in his official capacity must deliver to the Speaker written prior notice of the proposed reference, the notice must set out the facts on which such reference will be based and must be signed by the Member giving it."

I am saying that I have disallowed the comment made by the Honourable Member with regard to that statement and no reference must be made on that. However the Honourable Member may proceed with his contribution.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, this constant reference to degrade Honourable Members in their public capacity by insinuating certain deals or certain actions that were not done in a correct manner, Mr. Chairman, I have responded to those allegations last year and the three Honourable Members there who are sitting together, one, two, three know that I responded to these allegations. I even brought the files in here and I pointed out and it was in the newspapers as well.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You all were not in here. You all were outside looking after your own....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: However let us get....

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I brought the file in here, Mr. Chairman. They are not going to stop me ....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get on.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: ...because they have not understood that the elections are over.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No Honourable Member must speak when the Chair is addressing the Chamber. I am saying that I would like you to go on to the Head under discussion. I want the Honourable Member to deal with the Head under discussion.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chariman, I responded, I pointed out and I showed from the files the applications that came into the Ministry of Housing and Lands and who they were from. I came in here and I gave....

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: ...the run down of the permissions that were given, those that would have been used...

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I am concerned to discover from the Chair whether the Honourable Member can pursue a matter answering allegations which have never been made. You ruled that....

Asides.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Yes. But nothing about Franklin & Franklin. He said allegations about the Honourable Member.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have ruled that there will be no mention of Franklin & Franklin.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member dealt with the cutting up of land. I am dealing with the cutting up of land. I am dealing with the point that there were applications for sub-division of land.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am sure Honourable Members will not wish me at this late stage of the day....

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You had better tell this House who it was, after Tom Adams refused Mrs. Ram's application at Oldbury for subdividing land, for nearly four years, two months after Tom Adams died gave Mrs. Ram permission. Tell them why you gave Mrs. Ram permission. Do not tangle with me, hear. Okay.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South said that four years before Tom Adams died, certainly he was referring to the year 1981 that an application....

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Let us have the debate nice. He said four years before Tom Adams died an application put in by Mrs. Ram for Oldbury was refused for some reasons and there were not very pleasant reasons. I was the Minister responsible for Housing and Lands then and I had responsibility for refusing or granting permission.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have order. Let me hear the point of order.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am submitting that the Honourable Member is misleading this House because nothing of the sort occurred.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point of order is made.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mrs. Ram does not give me shirts and pants like you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must not continue in that way.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: She does not clothe me.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I am saying, Mr. Chairman, I am going to repeat the point I made that the Right Honourable Prime Minister of the day refused the application consistently over a period of years. I have it on file in his own fine handwriting. And immediately after he died, within two months of his death....

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You had better not tangle with me. I am going to bring it tomorrow.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: You should try and find out who gave permission.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We cannot have that kind of cross talk.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, let me continue. The subdivisions – I have already pointed out in this Honourable House that the ....I am bringing the files tomorow for all of you, from him right down. Not them. I am finished with them already.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have kept very quiet since then. I have not said a word for the whole night. I understand the Honourable Minister of State to be saying that he dealt with me already. I want him to say how. I am not in this. He said he dealt with me already. I want to hear. I did not get into the debate all night, Sir.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, the point I was making is that the three of those were in here before. Those three were in here last year and the year before.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: All I am saying is that the three Members who were in here before, they would know what went on before. That is all I am saying. They would know. So the file that is coming tomorrow is for you all.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I have not finished. No. Mr. Chairman, I heard tonight the point being made about the subdivision of land at certain places in Barbados, Constant....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would the Honourable Member just wait a minute. I have already given my ruling on the behaviour of Members in this Chamber. If I am forced, I will have to invoke the penalties under the Standig Orders.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Laughter.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the point was being made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph about subdivision of land at different places in Barbados. I would like to say again – and I am going to bring the files in here tomorrow again – that I pointed out that all the applications except one, all of them that were released and approved, were approved by the Chief Town Planner or the Chief Agricultural Officer, all except one.
9.55 p.m.

The point I was trying to make, Mr. Chairman, the original complaint, the original statement by Members from the other side, not in here, outside. The first statement was that certain Honourable Members had the permission to give, which Honourable Members over there know was not true, because no Minister of any other department, apart from the Minister responsible for Town Planning can give permission to subdivide land. That was the first way they came. They came to say that honourable gentleman had the decision to make to give permission.

I put that to rest. Having put that to rest, after I had pointed out that most of the applications, except one, was approved by the Town Planner or by the Chief Agricultural Officer, the next angle that they took now was that a particular firm had the contract to put in the roads.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is the ridiculous level that it sank to because after they realised that they were on warm grounds when they talked about how many subdivisions that particular firm got, they went then to the ridiculous level as to say that most of the permissions, that this particular firm did most of the work on the subdivisions. Now, Mr. Chairman....

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: That is the ridiculous level that you all went to. All of you all over there. All bar none. That is the level you went to. Including Braddie.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I know it is getting near the hour for Rambo to parade on television.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, on a point of order, he can't be making these wild sweeping statements about all of you over there. I would like the Minister to identify when I made the sort of statement that he is alleging. When each one of us over here made those statements. I don't know what he is talking about, Sir. He is making a whole lot of wild statements. He has not realised yet, Sir. The Honourable Minister of State and Finance ...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am serious, Sir. He is making sweeping allegations about all of you over there, said these things, Sir. He has forgotten, Sir, that he came under severe attack from the NDP, he must now realise, Sir, that the NDP has gone.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I started this debate in a very philosophical....

Asides.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: The elections are over and we came here. During the elections I stood and I listened to some of the most ridiculous, outrageous, inflammatory statements and innuendoes made throughout the length and breadth of Barbados about this .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to speak in the terms that I have spoken before without invoking the penalties of the Standing Orders. Honourable Members must have some respect for the Chair.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, over the last year there have been all kinds of imputations about morality, lack of integrity etc., and I have demonstrated and I repeat it, let me put the record straight for the Member for St. Joseph.

Franklin and Franklin has been a firm for the last 22 years. When I became a Minister I immediately stopped association by giving all of the work I had to two people, unlike a lot of people who continued to wind down their practice. But, because I happen to be the brother of Franklin and Franklin, Franklin and Franklin must close down, the other firms, the Cheltenham firm must not close down when their brothers must work. The other such people that have all of their businesses and associations must continue, but the moment I enter into politics, the whole firm must collapse. I have already given them, but let me repeat for you. I have never made a decision about any subdivision of land that went contrary to the advice of the Chief Agricultural Officer in this country. You can ask them, they always came and the only thing I said, I approve, pass on. And this innuendo, even now in this debate, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, he did not realise I realised it, he started by asking how and under what circumstances did the General Manager of ADC resign?

As far as I am concerned, the General Manager wrote a letter in which he said that his wife's health has been such that she cannot continue the function of carrying on their private company and therefore he decided that he would resign. I did not check behind him because I am not that type of person to peep behind any corner. I accepted the information given me and I accepted his resignation.

You also went on to say in here there is a lot of infelicities and abuse of the subsidy scheme for vehicles. I don't, and I never administered that scheme. I don't know who got the vehicles. I am saying that as far as I am concerned, I heard and I checked with the administrative people and the result is such that on every application, there is an officer who is sent out to check to see if the person is in agricultural pursuit. After the officer comes in, it goes to the Chief Agricultural Officer who also then sends it on to the Permanent Secretary for approval.

You have to understand that there are people who are in agricultural pursuit but have other interests. So, if a man in agricultural pursuit got a vehicle because he is in agriculture and he has some other interest in the said vehicle must I go and administer that? But, it has continued in this Parliament here and during the heat of the elections but I can forgive that, but I think the time has come that you must stop that because I have functioned as a Minister with integrity and morality and I want that put in the record. You must not try to impute that because people are from working class families that everybody who comes in is immoral, lack integrity, trying to do deeds. I am fed up with that. Let me tell you why you debate agriculture, agriculture is an important issue. I started to follow the philosophical background and the quality I tried to pursue and you introduce all kinds of innuendoes to attack the Minister personally in his performance and his integrity and morality. My morality and my integrity can stand up to anybody's in this country.

Asides.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: You cannot say you withdraw, because the reporters are here, there are visitors in this gallery.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am obviously not able....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before the Honourable Member proceeds, there is some query as to my allowing the Honourable Minister to make reference. Honourable Members will recall that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph in spite of withdrawing the comment said he would

like the Minister to clarify the issue for the people out there. I think that he has dealt with it and I don't think we should have any more references to it in this debate.

Are we going to have some order? Will the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Member for St. Michael West, please observe the Standing Orders.
10.05 p.m.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, to answer the Honourable Member for St. Peter, he said that he had not seen any sums in the Estimates for the Springhall Scheme or the Rural Development Project. The Ministry has made the decision that they should not continue as separate projects and, therefore, they are not incorporated under the overall broad heading of the ADC. They will be administered as usual by the ADC but they are not put in the Estimates as separate projects. So you would find that this work will be done by the ADC as part of the ADC programme. Mr. Chairman, as I was saying to the Honourable Member for St. Peter, we have decided not to put the Springhall Land Lease Project and the Rural Development Project as individual projects again and they are being brought into the main stream of the ADC activities.

Mr. Chairman, on the debt of the ADC, I will bring this information tomorrow. But as I remember when we took office the ADC was owing $7.9 million to the BNB. I will check this and bring the facts to the House tomorrow.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am moving that this House be suspended until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning, March 22, 1991.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 10 o'clock on March 22, 1991 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
10.10 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply and to that it should revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee has resumed. The Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, towards the end of the debate last night, I am sure like myself you might have been concerned to know how much agriculture was occupying the minds of the Honourable Committee. I believe that the debate became side-tracked from what was promising to be part of the great debate invited by the Right Honourable Member. I would like to put the debate back on track as I believe so much more has to be put back on track in Barbados today and particularly in relation to this subject.

No one can be happy about the fact that agriculture once the main plank, if not the only plank, of this country's development is today not performing to any reasonable standard and not making the contribution which one would expect it to make to the development of Barbados. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South in opening on behalf of the Opposition has made it abundantly clear that the Opposition considers that agriculture has for the foreseeable future as long as Barbados remains a country, to be one of the main industries in Barbados and one of the main planks for development. I have said in this House previously and I repeat that I know of no country in the world which has made significant progress in the standard of living that does not maintain some reasonable agricultural base. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North says Singapore. Even in Singapore the Honourable Member will find there is some agriculture.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member also mentions Bermuda and certainly there is not sugar agriculture but there is at least some vegetables and other produce. But I do not believe that Barbados can, in any respect, aim for the type of development that a country such as Singapore has, I do not believe it at all, and concentrate merely on a limited number of areas. I think it would be a waste of our very vital resource of our land if likewise we concentrated only on services, for instance, as tourism and manufacturing and ignored the role which agriculture has to play. Let us face it. Prior to the 1950's Barbados' development was based almost exclusively on agriculture. It is true that we had the sociological disadvantage of coming up under a sugar monoculture. But despite that we must recognize that for almost 300 years sugar and agriculture did make a significant development not only to Barbados but, as history would show in fact, to enriching a lot of landlords who then lived as expatriate landlords overseas in the United Kingdom.

I do not believe that I have to recite the historical role which agriculture played in this island's development

anymore. Therefore, I regret today that we have not yet got into the psyche of the new generation, those of us who were born since 1900, how important it is to have the right attitude towards this subject.

Sir, I want first to outline the problems, as I see, which have occurred recently in some aspects of our agriculture. To this extent, I have to repeat a bit of what the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said. I do not think that we can take any comfort from the 10 per cent growth that we heard occurred last year in non-sugar agriculture nor can we take any comfort from the slight increase which occurred in the tonnage. It is just not satisfactory and I believe that in the last five years, particularly in the area of sugar, we have not seen the application of either the type of policies or such policies as were applied that were not applied in as timely a manner as we would have expected.

Small Farmers' Contribution is down from 15 per cent of the pre-1986 year to 6 per cent. That is in relation to sugar. We waited without seeing any of the Landell Mills proposals being implemented at all. We have the position that there is a crying need for retooling in the industry, for debt rescheduling in the industry, for improvement in research and development in the industry and for capitalizing on the industrial inventions which have occurred in the industry as well. Those are all of the needs there of the sugar industry, Sir. I believe that the problems have been identified. The solutions have been identified and we have to ask ourselves seriously as legislators – why have they not been applied? I do not believe that we can, like some of the Honourable Members on the other side, tend to shout *sotto voce*, "We did not make the rain stop falling." I do not believe that that is the attitude. It might sound like very good politics to have that retort. But do we seriously believe in our minds that the reason why we have done so badly is because the rain has stopped falling at any particular time at all. I have to ask that question. Members cannot be serious about that and I believe that we cannot delay for any longer in Barbados taking the decisions that are called for to resuscitate the sugar industry and agriculture as a whole. I would hope that in next year's Estimates when we come back to this Committee that I would not be hearing the recital of excuses which has come from the Government for the delay in applying the answers.

Sir, I want particularly to talk about the cotton industry. I really feel genuinely saddened anytime that I have to speak either in public or in this House on the issue of cotton, Sir. Because I recall when this subject was discussed in the House and the former Minister of Agriculture got up and explained to us why the Government wanted to go to three stages of production immediately in the cotton industry. Speaking on behalf of the Opposition, I said that it was a laudable objective but that there were tremendous problems along the road in moving from a primary production stage to a tertiary production stage at one go. I counselled the Government then to go slowly and to go wisely. But I went a bit further and I counselled the Government, as the debates would show about the partners they were choosing, and I remember saying specifically and the debate will show them, Sir – "Be careful with whom you lie down in bed." I cited the disastrous precedent that we had in International Sea Foods Limited and I said, "Be cautious". They ignored it.

10.10 a.m.

We have had to take a tremendous loss that resulted from the CARSICOT debacle. I think it is a scandal. I do not have to make any allegations against any person, I think that CARSICOT was a national scandal. I also am satisfied in my mind that it could have been avoided had the Government listened to the cautionary words from this side of the Opposition. Certainly, everything that I said and warned about CARSICOT has come true. It is not finished, Sir, I am not going to go into any cases that are before the law courts at the moment. I would hope that we could put that behind us.

I am concerned, Sir, that, for instance, this year, even with the new start which the Government has made by forming Caribbean Cotton Industries Limited, once again the project does not seem to have been properly thought through and looked at from the financial and other aspects. It seems to me to be conceived as a quick manner of trying to bury the CARSICOT episode without any serious effort being made to learn from the mistakes of CARSICOT.

I would wish the Minister to tell us if Caribbean Cotton Industries Limited has lost $1.6 million so far. That is my information. I know that the investment the Government has in the project has never been brought before this House, so none of us has had the opportunity of seeing how the new company has been financed. I understand the new company is being financed from an overdraft through the National Bank, with a letter of comfort from the Ministry of Finance behind it. The Minister will have the opportunity to clarify whether my information is correct or not, but that is the information I have and obviously the information is within the Government's bosom, so I would wish the Government to let me know how it is being financed. It was also being financed from some Head under the Ministry, which Head I do not know, but funds were being made available in this way.

I believe that that company, if it is to be properly established, has to have a proper equity base. We must have an overall investment and business plan for it, at least for five years, and a proper recognition of where it is going. It cannot thrive in the circumstances where the problems of CARSICOT still remain unsolved. The Government must get the best legal advice and deal with CARSICOT once and for all and get it out of the way. We cannot go on in that position of drift.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, in the two minutes remaining to me let me say that I understand that the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation planted in the last year 730 acres of cotton at Springhall, at Summervale, at Dodds and at Vineyard. It ploughed under 239 acres before harvest, before they could even reach the stage of putting out the cotton blooms. They salvaged 491 acres and the projected cotton seed per acre from the crop is 400 pounds. The average that you would expect from the industry, certainly when the private farmers participated – and there is only one private farmer who participated last year – is, I believe, 1 200 pounds per acre.

I have taken the opportunity, as a legislator, before coming in here to discuss these subjects, of driving around the Government's plantations. I went to Springhall in St. Lucy, I pass daily by Summervale and Dodds, and by Spencers, and I can see the tremendous problems. Who could be happy when the cotton plant is vying for the sun with tall stalks of grass?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time is overspent.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Let me say, Sir, that the crop has not been properly cared for, whether it is because of lack of finance or bad husbandry, whatever has happened it has been a total disaster and the Honourable Member, like myself, must be concerned that we see a little pond occurring in one of the fields right up by Summervale on the other side of the road.

I believe that once again the problems of erosion are facing us because there has been bad husbandry, whether it was by Caribbean Cotton Industries Limited or the Agricultural Development Corporation which is responsible for this new exercise. We cannot continue, despite the price that Nitobishi is paying – US$4.50 they tell me, although I understand you can get a price as high as US$7.00 for the crop – at least that is what was said in the CARSICOT case – I understand that despite that we are looking at another very serious loss for last year from this exercise being carried out.

We have to stop the losses. The taxpayers of Barbados will no longer put up with governmental action where inefficiency and mismanagement are leading to such bleeding of the pockets of the taxpayers with tremendous losses in these ventures which are supposed to be economic and investment ventures.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude now.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: How long is it going to go on, Sir?

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir, I just want to follow up before the Minister replies on certain aspects of this matter, because we have not yet touched fisheries or markets and we intend to touch them.

The Estimates indicate that the Government has decided that the BMC is no longer to be supported, for I see nowhere any reference at all to the BMC. The Government says that it is not supporting the BMC. They have not supported it for the last five years. The BMC, as I understand it, is one of the principal instruments which will be used to help in our export marketing thrust of non-sugar agriculture. The peppers the Honourable Member for St. Philip North talked about, the sweet potatoes – there are no yams now, because the variety of yams that was exportable has been subject to a disease and so far, despite the efforts of the researchers, no satisfactory solution has been found to the problem of that particular disease. I know, for in my constituency there is an institution which helped to pioneer at the private sector level the exportation of some of these crops. It was our policy, after all, to use the BMC as the catalyst, as the guarantor of standards for export, but we permitted the private sector to carry on the actual commercial activity of exports within the framework of the monitoring of the BMC so as to ensure that Barbados' obligations with respect to standards and certification for export markets were carried out.

But there was a change. The BMC decided that it would request all of the private sector people who formerly exported to surrender their export markets to them and the BMC would be the sole exporter, so to speak. That has led to great disaster. For this year, because of what occurred last year, where a number of growers had grown on the faith of orders and because the orders were not fulfilled they found themselves with large amounts of sweet potatoes which they had to plough in, but this year the consequence was that they did not plant. They found themselves with large amounts of sweet potatoes which they had to plough in. But, this year, the consequence was that they didn't plant. Now, if the B.M.C. wants to assume the role of sole exporter, whether in law or in fact, they cannot expect that they can perform that role, if they are not going to have the confidence of the farmers. You can't get the confidence of the farmers if when they grow the stuff on the faith of your representations that you have markets and transportation and then you don't fulfil it.
10.20 a.m.

Now that is one of the reasons why this year there are no sweet potatoes for export. What is likely to happen, as I understand, is that the farmers are likely to go back now to the position in which they are going to go abroad and seek out the markets and tell the BMC: "you can do what you like. We are going to do it ourselves this time". It is a very tragic thing, because the farmers were doing it under the umbrella of the BMC, which was performing a role of being the guarantor of standards. You couldn't export

anything the BMC did not stamp, so the BMC was fully aware. They had people who used to go around to plants. They haven't changed it.

Now, this is a real serious thing. There have been all kinds of explanations given for it. As far as I understand, the BMC said that the Government wouldn't give them any money and therefore they couldn't pay the farmers on time and therefore, they couldn't go abroad to market the product because the BMC didn't have any money to let them do the necessary missions abroad. The whole thing has ended up in a situation where we have gone back instead of forward. We can't have a policy of chopping and changing in this respect. There is no doubt that there is a role for a promotional organisation to help to market agricultural products, such as the sweet potatoes, the yams, the eddoes, tannias, the carrots, the onions and things of that kind.

So, the Government has to make up its mind in that respect. Now, Sir, there is another area. There was some talk when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made the point about small countries continuing to carry out agriculture. It was pointed out and it was said from the other side, that Bermuda and Singapore don't necessarily have much agriculture. Bermuda is a unique place. Bermuda has a very small population in relation to its economic activity. I remember the time when I was first in Parliament and there was a Senator who used to bring a resolution every year asking that the Government make Barbados a tax-free haven like Bermuda. We always used to have to point out that status and those conditions have never been applied to countries which were sugar-growing islands and which had imported large masses of slaves to grow the sugar and which, subsequently, have had to diversify their economies and have been unable to find employment for them.

Singapore, too, is a very unique place. Singapore sits at the cross-roads of a large group of countries and they can live. I have been to Singapore more than once and they can live out of buying and selling and performing services. They are essentially a service economy and they have access to a lot of cheap food in Asia, and they are Chinese anyway. In any event, they have a system of government which... I know the Honourable Members are being advised that it is the best system to adopt but as I have told the Prime Minister of Singapore, himself, Lee Kuan Yew, when I met him, I said: "You are a lucky man. You have a very obedient population. If you were in the Caribbean, our concepts of freedom are completely different from yours". He told me that he had very little trouble in that direction because the alternative to the Singaporeans was to go back to China where they were under a dictatorship. So, I mean, if they had a semi-dictatorship they were still better off.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: That is in relation to other developed countries which have become independent. So, we are dealing with a different situation. We cannot afford to give up this natural resource.

Now, on the question of water. Don't let us fool ourselves, there is nothing inconsistent with a government pursuing a policy which has been started long ago of trying to make the maximum use of such water resources as we have. We have a certain number of areas that we can tap water from without interfering with our drinking water. We have a number of areas in the Scotland area which because of its topography of the land we can get ponds. The fact that we have water is a resource which we must exploit and if we can get three or four thousand acres under irrigated farming that would be more than enough to satisfy the vegetable needs of which we are capable of producing. That is why we felt so strongly about the exploitation of the water resources in Bath, the water that used to go down the hill. Now, that down there was a flat area and it was being used under a special project for the experimental growing of melons and other crops. So, we have some resources and that is what the Opposition is saying.

The Opposition is saying that there appears to be a tendency on the part of the Government to throw its hands in the air, to blame everybody, instead of being the catalyst, the encourager, the supporter of every effort to diversify. Now, Sir, I find it strange that we can support BADC to the tune of $3.7 million, as I understand it, because the new way how the estimates are being compiled... Page 41, I see here support of BADC and as I understand it, sub-program 01 and it seems to me to be $3.7 million. How can you give BADC $3.7 million and don't give the BMC any money at all. I don't understand that. As a promotional body similar to the Export Promotion Corporation or to the Tourist Board, they must have some kind of money to be able to go abroad. Is it expected that the difference between what they pay the farmers and what they sell overseas they must put such a mark-up that they would be able to generate enough money to pay for the missions abroad? I don't understand that. Where are we now, Sir?

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

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Very well, Sir. Now, the other point that I find confusing is at page 39, the Incentives and other Subsidies to Farmers, that that has been the subject of a savage cut of $6 million. Page 39, Item 713.

I go now to Livestock Development. This is something that I want to say, Sir.
10.30 a.m.

In livestock development previously it was well recognised that this was an area that had reasonable potential in Barbados, not only in chicken growing, cattle

for milk, sheep and things of that kind but it was agreed that some help would be given for the development of pasture land in Barbados. We had put a large sum of money in the Estimates for that. I believe that in the 1989 Budget of the Prime Minister that there was a sum of $3 million for bringing under-utilised land in. Presumably that would have been to create some kind of pasturage, among other things. What has happened with that?

We would like a progress report in that direction because the Scotland area is an area where I know the pioneering work was done in communal pastures, the creation of a large area of pasturage where people who had cows but did not have land would be able to go there with grazing rights. Then you would have been able to legitimately police all stray cattle and force people by the full weight of the law without any feeling that you were doing anybody an injustice because of the fact you would have had an alternative place where they could graze their cattle. That was agreed. What has happened to that scheme?

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I thought I would enter this debate to make a few points. It is unfortunate that yesterday evening the debate took a turn from the approach which this whole House had gone through over the period of the week and I sincerely hope that as we conclude today that we do not go down that road again. Whatever has happened before in this House I do not think we should draw on that to determine how we should proceed in the sense that I find that we are becoming too personal in a lot of matters. We are supposed to set examples for people to follow. There are young people who are disenchanted with the whole system because of how we are behaving. We might not offend the Rules of the House but, at the same time, I think it is time we understand where the country is at this time and try as far as possible to raise those standards. That is all I want to say on that particular point as my introduction.

Now, listening to the debate as it unfolded from the other side, I get the distinct impression that the other side sees sugar as part of the salvation for this country. If we were to look at the history of sugar, one must understand certain basic facts. Sugar was king at a time when labour was either free or very cheap. Of course, at that time we were a colony as well. Therefore, we had certain preferential treatment which, I am not quite sure if it will extend beyond 1992. It is something which we have to look at very carefully.

I indicated that sugar prospered when labour was cheap. We can see that successive Governments have had to pour large sums by way of subsidy to prop up the sugar industry. How long we can continue, how long the taxpayers of this country will be able to tolerate that, I am not so sure either. I understand why we did it. I understand that we need to earn foreign exchange. Therefore, as long as there is a noticeable alternative then it will be in our interest in order to get that foreign exchange do something to assist sugar.

Again, I understand that because of our soil content that sugar is one of the crops which will have to go in order to stabilise the soil. The soil is very thin in terms of depth. It is very loose in some respects. Therefore, we need something to bind the soil and keep it steady. At the same time, I think we have to understand that we cannot continue in this vein *ad infinitum*. We have heard from the other side too the fact that we have cut up valuable lands. This is true of both Parties. Both Parties, I guess, did this in an effort to see if they could solve some of the problems. As we develop as a country, we notice fewer and fewer Barbadians are going into sugar cultivation. Some believe it is because of our history being the descendants of slaves we still have those hang-ups about working in the sugar crop. I think for two reasons, as people become more educated they look for better jobs, jobs which some people might call white collar jobs. Therefore, they do not gravitate towards the sugar plantations.

There are some people today who still have had bad experiences working on sugar plantations. There were days in the 1950's if you were a bright youngster, and your parents worked on the sugar plantation, the owner of the plantation would tell your mother she either work or move off the plantation all together. You were tied up to the plantation even up to the 1950's. Although slavery was abolished for all intents and purposes by 1834, in the 1950's the factual situation was we were in a semi-slavery condition. People have to understand that.

In the 1950's tourism was introduced into Barbados. I remember living in Holetown and my friend from St. James North lived a stone's throw away. Every morning you would see people coming up the road going to Trents Plantation and Lascelles Plantation. I left the country in 1961. When I returned in 1966 Discovery Bay was built. People are no longer going to Trents anymore – hard dirty work. They are going to Discovery Bay where there is easier and cleaner work and much more money. Over a period of time fewer and fewer people went to sugar plantations to work. The money still now is not as high as you can get in the hotels. If your brother has left the sugar plantation to go and work in the hotel, even if you have the inclination to go there, you would still yearn to go in the hotel industry and work. Over a period of time the plantations have suffered.

Also, because we are looking at tourism as another industry in order to bring in foreign exchange, that has created another problem because we have to have certain infrastructure or certain facilities in the country to attract our tourists. What is happening is you find that whereas Trents or Lascelles Plantation, Trents in particular, in the 1950's was growing all sugar cane – it is true that the

owners were not as competent as one would expect but the fact is that within five years, 1961-1966 the whole of Lascelles Plantation went out of sugar cane production to building accommodation for tourists. Probably 400 or 500 acres went out.

I remember when Lascelles Plantation used to grind sugar cane for molasses and the same thing with Husbands and Oxnards in the 1950's. Trents has gone out of production now because they have all gone towards the other industry which we believe will earn foreign exchange to the country. This did not happen only under the Democratic Labour Party.
10.40 a.m.

It has happened under the Barbados Labour Party. Warrens Plantation, as far as I remember in 1950 was one of the most productive areas for sugar cane. Today nearly the whole of Warrens Plantation has been turned into either housing estates or some manufacturing industry. I am not quite sure what they are doing up there, except for Simpsons Motors.

But what I am saying is this: that we tend to point fingers at each other without being as objective as we should be. I think that objectivity should rule all of these deliberations. I hope that we will do so in the future.

Of course we have to be, even as my friend came in just now and reminded that Halcyon Heights was part of Trents Plantation and that now has gone for housing development... As people progress and your aspirations and horizons broaden you move off the sugar plantations because most of our parents lived on the sugar plantations and when we want to erase those bad times from our memories we go into the Heights and Gardens and Parks so as to get that behind us. However people talk about rab land for housing development, it seems to me – I might be wrong – that people are going to move out of the rab land because they have for them psychologically a very bad past. These are the things we have to live with.

Another kind of development. I spoke about facilities for tourism. It is a known fact now, Mr. Chairman, that any tourist destination must have golf courses. What does that say to us? It says to us that more agricultural land, if we are to have golf courses, must be taken up. Let me say this. I do not speak of 6 or 7 acres. A golf course is in the vicinity of 300 to 400 acres of land.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: We are talking about an 18 or 36-hole golf course. It has to be between, my friend to my right the Honourable Minister of Tourism says, 300 to 800 acres of land.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Sorry? Eight hundred. Sandy Lane is now asking for something I think like 300 more into the land going all up to Norwoods on one side and going over the other side. I am not quite sure whether it is Irrigation Road. Another 300 acres.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: That is to have 27 holes. If you do not play golf, you do not appreciate this. But a golf course is huge. If we are to attract more tourists and incidentally I understand there are 27 million people playing golf in the United States of America with not enough golf courses, so they want to go out. They have to leave the United States of America and go and play golf. Golfers are of such a nature and character that when they come to a country they do not want to play only on one golf course, they want to test two and three golf courses.

If we are going to push tourism then we have to ask ourselves to what expense of agriculture. These are the matters we have to look at carefully. I believe that the time has come when we will have to look seriously at a land use policy. Let us face it. I do not think we have done that seriously yet and unless we do that, the arguments which we hear here, one side against the other would perpetuate themselves, whatever we say. We have to accept that this is the way to go, that sugar on the one hand is, to a large extent, a liability. What are the alternatives.

We believe that cotton might be a way to go. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South who I know has got a lot of practical experience in the area of agriculture says, and I understand other agriculturalists are saying that as well, that the cotton plant can be very detrimental to the soil and therefore it is necessary to have a rotation.

I know that we are trying our level best to ask all the plantation owners to plant a minimum of 10 acres per plantation in cotton and then you rotate it so that the soil does not lose the nutrients which are so vital for other crops. If we continue, as I understand it, to plant cotton over and over in large areas then you will find that when you want to plant other crops there is a problem.

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

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Three minutes?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I am going to wind up only to say this: that during the course of the last election I took time out to look at our production levels in other areas of agriculture, non-sugar agriculture and I was astounded to see that during the last five years, the levels of the

productivity in nearly all the areas of agriculture, except sugar had gone up tremendously. Therefore I do not think that we should judge this Government on its performance on sugar only because if we judge any government in Barbados on what has happened in sugar over the last 40 years, all governments would have failed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not sure where exactly the Honourable Member for St. James South really stands in relation to the future of agriculture in general or indeed of sugar in particular because he spoke in such a way as to give the impression that sugar is doomed as a crop for Barbados in the future and to have laid his emphasis on the use of good agricultural land or agricultural land for other services that we are promoting in Barbados.

Let me begin by saying that there is nothing incompatible between the maintenance of a viable agricultural sector alongside the development of the tourism sector and services in general with the ancillary needs that those services have.

When it comes to developing a land use policy I want to say that we have persisted in breaching even existing legislation in relation to the land use policy. I want to reiterate in here my Party's position. Quite clearly in our Manifesto "UPWARDS AND ONWARDS" which has already been made a document of this House in the debate at page 21, and I quote, we say:

> "The Barbados Labour Party regards the establishment of an appropriate land use policy as a prerequisite formulation of relevant strategies. Such a policy would allocate marginal lands to other use while reserving good arable land to agriculture. In this context provisions will be made for such agricultural activity as does not require the use of high quality arable acreage. Adequate provision will also be made for land lease arrangements to take care of the needs of the landless farmer as well as the revision of arrangements at Springhall against the background of experience gained with this project over the years."

It is obvious that we must maintain in agriculture at least 30 000 acres for the purpose of farming. My view would be that we should go back up to at least 45 000 acres maintained in agriculture.

What has worried me is that good agricultural land that has a good depth of soil, proper soil qualities as well as land in reasonable rainfall areas is now coming out and going into housing. Let me take an example. I take the example of behind Villa Nova, some of the deepest soil that you could ever want which has now passed into housing. I drive up there to see the tractors ploughing into good agricultural soil deeper than anything that I have seen in some parts of St. Philip and Christ Church in order to put a housing estate. That is a wrong decision. The reason why we will continue to make those wrong decisions is that there is a group of selfish people in this country who believe that they can get behind every politician, or Government official by whatever means to do whatever they want. Let us face it.

I had responsibility for Town Planning in this country and I brought before the House, the only time that it has been brought and laid on the Table of this House the Town Planning Development Plan. That was in 1978. Since then the Labour Party revised the plan and by 1985, Mr. Justice Rocheford had sat as a special commission. That plan has never been laid in this House, but you have people who are jockeying for positions and buying up land in situations where they believe they will get planning control.
10.50 a.m.

Now we will always get into confusion and we will always lose our good agricultural land because there may be somebody supportive of the Party or belonging to the Party who might only want you to let out 5, let out 10 and then it is let out 15 and their interest is their own interest, not the future generations of Barbados. And, I want to say here and now the Government must bring down, timely, the Town and Country Planning Land Use Study, lay it on the table of the House, enforce it, stop allowing pressure to be put on them by people who may be political supporters, for their own narrow interest.

I used to make public all of the town planning information and I went on the radio and said that anybody who turned up in my office wanting to see me on a town planning matter to talk about what they can give me, know they were going before the Director of Public Prosecutions. I called in my Secretary once, Sir – and that could be verified within a minute here, Sir – I called in my Secretary when she was Secretary to the Attorney General, for one gentleman who came to talk to me about why he should get permission to develop land in St. John. He never came back, because I threatened to call in the police, and this is the message that we have to send if we are to keep Agriculture for the future generations of Barbados.

So, Sir, I want to make the position on the land use policy quite clear. I have seen decisions on land use whether it be in Wakefield or whether it be on the East Coast Road, that are contrary to the interests of all Barbados and I don't care who they are, what political party they support, how much money they have, they should be told no, that you cannot compromise Barbados in that regard. And, Sir, I want to move off this Head to ask the Minister some questions.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South spoke about the tremendous cut occurring in the vote for incentives and other subsidies and I am reading from page 39 of the Estimates, under Sub-Program 4, and this is what it says:

> "This sub-program is concerned with the monitoring and, tangentially, the disbursement of the various subsidies and incentives given by Government to Farmers to stimulate agricultural production in Barbados.".

The approved estimates for last financial year showed that $8.2 million was provided. This year only $2 million and there is a decrease of $6.2 million in subsidies.

Now a lot of small farmers benefit from these schemes – tractor schemes, various other schemes. Incentives to get them going into fruit production and what not. Whilst I recognise that Government has to control its expenditure, yet it seems to me in the productive sector, particularly in Agriculture, why this tremendous drastic cut, especially if you want to keep people in the farming community. I am talking particularly about that small farmer class who has been reduced from contributing now, some 15 per cent to agricultural production to a mere 6 per cent. We are sending the wrong messages, if we want to encourage young people to see Agriculture as having a future, where they can make an economic level of earnings from it, Sir.

I also wish the Minister before he replies – I am now looking at page 41, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South raised this point, the support of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation. I am finding it a bit difficult to follow what is happening under this Head, because if it is a mere grant to the Corporation which is an independent body, I am not sure why it should also have the sort of details and other personal emoluments, NIS, Health Levy, Transport Levy, that we see on this page. I am not sure what has happened there, Sir. What is the true grant to the ADC. I understand that the ADC debt has also been doubling and the debt has increased recently, from $2 million to $4 million. I want to know what is the true position of the ADC. We can't any longer have that, again, as the milch cow. Sorry, not as a milch cow, let me say we can't have it as white elephant, continuing losses and really not being an economic and viable enterprise. If the Government wants to show that they are changing the social structure of Barbados and really are serious about enfranchisement, the ADC has a lot of land, encourage some of the young farmers by giving them land, encourage them. Let the Government start itself as an example in this regard. But, we don't see that, Sir, and, Sir, I want as well to advert to the marketing facilities.

I listened a few nights ago, I think it was last Sunday night, to a programme from CBC in which a young lady from CBC interviewed persons using the Cheapside and the Fairchild Street Markets and the people who are in the markets. You see, Sir, we talk about the problems of Barbados but each one of those vendors made the point that formerly the market attracted its own consumers and clientele and that the market was in good condition. The market has got to such a bad condition that they say most of the vendors now only leave their trays and their goods on nights, but are by the wayside.

We talk about the problems we create for ourselves. We will then argue in here as to who should sell on Swan Street and who shouldn't sell, with all of the overtones that we will introduce into the debate, because our policies have been wrong. I have always contended that it is possible for, in Bridgetown, itself, in even existing Government buildings beside the market to provide airconditioned and up to date accommodation for the man at the lower socio-economic level of the society to ply his wares, to pursue his ventures, to show his enterprise without exposing them to all the elements and at the same time to make a true advance in the development in Barbados. But what we do, we have to let them take things into their hands, then politicians find themselves unable to take tough decisions because of the emotive language which creep in and we all then pretend and excuse it on the basis of race.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Forde is a white man, Franklin is a white man, somebody is a black man and it is the sort of dishonest, political type of approach to politics that really, Sir, sometimes when I look back on my twenty years, I think that I have not yet got into the skull of some people that we can give a higher level of politics in this country, a higher level of politics, away from emotion by rational and sensible and caring and true action, and I am going to remain in politics until I have achieved this.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, we seem to have gone on to markets now and I am very glad that we have gone over to this. It will give the other side the opportunity to get the answers to the questions that we raised.

Now, there is no doubt about it at all, Sir, that the Labour Party had a definite and definitive policy to improve the markets in Barbados, whether they be for the selling of fish, selling of vegetables, or for the selling of craft. We started with fisheries, we built the Oistin's Market, we were well on the way to completing the Bridgetown Fisheries Market and I well recall that a decision was taken on a plan for the complete renovation of Cheapside Market.
11.00 a.m.

I remember when it came to the Planning and Priorities Committee and I even remember the architect that what was put forward was rejected by the then Government on the ground that it did not go far enough in the

influence in relation to agricultural policy. But at the same time, it seems as though he was knocking the Singapore model.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, not knocking it, but you are saying it is not applicable to us. I accept that point because of the political factors which are a lot different from our development characteristics. The point is that in a country like Barbados it is not going to be as easy as it appears for Government, whether by way of incentives or by any other form of executive action, to enforce or maximise its influence in the agricultural sector, other than in relation to the land that Government owns. You know what it is like to negotiate with some of the people in the agricultural sector, whose only claim to being involved in agriculture is romantic and sometimes hereditary too, and you know better than me, you have lived with them for generations – I mean you know how they function – as a politician you come into contact with them in relation to policy making, and I know what your views have been in relation to price support and that kind of thing for those people. Tell me how you are going to persuade them to follow a line or a pattern in relation to what Government wants to achieve in agriculture. Ten years elapsed, five more have elapsed, successive Ministers have tried, different individuals have come here and advised them. Tell me the extent to which their philosophy in relation to agriculture has changed or is about to change.

It is okay to say that Government must maximise its influence, but in relation to private agricultural holdings and decisions that are made in that sector, we seem to have met with little success. The obvious corollary to that is that unless we pursue a form of Government, which I hope we do not, that is similar to the Governments of some of those newly industrialised countries, where the Government intervenes, and State intervention is certainly a lot more oppressive than we have in this country, then we are not going to have that much influence on those persons until land ownership patterns in this country change.

What you really need to address is not the concept of Government simply maximising its influence and leaving that up in the air, what you need to address is whether the people who are going to help us carry out that mandate are the people who presently own the land in this country. If they are not, and there are people who are going to manage that land and make better production gains from that land, then we have to get the land into their hands. That is the approach I would assume is the natural corollary to the arguments I have been hearing.

One of the most distinguishing and disastrous features of nationalist governments, of which the Democratic Labour Party is one, and of which the Barbados Labour Party to some extent forms part of that intellectual tradition, was the neglect of agriculture.
11.20 a.m.

People keep getting up in this House of Assembly and throwing all the woes of more than fifty years of almost single-minded pursuit of tourism, manufacturing, service industry and all of the other areas to the exclusion of agriculture and every year we come in this Chamber those woes are placed at the feet of one man, whoever he may be at that time, the Minister of Agriculture. You would have experienced it before, too, and now you are turning the tables, perhaps in a more vociferous and to some extent, I don't want to... The word "vituperative" is not relevant. Vociferous, a more vociferous way.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, we are going okay but I want you to understand how I feel as a young person about it, because I don't think that the blame is to be thrown at this particular generation of Barbadians. It is to be thrown at the process of history and it is to be thrown at the ideological components of Caribbean development fifty years ago and leading up into the 1960's and 1970's.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If you wish me to give you a lecture on those things... I know your mind is distracted by statistics and all the reports you have read. The ideological component, the nationalist approach of government over time, or the approach of nationalist governments, let's put it that way. The almost single-minded pursuit of tourism at one point, almost single-minded pursuit of the Arthur Lewis model even if they didn't understand the model completely and the linkages that he spoke about were never brought about, because they seemed to think that all Arthur Lewis was talking about was industrialisation by invitation. They never looked further than that and appreciated the other aspects of the theory. This is a fact. So, you can't come in here on one occasion, as the former Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central did, and throw all the woes of agriculture at the feet of one man. We are capable of reaching consensus and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has spoken about land use and we are capable of reaching consensus on that. I am certain that we are, and the sooner that we reach that consensus the better. But, there are going to be some exceptions from time to time. There has been absolutely no housing development in St. John for eighteen years or more. Could be a lot more than that, but I have access to records that only go back eighteen years. We had to take a field of six acres which was almost in the centre of Gall Hill and therefore was not secure for low income houses.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is a part of Wakefield, really, Clifton Hall. We had to agree to subdivide it. Now, this is a piece of land between the cemetery and the playing field. There is no security and we didn't acquire the cemetery, I can assure you. The point is that we needed house spots for low income people. All of the manoeuvres that these plantation owners pull and the stunts that they pull to get land subdivided, is a reflection on us as politicians, and the big company lawyers in town that can advise them on how to do it, for example, apply for the subdivision in the name of the plantation, sell it to a company as agricultural land and then let the company develop the land and make the capital gain on it and all kinds of other manoeuvres....

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is not a spurious manoeuvre. I don't care how the company lawyers push up their faces. That has been going on and I can give you several examples. It is a reflection on us, because we are the policy makers and the point is that we therefore can come to some reasonable decision in relation to land use and those decisions in relation to land use must also impact on land reform, on getting land into the hands of those young people or others who are innovative and indigenous in their approach to develop agriculture in Barbados. There are people who have written – for example, the great economist, C.Y. Thomas, Guyana – on agriculture who has analysed it over a long time with a socialist perspective, which is refreshing.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am glad you have been reading because if you ever get the opportunity under a Democratic Labour Party Government to be Minister of Agriculture, I hope you would implement some of those suggestions. This is a powerful work. An outstanding work on all aspects of the political development in the Caribbean. He has a particular interest in agriculture and he has been able to identify over time in a holistic way the problems that have impacted on agriculture in the Caribbean as a whole. You have to start with a philosophy of what you want to achieve, not in nit-picking.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Ice down at Oistins? Yes, of course, but ice at Oistins isn't going to get land in anybody else's hand in this country. Let us look at the major components of what we want to achieve in agriculture and work towards them. If every time we come in the House we are going to be talking about ice in Oistins, which I sympathise with and I wish they could solve that problem but, Good Lord, there are so many other major issues in relation to agriculture in this country. I cannot imagine that any young person living in the constituency of St. John, the only social advantage that they have received in relation to their economic relationship to resources is the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act which permitted them to buy land that they could not be moved off of anyway in a tenantry where they could build a house about half the size of one in the Parks and the Heights, that to get access to it you have to cross over a rocky cart-road or conditions that are worse than that....

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ...to get water to it you have to run forty lengths of pipe, that if you come late at night you butt your foot and fall down in the hedgerow. A whole range of other social conditions of essential deprivation that they have to endure. Could you convince them to remain in St. John and practise agriculture? They would have to be drunk and I would say they would be right if they said: "No, let me get a Government house in town, when they become available shortly. Let me get a Government house in town and let me get away from that scene because my relationship to economic wealth in this country is no different to my grandfather's, except that at various times in the history of Barbados, Government has intervened and made security of tenure on the land a little better. Nothing else has changed. I don't have access to any more land than my grandfather. I do not have access to any more credit than my grandfather in relation to the pursuit of agriculture. In fact, I probably have less access to credit, because if one looks at the credit to the agricultural sector from the private commercial interests in this country over time you will see that there isn't even any commitment on Broad Street."

So, I don't mind discussing the ice and the BMC and the markets and so on, but I feel that we should turn our attention out into the hills and the fields with a more analytical perspective on agriculture and I am saying that the things on which we can reach consensus in this House, let us reach them. We may not reach it on things like CARSICOT, but I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church South talking about Caricargo as an interesting lesson to the students at Cave Hill. Well, CARSICOT is equally interesting. There is no need for people to cast slurs and aspersions on Honourable Members in relation to their activities in things like investing Government's money in corporations of that nature. It is equally interesting, because the potential of the project was good. It is a very important lesson that can be learnt and I am going to talk about it a little later but I feel that there are some things, as I said, on which we can reach consensus and on which we must reach some consensus and then the others we can discuss in a philosophical nature.

11.30 a.m.

Even if it gives some difficulty to the romanticists, we can still discuss it because it might help them to redirect

their philosophical approach over time. That is my interest in this debate, Sir.

Thank you.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I must observe that the atmosphere this morning is much more restrained and less combative than last night. I suspect much more productive and rational discussion. I myself welcome it. This intervention is meant to range across the gamut of agriculture and really direct a series of specific questions to the Honourable Minister who introduced the Head.

Before I do that, I just want to return to the question of land use policy and idle land and to recall that the Barbados Labour Party had legislation on the statute book in this country structured on an incentive and penalty, carrot and stick, policy whereby those who owned two acres and more and who made no attempt to produce, however minimal, were penalised. The legislation was subjected to enormous criticism in this House before the time of the Honourable Member for St. John. Whatever might have been said to be the shortcomings of the legislation, it represented an attempt to grapple with the problem of idle land. By itself it was not the total answer. Clearly, you have to have some policy of incentives in order to encourage people to bring the many thousands of idle acres into production. What concerns me is that the Democratic Labour Party Administration in 1986, following the tremendous criticism of that piece of legislation, scrapped it. Thus far nothing has been put in place in order to address this question of idle land and getting people to produce on these idle lands.

I would just like to say that following the discussion last night it seems clear to me that decisions affecting the change of use of agricultural land, particularly those involving two acres and more, ought not to be left in the hands of civil servants. The decisions are too important and the consequences too far-reaching. Even though I think it is important that the Chief Agricultural Officer should have a viewpoint and the Chief Town Planner, at the end of the day a subcommittee of Cabinet should be responsible for determining those decisions.

It exposes any individual Minister. I was confirmed in that view when I listened to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. For the protection of the Minister responsible, I think those matters ought to go to a subcommittee of Cabinet and that no one Minister should have the final word with respect to the whole question of subdivision and change of use of agricultural land. I would like to urge that the policy for the future be that agricultural land be sacrosanct. Only in the most compelling circumstances ought Government to allow a change of use of agricultural land. We have, as has been said by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, enough land in Barbados at present to satisfy all the needs, recreational, manufacturing, tourism and housing. For the short-term there is no need to trespass any further on good agricultural land in this country. I hope that the view that agricultural land is sacrosanct would be at the centre of any new attempt to fashion a land use policy for the future.

Now, in the last year or two several of our crops in Barbados have been affected by trips-palmy. Clearly the bunchy top has not been licked which has tended to devastate our paw-paws in Barbados. I have heard one school of thought that the trips-palmy in particular, and I think the white fly too, has been the result of some relaxation in our plant quarantine control. I would just like the Honourable Minister in his response to indicate whether it is true that we have been suffering the destruction of our christophenes, melons and several other crops as a result of the trips-palmy, and whether he thinks the problem is one of control of our plant quarantine section in the Ministry or whether this has been some airborne infection over which we have had no control.

I want to turn briefly to deal with the facility at Tent Bay. Some seven years ago, Mr. Chairman, work was started at Tent Bay. It was always recognised and identified as a secondary fishing site, not on the same status and same scale as Oistins and Bridgetown but on the same basis as Consett and Skeete's Bay. There were particular problems there. There was need to widen the channel. There was need for a slip-way. There was need too for the provision of electricity. Above all there was the need of a changing facility, a small storage facility and for adequate haul-up facilities for the boats particularly in times of bad weather.

It seems that there was some engineering problem which resulted in the slip-way being erroneously located. The fishermen of the Tent Bay area tell me that they feel particularly hurt because they always insisted that they should have been consulted with respect to the location of the slip-way. It has turned out that those who had experience with the tidal movement in the area going back some 40 to 50 years, had a sounder view with respect to the location of the slip-way than the engineers who were responsible for the project. Even though no work has gone on for the last four or five years, I am advised that work is likely to start again soon. I hope that on this occasion the viewpoint of the experienced fishermen of the Tent Bay area will be borne in mind.

Now, the two major new projects in the Estimates which the Ministry seem to be concerned with are the fruit orchard and the flower project. I would like the Minister in the course of his response to tell us precisely what is going to be the content of the fruit orchard where in Barbados we are going to have concentration focussed, what particular fruits we are going to be emphasising and where the funding is going to be coming from and so on.

I would like him to do the same in respect of the flower project. I must observe, however, that we have lost a lot of time in relation to the cut flower project. We have come to the marketplace late. Costa Rico and many other countries in Central and Latin America have gone ahead. Israel has carved out a niche in the market for itself. It seems to me that in the last five years nothing has happened. I know that to a large extent we were concerned to allow the private sector, led by the initiative of the late Mr. Leacock, to get ahead with the project. It has been very slow in moving. I would like the Minister to tell us precisely where we are with respect to the flower project.

A word, Sir, about our agricultural stations. For a long while they have not been functioning at full capacity, the Home and Greenland, to give two examples.
11.40 a.m.

There seems to be some uncertainty in the farming community with respect to Government's policy, with respect to the future of these agricultural stations. Greenland, in St. Andrew, is particularly run down. It used to be seen as a centre where in particular black belly sheep and cattle would have been the specialization. But I passed there only a few weeks ago and had a close look and the pens are all in a state of disrepair. One gets the impression that there is little or no activity there.

I am particularly interested in Greenland because it seems to me that there is an untapped potential in the Scotland District. We have the opportunity to make the Scotland District the food basket for Barbados. We can do a lot of things in that area. We can concentrate a lot of our flower growing activity. We can concentrate a lot of our fruit growing activity. We can concentrate a lot of our cattle rearing activity in the Scotland District. I think that the Greenland Centre ought to be revitalized so that it can play a lead role in the agricultural activity in the Scotland District. But generally I think the Minister needs to tell us what is going to be the future of these agricultural stations.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The only other question that I am concerned to raise, Mr. Chairman, has got to do with the modest export effort that we had achieved in Tamdew melons, in sweet peppers, ground provisions and hot peppers mostly through the BMC and moving off from a facility at the Airport. The export of these items is a very difficult exercise. We had made a start and we had demonstrated that with discipline, production and with an organizational facility in place that we could have achieved some measure of success in penetrating the European markets in particular.

My information is, Mr. Chairman, that that export effort has collapsed and I should like the Minister to tell us whether we can look forward to a revival of that effort or whether we have come to the conclusion on the whole that it is uneconomical and not viable for us to pursue export in these particular items – Tamdew melons, the sweet peppers, the ground provisions and the hot peppers.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to finish a few of the points I was making. When I finished I was lamenting the fact that there had been no change in the relationship of people living in the rural area to the resources of land. So for example it is quite possible in Barbados for 400 people to be living in a tenantry area so-called. Meanwhile the 500 acres around that tenantry are not owned or controlled, or leased or in any way associated with those 500 people. I believe that the only way that you can change people's attitudes and involve them more in the production and in the development of agriculture is if you recognize firstly that a change in their view and a change in their relationship to the resources around them has to occur.

One of the things that is going to propel Barbados into the Twenty-first Century with a new approach to economic development is the fact that I think young black Barbadians who have been deprived many opportunities of ownership and control of wealth, whereas they have received other palliative social benefits, political rights and so on, are now more aware of this fact and, because of that awareness, are seeking to press home their demands for more involvement in that aspect of our economic development.

Just as people treat shares in public corporations and other forms of easily convertible wealth as well so too people's economic relationship to the land would have to be transformed and changed if we are going to avoid the continuing neglect of agriculture. Because they simply are not going to continue for generation after generation to be involved in agriculture at the same station and the same level for which their parents, grandparents and great great grandparents were involved. If there is no other stake for them other than being mere participators rather than owners and sharers and people involved in acquiring knowledge then they are going to abandon the interest even more than they have abandoned it today. There will therefore be a need for us to pay that kind of attention to the agricultural sector at a philosophical level too to militate against these changes.

So there has been a substantial policy bias against agriculture and when people do come up with policies that are courageous, for example, CARSICOT the development of an integrated cotton project; when you come up with these creative policies, it seems as though there is some coalescing of forces both in relation to the major economic

partners in the country, excluding labour, and in relation to the political forces in the country that seek to militate against those kinds of development.

People are going to view Barbados by its ability to be innovative. If you spend your entire modern, historical development doing the same things, demonstrating no innovative capacity, coming up with no creative ideas for development, making no major thrusts in any of the areas of economic life that are going to make you more productive and survive in the world, then people are basically going to turn their backs on you. I do not think people judge Barbados only on the balance sheet of its Estimates or Central Bank Report of statistics. They will also judge countries like Barbados as they would have judged the newly industrialized countries perhaps 10 years ago by their ability to be innovative and their ability to develop technology and to be path breakers.

So you pursue the integrated cotton project and at every cross and turn problems arise. Nobody denies that some of those problems might arise from the naiveness of Government from time to time or the slow process of administrative....

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, no. I said I am not going to use the word omniscient. That is why I used the word naiveness. ....of Government in relation....

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You will see the action. I have only had 7 weeks as a Minister. Call my Head then and let me give you some more verbosity and next year I will tell you what has been done which is the difference between me and the majority of you all over there. I will be able to tell you what has been done, not five years after. I would not be looking back crusading for the truth and let the people know they made a mistake. The verdict of the people I will accept in any circumstances and when it has passed I will move on to something new. I will pass on to something new. But you all are spending time back in 1986 dreaming about what could have been but never was.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But they will still try to pull that stunt again. Mark my words.

The point is there is a project that is going to earn foreign exchange for Barbados that needs some critical attention from us as policy makers, both in articulating its viability and helping people to understand that it can be successful and I believe that Government must persevere with it. The possibility of diversification into that area and development of an entire industry in that area is something that we have to pursue and we are going to fail sometimes along the way and nobody should look at failure as an impediment.
11.50 a.m.

People fail exams and that helps them to understand what more they have to do. The man who invented the light bulb – she is saying Oh Lord, because she would not know, she never invented anything. The man who invented the light bulb did not get up a morning and make the light bulb, he made mistakes along the way until he eventually did it and I said this before, Columbus had to convince an entire country and some kings and queens who were not particularly bright that the world was not flat and he was able to convince them four times and set sail and made great discoveries of considerable advantage to the European nations.

You will make errors along the way and if you make an initial error in relation to a project like CARSICOT but you recognise that there are great possibilities there, persevere. The errors are going to cost money, but I think you have to articulate a point of view in relation to these things that is going to help the population to understand that nationally we are committed to being innovative, to developing our indigenous resources and that along the way we are going to make errors.

This is the point, Sir. I only want to say, that is how I think my generation which should be slightly more enlightened than its previous generation thinks and that is how the world goes on. I believe it has a commitment to that kind of innovation and change and it is for us as policy makers to understand that there is a cost in relation to what we might lose, and also a cost that we might gain ten years down the road.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South talked about the commitment to establishing CARICARGO and he said it was established because nobody else is going to do for you what CARICARGO can do for you. I understand that and there will be losses and as you say, the students have to look at those losses and see how best projects of that nature can be executed on the next occasion. So, you are saying that about CARICARGO because it is your project but now when we come to CARSICOT you will spend an entire debate and go out, all around Barbados, telling people whose university education was paid for out of CARSICOT and that kind of thing. I don't mean the Honourable Member, even though I don't have it written down. The point is all we do essentially is kill the spirit of innovation and sell ourselves short, that is all.

Well, okay, I believe that the Government has to demonstrate its commitment to the project, just as the same newly industrialised countries that some of us seem to think are the model that we should pursue, were innovative, made mistakes along the road, but are now successful and major

economic powers in the world. Well, the only way that any of us in the Caribbean will achieve that is if we pursue that form of innovation and understand that there will be mistakes along the way, there will be major losses along the way, but we have to determine that this is the way that we want to go.

Every time a Government agency loses money, for example, CBC, you are now hearing the touting of this so called philosophy, privatise. Now the position is this, there is a role for joint ventures involving the private sector and Government, but you have to start by determining what you want to achieve down the road and you have to determine whether the best approach is a joint venture approach or the best approach is exclusively a Government-owned approach, and I believe that in relation to the cotton industry, that is all I am saying, that the joint venture approach is certainly the most attractive. The problem is you have to be very careful in choosing your partners because there are a lot of sharks out there in the water waiting to see what they can get out of it.

The sources of investment in the agricultural sector, particularly the sugar sector, have also changed over time and that is something we have to recognise because that is a phenomenon of Barbados' modern development. The fact is that money has been taken from agriculture for a long time and has been used to sustain, initiate and further develop other sectors of the Barbados economy. We have to determine that private wealth has now to be allocated in such a way that some of it returns to the agricultural sector. Those are the points that need to be made in a debate of this nature instead of the very shallow points that are continuously being made by Members which, if historians were to read them ten years from now to discover where Barbados was at this juncture, they would be no wiser, except that they would know that an ice machine was not working and they would see outlandish things like this, St. Joseph, St. Lucy and St. Thomas are now a waste land – the hyperbole of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. You must grow crops on which you have a comparative advantage – trite points.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I want to turn finally to St. John. The Nature trail. I want to reinforce the point because we are very proud of what has taken place at Bath.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It is in the Development Plan, you don't read anything so you would never see that. The point is, Tourism, and I am just shifting there for a moment, has to include all Barbadians and for the thousand of Barbadians who pass through St. John going to St. John's Church and Bath, we have to find a way to involve people living in St. John rather than keep them marginalised, and, I believe the prospects for the development, not only of St. John's Church, but for the development of that Bath area for tourists and also for Barbadians, because there are Barbadians who will pay too. It is something that we have to look at pursuing.

As it stands now, the nature trail does not involve any alienation of agricultural land. It is a trail along the spring where the manager used to travel to get down to the bottom of that field just above Congor Bay, so it is not alienating any agricultural land. The other land at the bottom that the cows used to graze on, there is plenty of land for that and there are not many people now, who bring their cows down into Bath anymore because there is a lot of other land which is not under production above the hill and also below Sargeants Street. But, the point is that the development of the National Park at Bath is something that I think is important and I think it should be given encouragement. It is not involving the alienation of any agricultural land and in addition to that I hope that the ADC sees fit to get some of that land into the hands of the banana farmers. They are doing well since the government has put in the feeder roads. We are now trying to develop the irrigation system, they want more land and I believe that based on the success they have met so far, that the ADC should develop a commitment to giving them some more land in that area whether on long lease or selling it or whatever.

Those are the major points I wanted to make in relation to Bath. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to make an intervention on this very important area of agriculture. At this present time at the Barbados Workers Union Labour College we are host to some twenty persons from the Caribbean, particularly from Guyana, Jamaica, Dominica and our own country who have been brought together by the Frederich Ebert Stiftung and the International Federation of Plantation Agriculture and Allied Workers.

Most of these persons are senior members of Trade Unions and they are looking at agriculture towards the year 2 000 in terms of establishing policies that will inform the approach to be taken by trade unions in assessing where agriculture goes in this region. We in the trade union movement from time to time bring our members together to reflect on the important issues – education, technology, treatment of the environment, etc. I am sure they are going to be very happy to hear the level of debate that has so far in my presence entertained this august Chamber.

One of the concerns we have about agriculture is in the area of human resources and it seems to me that it is an issue that has to be given very close attention.

12.00 noon.

When we look at agriculture in Barbados, we are looking mainly at the sugar industry because unfortunately there is still that dialectical relationship between sugar and non-sugar agriculture. It seems to me that there is a certain tension between these areas when, in fact, I believe that that tension need not exist and that in fact sugar and non-sugar should work very, very closely and productively for the advancement of our country. But it seems to me that when we look at the sugar industry both at the level of management as well as the level of manual labour that we are experiencing difficulties which I think will be exacerbated in the future. I find it very difficult to see where the successor generation to the plantation managers and so on will be coming from, because it does not seem to me at this particular point in time that there is any particular desire for young people to be rushing into the sugar industry at the level of management and so on. I believe that a lot of the attorneys and the managers are not the youngest people.

When we look at the labour force, I think the same thing is happening. The labour force in sugar seems to be aging and aging significantly and there is not that recruitment of the labour force that it would seem to me would sustain the level of agricultural production that I hear sometimes mooted in Barbados. I do not believe that we will be able to replace all that labour by mechanization down the line.

I see it as a matter of concern that we look at human resources development as it applies to agriculture and that we pay particular attention to it now because we are talking about replacing in the future and we cannot wait until the time is upon us to replace. We have to think about it at this particular time. I believe there are about 7 or 12 CARICOM countries that have about twenty per cent of the labour force involved in agriculture. In Barbados, it is likely to be about 9 to 10 per cent and it has been declining. This is important. Agriculture is very, very important but we cannot get people going into agriculture. We can talk as much as we like. We can talk about land reform and that sort of thing. If we do not have the human component, agriculture will not be going anywhere. I think we have to be very, very particular at this point in time to start to send messages out there in terms of the successor generations and how they will relate to agriculture. As I said, this is at both levels – management and control as well as at the level of the field workers, the ones who have to go out there in the field or factory and do the work.

Now there are a number of associations we have had with agriculture in the past that perhaps have not led to motivation for people to come into the industry. I believe that while recognizing that we still have to start looking at it again because I believe agriculture in the future must be significantly different from what it was in the past. I believe that we have to think in terms of transforming agriculture. We have to understand that even when we will have people in the fields they might be quite different workers than the ones in the past and certainly our managers have to be trained in a different way also. The managers have to be trained in all of the skills that we will expect in a modern agricultural sector. They must be trained in things like Agricultural Management, Production Technology, and Farm Machinery Management. They should have some knowledge of bio-technology and sea technology and all of those other things that are vitally important for the future. In fact, I believe that what we should be aiming for apart from the fact that we will always have some large plantations, because I do not see us getting out of those in the future, is the establishment of farms.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South mentioned the fact that he has had some experience in setting up cooperatives. Certainly, that is one of the weakest areas of cooperative developments that we have had in Barbados. I am referring to the area of agricultural cooperatives. Those who have experience in agricultural cooperatives, both in setting them up and the legal ramifications of establishing them, I think will have to stand by to give our people some help in this area. Because it seems to me that once the opportunity provides itself for the establishment of some farms... Of course, that will follow through from land reform.

I think it is very, very important that we start to rationalize the use of land in agriculture in Barbados and that we should make some agricultural lands available to the young people to move into. I am not saying that we should make the advances in terms of rationalizing the land and then go and look for the young people. I think we have to set up a policy of training our young people and introducing them to take up an agricultural career and providing the training. I think that I am on correct ground when I say that the Democratic Labour Party has already made it clear that it will be establishing an institution for teaching about agriculture at the Community College. I think it is a step that is long overdue, but I would like to compliment the party for moving in that direction. It is something that I would have liked to have seen in existence for a very long time. But I am hoping that if we can attract people to that college and provide them with the requisite training, the corollary of that is that you cannot provide people with the training and then you do not give them access to use that training. The corollary has to be that we will make land available to these young people and encourage them to go into farming.

I believe that sugar will be with us for sometime even though we recognize the difficulties and fall in prices, *et cetera*. Sometimes I think we exaggerate its importance in terms of foreign exchange. Sugar brings us about 12 per cent of the foreign exchange that we earn in our country. Perhaps Jamaica is about 15 per cent I think. Those are the figures that I have. But this is a relatively big foreign exchange earner and people are afraid that if sugar goes that

we will collapse. I really do not have that fear but at the same time I am saying that we do not have a position where we want to push it out. We recognize that sugar is going to be here for sometime. I certainly would like to think that we would inform ourselves in Barbados with a philosophy that is underpinned by a concept of agricultural diversi-fication. To me, that is the future of our country. Agricul-ture must be very basic to our economic production. It must be seen as being fundamental, but we have to get out of the thinking that agriculture means sugar and sugar alone.

I think those of us who pass through St. John on excursions and so on – we do not have the opportunity to get as much time as our good friend, the Honourable Member for St. John – we see the fields of bananas recognizing in our own short lifetime, speaking for myself of course and not everybody here, how there has been transformation. There was a time when you passed through St. John there were a few banana fields. Nowadays you see large fields. It is to me gratifying that when you are passing through St. John it is like when you are passing through St. Lucia, the kind of scene you would expect in St. Lucia. Again, in recent time – apparently this is under some difficulty – passing through St. George in the area of Constant we were seeing the paw-paw fields and so on and, of course, I am accustomed to passing through Spencers and seeing the cotton. Now these are developments that I think we take too lightly. At one time you could see yams and potatoes. We experimented on them. We sort of backed away from that. At another time we tried with cotton, paw-paw, and bananas, and then we backed away again.

It seems to me that we have to develop a policy that is based on principle and programming, that brings a certain constancy in our approach to diversify in agriculture. This is going to mean, as I have said, dealing with a different type of person and a different mentality. I think now we have to be training those persons. We have to be getting those persons involved because it is very difficult for those persons who were established in a particular area and have a certain set about things to change. But I believe that in the future we have to be developing the kinds of persons that we want to be involved in sugar agriculture.

Now Mr. Chairman, I recognize that the Democratic Labour Party's Administration took a position in relation to Landell Mills and I thought that was a good approach to take to get a study and analyze it. You might not take it in its entirety but try to implement some of the recommenda-tions of that study. I am sure, Sir, that this is a good opportunity for this Chamber to hear what steps have been taken in pursuit of the intention of the Government to implement certain aspects of the Landell Mills.
12.10 p.m.

I think it is fair to say that I am aware basically of some of the things that are happening and I would like again to compliment the Government on the fact that it is moving in looking at this study in a tripartite manner, that in fact the trade union movement has been involved in some of the discussions and of course, the members of the industry. I believe that this is the way forward. When we are making these kinds of path-breaking moves in agriculture, it is important that there is tripartite discussion and furthermore, I believe that it is important too that the public becomes aware of the changes we are making and sometimes, too, that the public should be brought into the process of decision-making. Certainly, if we want to transform an area as important as sugar, I believe that the public should be involved in making some inputs into any changes, especially if they are changes that are likely to be institution-wise, changes that will impact very much on our economy and our society. So, I believe that that process of dialogue must continue and I would be very grateful for any comments to this Chamber about where Landell Mills is going at this time.

It seems to me, too, that sometimes when we recognise that the sugar industry is a private sector industry and has been for several years and we give them a lot of deference that we are not doing them a great deal of good. It seems to me that when the persons who control sugar are criticised and criticised effectively, that they tend to try to make some changes. I have seen some attempts recently by Sugar Industries Ltd., for instance, in transforming the transport sector, where they have got away from the small vehicles and they are now consolidating the large vehicles, which is likely to make some economies for them in terms of their transport costs. It seems to me that if you don't criticise institutions sometimes, they don't really try to use their internal resources in order to improve themselves. It seems that they would sit and as far as possible derive benefits from the society, especially if we are willing to give away the kinds of funds that they ask for unquestioningly. It seems to me that we have to take a principled position that anytime we are taking these public funds and putting them into any private-sector organisation we must always be entirely critical of them. We must ask for information from them and that information must be good and firm information and we must be able to relate to them and to introduce them to the kinds of strictures that we want.

This leads me, Sir, to a discussion of the extant legislation that relates to sugar – the Sugar Act of 1982 and the Sugar Support Price Act of 1982. I think the two Acts were passed around the same time. I think that these are Acts that have to be looked at very seriously again. To me, they are replete with flaws. I think the Honourable Member for St. Joseph might have known something about them because if I am not mistaken, I think that he would have had some responsibility at the time when they were introduced. Certainly, it was at the time when they were rationalising sugar and were getting rid of all of the levies and passing on some of the funds to the sugar industry. It seems to me that those bills were vitally flawed in

conceptions and therefore flawed in their use as a practice. For instance, the information that is supposed to be supplied under the Sugar Industries Act, to me, cannot be very useful in terms of assessing sugar when that information comes into the appropriate Ministries. First of all, the information that is given relates only to sugar and has nothing to do with non sugar. To me, that is bound to render askew information in terms of income on these estates which we know grow both sugar and non sugar, but they are only reporting on the sugar income. So, the information that comes in cannot be used for any policy decision, because it almost means less information. Furthermore, that Act gives the onus to Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. to produce the information, but the information should come from the fields and Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. does not own the fields. It means therefore that you are giving responsibility to one body to report on another body when they have no direct control over that body.

It seems to me that there are other flaws in terms of the research and development fund that has been established in that research and development committee. I think that zeroes in also on sugar research and sugar development when at this time I think we really need agricultural research and agricultural development. I hope, Sir, that those Acts will be looked at and modernised as part, perhaps, of the same Landell Mills study.

I will end by saying, Sir, that I believe that agriculture is vitally important and I believe that we have to be looking at the human resources aspect of agriculture. To me, that is the most important, and tied in with that, the whole question of land use, land reform and so on. I believe even so that even though we will have sugar with us for some time, we have to look very critically at sugar and we must send strong messages to those who are involved in the control and the management of sugar that we expect the best from them once they are going to be getting public funds in that industry. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make just two very brief points in this area. One relates to agriculture insofar as it treats and deals and looks at the new economic trading blocs that are setting themselves up. One should be recognising that although we are ourselves not necessarily involved in too much production and export of the crop of bananas, that in fact there is a very significant threat to regional bananas in the Caribbean from the Latin group and their dollar bananas in the same way that there is likely to be a concern for the future of those agricultural products which we have historically had protective markets for. The point I want to make out of this is that there is increasing need therefore for the Government and the people of Barbados, in any strategies which we decide to embark upon, to recognise that it is not only important to look at the value of the labourer and his productive capacity but we need to look at greater efficiencies within the management of the people who are in the industry itself and we ought to be able to recognise the need for greater efficiencies in the use of land, since our capacity in that particular regard is so very limited.

I have no doubt, Mr. Chairman that these comments would have been made before. The central reason for my rising is to draw the attention of this Chamber to one very disturbing problem that presents itself within the ambit of this Ministry's portfolio. Institutions which benefit from taxpayers' money such as CARDI does, institutions which enjoy, or where the workers enjoy good salaries and, as I understand them, magnificent benefits, where these institutions also manage to get from the Government particular privileges are institutions that the Government may need to have another look at.

CARDI, Sir, is one such institution where, as I understand, the workers there, not the Board, but the institution itself, has managed to receive certain diplomatic immunities. This, I suppose, allows the institution itself to be able to conduct its business in such a way as to avoid some of the – I shouldn't say the harassment – but some of the details and paraphernalia that might otherwise attend such an institution. I have no problem with what kind of status it gets, diplomatic or otherwise, if when it receives that kind of status it is used in such a way as to advance the institution. On the other hand, Mr, Chairman, I am very bothered when that status is given and the very status that the institution obtains from the Governments of the region, including the Government of Barbados to make it more efficient and better able to function for the people of Barbados and for the people of the region, it then proceeds to use those privileges to prevent the workers within the institution from exercising certain democratic rights which they may have – the right to organise, the right to bargain collectively and the right of due process. This institution is on record across the entire Caribbean, Mr. Chairman, as refusing even before the Courts to allow workers who work for that institution, unless they are at the managerial level, to enjoy the benefits of due process. In short, they believe that because the Governments of the Caribbean, including the Government of Barbados, have given to them certain diplomatic privileges that they can fire whom they feel like, with no consequences whatever to themselves.

Asides.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: CARDI. Yes. CARDI, Mr. Chairman.
12.20 p.m.

They have even gone beyond this and they have refused where there have been collective agreements across the Caribbean to say to the particular trade unions that have been involved, that they are no longer going to respect the obligations that they have under those collective agreements, and that they will refuse to deal with those trade unions anymore. They will be prepared more to deal

with associations of workers and if they feel like, treat with them. This has been so across the Caribbean starting with Trinidad. Only in the case of Dominica have they had a situation where they have been called upon to review their position because in Dominica the opinion of the Attorney General has been that they cannot function in those circumstances within the Commonwealth of Dominica.

I am aware that some of the leaders within the region are themselves not fully aware of the underpinnings of that arrangement. I am aware that some of them are quite prepared to look this matter over and make sure that this kind of denial of the freedoms and rights of a people are not destroyed by other groups of people who themselves are enjoying the benefits of taxpayers' money while not wanting other people to have certain rights and privileges which should be theirs as a very natural human right for themselves as persons or for their institutions regarding their trade unions.

We are very concerned, Sir, not only in Barbados but organised labour across the Caribbean – I think I can be allowed to speak for that from time to time – at this wanton disrespect by an institution, as CARDI is an institution that is receiving grants of money from the taxpayers of Barbados and from other Governments in this region. I urge upon the Government, Mr. Chairman, and the relevant Minister of Agriculture, I urge upon all the Governments in the region that we should, as a matter of despatch, speak to this issue and prevent a matter which may otherwise become very explosive from unnecessarily having to reach those levels.

I am finding it particularly disconcerting, Sir, because once you speak to some of those officials, you get the impression that the one official you speak to understands that there is this instruction not to treat with the trade unions and not to deal with any workers' problems even including his dismissal, but that he does not know who gave the instruction. He recommends you to another level of officialdom. When you speak to that other level and higher level of officialdom he or she also does not know what is responsible. It seems to me as though there is a royal run around of passing the buck and taking the employees at the lower levels within CARDI for a ride. I do not think that is fair for any institution, private or public.

I think it is particularly devilish when that institution is public and when the very workers themselves from their taxation are paying for the on-going employment of those who enjoy the special privileges and are thereby denying the others their rights. I do not think I need to belabour the point more than this because it may be news to some of the Members here. It is a very real problem from Jamaica to Trinidad, Barbados, St. Lucia and the whole lot of them. It is very important that we do not allow anymore grass to grow under our feet in this particular issue.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, this has been a long debate. I would say today's session has been very constructive. I am certain that the future of agriculture could benefit from the contribution of some of today's speakers. There have been many questions so I have to start immediately. I will start by saying this is a public document. It is called the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries. It is the agriculture sector plan for 1988-93. It is public. It has been discussed very widely. If there are any Honourable Members in this House who have an interest particularly in it copies are available at the Ministry of Agriculture.

First of all let me deal with the topic we started with that we spent a lot of time on, and that is land use and sugar. In this plan the projected land use for 1990-92 is as follows: Sugar cane to be harvested annually 12 160 hectares. If you multiply that by 2.2 you should roughly get around 26 000 acres. Preparation or thrown-out lands – 2 430 for a total of 14 590 hectares devoted to sugar cane which would give you something in the vicinity of 32 000 to 33 000 hectares of sugar cane. Cotton – 2 430 hectares.

Let me start and spend a little time on sugar cane. This Government and this Minister when I was the Minister of Agriculture have always made it very clear that Government intended to diversify around sugar and not out of sugar. I have repeated this on almost every occasion I had the opportunity to speak. As was said earlier by my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. John, one has to remember that the sugar industry is primarily a private industry. It is Government's responsibility to set the atmosphere. I disagree totally with the Honourable Members who spoke about the lack thereof.

I can tell you that this Honourable Member when he was responsible for agriculture did everything humanly possible to develop a good relationship between the Government and the agricultural sector. As I said, I believe I have succeeded in certain ways. Others I have not succeeded in. I did try. The Government's agricultural policy I have made known that we intend to let the industry know what the intended support is, offer them a price up front. Therefore, it is the best price that the Government can afford, taking the demands for all the other services into consideration.

This brings me to the first point about the drastic reduction in the subsidies. Most of that subsidy has been earmarked for the sugar industry. We are not expecting in this year's programme to provide any subsidies to the sugar industry due to the price they are likely to be getting for sugar. As a result, the amount that has been earmarked in the subsidy, it has been reduced from $8 million to $2.2 million. I cannot give the final price now since I am not dealing with this matter on a daily basis. The note says it is not anticipated there will be need for price support payment this year, hence the reduction in the amount from $8.2

million to $2 million. However, if the need for price support arises, it will be provided through a supplementary as used to be in the past. This is the reason when the estimates were being put the best information at that time was there would be no need for the price support policy.

Secondly, I hope that the industry will realise that the Government has gone as far as it possibly can in extending the hand to them. Negotiations are now going on about the debt management programme which is between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture. I am hopeful that an agreeable solution will be found to tackle that very important topic.

The other area I need to deal with very quickly is the Government's policy on cotton. Once again I think that the Government has done everything humanly possible to encourage the private sector to get into cotton production. Because let us understand it, this Government has the same advisers as the previous Government and nobody in the Ministry of Agriculture could expect to use the Government lands for large scale cotton production for any length of time. It would not work. But let me explain what has been the problem. We have had a commitment to our Japanese suppliers to supply minimum quantities of cotton lint. We have been discussing at length and every possible assistance was offered. The last thing I did as Minister of Agriculture was that I went to the Government and got an agreement to provide an addition 25 cents per pound for seed cotton making it $2.42 plus 25 cents which is $2.67 a pound for seed cotton in an effort to entice the plantation people to go into some cotton production preferably about 10 acres per plantation which would give us from the plantation section approximately 800 acres. The last I heard was that they were asking for $2.82 per pound.
12.30 p.m.

When we did all the costing, I had been advised by my technical people that with average husbandry – because people like Foursquare at one time got 1 500 pounds of cotton per acre. Foursquare went up to 2 022 pounds of seed cotton per acre. Foursquare has been one of the best cotton farmers. The private sector people have been getting on an average when they spread it over 10 acres of about 1 200 to 1 400 pounds of seed cotton per acre. All the information available to me is that they can make a profit out of $2.52. I went as far as $2.67 per pound but to date we have not been able to get the private sector people to do any cotton. You had the chicken and the egg situation. I explained to them at that time that in order for them to get more at the primary stage we have to turn that gulf where we can have some value added to pass back to the primary stage and we seem not to have been able to get the message.

The answer to that is: "No, the Government does not intend to do large acreage of cotton on their land." They were trying to bridge that gap hoping in the meantime that discussions will continue with the private sector and that they would come in and join the Government to develop the cotton industry which is a viable industry and a possible foreign exchange earner.

I can only make the appeal once again for the private sector people to get into cotton.

I will go through and I will take some notes very quickly. What I want to discuss is that it has been said that the agricultural sector has collapsed. These are the words. I want now to put the contribution of agriculture to the GDP for the last 10 years. Agricultural contribution to the GDP for the last 10 years. In 1980 sugar 94.2, non-sugar 49.5 for a contribution of 143.7. 1981 has been a very good year, sugar 169.2 million, non-sugar 59 for a contribution, a record in the last 10 years of 228.3 million to the GDP. 1982 a contribution of 112 million. Listen for it. 1983 a contribution of 135 million and roughly 75 from sugar. It is to be noted that from 1982 non-sugar agriculture has been contributing more to the GDP than sugar. This is what people do not seem to understand. From 1982 non-sugar has been contributing more to GDP than sugar. 1982 $112 million to GDP. 1983 $135.6 million to GDP of which non-sugar is $78.6 million. 1984 $139.2 million. 1985 they say that is the cross over year $138 million to GDP. From 1986 the sector that has collapsed – contribution to GDP $146.4 million which was $8 million more that in 1985. 1987 a contribution of $171.6 million to GDP. This is a sector that has collapsed with non-sugar $102.9 million, sugar $68.7 million. 1988 $172.9 million to GDP, $105 million from non-sugar and $67 million from sugar. The last we have is the year 1989 $152.7 million of which $100.5 million is non-sugar and $52.5 million is sugar.

So to make the emotive statement that the agricultural sector has collapsed in the face of these figures that are available is not only being emotive but not absolutely squaring with the fact as given in Barbados. One has to be very careful.

Let me continue to show following the statistics that are available in the Barbados Economic Report. Let me take livestock and dairy production. Livestock and dairy production from 1986, the only year prior to 1986 that pork has had a higher production was in 1982 where we had 1 300 produced. From 1986 we had 1 193, 1 296, 1 175 and 1 066 higher than any other year besides 1982. Take beef. The production of beef this year and last year has been the highest on record in Barbados 832.2 tonnes of beef.

If you go back now why has that been successful as a policy? When I went into the Ministry there was a problem with the marketing of beef. I looked at the statistics of the importation of beef and it was my view that no way in Barbados, when you were bringing in so much beef, that the local people should not be able to sell local beef. In conjunction with the Minister of Trade, at that time the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, we called in the major

importers of beef in Barbados and we said to them we are not going to put it on licence or anything but you have a moral obligation to buy some of this local beef. They said to us that the problem they had was that when they bring in beef from outside, they bring it in in boxes, a box of clod, rib roast, sirloin inside round, outside round, *et cetera* and therefore they would have a difficulty. If they buy the carcass they have this problem.

In conjunction with that I went to the BMC and the BMC then went and got one of the best butchers in Barbados, a chap that we got from the Goddard's Group, the best butcher in Barbados, a chap who was trained in meat science. I cannot remember what is his name now. We brought him to BMC.

Aside.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: He was a trained meat scientist. He introduced a programme where BMC then bought the animal on the hoof, brought them into the BMC, they were slaughtered and then cut and packed and the meat was then sold to the distributors in boxes the same way you have clod, *et cetera.* Therefore as a result we had an increase in beef.

Asides.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: The same thing happened to pork.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: There was not a growth of pork just overnight like that. In conjunction with the Barbados Agricultural Society which I gave $250 000 a year as a subvention from 22, part of the programme agreed on was that they would bring in increased and improved genetic stock in the pig industry. As a result BAS then went out and brought in increased genetic stock for their members.

12.40 p.m.

They then subsequently as a result of this, as well as a result of a series of seminars held by the feed company, had a complete improvement in the quality of pigs, because the persons who were keeping pigs did not realise that when you are producing pigs for the first 70 per cent of the growth of a pig, 80 per cent of the feed went towards the building of muscles and lean, but after a pig has reached about 70 per cent of the weight it should be marketed on, 60 per cent of the feed goes toward building fat and therefore a lot of people were over feeding because they thought that if they over fed the pig, it would get big, but they did not realise that when they over feed it was not the best because they were building fat which is lighter, as well as they were building fat, which reduced the quality of the carcass. As a result of a long programme of education the feeding regime was adopted and therefore we have moved to the stage now where I have seen during the time I was Minister where the back fat has been reduced on pigs and where for the first time in Barbados that you can now market a pig at 225 pounds in 135 days of weaning instead of 180 days from weaning as a result of the programme the Ministry of Agriculture introduced, as well as the reduction in the price of feed which in conjunction with the Minister of Trade at that time you can see.

The mutton industry is the same thing and let us take the poultry industry. The poultry industry last year produced something like 10 730 tons of poultry meat. The highest before that was in 1986. In 1981 it was 600 000 tons, in 1982, 6 700 and we are now at 10 000 tons which is nearly an increase of 80 per cent and if you follow the statistics most of it has been done during 1986 to 90 under this regime.

The eggs, there has been an increase production. Let me say this about Landell Mills study about what they called the resource costs. The Landell Mills study as far as the resource cost is concerned is very, very faulty and this is one of the areas that we do not agree with Landell Mills on, that it is a faulty technique because they are talking about resource to produce a dollar in foreign exchange and they don't take the generation of employment, they don't take the value added in Barbados, they don't take the variation of any move in price of feed, etc., and in my opinion that is one area in Landell Mills that needs a lot of work, this area of resource cost in Barbados.

The same thing has happened with milk, we have seen milk moving up to 12.821 million gallons from around 7 000. So, as I said to make the statement that the agricultural sector has collapsed in the face of these statistics I have just proven is being extremely alarmist and I think it is not a fair commentary to what has happened.

As I said, one has to understand, let me take the sector I am talking about, the peasant farmer's contribution to sugar. The peasant farmers contribution to agriculture continues, but the peasant farmers are now doing poultry, they are now doing pork meat, they are doing chicken and they are doing beef because as far as the peasant farmers are concerned these areas are generating to them more income than sugar so obviously they have moved out of sugar but they are still contributing to the GDP through agriculture.

Few of the other areas that have been asked on by Honourable Member for St. Joseph – the plight of small farmers support. I have just given you the Democratic Labour Party's policy on land use. We have followed this up in our policy in our Manifesto. If you look on page 11 in our Manifesto – we believe that in order to carry out that land use policy we need to carry out a rigid zoning of agricultural land in Barbados. This is a document of the

House already, Mr. Chairman. If you look at page 11 we said that agricultural land use planning will be further intensified and zoning established as follows:

Zone 1 – Plantation/Agricultural Land – no subdivision.

Zone 2 – Intensive farming – Farm size in excess of 18 acres, because we are of the view that a farm size in excess of 18 acres with or without irrigation, if properly farmed, can keep a family at a level of return that will make it viable for them, so we decided the second zone would be farm sizes in excess of 18 acres.

Zone 3 – would be small farms in the irrigated zone – farm sizes in excess of 11 acres.

And there the Honourable Member for Christ Church South made a point which I want to go on and that is that it is the policy of this Government to utilise every available gallon of water, not being used in the domestic system of Barbados for irrigation. The policy is being seen now in our Three Houses Project in which we have gone ahead and we have done a project using the Three Houses springs, where we will put down a dam, when there is run off, and then from the dam we will pump right through the existing canal as well as by some piping to irrigate one hundred acres of land in that Three Houses area for fruit and vegetables.

We have also done the same thing at St. John for the St. John farmers, there was a spring existing near Castle Grant, there was a spring and we have gone in and used that spring water for the Banana farmers in St. John.

We are doing the same thing in Shorey Village in St. Andrew where there is a spring. We are going to take the dam, using the dam at Greenland and we are going to irrigate about 40 acres of land at Shorey Village for peasant farmers. The policy is that we have gone out and we have tested and mapped all available sources of irrigation in Barbados.

This year the rural development scheme should be extended to Neils, irrigation as well as extension to Ruby, and we are to use a well at Wheelers. So, the policy of this Government is wherever there is available water, because one of the problems in non-sugar agriculture in Barbados is that during the wet season, where you have a lot of rain you are subject to a lot of diseases and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph raised the point about family strips, etc., and diseases and white fly etc. Let me give him what I understand is the problem. Previous to about five years ago the insecticides and pesticides used in Barbados were those very strong insecticides that have been banned in most places and that have been seen to be possible causes of cancer etc. and therefore the pesticides board in Barbados has gradually been removing from the importation into Barbados what we call the dirty dozen of the insecticides and pesticides. As a result of that most of the pesticides now are pyrethoids. These are artificial pesticides but there are more environmentally kind than the other ones but as a result of using those harsher pesticides before the pests in Barbados built up a resistance, so that with the ones that are less potent we are having a difficulty. We also discovered that the stronger pesticides before killed off the natural predators of the pests in Barbados and now we are at the stage where things like the lady bird and those that normally assisted before have almost been wiped out. By using pyrethoids, which are not as potent as the other ones, you are therefore as a result having an increase in pests in Barbados.

12.50 p.m.

But we also know as a matter of fact that as you increase acreage under any crop you have a higher percentage of pests invading them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has five minutes to conclude.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: So you can move from ten acres and have no pests, but the moment you take that to 100 acres you provide additional lands for a host of pests. Therefore, as Barbados increases its acreage in non-sugar crop, you are going to get new and additional pests which have to be tackled.

Mr. Chairman, in the last five minutes that I have, let me see if I can find some of the more potent points that were brought up. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who made a statement which I found surprising. When he was talking about cutting up of lands going out of agriculture, he said that we could take out River. Now this is the same Honourable Member who when he was Minister of Agriculture saddled the Government with River Plantation buying it from DaCostas. They bought it from DaCostas and they allowed DaCostas to retain all of the non-arable land which DaCosta would subsequently sell at exorbitant prices for residential use. River, as he so rightly said, has the worst quality land in the whole of Barbados. The ADC has been losing on an average of $600 000 a year on River, because when you have rain in River it floods out at least 300 acres of River. It takes between 4 and 5 months before it can dry out. Therefore, River has been the yolk around the neck of the ADC and I find it strange that that Honourable Member can now say that you can take out and sell River, and make River a golf course. I find that so strange to make River a golf course.

Mr. Chairman, the BMC. Once again the Honourable Member for Christ Church South made a statement which was very interesting and I have learnt something from him which is new to me. I never knew that the BMC had taken over solely the function. My understanding at that time when I was responsible is that there was an arrangement between BMC and the main exporter, whose name cannot

be mention, for that exporter to source the potatoes and use the facilities of the BMC for shipping. Unfortunately for us there came a time on the London Market when the African potatoes came in before us and flooded the market. As a result of flooding the market with potatoes from Africa at a far reduced price than we could get them there because it is a bulky product, there were times when the BMC could not market or off load the potatoes as far as they were coming in. I know of the fact where some of the potatoes were not marketed, but my instruction at that time was that the farmers should have been paid because there was a commitment given to the farmers by BMC. I am surprised that that had not been honoured and, therefore, the programme has kind of broken down because the BMC had been working very closely with that particular exporter and many others. I hope that gets back on schedule because it is an important concept. I do not believe that the BMC has physical ability or the managerial ability to do all the marketing and coordinate the field activities, because marketing is a very intricate thing. You have to coordinate from production back to shipping in order to have your programme and make sure that there is a supply at the appropriate time. There was a comprehensive programme drawn up particularly for potatoes where I know we had reached large acreage in tonnage and I hope that programme can get back on schedule.

As the Honourable Member for Christ Church South also stated, unfortunately we have not been able to solve the anthracnose problem which is responsible for the almost complete destruction of the Lisbon yams which is the one that has been planted overseas. The researchers have been working. The Ministry has even brought a researcher from one of the research institutes in London working specifically on the anthracnose, but I do not know if any solution has been found to date for the problems of the anthracnose.

Fisheries, very quickly – I find a note but speaking from memory provision has been made that there has been an offer to the Government by a private enterprise person to provide ice facilities at Oistins on terms and conditions that we thought that were acceptable to the Government. As far as I know, the Government has accepted the offer and the person should have been informed. Therefore, I believe that will be solved very, very quickly and that would be out of the way.

Markets – The Fairchild Street Market, because of the extension of the bus stand, I understand it is to be knocked down and when the Fairchild Street Bus Stand is extended we will then have a new market. Cheapside – after we examined and discussed the plans when we came in and found out from the persons who use Cheapside and after we also had some consultations with some market specialists who came in from Massachusetts, the feeling was that the plan for the Cheapside Market did not allow enough pedestrian walk-through traffic and, therefore, it was not the most modern up-to-date and we therefore spent some money altering those plans. I believe this year the first section of the implementation of that plan for Cheapside should be in place.

Cheapside Public Market – Let me see quickly while I read here. The Bridgetown Fisheries Market – Yes, we have had many problems with the Bridgetown Fisheries Market.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: One minute, Mr. Chairman. I am winding up, Mr. Chairman. On the Bridgetown Fisheries Market, yes we have had many problems and as a result the Bridgetown Fisheries Complex was not turned over to the market people until all the problems were sorted out and the problems were particularly in the area of refrigeration. We had a lot of problems and we have just voted money for an additional ice plant at Bridgetown. Let me explain again. When Bridgetown came on stream, there were three private ice plants in Barbados. You had one which was run by Ince. There was one down by Stoutes as well as Miller had a facility as well. But as soon as the Government came on stream due to a series of coincidences, all three went out of production. As a result, the Bridgetown Complex had to carry the brunt of the burden which proved inadequate and, therefore, the Government had to put in money for an additional ice plant. Therefore, I believe that during the next 9 months we should have two additional ice facilities on stream, that is an additional one in Bridgetown and one in Oistins which should take care of all of the facilities and make the fishermen fairly comfortable as far as that is concerned.

Mr. Chairman, let me end with two things on ADC. I think persons have been unreasonable and unfair to ADC.
1.00 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph said that ADC contributions to sugar cane this year has been only 1 500 tons as against 1980 when it was 45,000 tons. Obviously, if ADC has been given the brunt of the cutting edge for the non-sugar diversification programme, it is moving out of sugar and therefore, if it is moving out of sugar and using sugar only as a rotation crop for the other one, we must expect that there will be a reduction in production. He should also follow this by showing the ADC's contribution to another non-sugar crop as a balance. ADC, I must say, has always been changed very rashly. We just heard of the quality of the land at River. ADC has something like 1 500 acres of land in the Scotland District. The ADC is the only large-scale landowner and farmer in the Scotland District. Everybody else besides the ADC has gone out of agriculture in the Scotland District. When you take ADC's debt portfolio and that is acreage as against debt, it is interesting and the Members of the Opposition should listen that out of 141 plantations indebted to Barbados National Bank, ADC's debt ratio, and that is loan as against acreage

made ADC No. 16. There were 124 plantations in Barbados which had a higher debt ratio owing to the BNB and therefore it is not....

Asides.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: So, therefore I would say that ADC has to be seen against the background. Let's take for argument's sake, what did the ADC do this year? I agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, it cannot continue, but this year because we have not yet been able to get any of the plantations to go into large production of cotton, in order to keep our people, ADC had to put nearly 800 acres in cotton and yes, the production has been below what we expect. But, let me give an example of agriculture....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But you will have to do that in two minutes.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: One minute will do. Let me give you an example of how agriculture is open to nature. Spring Hall, up until six weeks ago, had one of the best crops of cotton seen anywhere for a long time and out of a clear, blue sky you had about three weeks of high winds that completely scorched the acreage of cotton in Spring Hall. Within three weeks, Spring Hall went from one of the most promising crops of cotton seen in Barbados for many years to almost a disaster due to a natural event that the Ministry and nobody had any control over.

Mr. Chairman, let me thank all of those who have contributed in this debate and I now beg that this Head stand part.

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

The question that the sum of $35,046,469 under Head 25 as amended Ministry of Agriculture stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. Chairman reported progress and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. today.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

HEAD 35 MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AS AMENDED $14,193,872

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the appropriations under this Had are required to meet expenditure for financing the operations of the headquarters and of the missions overseas, fiscal year 1991–92. Under Programme 1, increases in the draft estimates are shown in the areas related to statutory personal emoluments, other personal emoluments, national insurance, health levy, in relation to rental of property and operating expenses and a slight increase for professional services. These are the main areas in respect to which increases in the current estimates are shown. You will note, Mr. Chairman, that there appear to be large increases in the area of statutory personal emoluments and other personal emoluments and these are easily understood. I don't think I need to explain that. Consequential increases in the areas relating to national insurance, health levy and so forth. In relation to rental of property and operating expenses which also show large increases, Honourable Members will recall that just about two or so weeks ago a supplementary provision was approved by this Honourable House in relation to rental of property and operating expenses which I explained on that occasion was because of the increases in the rents in relation to the properties overseas and in relation to the operating expenses. I explained the need for those increases so that you will find that the increase which appear in the present estimates reflect the supplementary provision which had been approved only two or so weeks ago.

In relation to Programme 2, which is Accommodation for Diplomatic Posts Abroad, the major increase in this area relates to the amount relating to the acquisition of property, $880,952, is in respect of the acquisition of a new chancery for the mission in Brussels and the value of that property which Government has agreed to purchase and in respect of which a deposit has been paid is BDS$1.2 million. A deposit of $400,000 has already been paid and the balance of some $880,952 is due on the purchase of that property so that the amount shown in the estimates of $880,952 is to meet the cost of payment of the balance of the purchase price on the acquisition of the property in Brussels.

There is consequent on the purchase of the property in Brussels, Mr. Chairman, the need for me at this time to move in an additional sum of...

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: There is, as I was indicating, the additional expenses connected with the purchase of the chancery and I therefore move that Head 35 as amended stand part.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister of Foreign Affairs mentioned the purchase of a new chancery in Brussels. Am I to understand that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already acquired the residence of the ambassador in Brussels? I am not quite sure what you are talking about.
2.20 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the geo-political situation in the world has been changing in recent times with respect to the developments in Europe and more recently the developments in the Middle East, the Gulf and the redefining of political lines, the chaos for a while and the reshaping of Eastern Europe, the priority that Europe is receiving from both the Western European countries and, indeed, the United States of America. The investment recently made by the United States in the Middle East probably will require something to be paid to them in return. Indications are, when one reads a whole set of journals, that a lot of resources for overseas development systems in one form or another – I do not mean direct cash grants, I am talking about trade and other arrangements – seem to be skewed now in favour of Eastern Europe and, undoubtedly, in the next year or two towards the Middle East.

We have been seeing in very recent times too the enterprises for America. A number of things arising from these developments will of necessity touch the foreign policy decisions of the Government of Barbados. I know that the Minister in introducing this particular Head only dealt with specific items of the Estimates. I would be glad if before the debate is over the Minister could tell the House some of the new policy changes that have been made as a result of the kind of developments I am talking about.

I want specifically to speak on this first intervention on matters relating to the Caribbean. I will get back to other matters later on if the need arises. I think it was either 1981 or 1982 when the Convention of the Law of the Sea was signed in Jamaica. One has not been hearing a lot since then in the developments of the Law of the Sea with particular reference to Barbados and the Caribbean. I would also want the Minister to tell us something about what has developed in recent years in respect of Government's policy in relation to the Law of the Sea.

I know that at one point the CARICOM States were awaiting technical assistance arising out of the new delimitations in respect of the exclusive economic zone and the 200-mile limit and the new arrangement in the national law in relation to the median line between states in an archipelago. A lot of work was to be done on this. It was talked about at several CARICOM meetings in past years. In recent times, I have not heard anything of what has been taking place in that particular area. I would also want to hear something in that regard.

A lot has been said also by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other people in Government about the harmonisation of the activities of those departments of Government that are involved in external work, the IDC, Export Promotion Corporation, Tourist Board and so on. The former Minister of Trade, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, I believe, on one occasion I recall alluded to the priority that Government at long last had intended the setting up of trade representatives in the missions overseas to look after this important aspect of the work.

Those of us who have had any relationship with those things would know that the system did not work very well in the past. There has been a lot of duplication and multiplication of efforts by the various external agencies. The posting of persons in the Foreign Service overseas in recent times has not suggested that the Government is serious about giving the overseas missions a greater role in trade promotion, searching after investments, and the like. I do not want to personalise it. I do not want to mention the names of persons who were assigned to posts overseas. Certainly, if you look at them in the last two or three years, you are certainly not looking at the kinds of people with the background to suggest that you are serious about using the missions overseas for that particular purpose.

Two or three weeks ago in this House, Mr. Chairman, the question was raised as to the position of honorary representatives overseas. The Minister of Foreign Affairs gave the House an assurance that the Ministry was trying to look for persons of a particular background who could assist the Government as honorary consuls and honorary representatives generally in the search for much needed investment and also looking at possibilities for the widening of exports. I would like the Minister of Foreign Affairs, before I speak of more, to give some kind of response to the four matters I have raised before we move into other areas.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. George South raised a number of issues. I will take the last one first. In relation to the position of honorary consuls and the promotion of Barbados' commercial trading and investment interest overseas, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is keenly interested in developing this aspect of Barbados' foreign policy. We want to place a greater emphasis on the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in assisting in developments of this kind. We are actually in the process of reviewing the work and the input of the Foreign Ministry and of the missions overseas with a view to restructuring them to ensure that they are able to perform the type of work which we expect of them. There will obviously be some restructuring necessary. There will obviously be the need to ensure that the quality of persons who are needed to do the kind of

promotional work which needs to be done are, in fact, placed in the missions. All this is part of the active immediate work upon which the Ministry is presently engaged. A couple of weeks ago when we dealt with this issue mention was made of the proposal which we had in relation to Toronto to appoint a development officer for the express purpose of promoting this aspect of Government's overseas work.
2.30 p.m.

We have gone quite some distance in negotiating the terms and conditions under which the person we feel is best able to do this work can work in the interest of the country and we shall shortly be in a position to conclude an arrangement with him. We will do it on an initial period for 2 years with the provision at the end of one year for either side to terminate it, if it is not working in the best interest of the country. We hope that this will be the beginning of a network of commercial representatives in all the major capitals where the interest of Barbados can be effectively promoted. So that what the Ministry is presently engaged in is trying to locate the most appropriate situations where these persons can be placed and the areas to be targetted. We want to look at the opportunities which are available for the promotion of business and industry in as many cities as possible throughout the world. Obviously we will have to ensure that the appropriate persons with the adequate capacity, intellectual and business capacity to deal with these issues are in place and we want to ensure that the mechanisms are fully in place for dealing with these matters.

It will of course also be necessary for the Ministry in its own internal relations at Headquarters to ensure that it has been so structured to effectively promote this aspect of the Government's work. Recently there was – just to indicate the interest which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is placing on this matter – a financial services workshop organized by the Central Bank of Barbados to deal with this whole matter of the promotion of the financial services and offshore business activities. The Foreign Ministry sent some 19 of its officers to participate in this course because we feel that the officers at Headquarters need to be fully attuned to and sensitized to what needs to be done from the point of view of promoting the offshore sector and that participation in workshops of the kind organized by the Central Bank would be a good starting point from which they can hone their skills for the purpose of dealing with these specific matters.

The Honourable Member for St. George South raised the question of the harmonization of the activities of Government agencies which are involved in the promotion of trade and industry. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under my direction, has already been participating in meetings with the other two executive Ministries, the Ministry of Trade and Commerce and the Ministry of Tourism as well with a view to trying to organize effective co-operation and collaboration between these Ministries because I have always felt that there has always tended to be too much isolation between departments of Government which are, in essence, all engaged in the same kind of work, which is promoting the trade and industrial and financial interest of Barbados overseas.

At that meeting obviously representatives of the Industrial Development Corporation, the Board of Tourism, the Export Promotion Agency and so forth were present and we are in the process of trying to formalize a structure for co-operation and collaboration in these areas. We have not yet concluded the work which needs to be done in this area but I assure Honourable Members that this matter is being given serious and very urgent attention with a view to ensuring that the agencies collaborate and operate effectively in the interest of the country.

One of the three points raised by the Honourable Member is in relation to the law of the sea and what developments were being made in this area. An awful lot has not happened in this regard but the Ministry is in fact looking at the wider issue of the problems of the region insofar as providing a regime for the management of the maritime affairs of the area are concerned. We have a responsibility – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that is – under the Marine Boundaries Act of course to map out and to chart the territorial waters of Barbados prior to demarcation of those boundaries. We are, from the point of view of what are the implications of the Law of the Sea Convention for Barbados, still in the process of trying to work with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs with a view to sorting out fully what are the total financial implications to Barbados. The Convention has not yet been ratified by us. But we are in the process of looking to see what the full financial implications are for us and we are in close collaboration with our CARICOM colleagues on this matter. In fact I have just got a note indicating that a meeting of senior officials is planned for Georgetown on March 25, 26. That is next week, is it not? So that active consideration is being given to this aspect of the Ministry's work as well.

I believe the other aspect of the questions raised by the Honourable Member related to – I am not too sure if I understand him correctly – what our position was in relation to what was happening in Eastern Europe.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Obviously with the change in the relations between countries and what has been happening in Eastern Europe we are of course looking at that area of the word. No definite decisions have been reached in relation to opening relations with other countries in Eastern Europe at the moment but we are actively looking at that, at the total implications of Europe for the region and when we have come to an organized position on that matter, after

consultation with our other CARICOM colleagues because this is an area in which CARICOM members are actively giving consideration – when all of that has been addressed – I am sure that we will be in a position to inform the House of what the settled position is in this regard

If there are other areas in respect of which Honourable Members would wish further information, I would try to give as much information as I can.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I understand the Minister in replying to the Honourable Member for St. George South has said that it is intended to use the Honorary Consuls for the promotion of trade relations with countries overseas.

Let me say, Sir, that I believe that there should be established, within the governmental system in Barbados, a corps of officers, professional officers, who have primary responsibility for Barbados' trade relations overseas, who are well trained to undertake those tasks and who will not be seen simply as though they are selling the products of any particular firm. I do not believe that this is a task that can be assigned to Honorary Counsuls. Honorary Counsuls have their uses but they do not in the last resort, belong to the professional foreign service as such and they are not as well placed to understand the overall thrust of Barbados' foreign policy as do our professional officers in the foreign service.
2.40 p.m.

They are not as well placed to understand the overall thrust of Barbados' foreign policy as do our professional officers in the foreign service.

Now, Sir, many years ago, we started assigning some of our officers training at the International Trade Centre in New York and other similar organisations which concentrate on trade matters. There has always been within the governmental system in Barbados a resistance among Ministries to cede territory, particularly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I am sure, the Minister, himself, must have experienced the reaction that you get at the civil service level and also at the Ministerial level because as the Minister has just said, everybody is a separate republic.

We had established a standing committee on the coordination of foreign policy. The purpose of that committee was to ensure that there were regular meetings, at least on a quarterly basis, and at one stage we had them on a monthly basis, of all departments of Government which had significant relations with foreign governments.

Every Ministry does have an external aspect, but those that had substantial dealings with foreign governments or international organisations or regional organisations and institutions would meet on a regular basis, usually under the Chairmanship of the Minister of External Relations or his Permanent Secretary and usually at the level of Permanent Secretary or Deputy Permanent Secretary, what is now Deputy Permanent Secretary but was formerly Senior Assistant Secretary level, to coordinate the foreign policy aspects of Government.

I still consider that as necessary and perhaps the Minister could let us know whether there is any mechanism of a similar nature still in existence to ensure that timely information is sent from Foreign Affairs to the other Ministries on the broader aspects of foreign policy and that there is a feedback from those Ministries as well on those aspects of their policy which have foreign policy implications.

Very often I found, as the Minister, that Ministers or Departments were doing business on a daily basis with foreign governments, either through their ambassadors or at other levels, people visiting, and there was no reporting back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as a result it was impossible to inform other departments of what was going on and very often the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Foreign Minister or Ambassadors and High Commissioners overseas became aware of decisions taken and the policy implications of these decisions from the foreign governments themselves, or the foreign institutions.

There is nothing more weakening of a Government's stand than to discover that the people with whom you are doing business know more about the different stances and minds of the Government than the Government's principal ministry or agency knows, and therefore, it is necessary in my view to keep a standing mechanism or body to ensure that coordination takes place.

I have adverted, Sir, to this again to enable me to go back to the idea of honorary consuls acting as our real trade commissioners. I do not believe that our policy should be built on that basis. There should be inter-changeability between the Ministry of Trade Officers in the Ministry of Trade, the Export Promotion Agency and I.D.C. and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and this should be a matter of course. There is no harm in officers being moved in and out of departments of Government. You may be five or seven years in one department, two or three in another, home based for a period of time, overseas based for another period of time, but we must move to that concept.

As the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was just saying, Ireland provides a good example of how this is done. In fact it is those countries that are able to move to this type of procedure which find themselves being able to service much better, their overseas interests. One of

the primary thrusts of Barbados' foreign policy must be to maximise the selling of our goods and services overseas and the attraction of investment.

We are now moving out of the area of foreign policy where there was a good deal of divide between the various blocks, where the political aspect of foreign policy was the dominant aspect for small nations such as ours, where, now, the dominant aspect must be to earn our way in the world. To be in there on the trade negotiations, whether it be the Uruguay round, whatever it is, we must be there up front and being as well trained, in fact, in many instances we must be better informed than the bigger countries, because we have less human resources with which to conduct our foreign policy. So, I would hope the Minister would tell us what is the Government's thinking along these lines and something much more concrete than building our development on Honorary Consuls, who, make no mistake about it, most of whom, no doubt, are probably not Barbadians in the first instance in any event, but many of whose first loyalties is to the countries in which they reside.

I want as well, under this Head, Sir, to raise the question of Barbados' Foreign Policy profile within the Caribbean. Obviously there is no divide between the political parties in the Caribbean today, that our primary foreign policy thrust must be within the Commonwealth Caribbean in the first instance. Perhaps in the Commonwealth in the second instance and in the countries of North America and Latin America which are closer to us than anyone else.

Sometimes I am a bit at a loss to understand the hesitancy on the part of Caribbean countries to be as candid in their negotiations and in their relationships with their CARICOM brothers as we are about our business with other third countries, whether they be in Eastern Europe, in Southern Africa, in Latin America or elsewhere.

One of the most disappointing aspects of CARICOM affairs has been the hesitancy on the part of CARICOM Governments to speak frankly to each other, particularly where abuses of human rights have occurred. We are most anxious and are very willing to speak out about Haiti, to speak out about countries where fair and free elections do not appear to be practised and we are almost silent when we come to look at those practices within the CARICOM community.
2.50 p.m.

How many leaders in the CARICOM have in the last 20 or 25 years had the strength of character and the conviction to openly talk about what was happening in Guyana in relation to free and fair elections? How many of us had a similar conviction to speak out about the abuses which had occurred in Grenada until it was too late? I cite this, Sir, because only a year ago or probably less I had an occasion on an interview either on CANA or the BBC to express my views and my party's views about Guyana and the need to ensure that the electoral system in that country was free from fraud and would give no cause of concern to those of us who believe in fair and free elections. I, of course, Sir, came in for criticism by a newspaper owned by the governing party in Guyana. But criticism is something that I have had in politics from the first day that I took an interest in these matters, so that did not matter. The important point is that the Caribbean countries themselves were more interested in condemning Noriega in Panama and willing to send a mission there, in condemning events in Haiti and willing to send a team there, in condemning events in Nicaragua and they were silent about condemning the events in Guyana. What has happened? It was left to Senator Kennedy, President Carter, and Henry Forde, of course, to be the voices speaking. This is a fact. History will show that. It is a lesson in how we think about each other in the Caribbean. Because whereas the President of Guyana was prepared to reply in a civilized manner to Senator Kennedy or to President Carter when you were dealing with the leader of a political party in the Caribbean that has more interest in his country, it was a different way of how he replies.

Now Sir, I am concerned about this and I am very concerned as well about the fact that the Caribbean including Barbados, is prepared to mount a mission, a CARICOM Mission mark you, of governmental and non-governmental representatives on that mission to observe elections in Haiti on their own. But when it comes to going to Guyana, they are only going to send two or three people if so many or maybe one representative on a Commonwealth team.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I believe that Guyana is more our concern than even Haiti is, although Haiti is of concern to us. I do not believe that Barbadians should remain silent on questions such as these and I would like the Minister, as a matter of policy, to ensure that when we are renegotiating the Treaty of Chaguaramas that we insist on a provision in the treaty that it will be a condition of membership that those persons who want to be members of CARICOM and an extended CARICOM must respect human rights, must have fair and free elections, and must have an independent judiciary. At least the European countries in the European Economic Community insist on those terms and see that they are honoured.

One of the things, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that Barbados has going in its favour is generally its respect for human rights. I believe that in this area we can be an example and we should have no fear about going along this road.

The last matter that I want to speak on, Sir, is what is the Government's policy in relation to the Enterprise of

America's initiative? I notice that one of our CARICOM brothers is already proceeding down the line of an almost bilateral relationship on this issue and negotiations. I believe that within CARICOM it would be much better if we are approaching the free trade concept and market between North America, Canada, United States, and ourselves as one market. The terms are apt to be better for us within that one market. Really, I believe that the Government must emphasize within the CARICOM Council of Ministers and also at the Prime Ministerial level meetings of Heads of Governments that the Caribbean countries should approach the widening of our market on the basis of a regional approach rather than a country by country approach.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of matters which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West raised to which I need to respond at this time. First of all, dealing with the need to ensure that the activities in relation to the Foreign Ministry and the promotion of Barbados' interest overseas is adequately coordinated.

The Honourable Member is pushing an open door on this point. We have already on several occasions made our position abundantly clear on this issue and it has been articulated most forcibly by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy in this Honourable House on previous occasions. In relation to that issue, Mr. Chairman, the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, which is already a document of this House at Page 36, makes it clear that in collaboration with the private sector we will implement a massive retraining programme of our Foreign Service Officers to direct their thrust to an aggressive promotion of Barbados' trade and investment strategies paying special attention to Central and South America. We will pursue initiatives to enhance the regional integration movement, vigorously pursue initiatives to strengthen trade and economic relations with Central and South America and North America as well.

In pursuit of this, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has made the point that it is his view that these interests are best promoted by, I suppose, regular Foreign Service and Consular Officers rather than by Honorary Consuls. We are in a way, as it were, experimenting in some of these areas. The traditional training of Foreign Service Officers has not been geared to the type of promotion which is necessary. Well, they have to be trained specially for this purpose. We are presently experimenting with the proposal of using people in business and industry who have lived in the jurisdiction where we wish the promotion to take place, people who have had long experience, people who are actually businessmen, people who understand what promoting business industry and investment is all about and who do not need to go through this period of training.

3.00 p.m.

As I said, we are experimenting with this. We want to see how it works because traditionally the techniques which we have used so far have not produced an awful lot of results. The experiment which we are using in Canada is one which we will look at to see what it will produce. We have made the point that we are doing it on a trial basis and that after a year we can review what has happened so that if it does not work satisfactorily then we can look at other strategies. However, one has to look at all of this in the context of what the country can afford and the extent to which it can find the available quantity of officers in the routine Foreign Service relationships, which will produce the results we want. I am saying that we need to look at it and give what we are proposing a chance to work before we look at other aspects of the problem. This is not to say that we are not going to use the regular foreign service channels to see that what we need to accomplish is achieved, because obviously, it is going to be of tremendous importance to ensure that the routine foreign service officers and those who are in the local service are attuned to what we need to achieve. That is why I made the point that as a starter we have provided for a substantial number of foreign service officers to attend this financial services workshop which had been organised by the Central Bank with a view to ensuring that they understood what was necessary.

Honourable Members spoke in terms of the need for the establishment of a good network for reporting in relation to what was happening in the Foreign Service and between the Ministries and departmentally. Now, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of course, is committed to ensuring that adequate mechanisms for coordinating consultation and reporting do exist. For this purpose we have, in fact, set up nine coordinating committees to begin work in the very near future. Those coordinating committees relate to areas like marine affairs and the environment, consular, immigration and security, technical cooperation and training, relations with the resident diplomatic corps, cultural diplomacy, promotion marketing and investment, administrative matters, treaty obligations, trade policy and negotiations. These committees, of course, will comprise of representatives from all the relevant Government agencies. All those agencies and departments which are in fact involved in the actual preparation and promotion and presentation of these matters. So far, the reporting and coordination has been going on at, perhaps, a level not as formalised as this, but the reporting has in fact been going on and the Permanent Secretary and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have been collaborating very closely with his colleagues in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce and in Tourism, with a view to ensuring that the necessary coordination and reporting is done at all levels.

In relation to the Enterprise of the Americas, about which the Honourable Member made mention. This was also mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. George South in his earlier presentation. I think it is known that one

of the CARICOM had itself gone ahead and negotiated a framework agreement with the United States on this matter. It is a matter on which the CARICOM Heads of Government had the opportunity to exchange some dialogue at the last meeting which took place in Trinidad and Tobago recently. It was recognised at that meeting that it was necessary for all the countries of the CARICOM region to proceed with a united front in regard to this matter. Therefore, the Heads of Government at that meeting decided that it was necessary to adopt a common approach to the Enterprise for the Americas initiative. In fact, technical groups have been set up to look at this aspect of the problem. It was agreed that a small political committee would be set up and that Jamaica should initiate discussion with the U.S. based on the work which this technical group would have done in that regard. I don't believe that the Congress of the United States has yet finally pronounced on the Enterprise of the Americas initiative. So, the matter is not yet at a position where definite conclusions can be reached.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West spoke of what he perceived to be the hesitancy of CARICOM Governments to speak frankly to one another and in this context he raised the issue of human rights in Guyana and made the point that the Governments of this region did not speak frankly about what was happening in Guyana.

The Honourable Member went on to make the point that when clear abuses of human rights were shown in Panama, the Governments of this region had no hesitation in condemning Noriega, neither in Haiti nor in Nicaragua. He went on to make the point that CARICOM Governments have been silent in relation to Guyana. That is not so, Mr. Chairman. CARICOM Heads of Government meet at regular intervals now and they exchange ideas and they speak to each other frankly. I have been privileged to attend some of those meetings and CARICOM Heads of Government speak to each other frankly in relation to a variety of issues. What is absent from those meetings is the publicity which is attendant on one nation condemning another. So, there is no big public fanfare. Haiti and Panama are a different situation. There is no formal forum in which the Governments of this region can speak to Haiti or Nicaragua or Panama with the same informality and closeness as they can speak to each other in this region. There is the Organisation of American States, of course, but that is a wider, more formal arrangement for meeting. They use the opportunity there to speak to each other as well but....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I don't want the Honourable Member to argue along the point without dealing with the point that I really wanted him to deal with. This is the point. It is not that there may not be exchanges between Governments. It can be an oral exchange or an exchange by diplomatic note or whatever. The point is that there comes a time when a government's point of view can be publicly announced without being offensive and you will see that within the European Economic Community, where there is any abuse at all, that people put their points of view absolutely clearly within the public domain. That, by itself, has an impact. Like, for instance... I am not going to be long. Like when President Bush put his point of view on fair and free elections and there was a public disclosure in Guyana on what his point of view was. That is the point I am making.

Hon. M. A. KING: Surely, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member must accept that President Bush's attitude towards Guyana, the United States of America speaking to Guyana is not going to be the same and is not going to be based against the same background and in the same relationship as would exist between sister countries of CARICOM. There is a different relationship. It is the matter of style. If the Heads of Government in this region choose to speak to each other informally – and I can assure the Honourable Member that they speak to one another frankly on these issues – if they choose that style rather than the more public forum where it would suit everybody else to say: "Ah, somebody else is criticising the other." It is a matter of style....
3.10 p.m.

We are saying that in the interest of trying to advance the whole process of Caribbean integration and building up trust among us, it is better to deal with these issues within the context of a Heads of Governments relationship based on mutual respect and on confidentiality. If that is the style which the leaders of the region choose to adopt, there is nothing wrong with that.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I think there are only two persons in this Chamber who have been Heads of Government, that is, my elder and friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and myself. I have no doubt at all that whenever the occasion merited it, the former Prime Minister St. John spoke in defence....

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes you can. I am sure when the occasion merited it he spoke without fear or favour on the question of democracy and human rights, and fair and free elections. I have read such statements, Sir. I have spoken very frequently on this question of democracy and free and fair elections to the extent that I believe the Leader of the Opposition in one of his outbursts wondered why we were talking so much about democracy, fair and free elections.

I am not going to accuse the Leader of the Opposition of anything. I know he did not identify which Head of Government he was talking about. I could only assume he was not including me in that particular category although it

would have been clear to everyone if he had said "excluding the Prime Minister of Barbados." He did not say so.

I recall, Sir, in Barbados when the question of Haiti came up at a meeting at Heywoods I came out openly and spoke against any compromising with the authoritarian and dictatorial regimes, the Duvalierists and so on in Haiti. Far from anybody in Barbados supporting me apart from members on my own side, they took sides, including the Press, with another Prime Minister of the region. That is the record. I have lived to see the stand I took on that occasion was justified and that Haiti was brought to a position where they had as fair and free elections as could be expected under those conditions.

As far as Guyana is concerned, I am not sure what the Leader of the Opposition is talking about. He has said that leaders of CARICOM should come out and condemn what is going on in Guyana.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, if the Honourable Prime Minister would give away.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Prime Minister has to be serious about this. He must not try to score political points because I think one thing he would concede is that in foreign affairs I have always spoken with great restraint and with great depth about the subject. Firstly, Sir, if I may respond quickly to Haiti, the Honourable Member is not right. Our stand on the Haiti position has been absolutely clear. We never agreed with the position of Jamaica and others about compromising on the Haiti position at all. That has been publicly expressed by myself on behalf of the Labour Party. That is one.

Secondly, in relation to Guyana, there is no doubt that there has been concern in Guyana about ensuring that the election machinery is as fair and free as it is in Barbados or some of the other countries, Canada and elsewhere. There are justifications for those fears. There would be nothing wrong for CARICOM countries as a whole to have issued statements about these matters rather than giving the turf up to the Senator Kennedys and the President Carters. We should have taken initiatives, the same initiative that Guyana has now welcomed from President Carter.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I have heard and read in public statements made by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago on the question of elections and the need for fair and free elections in Guyana and the stance that Trinidad and Tobago has taken on it. I paid a state visit to Guyana. On a number of occasions there including a Press conference, I made it clear that the position of Barbados was one in favour of fair and free elections in Barbados, and in all CARICOM countries, including Guyana in respect for human rights and for democracy. I said both when I made the state visit to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and when a reciprocal visit was made to Barbados, what the position of Barbados was in favour of fair and free elections based on the accepted arrangements to make those elections fair and free. There cannot be any doubt about that, Sir.

I can take this opportunity to announce that early next week the Chief Electoral Officer of Barbados will be leading a team to Guyana under the auspices of the same Carter Centre which the Leader of the Opposition has spoken so glowingly of President Carter then. That is his initiative. We are playing our full part in that particular mission. There will be three missions going, a first mission, then a second one and a third one, all in that process of monitoring the elections in Guyana to ensure as far as possible through observation that the elections are fair and free.

Sir, the Commonwealth has also been invited to send an observer mission in which CARICOM members would play a major role. Barbados will be playing a major role in that particular area. We have said openly – I am speaking about Barbados now – that it favours free and fair elections, human rights and democracy. I have spoken in Guyana, Barbados and elsewhere on the need for that.
3.20 p.m.

We are taking positive steps through the Carter Centre as well as through the Commonwealth Secretariat to play our part in the Observer Mission. I do not believe that it is fair that those kinds of charges should be levelled either against myself or against the other Prime Ministers or Heads of Government of the Commonwealth. We are very conscious of our responsibilities. But I am not sure what we should condemn the head of the Guyana Government for because he is taking steps....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Prime Minister must understand that I am not talking about condemning any head.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am talking about condemning practices within a country. We must not personalize this.

The other point I was making that the Prime Minister must understand is that I said there should be a CARICOM initiative on this and its own observer mission as it has done in Haiti. That was the point.

I believe the Commonwealth Caribbean, by and large, has examples that we could set and even market and that is

in the field of fair and free elections. It is a distinguishing aspect of our independence and of our conduct of political affairs.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point of order is taken.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I believe others should be joining us not us joining them.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I think I have made the point, I have made it clear that we have made the statements, we have spoken in favour of free and fair elections and I do not want there to be any mistake or misunderstanding on the record on this at all.

As I have just been reminded by the Acting Leader of the House, we have been sending our officials to observe elections in many countries and to assist in what way they can. This has been going on for quite some time under both Governments. We should not get up and make statements to give people the impression that Barbados is not playing its part. You should make it clear that you are not including Barbados in this. All I would like the Leader of the Opposition to get up and say is that he is not including Barbados in this.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like the Right Honourable Member to know that Barbados is so respected and the Barbados Labour Party's role in foreign affairs and free and fair elections that I had unfortunately, because I was waiting on the Right Honourable Member to call the elections to decline leading the Commonwealth Mission to Bangladesh to Malaysia in November and to head the Commonwealth Observer team on elections in Bangladesh recently. I am not available for Guyana but I am available for the others.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I know that the foreign relations of Barbados is very well respected, not only now, but when my friend the Honourable Member for St. George South was a distinguished Foreign Minister.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I called the election, Sir. He is still over there and still free to lead his delegation. Are you going to lead them from the Government side? Is that what you mean? Tell this Honourable House from which position you were going to lead them, from Opposition or Government?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Right Honourable Member must know that when I am asked to lead such missions I am asked because of my own personal standing without being in any Government or Opposition.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I know for sure that you are not in Government.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You can inform everybody from which position you were going to lead these delegations.

Anyhow, Sir, I think I have set the record straight. There should not be any partisan positions on this matter and we should be able to speak fairly and frankly on this matter. I say that the record of Barbados in this regard is one that is very clear. That is how I see it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, just before the question is put, there is just one area of CARICOM....

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: ... relationships that I would like to raise and it relates to the decisions by the Heads of Government, consequent upon a consideration of the Gladstone Mills Report on the structure and workings of CARICOM Agreement. I have been unable to see anything published as to the various views that were expressed on it. That was a very important document because it dealt with a specific area of the workings of the CARICOM Agreement which we all recognize is defective, namely the unanimity rule and things of that kind.

One of the tragedies I think of how CARICOM operates is that we do not have access on a wide basis to the Reports that are published. For instance I was asked to give evidence. I gave evidence. On this occasion and like the previous occasion when there was the Demas Committee Report I was kindly sent a copy. On this occasion I was not. We have looked around here as to whether anything is in the House on it. There is nothing in the House on it. I think it is important if we are to be able to follow these matters that all the decisions that relate to such important matters, the Heads of Government Conference form part of the Library here. It is very difficult to get them. To get mail to Guyana and to get back mail from Guyana is a very difficult thing. I have to ask the Honourable Minister if he can enlighten us on it.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the Mills Report was looked at, I must admit, fairly briefly by the Heads of Government in Trinidad recently. One of the problems about it is that it had not been as widely circulated and as widely available as possible. Directions were given to the

Secretariat to ensure that enough copies of the Gladstone Mills Report were published that people throughout the region could have access to it and be able to study it and make any inputs on it.

No final decisions have been made on that very valuable Report as yet.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: The Commission is going to look at it, yes. The Secretariat is also going to analyze it further and make further comments for the benefit of Heads of Government. What the Heads wish to ensure is that it gets a wide circulation and the benefit of comments of as wide a cross-section of people in the region is obtained before any final decisions are made on it.

So that hopefully the Report will become available in this area and to Members of the House at an early opportunity, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, only because the discussion on CARICOM has reached the stage it has I wish to say a word. I do not myself lay any claim to any of the esoteric connections which we have seen from time to time displayed in this House except perhaps that I was there in the beginning.

But one of the problems which we have had in CARICOM and which we are going to continue to have until we correct is the whole area of communication and we are seeing it exemplified here. The number of studies and commentaries and examinations which have been done on this region in the last 25 years is a very high number and many of them have been invaluable examinations which are worthy of much wider dissemination than has actually occurred.

I recall very well that in the earlier days, perhaps some would say the salad days of the coming into being of CARICOM that it was examined whether we should not have had a CARICOM station where there would have been a powerful transmitter which would have been able to reach all of the countries of the Caribbean. Indeed I have reason to believe that when eventually a quasi public sector station was established in Montserrat that its initiative had arisen out of initiatives taken by Demas to fulfil recommendations which we had made at the CARICOM Council for wider dissemination. It is unfortunate that what tends to happen as happens in almost every different discipline is that they stop communicating among themselves, and since each one knows about what has been happening and each one is seised of the particular issue or issues that they forget that there is a wider community that is ignorant of what in fact has been going on at the level they have been functioning. And, even though they have been a number of what may be called public relations pamphlets and booklets published, sometimes they remain large quantities of them sitting somewhere, but not in fact going out to the community.
3.30 p.m.

I am convinced that much of what will happen in CARICOM that will be meaningful over the next five to ten years will depend to a large extent on the simple system of direct communication with the ordinary masses of this region.

Now, in recent times, relatively recent times, through the aegis of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union there has been an exchange of programmes between the various television stations and I think some of the officials in the CARICOM region would be amazed to know what a tremendous difference it has made for persons in Barbados to see on television at 7 o'clock in the evening or 7.15, the activities of ordinary people in Jamaica and I have no doubt, the activities of ordinary people from Barbados being seen in Jamaica is beginning to have an effect, and I use that as an example. We really do need much more information about what is going on both at the official and unofficial level to be disseminated between and among and within the region as a whole. We know more, in many respects, about what has been happening in Haiti than we know about what has been happening in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Honourable Member says, "or in Barbados about the economy, prior to elections," but the Honourable Member would then be making a very strange castigation of the Press because it must be recalled that the Governor of the Central Bank, and that is where I was very surprised to see that someone of the standing of the Leader of the Opposition who had been selected to go as far afield as Bangladesh did not have the prescience to understand and to recognise that this information....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: May I enquire which Honourable Member made that comment?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Look you can pronounce it how you want to, you speak funny you know.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member, which Honourable Member made the comment you just referred to?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What comment?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Chairman was not supposed to hear that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, I am not supposed to hear it and it should not be part of the debate either, so it should not be responded to.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for St. George South was the one. Not you, you speak very clearly and well, Sir. There is no one who has ever been more suited to the role of speaking than Your Honour, Sir. But the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, you must forgive me if I am stuttering because I am not accustomed to seeing you sitting there, you must not get accustomed to that seat, go back up there, you were down here and we put you up there, do not let them pull you back down. Go up there so I can relate to you as Leader of the Opposition.

Seriously, Sir, the Honourable Member got mixed up by trying to present old soup as new wine when we discovered for him that what he was holding up as new information had been in fact published three months before by the Governor of the Central Bank. Don't ask me about that Sir. The point I am making ... Don't divert me. I am saying, Sir, that in the CARICOM we are going to be a lot better off if we intensify the tendency which has started to give direct information about each other to the respective countries which are being called upon to form the deeper unity that will be CARICOM or something beyond.

Heads of Government have a responsibility if they are speaking frankly to one another, perhaps, they are not disseminating the information as well and as much as they should and if they are, the media may not be carrying it as effectively as they can.

I notice, recently for example, that those attempts that were made to report the regional economic conference, those that were done by way of features, some of them were long and boring and some of them conveyed almost no substance, and really the Caribbean Community is going to have to recognise that some of its expenditure must be concentrated in the area of communications. It is proper for the Caribbean Community to spend some of its resources on dissemination of information within the region.

Mr. Chairman, not many people for example, are seised of the tremendous amount of work that has been done under a programme called Caribbean Cooperation in Health. There is a systematic programme, which I am not going to attempt to discuss here, called Caribbean Cooperation in Health. I have never seen, in spite of statements, I remember Sir George Alleyne came to Barbados, had a press conference, spoke about the matter in great detail, but the Press did not carry it because, I don't think it was familiar to them and they had not been accustomed to it and it is not a matter which is discussed in any great detail and yet it is something of fundamental importance to the people of the region.

Mr. Chairman, to just give an example, the Caribbean Community has been spearheading and will spearhead a programme by which we will attempt to eliminate measles from the region of the Americas by the year 1995 and that follows a successful elimination of polio from the region in recent times. That is just one indication of how caribbean cooperation in health, a programme which seeks to have the resources of the Caribbean shared as we approach the area of health for all the people of the region.

Mr. Chairman, this is not the debate in which I should be expanding on that and I merely wanted to make the point that we need, we absolutely must have, in the next few years and in the coming years at least as good a portrayal of information about each other as we have via the CNN about what is going on in the United States.It may very well be that what we will have to do in the Caribbean is to package our information and put it on CNN and send it back into the region because then it would be guaranteed to go into every home. The CBU is doing a good job and I hope they will find ability and capacity to expand and in that respect governments are going to have to spend money without profit as perceived by the accountant to do this kind of work of disseminating information.

I hope that by the time we come to do the Estimates next year that we will be in a position to report that there has been a wider dissemination of information among the Caribbean and therefore within the CARICOM. I am grateful to you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to say too much on winding up, except perhaps to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael West for putting a little health into foreign affairs.

Just for the record, Mr. Chairman, if I could just make a correction to something I said earlier when I was indicating the appropriation in relation to the acquisition of property I had mentioned the figure of $880 952 under this Head. In fact the amendment which has been circulated shows the amount for acquisitions is in fact $956 262 so just for the purpose of having the record corrected I would wish to make that clear.

I move then that Head 35, Mr. Chairman, stand part. 3.40 p.m.

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

The question that Head 35 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 37 – HOUSING AND LANDS – $29 880 572

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, in moving this Head, I want to make a few initial comments. As Honourable Members can see and certainly know from the

scope of this Head that it includes Departments such as the Housing Planning Unit, National Housing Corporation, Lands and Surveys Department, Town and Country Planning, Land Registry, Land Mapping and Registry Project to mention some of the areas which are offered by this Ministry.

The Notes state very clearly that the major objective of this Ministry is to give effect to a Housing and Lands Policy, in that as far as the law and resources of the economy to provide adequate housing for every household especially those of the middle and lower income bracket, and also provide ancillary services in the form of policy advice on Land Registration and Land Surveys, Environmental Planning, and Land Use Regulations. The major agency which is involved in the implementation of Government's Housing Policy is the National Housing Corporation. If I appear to spend some time on trying to indicate what is being done in that particular area, I think that you would recognize that it is something which I have to do.

The programme which the Democratic Labour Party set itself in Housing for this Parliamentary Session is to some extent contained in the Manifesto for the 1991 General Elections which I made a document of this House at Pages 27 and 28 and I would not detain this Honourable Chamber by reading into the record what is contained there. But let me indicate that one of the major thrusts which we hope to be involved in during this period is the provision of a wide scope of sites and services in many areas across Barbados. I think it is generally accepted that there is a very great demand for sites and services, that is for house spots, and there is also a demand for the provision of houses in this country. This hopefully will be answered by a very active programme which will be embarked on by this Government and also by the creation of an environment for the private sector to play its role in making provision for the improvement and generally the increase of the housing stock in Barbados.

Our Sites and Services Programme, as I said, will cover a wide area. Already the National Housing Corporation has begun work in a number of areas and has also identified a number of other areas where the Sites and Services Programme and other general housing developments will take place. For the record, I would want to mention some of these areas: Six Mens, the Colleton area in St. Peter, Hope Road in St. Lucy, Wotton in Christ Church, Crane in St. Philip, Cane Garden in St. Thomas, Haggatt Hall in St. Michael, Clifton Hall in St. John, Lammings in St. Joseph, Corbins Village in St. Andrew, and Walkers in St. Andrew. Quite recently I visited an area in St. George North. I think the place is called Moonshine with the representative from that constituency with a view to identifying what possibilities exist in that particular area. Additionally, work is going on in Parish Land, Christ Church and Coverley in Christ Church, Hoytes Village in St. James, Church Village in St. Philip. These are some of the many sites which have been identified. There will be others which will be identified and developed during this Parliamentary Session. The point I am making is that there is a clear recognition on the part of this Administration of the work which has to be done in this area and we will certainly be making every effort to satisfy as much as possible within the constraints of our particular economic and financial position to meet the demands.

Now I think that the whole question also of the attitude which people in Barbados who are tenants of the Government have towards Government property and the whole question of payments of rents is something which should be mentioned. I think that from time to time respective Ministers responsible for Housing have been faced with the problem where there is a backlog of rents. I am told, for example, that at one time the National Housing Corporation had in excess of about $5 million in arrears in rents. This has been reduced down now to around $2 million and we will continue to impress upon tenants that they have a responsibility to themselves, Government, and also the responsibility to other people who are desirous of having access to services and accommodations provided by the National Housing Corporation to pull their weight. We will gently but firmly impress upon them that they have a responsibility and an obligation in this particular respect. One thing that I have indicated to the Board of the National Housing Corporation and also to the Management that in the implementation of this policy one thing that I would not like to see happen is to see this being done in the glare of television cameras.

Now I think that that is one area of concern. Another area of concern which has to be dealt and dealt with firmly relates to another serious attitudinal problem and what we are finding is that there seems to be developing a tendency of people in this country when they know that land is owned by the Government or indeed we have situations where when the National Housing Corporation has begun to develop lands that people take it upon themselves to move in without any authorization or permission from the National Housing Corporation and set up their houses. This has to be stopped. I think it is going to be important for me, therefore, to state the Government's position very firmly on this and other related matters.
3.50 p.m.

I want to say that today personnel from the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Town Planning Department, the Environmental Division of the Ministry of Health and the National Housing Corporation met with 15 residents of Blenheim and the Belle to discuss plans for the residents' relocation from a water zone 1 area. The resiting of these 15 houses is the first phase of a project where approximately 50 houses will be relocated to lands developed by Government at Haggatt Hall. With the first 15 spots available, the Town Planning Department has given

residents in the first phase a further three month grace period to have their houses removed to Haggatt Hall. The three month notice takes effect from today, March 22, and ends on June 23.

The National Housing Corporation will continue work at Haggatt Hall in two phases and as the lots become available residents will be informed and discussions started with the relevant Government Ministries. The project at Haggatt Hall is costing Government around $1 million to provide infrastructural services such as roads, drainage, electricity and water. When all of these essential services are in place, it will have the features of an excellent residential area. It is located about two minutes' walk from the Bussa roundabout and has access to a good bus service and other nearby facilities. The lots average around 4,800 square feet each and will therefore allow residents to upgrade and expand their houses.

Residents are expected to pay the cost of their relocation. This is only reasonable, since Government must not be expected to reward breaking the law. In addition, with the scarce funds available, the Ministry of Housing and Lands must find resources to relocate persons in such areas as St. Andrew and St. Joseph where land is affected by slippage. The residents from the Belle area who are being relocated will in the beginning pay Government $40 a quarter, or $160 a year, for rental of the lands at Haggatt Hall. Notice I said "in the beginning". This is along with an option to purchase which will eventually be offered to them. These rents will represent the lowest rates paid to the National Housing Corporation. When the lands are vested in the National Housing Corporation, rents will become payable to that Corporation and obviously they will be going at the normal National Housing Corporation rates.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands, however, will not be providing spots for persons who commenced or completed building after February 1990, the date the Town Planning Department served the enforcement notices, since, as I have stated earlier, the Ministry cannot be expected to reward persons who blatantly ignore the law.

While carrying out this exercise, the Ministry would like to reiterate that Government has only taken this action in the Belle area because of the magnitude of the development there and because of the serious threat it poses in a Zone 1 water area. However, Government will not turn a blind eye to blatant flaunting of the law by citizens. For example, in the Blenheim area Government lands are being illegally occupied by citizens who have constructed houses for their own habitation and for rental purposes. An officer from my Ministry has been informed by a resident that she pays $68 per week for house rent, yet Government collects no land rent from these unscrupulous people. In another area in the country one resident continues to construct houses, flaunting repeated enforcement notices.

I would like to state now that Government intends to ensure that persons caught breaking the law will be treated according to the law. Barbados is a small country and we depend on underground water supplies and no Government will be fulfilling its duty if it stands idly by and allows unsupervised building of houses in critical water catchment areas. We are aware of the shortage of house spots and this Government is doing all in its power to make more spots available. However, we will not tolerate the actions of people who take matters into their own hands and erect illegal structures. This can be said of sites and services, areas in Rices in St. Philip, Parish Land in Christ Church, Lodge Hill in St. Michael, to mention a few of the areas we have discovered, but the Ministry is getting a complete picture of this. The Town and Country Planning Department will monitor the situation more closely, but Barbadians are urged that whenever they build planning permission must first be sought from the Town and Country Planning Department.

I would further make the point that I have issued instructions to the officials in the Ministry of Housing and Lands that Government lands must be more closely monitored and that they should pay attention to what is going on there. It would seem as if, unfortunately, sometimes Government acquires land, and indeed sometimes the National Housing Corporation embarks on a sites and services programme and it might reach a particular stage, they move on to something else to probably come back, awaiting the Water Authority, and when they get back there people have put houses on the land. This is an unbearable and certainly an intolerable situation and a stop has to be put to it. I just want to make the point that I intend to put a stop to that.

The meeting this morning with the residents was to iron out and discuss details of the relocation and these discussions will be followed up. However, I want to warn other persons illegally occupying Government lands that action such as is taking place in the Belle will not be tolerated. As I said, in future when persons are found illegally occupying lands this Government will take steps according to the law.

In this respect, Sir, I wish to express my appreciation to the Town and Country Planning Department, officials of the Ministry of Housing and Lands and of the Ministry of Health for the work which they have collectively done on this matter.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: The Member for the City must appreciate that at times when one is dealing with very difficult matters it is necessary to follow one's notes very closely. Having been a Minister herself, she must appreciate that particular point.

Now, Sir, if we can move on, I think the Member for St. Andrew earlier in the debate raised some questions related to the Land Registry and the whole question of the suspension of the registration in some areas. There is a history relating to the question of the registration of titles in Barbados, going back into the 70s or before, and it is a continuous development of a programme which has been put in place. It is a programme which has run into some difficulties, and indeed in reading the correspondence I have noticed that the Bar Association wrote to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing and Lands as far back as 14th November, 1988 indicating that the profession was of the clear view that the whole question of the suspension, as was anticipated by the Ministry, was the sensible course to take at this time and that they would be happy to work with the Ministry to iron out any problems which would develop.

We are getting assistance, as you are aware, from the Canadians, particularly in the area of land mapping. At present I think the Chief Surveyor is in Canada on a CIDA familiarisation visit where he will be brought up to date with the latest techniques in that particular area. The success of this particular programme calls for very close collaboration between the Lands and Surveys Department and the Division dealing with the registration of titles. I would hope that efforts will be made to fulfil the objectives which they have set themselves. There are some difficulties, but one would hope that these difficulties will be ironed out in the process of time and that the registration will continue apace.

I think what we are trying to do is that particularly in areas which have been subdivided recently, and where the maps are available, we will try to do those first and those out of the way and the more difficult ones one would hope would take longer and we will be able to spend more time in developing those areas, but we are committed to fulfilling the objectives which have been set in that particular area.
4.05 p.m.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that those would be the major points I would want to make on this first intervention. Let me just conclude by making reference to the statement made by the Member for St. George South when he intervened yesterday on agriculture where he was making the point about the fact that Government has land in different parts of the country which are not being cultivated and which it seems that some arrangement could be entered into where people who want to get into agriculture could do so. I have indicated to the Ministry of Agriculture that I would like us to sit down and identify such areas of land and work out a lease arrangement with people where they would be given manageable lots and where they can become self-employed. I know, for example, in St. Lucy that there are lots of areas of land, some of which are arable and some are not, but which could be used by small farmers in such things as pig rearing, chicken rearing and that kind of thing, but it is not being utilised in any effective manner and I would certainly think that we could work out an approach where these lands could be leased to persons who would want to get into this kind of activity and that would go a far way in trying to pull more smaller people into the whole question of agriculture. I would certainly be pursuing this, but, of course, it will be in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. I have indicated very clearly that I know that from the constituency of St. Lucy that there are a number of people who have expressed interest in this particular area and who, indeed, have made approaches for this kind of arrangement and I am fairly sure that in the not too distant future, since we cannot lease government land until Parliament approves, that you will be seeing this kind of policy being implemented. There is an area of land in St. George which is owned by the Government and which could very well be used for this purpose and I dare say, in many other areas of the country. So, I just thought that I would mention that in closing.

Sir, with those few remarks I would leave this intervention. I wouldn't move the passing of the Head at this point because I know that other people would want to make some contributions. This is the end of my first intervention. I, however, want to move that Head 37 for the sum of $29,880,572 stand part.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Minister has just made a very admirable statement and he has left out one thing from his ministerial statement, and that is a sentence with a profound apology to the people of Barbados for the words and actions taken by the Government up to this point in relation to the squatters at the Belle. His statement today represents a change of the position that the Government had taken on this matter before. I am not going to dwell on the Belle, because people of Barbados will judge the position of the Government in that regard.

It is a trite statement, Mr. Chairman, that housing is a basic human need. It is equally a cliché in Barbados that housing has not kept apace with development of the other social sectors. For instance, education, health, transportation and the like. There is a very considerable amount of sub-standard housing stock in Barbados and the Government in its protestations including a quote given by the Minister in the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party of 1991. Indeed from a look at the statement made in the speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament in relationship to housing, both those statements reflect a position in words that are not matched by action. The Minister very glibly talks about the great demand for sites and services and for low income housing, but I am suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that the estimates and the figures contained therein are not in sync with the words of the

Minister, nor are they in line with the words expressed by the Government and all of its statements in relation to housing. The Minister says that $1 million will be allocated for the relocation of people from the Belle to Haggatt Hall. Already, there has been a fairly sizeable cut in the estimates in the allocation under National Housing Corporation.
4.10 p.m.

There is a cut of almost $1.6 million in the Estimates for the coming year. When one considers that $1 million out of the vote of $5.5 million is being allocated to remove the squatters in the Belle that were allowed to go there by the same Government, then one realises....

Aside.

Certain remarks made by Mr. L. R. TULL were ordered to be expunged from the records by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The point is that despite the fact there is already a cut of $1.6 million from the Sites and Services Programme, Capital Projects Relocation and the Development of Lots for Sale and Rental, there is now $1 million of what is left to go towards the relocation of people in the Belle. The Government cannot be serious about these problems.

While the Government professes that there is this basic need that has to be met, this need is being strangled by a number of Government policies, some by the Ministry of Finance and some by the Ministry of Housing. There has been a reduction in the Home Improvement Loans during the past five years of Democratic Labour Party Government. There has been also a reduction in the money in the Housing Credit Fund. If the two of them were not enough, the Government has then inflicted on low income people in this country who want to improve their homes, a credit squeeze.

They have gone further. I am going to indict them today. The Government has removed Home Improvement Loans from the category of personal loans at the bank. They used to be no restrictions on the availability of Home Improvement Loans. That Government changed the rules making it difficult and in some cases impossible to get Home Improvement Loans out of the banking system.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South well remembers the situation with the National Low Income Housing Project. There was a provision of $10 million that was to have been acquired from the World Bank for this National Low Income Housing Project. This money was to do infrastructure in many low income areas, roads, utilities, etc. There was also going to be a number of locations where they would be servicing the lots. My recollection is, it was to be an urban low income programme. The then Minister of Housing, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, unilaterally decided to adjust the terms under which the loan would have been granted to include places like Rices in St. Philip for housing which the Honourable Member made reference to in this very debate. Mr. Chairman, they wanted to use this National Low Income Housing Project, $10 million provided by the World Bank as a pork barrel for Democratic Labour Party Members of Parliament to have in housing. As a result, Sir...

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Am I correct in hearing the Honourable Member for St. George South making a statement to the effect that this fund was used as a pork barrel by the Democratic Labour Party Members? If that is so, I am submitting it is unparliamentary and ought to be withdrawn.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, can an Honourable Member ask if he is on a point of order if he hears something and if it is so?

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: To help you. On a point of order, Sir. I rose to tell him he cannot ask you if something is so then he is making a submission. No, Sir. He is wrong.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, that administration went further in stifling the opportunity for people with low incomes to get houses in Barbados and improve their homes. Bridging loans at the banks are now considered personal loans and are, therefore, subject to the restrictions imposed in this credit squeeze arrangement. It was always the policy of the Barbados Labour Party that bridging loans would be removed from that category. In such a case they would not now be subject to the tight control that is existing. I know that when the words are tough and they bite people cannot take them but they have to take them.

I go further, Sir. In these Estimates the provision for low income housing was $759 000 in 1989/90.
4.20 p.m.

The figure was $790 000 as I see here for 1991. The figure for 1991-92 in these Estimates $425 000 almost a 50% drop. The Honourable Minister of Housing gets up today with all the panache of a man who now comes to a Ministry. The reason why I cannot take the Minister of Housing seriously when he makes these kinds of statements is because he has a way of making a number of attractive statements wherever he goes. When he went into the

Ministry of Trade he was going to have 2 000 jobs created in the manufacturing industry in a few months in Barbados.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. George South is misleading the House. It was 3 600 jobs by December, 1986. There was a breakthrough. I called him a burglar in here, Sir.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, I thought it was 2 000. He was going to provide 3 600 and four years later he did not produce 300. So when he gets in here today and he made these fine sounding statements, I listen to them and I wish I could be persuaded. But his record of statements when he is new to a department suggest to me that I might as well take his statements today with a pinch of salt.

There are a number of problems that I want to raise, Sir, before my time is up and they relate in seriatim, Sir...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Mr. L. R. TULL: One minute, Sir? I will come back, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, it is obvious for me to intervene in this debate on the question of squatting which seriously affects some of the constituents of St. Michael East, particularly in the Belle, in Blenheim and to some extent in the Ivy. I understand the nature of the problem in the Belle and based on my research it is fairly clear that there is no immediate danger to the water resources of Barbados...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I said, Mr. Chairman, that based on my research there is no immediate danger to the water resources of Barbados. But I recognize that the Government's precautionary measure to remove houses from their present location is probably necessary at this time. I am happy however that those who are being removed....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: ....will find a convenient location which will be near to their friends and family.

Mr. Chairman, these areas in Zone I in the Belle and Blenheim *et cetera* fall within the Zone I area. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas also lives in that Zone I area. He will probably be resited as well to Haggatt Hall.

It is my understanding, Sir, that the Zone I area is an area that is known to be the water resource base from which we will draw the majority of the water supply in Barbados. Barbados is perceived to possess a very clean and very pure water system. I think that it would be stupid to interfere with that perception by having a situation where it is likely for some contamination to take place. I think that in the interest of the continued development of the tourism industry and how we market Barbados, we certainly use – I am sure the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would recall that we usually market Barbados by saying to many people outside that Barbados has the purest water system in the world. We would not want to change that perception. We also have to drink it and we would not want to interfere with it. That is true.

I feel however that it is necessary to carry out some public relations exercise to sensitize Barbadians and residents in the area as to the importance and the significance of the preservation of the water system. I think it is very necessary because a lot of people are unaware of the water system, how it functions, how water gets to the reservoir *et cetera* and I think that we need to carry out a public relations exercise and sensitize Barbadians about that problem.

The Honourable Minister has just indicated the Government's position on squatting. I should like to support it on behalf of my constituents against the background that housing in Barbados, Mr. Chairman, is one of the biggest headaches that Honourable Members have to deal with on a daily basis. I believe that this country has, over the years, developed an educational system and subsidized it to the extent that Barbados can boast of a superior educational system. I think we have subsidized the transportation industry. I think we have subsidized agriculture for a very long time and we have certainly implemented the School Meals Programme for children *et cetera*. All of these projects by the Democratic Labour Party. I think the time has come, Sir, where we will shortly have to look, to some extent, at subsidizing the housing industry. But I understand the constraints of Government.

I would urge members of the public who presently rent units from the National Housing Corporation to support the plea of successive Ministers of Housing and pay their rents when they become due. It is fairly clear to all of us that if rents are paid that money will be made available for tenants who will follow in subsequent years. I think in all fairness to your fellow Barbadians that those rents should indeed be paid.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware that some 15 residents of the Belle and Blenheim have been meeting with personnel from the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Town Planning Department, the Environmental Division of the Ministry of Health and the National Housing Corporation. The spots that they have been offered in Haggatt Hall, I think, is a positive step and it is my intention to encourage my fellow constituents, in the interest of all Barbadians to co-operate with the authorities and "progress" plans to resite their properties.

Mr. Chairman, however I would like to observe that resiting is a very costly exercise. It is my understanding that many residents involved in this particular phase will require some assistance. I am sure that the Honourable Minister who is known to possess a supreme human conscience....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member was doing very well until he started to break the rules of reading the speech that somebody prepared for him. You cannot read speeches, Sir. Explain to him.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have to be very careful on this presentation. I do not want to say the wrong thing because this is a sensitive issue. I am very careful. I am not going to say the wrong thing.

But I will reiterate that the Honourable Minister is known to have a supreme human conscience not like the Minister in 1982 who sent a bulldozer in the Ivy to push down houses. I am not reading now. I went in front of the bulldozer. Ask them. I do not think it was you Braddie. That is a fact. That is typical of the attitude that they adopted to Barbadians including....I stood up in front of a bulldozer! That is the same attitude that the Honourable Member for the City adopted in any approach that she has taken in Government. The same kind of "bulldozish" approach.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking that favourable consideration is given to those residents at this time.
4.30 p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. I don't want to interrupt him. Could the Honourable Member tell me what is the attitude the Government recently adopted when immediately after elections they pulled down the house of a lady in the Belle, Sir. Up in the constituency of the Honourable Member.

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

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I am asking that in this particular instance that we pay some attention to these residents who are being relocated. I believe, Sir, that many of them are not in a position to find five or six thousand dollars off the cuff just to pay for resiting. I don't think we would want to have the problem of people not moving or not adhering to the instructions of the authorities.

I think, that under the circumstances we should seek some assistance, knowing full well that it must not be repeated because I can easily envisage a situation where many other residents would want to try to do the same thing. I think we have to make it absolutely clear that this system must be carefully monitored by the appropriate authorities to discourage any repeat of that kind of situation.

So, Mr. Chairman, in closing I would just say that I look forward to the resiting of the residents into facilities that will probably be more comfortable for them. The Haggatt Hall area, unfortunately is in an area contiguous to my constituency but I look forward at that time to proper representation and make sure that we will have a replacement very shortly.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, just to correct, or for the information of the Honourable Member who just sat down. In 1982 I had the honour to be the Minister of Housing and Lands and as far as the bulldozing which took place in the Ivy, it was done for a reason. The area had to be cleared in order to build the terrace units there now, which the Honourable Member...

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: That is the bulldozing I am talking about.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order, it is the other side, behind the school.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot hear the Honourable Member who is on a point of order. Can we have some order?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Well, as far as I am concerned that is what I know about the bulldozing which took place there. I also want to ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just one minute. I am having difficulty determining what ... The Member for St. George South seems not to understand what the Standing Orders of this House are.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I want to go on record, Mr. Chairman, as making it clear that the land on which these people will now be resited was acquired by the Barbados Labour Party Government. I want to put that on record, and therefore the decision to resite the people there would find favour with this side. But, I want to warn the Minister and the Government that in keeping with a policy adopted by the Barbados Labour Party we expect that proper water borne water facilities be made available to all

those persons that are resited. Not like the decision that was taken to move the people in Emmerton when the Democratic Labour Party was in power to put them in Clapham Park with pit toilets. I want to make this quite clear. None of that will happen in this resiting programme.

I also want to make a point which I am sure the Honourable Minister will take, because money is provided for the relocation of these people. A three months period is going to be a bit close. Anyone who is involved in construction will tell you the three months notice that the Town Planner has given the people is not going to work. He will have to think in terms of an extension. I am saying that from experience and that is the advice I think the Town Planner should be giving you at this point in time. What I am saying therefore, is, you have to take time to put in the roads and the water – the services, and certainly that is going to take some time, then the electricity that is going to take some time. When that is done, before the resiting process takes place these services would have to begin and in order to make sure that the people have proper facilities it would take some time to build the foundation and put in the septic tanks in that area.

I made a check, but I am quite sure that the area is a zone 2 area and it is going to be necessary to put in a septic tank as well as a well and that is a costly exercise. Therefore, I am calling on the Minister to make sure that he monitors the operations of the National Housing Corporation, since they will be responsible for the resiting, to make sure that they plan properly and they include these services, because that is going to be part of the whole programme.

It is not a matter of giving people notices and say go into Cutting Road, Haggatt Hall. Better planning will have to go into the whole exercise and I am calling on the Government to make sure that they give each householder or tenant or make available to them a loan, if the Government does not do it as the Government should do. The Barbados Labour Party provided this whenever they resited people. If, in the absence of that I want to make sure that funds are made available to these persons to enable them to have proper water borne facilities and to have a house, fit and proper, to live in.

I would hope too that the Minister realises that some spots will obviously be available after the resiting programme has taken place. As I understand it, Sir, some 15 houses have been resited.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: In keeping with the policy which the former Minister stated that persons in the Haggatt Hall area and in St. Michael South East have been calling on the Government and lots of them have got applications at the National Housing Corporation for rent as well as to purchase, I think it is only fair that persons living in St. Michael South East and in the Haggatt Hall area be given priority consideration.

I did, in another measure, support the Minister and I supported the policy then that the people in his constituency be considered or given a priority, and I hope that this policy is universal.

Now, the other point I would like to make is this. The people in the Pinelands and Parkinson Field have been complaining about the bush, in particular the people in Parkinson Field. They are people where Coloured Ward lives.
4.40 p.m.

There is a lot of bush in the Parkinson Field area. When we were in office, a bobcat used to go between the two houses and clear the area. I am asking the Minister to ask the National Housing Corporation to pay some attention to this because the people are complaining. They are complaining to me their duly elected representative and I hope that the Minister will do that.

The people in Parkinson Field also had natural gas mains put in sometime last year and, as a result of the digging up of the road, the people in that area have suffered from dust. They are complaining that daily the children are suffering from the dust and it is affecting the peoples' health. I have had to call the Ministry of Transport and Works and speak to the Chief Technical Officer who arranged to have the road wet during the day. But all I am asking the Minister who has the responsibility for the Parkinson Field Housing Estate is to see what he can do in his power to have a proper surface of barbergreen put in as soon as possible which would eliminate this sort of problem. It is a very, very serious problem. People have to be taking the hose during the day to do that. If they were living in other areas like in Rendezvous when the road was done, they would be adequately compensated and things would be done to correct this. I am saying that the people who live in housing areas deserve better treatment.

One other point before I sit down is that there is one well in particular in South Wildey which collapsed some four years ago and the residents in the area realizing that it posed danger to the lives of children and residents called the National Housing and made several complaints. They contacted the then representative to have something done. Up to this day, Mr. Chairman, nothing has been done. I am calling on the Minister to investigate the matter and have the well properly cased in. It is a dangerous situation. It is nothing that anyone would like to see perpetuated. This is not cheap politics. As I said, this is serious. The roads in East Terrace, First and Second Avenues, flood everytime that there is a little down pour of rain. It was there for a

long time. The people in Wildey Gardens where the Honourable Member's brother lives, he is my constituent and I am to represent him too, I am asking that something will be done. As I understand it, the National Housing Corporation has passed on this responsibility. It is a new policy where the Ministry of Transport and Works looks after the roads in the housing estates. It took me sometime to find out which Ministry is responsible for it.

Now as I said, I would think that since you have tenants in these estates that it is part of your responsibility to make sure that they are provided with facilities such as roads and I am asking that this be done.

The final point is that natural gas has been put into Parkinson Field. I mean there is a talk. People out there are concerned. They cannot understand the madness in which it was done. Natural gas is so put in that you will have to put the natural gas through the front part of the house. In other words, the kitchen is at the back. Rather than lay the pipe in such a way that it will come at the back where the water is at the moment and bring it through the back where the kitchen is, they have the pipe in front of the house and they will now have to bring the pipe through the houses. Now what I am saying is...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Let me continue to make the point. Prior to their doing this, they could have relocated this ever since. It could have been done before. Now what will happen is that the Natural Gas would have to go back and correct that when if it were properly planned in the first place you would avoid this. So I am saying to the Minister to allay the fears of the people in Parkinson Field that they would not have to put their natural gas through their houses. It is not part of a campaign. That is what the former representative made them to believe.

Mr. Chairman, I am hoping that these concerns would be addressed by the Honourable Minister because, as I said, I would not want to be in here on parochial issues speaking everytime. Thank you.

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

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are a few points raised by the Honourable Members on the other side to which I have to respond. Most of the points raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East are points to be noted by the present Minister of Housing and no doubt he has taken note of those points raised by the Honourable Member.

Let me start, Mr. Chairman, by speaking about the squatters at the Belle. The squatters at the Belle, Mr. Chairman, are in a peculiar position. Many of the squatters at the Belle are persons who own land in the Belle and that is why it becomes peculiar. Most or many of the squatters in the Belle own the land on which they are putting their houses. Let me explain it. I am going to explain everything. I am telling you that they own the land. So the point is that if someone owns land it is difficult to tell that person – well, that land which you own is in Zone 1 so therefore get out. Therefore, you have to handle them carefully and nicely. Now there are other squatters who having seen those persons....

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Well, the point is that if the land is theirs they are not really to all intents and purposes squatters. Do you understand? Okay. When those people moved back to their land, other persons seeing those persons moving back to their land decided that if they can go and put houses down there then I am going to put my house too. That is where the problem came. I tried to explain this to the people in the Press. It was not a simple matter. The point that was made by the former Member of St. Michael East was that very point. He was sympathetic to the people he knew because the land was theirs. He did not tell them to go there. He knew about some of them going there and he was sympathetic because the land was theirs. There are lots of people out there who are not Barbadians at all. In fact, I heard one chap on the radio with a foreign accent saying that he saw other people putting down there, so he went and put his. Did you not hear him on "Tell It Like It Is" or one of those programmes? As far as the Belle is concerned, my view was and still is that the people should be relocated but those persons who own the land in the Belle have to be treated differently.

Let me just explain further. When the matter first came to the notice of the newspapers, I said that the Notices had been sent to the persons in the Belle but as with any Notice that is sent out there is a period in which you can appeal. I have said in this House of Assembly and I have said it outside that the duty of any Government is to allay the fears of the citizens and not to get people frightened. If citizens get a letter telling them that they have to move from the Belle and they believe: Oh, Lord where am I going tomorrow or the next day? All I am saying is that they have a time period in which they can apply to the Town Planner and say, okay, I am appealing against this. In the time that you start the appeal, you start looking for somewhere else. That is all I said that they have a time limit in which to appeal, because the duty of any Government is not to get people frightened. Well, it may not be the duty of the Opposition. That is what the Opposition did last year. Fortunately, it was not done to the extent by this Opposition as by the other Opposition which is no longer with us thank God. The point I was trying to make is that you do not want people to become unduly agitated.

4.50 p.m.

Let me move on further to another point, the statement just made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East about giving the people from the Belle all the amenities. Let me issue a word of warning, because the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made this statement last year and we have to be careful in what we are saying. Two days after he made that statement five more persons went and put their houses in the Belle. If you tell people that if the Government has to relocate you it should provide you with water toilet and all that sort of thing, they will go and put their houses anywhere, because they know that whenever you move them you would have to give them all of the facilities, because the Opposition says you should.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member give way for a moment? Every Honourable Member has an opportunity to speak in Committee of Supply. I therefore cannot tolerate this kind of behaviour, cross-talking, as loud as it is. Please desist from doing it.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: If the Honourable Member does not see the point I am making, I am very sorry for her. I am sure all other Honourable Members see the point. We have no difficulty, as was the case when the Barbados Labour Party removed the persons from Emmerton, because that was a Government decision. The Government wanted that land to put the sewerage plant and therefore it was the Government's duty to provide proper amenities for those people. We agree with that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, a little history is being rewritten here.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please state that as you rise.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Member is misleading the House. In 1976 there was a change of Government. I was representing the City of Bridgetown at that time. When these people at Emmerton were to be relocated or resited at what is now Clapham Park, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North had given the instructions and dry pits were being dug.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I gave no such instructions.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what the Honourable Member was correcting. The statement I specifically made was that when that administration moved the persons from Emmerton, proper facilities were provided because....

Aside.

4.55 p.m.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Water-borne facilities were provided because the Government itself decided that it wanted that land. Therefore, if the Government decided: Okay, I want this land to build a road and you have to relocate people, you are really dispossessing people, therefore it is your duty to provide proper amenities. However, if some person deliberately, knowingly, and at times, wantonly, decides to go and put a house some place because they heard the Leader of the Opposition say that if the Government moves you they have to give you all the facilities you want, you will have a free-for-all... That is all I am saying. This Government has no argument or no quarrel against providing proper amenities for those persons who genuinely went into the Belle because the land was theirs and they felt honestly that they had a right to be living there. If you all don't understand it, it is a matter for you. Those persons who find themselves and decided that they were going down there because they see other people going down there, they will have to relocate. We don't mind giving them a loan. That is why I am agreeing with you and we have already decided that. You didn't have to tell us. We don't mind giving them a loan but we are warning the other side not to go down that road saying that everyone who is to be relocated should be given water-borne facilities, because it is opening up a can of worms. That is all I am saying and I know what I am saying. As I said before, after the statement was made by the Leader of the Opposition – he was not Leader of the Opposition then – five persons went and put their houses down there because they realised: "Well, if they move me, I will be having water-borne toilet facilities and everything."

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: A lot of the people down there are foreigners. Anyhow, Mr. Speaker, I think I have said enough about that.

Let me just speak about the National Low Income Housing Project. The Honourable Member for St. George South, as is his wont, every now and then, said that the Democratic Labour Party, this Administration, was planning to use or was using the World Bank's $10 million as it were a slush fund for parliamentarians over here. Let me just advise the Honourable Member for St. George South, because you were not in here. What I am saying now, I have said before and you could have checked with your colleagues and they would have explained to you the situation. We did not take any money from the World Bank for this project. Let me explain it for you. Sit and listen. The World Bank wanted to get involved in this project. We had discussions with them. The World Bank ended up by telling us at what point the National Housing Corporation should break even, when we should increase rentals and things like that and we told them: "This is an independent

country. We will decide when we are going to increase prices. Nobody will tell us when we are going to increase rentals."

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: We don't operate like how you operate at all. There is no one that is going to tell this Democratic Labour Party that you have to increase the rentals by October, by July or by anything. We make that decision as a government in an independent country and the World Bank said that since that is so that they are not taking part and we said okay, we will go ahead with it on our own. It is nothing to do with any slush fund. I am telling you what this Administration did. I am not interested in what took place before me at all.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George South again. I believe he was out of here for too long.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: If the Honourable Member for St. George South does not remember, the National Housing Corporation has a commercial vote that had been used continuously by governments for years including this one, so if you see a figure drop by $1.5 million in the estimates, it does not mean, as it has always meant, the National Housing Corporation always comes in with its commercial vote. Let me tell you, most of the buildings in Barbados that are done by the National Housing Corporation are done by that commercial vote. So there is nothing for you to panic about. You know this has always been so.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to come back, because I welcome this debate on housing. I will be back.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has been trying to get my attention. Let me say that time is of the essence. There will be no overruns in this one.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This Minister is new and I am going to behave towards him as I have towards the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. I am going to give him a settling in period, so I am going to ask him some questions of which he should take note and since he introduced the Head quite lavishly, he would have the answers.

First, we are not going to get into housing policy at this stage. The Minister says that the National Housing Corporation has started work in a number of areas and has identified other areas for sites and services and this will be Government's answer in part to the pressing need for house spots. He gave me a number of places – Six Men's, Hope Road, Wotton, Cane Garden... The Minister will remember and so on. My question to the Minister is, how many house spots in all is Government providing in those areas mentioned? I ask this for this reason, not only to see if the Minister has the information and wasn't bluffing but because in Cane Garden I had asked early last year and the then Minister of Housing had recognised, perhaps, the soundness of the point I was making and had agreed that he would look at the provision of some house spots in Cane Garden. He was not then able to identify a specific number but that was over a year ago.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sixty. For sale? None for house spots to rent? I didn't think that was possible the way the scheme was developing because we had the Venezuelan houses taking up most of the then identified land and I know Government intended to have some house lots for sale. I am concerned also with the provision of spots for rent because there is a crying need for that type of facility and in that regard, Sir, perhaps, as I have done with the previous Minister I will do with the new Minister. I am going to write the Minister and give him three areas in St. Thomas which I think over time would be available for acquisition with a view to housing. One will depend upon the construction of phase 2 of the Highway 2A. It is by Arch Hall, just before you get to the village of Arch Hall, some land on the left with a top soil...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Going north. You get to the shop at the corner just before you get to the white house and the shop. About an inch of top soil. Every year that village is threatened by fire which starts up under the dump and sweeps across the road. If there are canes in that field it burns them and it was in 1988 that we nearly lost the whole village. So, it would make sense to put a buffer in the shape of terraced units or house spots or something in that area. That's one, Sir.

The other one, of course, is Forty Acre where, I think, the land around the village should be acquired from the plantation and developed. That would give you a large number of house spots, but I will write the Minister on that, Sir.

Now, Sir, I am not going to get into the Belle/Haggatt Hall debate tonight. There will be a televised occasion shortly within the next three weeks where I will have an opportunity to deal with that. The only thing I would say at this stage until I match up various statements, this Minister's against the former Representative's for St. Michael South East and the former Minister's of Housing. When I match up the statements there will be, as we say in

Law, enough discrepancies to tell us where the truth lies. I was glad that the Minister in his statement admitted that what we call the squatting in the Belle was a threat. I think he actually used the word "threat" to the water system of Barbados. Indeed, I used to have difficulty sometimes with the person who was predecessor to the Honourable Member for St. Michael East in terms of the convolutions of language, but this Honourable Member was very clear until he tried to say that based on his research – and he was very careful, Sir, not on any scientific analysis but on his own research, there was no threat to the water system, but then he went on.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Danger. ... but then he went on to say this, Sir, and this is what confused me, like his predecessor used to do. "It would be stupid to have a situation where some contamination is likely to take place." He was admitting, Sir, but as I say in due course he will get on, in the fullness of time.

Sir, in respect of the National Housing Corporation, I want to make the Minister aware of a serious situation in the National Housing Corporation. For some time, that corporation has been using agents to collect rents and arrears from various people. All of the collectors are not honest. Now I would say this, Sir, from my own research, which is very scientific because I have the receipts. I know of a specific case. I believe my office may have filed the writ this week. When I was in here I left instructions that a writ be filed against the National Housing Corporation. It's a specific case involving a constituent of the Honourable Minister of Housing. I will speak privately to him about the person later. That person borrowed $5000 in 1980, paid back every cent. We have all the ticket tape from National Housing, all the receipts. A firm acting as agents for the corporation wrote her and told her that she owed money and she went and paid more than the original $5000 against it. She paid over $10,000. In fact, she has overpaid the National Housing Corporation by $5,000. I drew it to their attention.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, let me declare the interest that I am going to sue the corporation. That is the interest on behalf of my client.
5.10 p.m.

Sir, I would have thought that the Corporation as an arm of Government, having had all the photocopies at my expense of all the bills and receipts, would have moved to settle with the lady. I sent them these documents they wanted to see since about October/November last year. Up to now we have not heard a word from them. I have to put them in court.

I believe, Sir, there is a misunderstanding in this country about the standards of conduct that should attend statutory corporations. I had another matter some years ago with the Corporation where again I do not believe the standard of conduct on the Corporation's part exhibited the kind of probity that one would expect. The courts in England upheld that these government agencies have to set the very highest standard of conduct and behaviour. I believe we all accept that and would like to see it especially I think when there is a clear case. The Corporation itself knows that the agent has been behaving shady. Pay the lady. It has all the documents.

Sir, I think that whole question of agents collecting on behalf of the Corporation needs to be looked into. I believe that is only one of other cases where the Corporation has been defrauded, or the tenants, whoever owes the rents, has been defrauded. Somebody must be brought to court and criminally prosecuted for default when you pin down the evidence. Do not let them get away with it.

I know the time is short, Sir, and other Honourable Members want to speak. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was a former chairman, I will give him a chance to speak.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to associate myself with the effort and policies of the Democratic Labour Party in respect of increasing the housing stock and, indeed, increasing the number of service lots available to the citizens of Barbados. The Honourable Minister in his opening remarks alluded to the fact that the sites and services programme was very much on-going. I have some figures here which time would not permit me to go through. Suffice it to say that the National Housing Corporation over the past two and a half years, has serviced 350 house spots. In respect of the construction of houses they have constructed over 600 houses.

The Honourable Member for St.Thomas also inquired, and the Minister answered him in part, about the programmes which we have in train. Just to give you an example of the programmes in terms of sites and services, at Haggatt Hall we have 93 lots, 45 at Hunte's Village, Six Men's Phase 2 – 52 lots, Hope, St. Lucy – 52 lots, Wotton Phase 2 – 34 lots, Crane – 96 service lots, 60 to be allocated to a joint venture, Corbin's Village, St. Andrew – 27, Gall Hill, St. John – 65, Coverley, Christ Church – 135, Lammings, St. Joseph – 38, Parish Land, Christ Church – 90, Church Village – 33 and the list goes on. The National Housing Corporation has just commenced a programme in Church Village, St. Philip for the erection of 52 terraced units. That is as far as the sites and services programme and the construction of houses are concerned.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to dwell, for the limited time that I have, on three areas of activities of the National Housing Corporation and then make some suggestions for

probably streamlining and improving the operations. With respect to refurbishing, the National Housing Corporation had to embark on an extensive refurbishing programme in the last 18 months. At Bayville, St. Michael, we refurbished 78 units. We also carried out an extensive and comprehensive refurbishing and reroofing at Haynesville, Golden Mile, Princess Royal and Eden Lodge. We had to refurbish all 353 units at Eden Lodge.

With respect to relocations, again the record of the Democratic Labour Party is one to be proud of. We have done several relocations especially in the St. Andrew area, Orange Hill in the Scotland District because of land slippage. Several relocations were also done at Six Men's, Simmons Road, Golden Mile and so on.

I just wanted to raise these specific cases to put in some sort of perspective the work that the National Housing Corporation has done. Of course, we recognise that there are certain areas of concern, for instance, the whole question of maintenance. We have spent $10 million in the maintenance of estates in the last two years. I join with supporting the Minister when he lamented the fact that the tenants treated with utter disregard and disrespect the very units that they are renting. No longer can we afford to spend this sort of outlay on our maintenance.

I also would speak to the representative for St. Thomas – I am no longer chairman but, certainly, on the case that he raised. We will see what can be done to sort it out as soon as possible because I recognise there were problems. As a matter of fact, there were problems even in the Housing Loans Section. Immediately on hearing the matter I had to inform the General Manager that I am a trade unionist, if nothing else, therefore he should call in the Royal Barbados Police Force. That matter is now in the hands of the Royal Barbados Police Force. I believe any time there is any seeming act of dishonesty that is the route that the National Corporation, or, indeed, any statutory board, or any government agency should go. You are dealing with public funds and the whole question of probity must take pride of place.
5.20 p.m.

In terms of the future, I think my Government will continue as is its Manifesto pledge to try to put housing and home ownership in the reach of all. We are committed to that. In the area of St. Michael South Central for example – I know the elections are over but every time I get the chance I will say it – where the representation has not been the best in the past. I have probably over 50 households with approved applications. This is of concern to me the whole question of providing, on an ongoing basis, increasing the housing stock. But even of more concern to me is the fact that a situation has developed where tenants who met the criteria in terms of salary levels were awarded homes. Over time because of increases in salary and so on in some cases when the application was made there probably was just one bread winner in the family but over time there are two and three and four people working and the collective salaries or in some cases the single salary of the tenant is way over. We have people now I am sure in some of those houses who work for $3 000 and $4 000 and two cars, minibuses and so on. This is not too much a political matter but this is a matter which we have to close ranks on to deal with.

There are too many people who are willing to pay and these are the ones by and large who do not pay anyhow. But there are too many people who continue to live in squalor who seem doomed to perpetual destitution. We need to flush out these persons who are over the threshold in the first place and in the second place are not paying rents.

Closely associated with this problem is the question of inviting the private sector to deduct the rents at source. In the public service this is not a problem. As soon as you get a loan from the National Housing Corporation or a home the rents are deducted. We believe that it is time that we implore the private sector to display a social conscience and to assist the National Housing Corporation by deducting rents. We have a series of cases where we have made this request and they have refused.

Aside.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Maybe. But we still have too many private sector firms who refuse. The same way they deduct insurance policies and that sort of thing, bank loans, they can deduct it for the National Housing Corporation. They must have and display a greater social conscience.

The other two matters that I should like to deal with briefly are the whole question of the General Workers Loan Scheme which needs to be consolidated and to be extended so that the low income house seekers would be eligible for more concessionary rates. I look forward to that. Also the question of the Public Officers Housing Loans Scheme which for all intents and purposes fell into disuse some time between the years of 1985 and 1987. At first it was transferred from the National Housing Corporation to the Barbados Mortgage Finance. Nothing happened. It went over to the Barbados National Bank and $1 million was injected some time in 1987 and again nothing happened. The fact that the whole question of public officers housing loans form part of a condition of service which public officers became used to, I do not think that we would want to unilaterally stop it. The Minister might want in the future to look at the resuscitation of the Public Officers Housing Loan.

Finally, the question – and this is the plug for the constituency of St. Michael South Central – of the allocations at Valery where the Sites and Services Programme has been completed. We just need now....

Aside.

Mr. D. W. BOWEN: Pardon, St. Michael South Central. The most contiguous in terms of Valery is St. Michael South. I am sure that the same way I am inundated with calls from my constituents who have applications for Valery that the Prime Minister has these same calls day and night.

I urge the Minister to move swiftly to make the allocations at Valery and as he makes these allocations at Valery to give pride of place to the applications at St. Michael South and St. Michael South Central.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member cannot have five minutes because we must conclude by 5.30 p.m.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, as you would appreciate we have just one minute.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member wants to utilize the time between now and 5.30 p.m.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, time would not permit me to say everything that I wanted to say. But I wanted to have the Honourable Minister's answer on the question of....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He is not going to be able to answer now so if you want to make a....

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: I should also like information on the question of the Land Registry Certificates which have been taking an extraordinary length of time to be issued. We understand that a number of surveyors have not been paid and there is a problem with payment of surveyors and this is one of the reasons why we cannot have the Certificates from the Land Registry.

The physical condition of the Land Registry is also something that needs to be looked at. I know the Honourable Minister is new. But I would urge him to see if he could do something about it. Certainly the Clerks have been complaining.

On the question of the Sites and Services, I notice mention was made of Walkers and Corbin's Village. I would not like to say that these areas are flooded areas. I do not know how this administration could decide to resite people in areas that are flooded, like Walkers and Corbin's Village. You are moving people from areas that are slipping and you are putting them in flooded areas. There are good areas in Haggatts just down the road from Isolation Road. There are also good areas in Apes Hill.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

The question that Head 37 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Head 36.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am reminded that I should remind Honourable Members that the guillotine is invoked at 5.30 p.m. for the debate to stop and therefore there can be no further debate on the Heads.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: All right, let us have some order.

HEAD 36 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – $125 589 477

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $125 589 477 under Head 36 – Ministry of Health stand part.

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

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

HEAD 38 – MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE (AS AMENDED) – $39 382 019

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $39 382 019 under Head 38 – Ministry of Community Development and Culture, as amended, stand part.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 39 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND THE ENVIRONMENT (AS AMENDED) – $24 712 219

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $24 712 219 under Head 39 – Ministry of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the Environment, as amended, stand part.

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

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

HEAD 40 – MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE (AS AMENDED) – $13 259 798

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $13 259 798 under Head 40 – Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce, as amended, stand part.

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

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

5.30 p.m.

HEAD 42 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION (AS AMENDED) – $112 029 237

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of $112 029 237 under Head 42 – Ministry of Public Works, Communications and Transportation, as amended, stand part.

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

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

HEAD 50 – POST OFFICE (AS AMENDED) – $5 088 325

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $5 088 325 under Head 50 – Post Office, as amended, stand part.

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

HEAD 43 – MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND SPORTS (AS AMENDED) – $37 537 070

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of $37 537 070 under Head 43 – Ministry of Tourism and Sports, as amended, stand part.

Hon. C. V. WALKER : I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Clause 1 as amended was called and passed.

Clause 2 as amended was called and passed.

Clause 3 was called and passed.

Clause 4 was called and passed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Schedule as amended be the Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill as amended in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 1991.

Order No. 6 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) (Airport to West Coast Area) Order, 1991.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I shall not be long on this. We have had a very long debate on the Appropriation Bill and I am sure that Honourable Members would not wish to be detained unduly, but it is important that this Resolution, entitled the Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) (Airport to West Coast Area) Order, 1991, be passed by this Honourable House.

It is an accepted principle, Sir, that when Government carries out certain developmental works, such as might lead to an appreciation in the value of properties, contiguous to or surrounding the particular developments and especially when the developments by Government require the expenditure of substantial sums from the public purse, that some effort should be made to re-capture from the appreciated values of the surrounding lands, some of the expenditures by the Government. It is desirable, Sir, I believe, that this should be done as early as possible in order that maximum amounts may be garnered.

The provision of the Land Development Duty Act, Cap. 78 permits the Minister responsible for Finance to designate such special development areas in such cases.

The Order before us relates to an area stretching from Hinds Hill to St. Barnabas and from Wildey to the Grantley Adams International Airport. The Government expended considerable sums of money on the development of the highway, I believe something in the region of US $44.5 million, of which more than half, or just over half, was financed by the Inter-American Development Bank and the remainder out of funds provided by the Government of Barbados. But, in any event, the part financed initially by the Inter-American Development Bank is by way of a loan which has to be repaid anyhow, so there can be no doubt that considerable sums of money have been expended on this particular project and the purpose of this Resolution is to approve an Order so that hopefully, out of the transactions taking place in land in and around that

particular development, that Government may be able to capture some of the accretions which may have come to those who deal in the land.
5.40 p.m.

Let me admit, Sir, that there have been some delays in this matter and those delays I would account for in this particular way. First of all, in the processing of the matter, there has been considerable effort utilized in order to make sure that the designations and descriptions of the parcels of land were accurate and the area itself was an accurate description.

There have been some problems in this area with a lot of backwards and forwards movement on this particular matter in relation to the queries and so on that were raised. Then in itself, Sir, there was also quite a number of parcels of land to take into account in this particular matter. It is regretted, Sir, that when the particular project was being implemented or nearing completion that the particular Orders were not prepared at that time because, as I said, it is desirable that this be done up front. But we have tried, Sir, to get the matter as quickly as possible bearing in mind the queries that have been raised from time to time by various officials in order to get the matter straight. It is now before us, Sir. The principle is accepted. We have already had some development areas subject to these Orders. So it is not a new principle.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to second this, Mr. Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is obviously about to go back to the University of the West Indies and enroll in the Law Faculty because today he has obviously done a special pleading. Those of us who are in the legal profession know of a special pleading called "Confess and Avoid" and frankly his submissions have been the classic example of a confession and an avoidance where you do not want to feel the full force of the plaintiff's case or the prosecution. His confession has been essentially about the delay which has occurred in this matter. A considerable period of time has elapsed since the Government should have brought this particular Order into effect.

Chapter 78 of the Laws of Barbados under the Land Development Act confers on the Minister the power to make a Land Development Duty Order in circumstances where Government has expended substantial public funds for a particular development and persons who are going to trade in the commodity of land in that particular area stand to make capital gains. Section 3 of the Act has been invoked in relation to various special development areas. It was invoked in relation to the East Coast Road. My only comment here is that I regret very much the development now being permitted at the East Coast Road would not feel its full vigour, otherwise we might still preserve the East Coast as proper virgin territory from an environmental point of view. It was invoked on the St. Barnabas Highway. It was invoked in relation to the Spring Garden Highway. It was invoked in relation to the Cave Hill Development. It was invoked in relation to the Deep Water Harbour area. It was invoked in relation to the Speightstown By-Pass Highway and now it is being invoked in relation to the ABC better known as the Tom Adams Highway. (I regret very much that it has taken the Government so long to improve the round-about at the commencement of the Tom Adams' portion of the ABC Highway and really, when you look at it, it has been an eye soar if not a national disgrace to us, that that particular round-about of all of the round-abouts has received no attention despite the fact that the Labour Party wrote a long time ago asking to assume responsibility for keeping that part of the round-about in good order. It is a matter for the Government. If they do not want us to keep it in good order, it is all right as far as we are concerned.)

What has happened here, Sir, is that almost two years ago or longer than that in speaking before the Budget debate I had warned the Government of the necessity to make such an Order and to impose the tax to prevent the speculators and the predictors in this community from getting a substantial windfall at the expense of the public. The Minister obviously cannot claim that he did not have sufficient warning. The Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, the Right Honourable Gentleman, on Wednesday, April 26, 1989 in his Financial and Budgetary Proposals stated thus, Sir, and I am reading from the printed copy at Page 14: "Very shortly I will be making the appropriate Order authorizing the collection of Land Development Duty on the sale of properties along the section of the Adams-Barrow-Cummins Highway not now covered by an Order."

That is almost two years ago, Sir, and I do not believe that the explanations given by the Minister can make anyone happy. I do not believe that we should be so clumsy in administration that it should have taken the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Finance has the responsibility and the Minister must carry the Ministerial responsibility, two years before an Order of this nature for which there has been substantial precedent could be brought before the Houses of Parliament and passed into law. Now what is more, Sir, in replying to the Minister in that debate on that Budget, I am reading from Hansard for the period of March 2 to December 1988 at Page 3837. This is what I said: "Why has it taken this Prime Minister well over a year almost two years before he could inform this House despite my continual warning that he could have put a Land Development Duty on the Tom Adams Highway and stop Moses from making $7 million or so half of which could have gone into the Public Treasury instead of putting it on the poor? Why has it taken him that long?"
5.50 p.m.

Despite my continual warnings that he could have put a land development duty on the Tom Adams Highway and stop Moses from making $7 million or so, half of which could have gone into the public treasury instead of putting it on the poor. Why has it taken him that long?

Now, Sir, I was not the only voice speaking then, because in the Senate Debate, again for the period Wednesday, 15th June 1988, I am reading from page 846 when Senator Blackman said:

> "I want to focus, Sir, on the enactments which are being impliedly affected and listed in the Schedule. The Land Development Duty Act is referred to in the Schedule and I wish to raise a query with the Minister. Section 3 of the Land Development Duty Act gives the right to the Minister to declare an area a special development area and impose a betterment levy, so that Government can recover any extraordinary expenditure in the creation of new highways. This was done, Sir, over the years in respect of the East Coast Road, the St. Barnabas Highway, the Spring Garden Highway, and the Cave Hill Development. With the airport to West Coast Highway almost complete, and that highway having opened up large new areas of land that were not previously capable of being accessible, my question, Sir, is, when is Government going to make the order? Because there are a lot of people who have benefited from the construction of that highway and who are going to sell their land at extraordinary prices, and unless an order is put in place very timely, the development duty that could accrue to the Treasury to defray the cost of the road would be lost. That order, Sir, is almost overdue, because the road is almost complete."

So, Sir, legislators took their duties very seriously. Almost two years before 1989, I was warning the Minister, the Rt. Honourable Gentleman and the Ministry about the necessity for such an order. Now, the Minister himself recognised by April 1989 that the order was necessary and he was going to bring it very shortly. Very shortly, Sir, has been another two years after that and what has happened in the meantime? In the meantime, obviously, the predators have gone ahead and developed and sold their land and made substantial capital profits already and what is so hurtful about this, Sir, is that that has been the capital gains to people in this society who are already substantially well-off whereas those persons in my constituency...

Asides.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: All right, Sir, I will explain if the Honourable Member will just keep quiet for a while. Whereas, Sir, people in my constituency and in all of our constituencies, the real poor of the society, have to bear an increase in land tax coming not from an increase in land tax that is hurting the poor, little lady up there in Worthing View, those who are in Forde's Road and in St. Matthias. I have a case of a poor lady, a pensioner, who lives alone and was paying $181 on her land tax. She has done nothing over the last three years to the house, not an improvement. She couldn't afford it. When I went to her house that tax was almost double, not because there wasn't a percentage point decrease in the order made by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister but because the revaluation of that house was so substantial that she had to pay that substantial increase. Therefore, what the Prime Minister had given her with one hand in December, had been taken back by the other hand. The Honourable Member will say that I now have under the Act to ask for a remittance of her tax because she is a pensioner. On the other hand, the "rich and the famous", the Rams and the Thanis and the Moses, that crowd, they have made their windfall from the sale of this land. This is public knowledge. All the Honourable Members have to do is to go into the Land Registry and I am sure there is no charge and look at the transactions which have taken place and the reason why they are not getting any penalties is because the Minister in compliance with Section 5 of the Act, Mr. Speaker, Sir, having named his base date as March 31, 1990 – "This Order, March 1990 cannot affect any sale that has already taken place and been completed between March 31st 1990 and April 1st, 1991."

They can't be taxed at all. Not under this. And who are the people? They are the people who continually in this society are able to exploit transactions such as these to make substantial capital gains – the rich and the famous. Now that is not fair, Sir.

Both of these parties subscribe to democratic socialism. Both of us subscribe to it. I don't believe that a party that spent a passing presence in this House subscribes to these concepts at all.

The Land Development Duty was passed in 1962 for the first time by the Democratic Labour Party when it was in office with our support. We have both used it and I do not believe that we should remove capital gains tax on land transactions of this nature. I believe that it is a fair tax in circumstances where the public funds are being expended and I believe that it should be strictly enforced to the hilt for those speculators who are just in transactions to make money. You see, Sir, earlier in this debate, on the Second Reading Bill, I made the point that it is necessary to publish up front the land use plan which is required by the Town and Country Planning Act. I will tell you why, Sir. People realise what is Government's thinking down the line and they start buying up areas of what they believe will soon become land for good speculation and they move in ahead of Government. They are willing to be in the background and tell all of the political parties how good they are; each one of us who aspires to high office, how exceptional we are; to tell the Prime Minister that he is the best Prime Minister and then tell his Deputy or the second down from him what a better Prime Minister he will make and the best

Prime Minister. This is a fact. To come and tell me how good I am and how exceptional I will be and tell the same to Honourable Members on each side. These are the real people in Barbados that are the... They really, Sir, get under my skin and I have to be very careful how I speak. Those are the people who really set about, in my view, to destroy what are the best things in our community. I believe that they should not be allowed to get away by any error or omission on the part of ourselves in enforcing these provisions in the interest of the public of Barbados.

So, I regret very much. We are going to vote for the resolution because there is no divide between us in relation to the necessity for this type of order, but I regret very much and I really believe the Minister must take his strictures for this one. I regret very much the considerable delay which has occurred and the fact that it has allowed the Moses and the Ram Merchandanis and crowd to have made the windfalls that they have made where now some Barbadians, born and bred, a poor person who might have a bit of land on the same highway coming through Haggatt Hall or wherever you like and who may genuinely now want to sell that land within ten years from March 31st 1991 to the year 2000 and he now will have to pay 50% of his capital gains after we have used the provisions set out in the Act to calculate those gains back into the Treasury. I do not believe that that can be fair and I feel, Sir, that the Ministry of Finance and the Minister of Finance must take his blame for the delay that has occurred.
6.00 p.m.

I said he began by confessing and avoiding. That is why we were saying all the time there is too much dilly dallying in relation to these matters. The Minister has merely said there were two reasons for the delay, that there were quite a number of parcels of land to take into account in this matter, but those parcels of land were well known in the Ministry of Housing for a long time. What has happened to the famous Minister of Housing who should have had that information? Not the present Minister. There were efforts to make sure that the designations and descriptions were accurate. The acquisitions were done a long time ago and those designations and descriptions were brought to this House and approved under section 5 of the Act.

I really do not believe, Sir, given the urgency of this matter, that it could have taken all that long. If it had cost the Government $100,000 to put on two extra surveyors and the Government will make out of that 1.5, 3.5, whatever million dollars in tax, it would have been worth hiring extra hands to carry out this task. I regret very much that at Warrens corner where a lot of the speculation has gone on, whether the Land Tax Division was saying that the land is worth $7.00 a square foot, and that land has passed title from hand to hand at $25 a square foot, we are talking about people in the big league, we are not talking about anybody in the small league. I bet you the Honourable Member, whose constituency borders it, does not know this.

At Christmas these people will send you some "nay nay" little gifts with a card and you send it back as a Minister. That is how they behave in the society. You become a Minister, they want to come and pay a courtesy call on you as though they are foreign governments. When are we in this country going to wake up and get rid of these predators, flatterers and those sorts of things in the society in order to help us conduct the people's business?

Now, Sir, I have had my degree of maligning done to me in my time in the House. You know, even before I got into the House Henry Forde was this big white man.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I have a character that is white and pure, so I have no problem. They said Henry Forde was this big white man, an honourable man, who represented A, B and C, but whenever people look back, from the first day I have had the courage to speak on a political platform I have been absolutely consistent, because I know the principles to which I am wedded. The Honourable Member who said it is true in joke, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, like myself was a part of that young, in those days – he is getting on a little bit, Sir, like myself – and the Right Honourable Prime Minister as well, we belonged to that sort of idealistic group of people who, in the 1950s and early 1960s, saw ourselves as reforming the whole world. I do not believe we have changed very much in the principles that we espoused. We are on a political divide, in two different political parties, but I want to reiterate that we must, despite all the political jargon we throw against each other, stick to the principles. We must make it clear to these people that they cannot come into Barbados and get the benefit of Barbados by trying to play off one side against the other.

I regret this delay very, very, very much, because I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that when the Prime Minister brings over his hand shortly the lashes will flow. He will beat them, and beat them, and beat them, and beat them, and beat them into submission. I regret very much that his hand got stuck somewhere that he could not bring it over hard enough to have beaten the predators and have got the tax on these people where they should rightly have fallen rather on my poor constituents and the poor constituents of most of us, the real poor people of this country, who now must take an additional dose of taxation whilst the Moseses and the Rams have got away with it. Yet we are going to vote with the Government on this bit of legislation.

You see, Sir, you always hear that in this House the Opposition is recalcitrant, they do not co-operate. The number of occasions when the Government is acting in a principled way you have seen us give our full support and

this is one such occasion. But I cannot allow the Minister to escape his strictures for the delay that has occurred within his Ministry. I do not know that within any other person's Ministry that any delay could have occurred.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member wants to be consistent, then they should vote against it. Only last week they voted against a matter that came in late. The reason they advanced at that time for voting against the Resolution on salaries was one of timing, they said it came late.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member cannot misrepresent us, and he is reflecting on a vote that was taken..... The Honourable Member is Leader of the House and he is reflecting on a vote of the House, but I am not going to take him up on that point. We voted against that measure because we said the Government was playing politics. That was our reason. Am I to understand they are playing politics on this one? I have not made that accusation.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am not reflecting on any vote, I merely mentioned that there was a vote. I am merely pointing out the inconsistency of the Honourable Member who just sat down, because this is coming late now and they are going to vote for it, but one that came last week they did not vote for it. He stood up here a few minutes ago and proclaimed how very consistent a person he has been from the very first day he set foot on the political platform.

Mr. Speaker, the Government, starting with the last Government, constructed about 13 miles or kilometers, I am not sure which one it is, of highway extending from the Grantley Adams International Airport right down to University Drive. That is an extensive piece of highway covering several hundreds of acres. I mentioned that because the Honourable Member in his presentation has spoken about transactions that have taken place. There can be no more than six transactions which have taken place on that whole highway, in other words, minuscule in relation to the amount of land that there is on the highway.
6.10 p.m.

The Honourable Member must also remember the fact that the land has been transferred before this Order takes effect but the land is still there. If at any time this land is transferred during the 10 year period of the Development Duty, that land is still subject to Development Duty. The land has not gone any place. It is not like, as I said just now to one of my colleagues, buying an apple. You have bought the apple and the apple is no longer there. You buy the land but the land remains in place. At any time that land is transferred, which had not originally attracted Development Duty, it would still be subject at the point of transfer to Development Duty. That is one point I want to make.

Sir, it is not easy to understand how this Development Duty works unless one has had some familiarity with it. I have had some dealing with this, both in my practice as an attorney-at-law as well as when I was Minister of Home Affairs with responsibility for Lands. In the 1960's a Development Order was placed on lands adjoining University Drive and the whole of that Cave Hill area. Any time any transactions took place within the 10 year period as set out in the Order, then that piece of land attracted Development Duty.

What is the duty? The duty has to be fixed by an Order. The Order is so applied as it relates only to the approved value brought about as a result of the development works that Government puts in and causes that land value to appreciate. It is not then necessarily a 50% duty. When land is transferred at any time during the 10 year period, it may be transferred in year 1, 2, 3, 5 or at anytime during that period. It does not attract the same duty in year 6 as it would attract in year 1 because normal inflation is also taken into account in making the deductions.

First of all, Sir, one divides the land before development takes place. Then one often deducts what would be normal inflation that comes about with an increase in the value of the land. After one has done a calculation based on that – it is not the only thing. There are other things as well. I have done them so long, Sir, that I cannot remember them all. One then gets the next improved value of the land. Depending on the Order that is placed on it by the Minister of Finance, the tax is then calculated based on that. It is not the millions that Honourable Members believe or would make the general public believe. It sounds that way but it never works out that way.

Let us look at the land here that is subject to this Development Duty. The only area where transactions have taken place apart from one additional area in Christ Church is the area of Warrens. There have not been more than half a dozen transfers of lands that have taken place since the Highway has been built. I am not even sure about the one in Christ Church. I am subject to correction. I believe the one on which a chicken farm is situated may have taken place after the road was placed there or it could even have been before the road was put there.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I understand it is after the road was built there. I will accept that. I know the plantation was split in two by the road. It took place after. The loss to the Treasury is not as great as Honourable Members are making it out to be. I will take the Honourable Member's point that there has been a considerable delay in bringing this matter here, in my opinion, to Parliament.

When this matter was first brought to the Cabinet about two years ago setting out an area that would be subject to Development Duty, I queried two things on it. Firstly, it was my opinion that as the Cave Hill area had been subject to Development Duty some years ago and it had come to an end in the 1970's, that we should not again impose another Development Duty as in fact, had been submitted to us to do. That was one reason why it was sent back again to the Ministry.

The second point is I took the view, I then related it to my own area in Lodge Hill, that the area was too expensive. I could not be persuaded that the properties of persons living in Well Gap would be affected. Those of you who might know the Cave Hill area, I could not be persuaded that those properties could be affected by the building of the road in a manner to attract Development Duty.

The area set out in that draft Order included an area of land north of Well Gap which meant it included properties in Well Gap and north of it. I could not accept it. I asked that the matter be deferred because I wanted to get the assurance that the areas should be less extensive. I wanted then to discuss the matter with the Land Tax Commissioner. I met with the Land Tax Commissioner. He assured me that even though the area extended to Well Gap the chances of that section of Well Gap attracting Development Duty was exceedingly small, if ever it existed. As he is the person to apply the Land Tax Duty, I took him at his word. Therefore, I did not proceed with that matter any further. There the matter rested in the Service somewhere and did not reach Cabinet until in very recent times.

As I said just now, I take the Honourable Member's point that there was some tardiness in this matter coming here. I think the Honourable Member has been a Member of the Government at some point. He knows there are times when these things do not reach one's desk as readily as we would like them to reach the desk. That accounts for the fact that this Development Duty Order is only now before this Honourable Chamber.

As I said earlier, I do not think it is that catastrophic. The land is still here. At any time any land that is affected by the Development Order is transferred within the period of the Order, which is 10 years, then that land will attract Development Duty. Of course, the Treasury will at that point benefit. But the loss to the Treasury is not nearly as great as Honourable Members make it out to be, Sir.
6.20 p.m.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not going to delay the House very long on this, Sir, except to say that I fully endorse the very cogent reasons that have been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition for his strictures for the tardiness with which this Order has come before the house, Sir. It is quite obvious that in a small community like this and with a limited land space and great demand for land that considerable increments in value would take place whenever there is a major development in a particular area. That is the reason for the community feeling very strongly that that unearned increment should be taxed.

One of the problems that we are going to have with this Order is that a new set of values are going, within 3 years to be ascribed to this land by the land tax authorities and those values to a large extent have been determined by the tremendous windfall that the Leader of the Opposition spoke about. The land tax authorities use sales, the land tax authorities for land tax purposes use the experience of *de facto* sales in the area. If $25 per square foot is the value that the land has been passing at now, many of those in that area who do not dispose of their land will have to pay land taxes on the basis of that new value and the people who have dictated that value have long since gone and have managed to take advantage of the windfall.

The significance up there of the sales that have taken place is the fact that there have been sales of some considerable pieces of land. That is the point. We are not talking about a number of transactions that are of the order of an acre or so made up of a lot of small parcels of land. We are talking about the prime corner sites 8 or 10 acres, 12 to 14 acres that have been sold. The other point that rankles us is the fact that everyone knew that for a long period of time, indeed over ten years that the development around the Warrens Complex in particular was envisaged and that what was holding it up was a decision as to what was going to happen to the road system in that particular area. When the plan was finally fixed for the alignment of this major road then it became even clearer.

With that background what we say is that everyone who was responsible for the compilation of this Order should have gone about it particularly after the warnings both in here and the Other Place, with much greater despatch. There cannot be any doubt about that.

I am one of those who have a radically different view on these things because I feel that we should have a look at the method of taxation in California in relation to the increase in values of land. But maybe one of these days we will wake up to the fact that all of these increments in value really belong to the community and that it should be dependant upon all that to have to bring them into the purview of the tax net.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: It still does not matter. The point is that the taxation system is quite unfair if people like this get away and everyone of us irrespective of our earnings when we go to the supermarkets have to pay an increasing proportion of our taxes for what we need for necessity. These are matters that I have absolutely no doubt that sooner or later we are going to have the opportunity to

debate that, Sir. Very soon we will have an opportunity to debate that, the regressive nature of the tax system that we have in Barbados. Very soon we are going to have that opportunity, Sir. So that there is no point at this particular period of time us prolonging this discussion.

I am going to support it, Sir, because I feel it should have been in before. That is why I am supporting it. I really feel it should have been in before. I was really looking forward to this Order being made and these large areas... And there are two more coming. But I do not want 50%, I want 100%, because the scheme for financing this road system was to a large extent predicated upon the increments of value and the perpetual increase in land taxes that you would get there plus this additional tax.

I remember the firm of Proctor and Redfirm, the Economists. They argued it out very clearly that we must not be afraid of the cost of this road because it had built into it with the increments of value, mechanisms that would ensure that at least the interest will be paid immediately. Because if the road cost $90 million and interest of 10% was $9 million, it was envisaged that the taxes would come in. You got $8 million from the increase in land taxes already. I know a good piece would come from this. The next valuation is even going to be worse.

Those are the considerations which motivated us in making these strictures. I do hope that a very close look is kept on the area. There will be some hardships that will arise because of the fact that some of the smaller land owners in the area will now be penalized with values of $25 a square foot. There will be some hardships. You have to look at those because there will be isolated cases.

Aside.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: Well I do not know what we will have to do about that but that is something that we have to watch. One of the things that we have to look at really and truly is that now that this value of $25 is established that the circumference of that area is pretty restrictive because there are other people outside of it. You will hear a lot more about it. It is a matter of regret, Sir, and I hope it does not happen again. I know how these things are done. They take a long time in coming up and sometimes you have to ask for them, otherwise they might not reach you fast enough.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, there is only one point I want to mention on this particular Resolution and it has something to do with law reform. But before I mention that point, I should like to take up the Honourable Member for St. Michael North on a point he mentioned about Well Gap. The reason why he did not agree with it was that it included an area in Well Gap and he felt that that area should not have been included in the actual Order.

Asides.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I have had dealings with transactions in areas affected by this particular bit of legislation. My understanding is that the argument that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North just advanced does not hold because it relates to the improved value at the base date and an area at the Well Gap – even if it were included in the Order– the value itself would not have improved as a result of it being included in that particular Order.

Aside.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Yes. But even if the description in Well Gap had been included it would not have affected the people in Well Gap.

In addition to that I do not see how the improved value would have affected that area in any event. But that is not the point that I wanted to make. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North could have had the description done in a matter of days. The matter of a description is nothing that takes that long. It is just the matter of a day or two, but the point which I wanted to mention, it is one which to my mind in dealing with a transaction pertaining to the land development duty I would not like to say it caused some hardship, because in any event, profit was made to the vendor.
6.30 p.m.

I would hope that the Honourable Attorney General would look at Section 6.1 in dealing with the capital gain. 6.(e) refers to certain amounts that are expended which should be deducted from the actual gain and it includes stamp duty under the Stamp Duty Act, fees to an attorney-at-law for professional services rendered, property transfer tax under the Property Transfer Tax Act, but there is excluded commission paid to a real estate agent and I believe that this is a legitimate expense of a vendor and I think it should be urgently looked at.

Thank you for allowing me to make that.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I would just like to reply briefly, Mr. Speaker. There is agreement on this matter on both sides of the House. The problem raised which I, myself, adverted to when I was introducing the matter was the delay and my shoulders are very broad and I can take the criticisms or if the Leader of the Opposition prefers to use the word, strictures, that is alright I can take that. I accept responsibility. I am Minister of Finance, but I would just like to say that it was within two months of my making the statement in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals that the matter was submitted to the Cabinet. It wasn't that there was any delay as such on my part, deliberately, or anything like that, in this matter. Within two months of making the statement on the floor of the House I had submitted the matter to the Cabinet and then there were delays as you heard the Deputy Prime

Minister indicated, the Member for St. Michael North, that there was a query relating to the designation of the entire area, then there was a query relating to Well Gap, then there were discussions about the rate of duty and then the parcels of land. All of that, with the files going backwards and forwards, Ministry of Finance, the Land Tax Officials, the Crown Counsels and the Cabinet and to and fro, the delays have occurred.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Attorney-General wants mention in this too, so that is the area and maybe we should find a way because this is something that is common to Government and perhaps we have to find a way of speeding up how these and other matters are processed within the Government, but in the process of administrative reform and law reform and whatever other kinds of reforms we will certainly be looking at these areas to see how they can be improved.

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

Order No. 7 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Land Development Duty (Rate of Duty) Order, 1991.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Order No. 8 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the sale to Gertrude Hall of land together with the building thereon, situated at Halls Village, St. James.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this is a short Resolution and it has to do with the sale of land at Halls Village in the parish of St. James to Gertrude Hall. This was one of those facilities – toilet and bath – which were owned by the Government and which were closed down some years ago and we advertised in the newspapers for persons who would want to purchase these and this is one of many people who had applied and the Cabinet made a decision that based on the offer that was made that they would sell this particular one to Ms. Gertrude Hall and I therefore would want to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Order No. 9 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Breedy's Land, Christ Church for housing development.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this is another one of those areas of land which has been identified by the Ministry of Housing and Lands for the purposes of housing development. It is in Breedy's Land in the parish of Christ Church and the reason why we have to go this route of compulsory acquisition is because we cannot agree by private arrangement on a price, but it is part of the Ministry's programme for making house spots, and generally speaking, in support of the Ministry's housing development programme.

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

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

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: I have not seen the plan, Sir. I think the Honourable Member has obviously not been in here at a time when the usual and customary sources of information have been provided. We never used to pass land acquisition things without giving the other side a look at the plan so that we would know. I don't know whether it is on my side or the other side. Whichever side it is on, Sir, we are looking forward to development in that area, and I hope that it is development, not for sites and services, because I can't see how a meaningful sites and services project can take place on an acre of land. I really can't see that, Sir. Eight house spots would be too much trouble to do. I am not sure, that is why we wanted to know.

Asides.

Mr. H. B. St. JOHN: No, it is more than that, Sir. It is 5 900 square metres, that is roughly about 59 000 square feet – an acre and a quarter. Perhaps the Honourable Member could start with some terrace houses there, something like that where we would get some houses. When you take out the roads that have to be going in with the house spots ... I would like to know where the land is because I really don't know where it is, I am looking for it.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: I rise in support of this Resolution before the Honourable House. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South should not worry too much, because it is really in my area although he should really know exactly where it is. It is somewhat north of the round rock area, sandwiched between the East to West Breedy Roads.
6.40 p.m.

My concern though, Sir, is that to the North there is adequate road access; but to the very Round Rock area I do not think that it should be developed without some attention being paid to that particular area. Unfortunately what the

Honourable Minister of Housing referred to has already happened on this very piece of land because, as I understand it, about 4 or 5 houses are already sited on this land. It can however hold when I worked it out sometime ago about eleven or so. I did speak with the Minister about this when I realized that the acquisition was coming up, Sir. My particular concern though is that if we are to move towards keeping families together I would hope that the first option of owning the house spots would be given to persons from the area so that the whole idea of the concept of the extended families is once again brought into play.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: The constituency of Christ Church East is visited with this problem repeatedly in the area of Parish Land and Fairy Valley which we will deal with in time. But Sir, I have the greatest amount of pleasure in acknowledging that the Ministry is moving in the right direction to ensure that all the people of this country are adequately provided for particularly in Christ Church East and I expect to see much more work done in the area for the constituents. Thank you.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I would want to offer my apologies to the House. The file relating to this particular acquisition is not here but I will give the Honourable Member the assurance that I will bring it at the next meeting of the House so that he could see the location. But I recognize the point which he has made that along with the acquisition the file should be here and that Honourable Members should be given the opportunity to look at the plans, and I really sincerely apologize for this. However, I have taken note of the comments made both by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and we will pay due attention to that.

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

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this House has been sitting continuously since 10 o'clock Monday morning. This is one sitting of the House and it is now, Sir, nearly 7 o'clock and it is about time that Honourable Members get a break. Not only Honourable Members, Sir, but all of those persons who worked in these Chambers here during that period of time. I am referring to the Reporters, Police, hourly workers in Parliament, the Clerks, Marshals, and everyone, Sir. I think, Sir, that we have completed and done the work that has been required of us and I want sincerely to thank all those Members who cooperated in order to bring this thing to its usual end.

Sir, in light of all of that, I would like to move at this point that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 2, 1991 at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to second this motion for the Adjournment and in so doing I wish to indicate that I will be laying the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals for 1991 on that particular day on April 2, 1991. I would like to join with the Leader of the House in thanking all members of staff for the work that they have done. I think that we should realize that we have had a new format for the Estimates and that we have got through the work with a minimum amount of dislocation I think is a tribute to the amount of work and preparation that has gone into that, not only by Honourable Members but by the civil servants and others who have worked on this particular matter. We have also got through a considerable number of Heads by the means of debate of some 15 which I think is more than have been done for quite sometime. I think as we seek to refine our own processes and procedures that we will certainly find some way of dealing with our Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure in such a way as all Honourable Members would get an opportunity to speak on the topics that they wish to speak and at the same time ensuring that there is proper and adequate debate on all issues. I thank you.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Speaking on the motion for the Adjournment, let me say as well that I wish to thank the staff for their cooperation. A lot of requests are made to members of staff during the time of the Estimates in particular and they have been very prompt in keeping Members informed and I wish to thank them, of course, particularly those of our staff who have to take shorthand. At times it has not been easy for them in the exchanges that occur in the House. The House has not been as hot as it was before the last Session, but I think there is still sometime away from the next fateful day and perhaps then the Prime Minister will really have his moment in time, Sir.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: But let me say, Sir, that from the Opposition I really would say that we have done a lot of work. We have debated 15 of the 21 Heads and this is the first time for many years since we changed the Rules of the House that I have seen 15 Heads debated. Before you know there was no time limit and we went on for a few days. We have got through 15 Heads and for the first time in a long time we have debated Foreign Affairs and some other Heads that we never normally get to. I would have hoped

that we could have probably covered a few more Heads, Sir. Maybe there are a couple of lessons for us in the reform of the Estimates which has taken place that will be the beginning of other reforms. I just want parenthetically to say that there are 21 Heads but they are numbered from 10 to something like 43 and I always wonder why we stick this way. Perhaps we should start from Head 1 or Head 10 or whatever the computer programme is but throw up Heads that are a little bit closer and consistent, Sir.

Sir, we are adjourning until April 2nd. I am sure that the Prime Minister will have no respite from his work and I am sure that the country can look forward to no respite from taxation. But Sir, we face the future with fortitude so ever looking upwards and onwards and I can let the Prime Minister know that we will be ready. The shadow Minister of Finance unfortunately is not here today. He has to go on his various duties, Sir. Unfortunately, his wife is overseas so he wants to spend a couple of days with her. I am sure he will come back refreshed, Sir, to deal with the problems and I will also, Sir, be refreshed. We are looking forward to the debate. I am sure the Leader of the House and myself will before that day be able to meet about the format and, when the relevant letter is addressed to Your Honour, the Speaker, and Your Honour has made a decision on that, we will be able to come to some arrangement to get through the debate rather speedily, Sir.

I want to say, Sir, perhaps to the new Members who have spoken and particularly the new Members of Parliament on our side that I was very pleased with the confidence with which they spoke particularly one of the new Members who handled his portfolio for the first time. Although they are new to this House, Sir, I feel good as a senior Member of this House in saying that it goes well for the future when we can have this sort of talent returning to the House, Sir.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West wants me to make some mention of himself, Sir. I promise him that I am going to make some mention of him in the Budget, Sir. I am going to tell the country that he will insist on speaking last one before the Prime Minister, Sir, as he always does because he does not like me to speak after him, Sir. He cannot stand the attack, Sir. But in any event, Sir, I look forward to hearing his voice too in the Budget.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will not be embroiled in this debate by any inducement offered by my friend. I wanted myself to thank those Honourable Members. From time to time for a few moments I would have had their cooperation and, since the Honourable Member discussed his new Members, I would like to pay tribute to this entire side, Sir. The new Members did not behave like new Members and that is probably why the Honourable Member who just sat down did not include them. He probably thought that they were here ever since the last time. But I have to remind him that they are new. But the point I wanted to make is that I hope that note has been taken that the Ministers on the front bench recognize the convention that essentially the Estimates debate gives the Opposition an opportunity to air their questions and ventilate issues and the Ministers provide clarification.
6.50 p.m.

It is obvious that we could not have got through 15 Heads if there had not been a tremendous amount of co-operation on the part of the Government. I am putting it on the record so that there will be no difficulty with someone in the future remembering what the Convention is, because we have been discussing from time to time the losing of Conventions. The fact is that our Members were very co-operative in this and I hope the Honourable Members do not think I am being invidious when I indicate that, to the extent it was necessary, we called the Heads to accommodate the Opposition. I think that is a good sign and I hope that this co-operative spirit will continue.

The question that the House be now adjourned until April 2, 1991 at 3.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
6.55 p.m.

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