
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 10, 1992.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

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

Mr. 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. 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)

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

Hon. C. V. **WALKER**, (Minister of Education)

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

Hon. E. E. **GREAVES**, G.C.M., B.A., Ed.M.,
(Minister of Housing and Lands)

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

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

Hon. D. J. H. **THOMPSON**, LL.B.(Hons.) (Minister
of Community Development and Culture)

Hon. 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**, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc.
(Econ.)

Mr. G. W. **PAYNE**

Prayers were led by Fr. Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of
Tuesday, February 25, 1992.

Hon. B. M. **TAITT**: Mr. Speaker, Sir, those Minutes
have been circulated and we can take them as read. I beg
to move that those Minutes be now confirmed.

Mr. SPEAKER: If then there are no other
observations, let the Minutes of February 25 stand
confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

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

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. B. M. **TAITT**: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give
notice of a Resolution to approve the borrowing by the
Government of a sum not exceeding \$7 million in the
currency of the United States of America for use by
various End User Departments specified in Appendix II of
the draft Third Supply and Finance Agreement between the
Government of Barbados and the Crown Agents Services
Limited.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 18, asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant order of the day. Order No. 3.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING OF
LAND AT MOUNT FRIENDSHIP ROAD, ST.
MICHAEL TO MILDRED HOLDER

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution seeks to tidy up some acquisitions which were done in 1981 for the purpose of road construction.

As a matter of history, in 1981 the Crown acquired several parcels of land at Mount Friendship/St. Barnabas/Wildey area for road construction. One of those parcels was acquired from Mrs. Mildred Holder to the tune of 119 square metres. This is part of a larger area of land then owned by the same lady. When the road project was completed, it was discovered that only an area of 63.6 square metres of Mrs. Holder's land were actually utilised in the programme, leaving the unutilised area of **55.4** square metres which was of no use to the Government.

It should be pointed out that during the preliminary discussion it was proposed that Mrs. Holder should be given, on the basis of an exchange, an equivalent portion of Government's land for the 119 square metres which were to be acquired. Government owns an area adjacent to Mrs. Holder's property and this area has been identified as that to be exchanged for the area which was utilised.

What we are seeking to do here also is to abandon the acquisition of the 55.4 square metres of land and allow it to revert to Mrs. Holder. Following publication of the requisite notices, the matter is now before Parliament and the information relating to the acquisition and history of

this matter is contained in the Addendum to the Resolution. 12.30 p.m.

Consequently, we are seeking parliamentary approval as stipulated in this Resolution, to vest in Mildred Holder parcels of land situate at Mount Friendship in the parish of Saint Michael and more particularly described in the First and Second Schedules to the Resolution. The maps for the area are available to Honourable Members.

I therefore move that the Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, the Opposition has no quarrel with the intention of the Government, but there are a few things which I want to clarify. The Minister, in introducing the resolution, spoke of tidying up this acquisition which occurred in 1981. I wish to point out that it is not so much a matter of tidying up, but is more precisely a matter of complying with the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act where property has been acquired and there is a surplus remaining after use by Government of a portion of the land. The policy is to restore the surplus to the original owners.

At the same time, there are some problems which I should like the Minister to understand. The land which is now being recommended for exchange was originally acquired by the Crown from a Mr. Victor Alleyne. If you were to follow the plans very carefully you would find that, although it is adjacent to Mrs. Holder's land, there are two welfare houses situated on it. What I want the Minister to establish clearly are the line marks of the area which is now being vested in the lady as an exchange. Otherwise, there is going to be confusion because there are 2 welfare houses which lie between Mrs. Holder and Mrs. Hackett. There is also land at the back and, as far as I know, that land was not worked for a long time and was owned by the same Mr. Alleyne. It is now in possession of the Crown and was not worked but was in grass, apparently harbouring criminals. Mrs. Hackett has been working that area of land. At the back there is an area of land that was being worked by Mrs. Hackett, and at the front there are the 2 welfare houses. So, I would want to be quite clear in my mind that there is no confusion.

The point must be made that it is not the entire area which formerly belonged to Victor Alleyne which is being vested in exchange. I want to know what are you going to do with the remainder of the land which is now owned by the Crown which was formerly owned by Victor Alleyne. Certainly, it must lead to some confusion because the Crown still owns the land and the National Assistance Board obviously would have some say in this. It is not

really a straightforward matter and I hope the Minister is in a position to have this matter investigated before approval is **granted**. It would prevent obvious **confusion**. There is a question of land boundaries. The welfare houses were **put** there in 1984 or 1985 and those people have grown accustomed to using this land. I do not know if the Government's intention is to transfer the land to Mrs. Holder while allowing the welfare houses to remain. Certainly this could not be the intention. I appreciate the intent of the Minister and Government in trying to resolve this matter. These problems obviously arise and we have to be quite clear so that legal hitches are satisfactorily resolved. Otherwise we are opening a can of worms.

I hope the Minister will take heed. There is no hurry. He can ask to have the matter deferred and come back with the information. That's all I have to say, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I have taken the point made by the Honourable Member. I think he has clearly demonstrated that he is on top of his constituency. I have to give him that. I **am** not aware of the particular difficulties which the Honourable Member has raised. Certainly, these are matters which can be dealt with. I will give him the assurance that I will personally go and look at the particular **area**. If there are problems relating to welfare houses and problems relating to Mrs. **Hackett** who, according to **the** Member, is working **Government** land - I don't know on what basis she is working Government land - I will **investigate** them and give **the** assurance that everything will **be** dealt with in as even-handed a manner as possible.

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

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

QUESTION TIME

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government Business. I **beg** to move **that** question time **be** taken now.

Mr. SPEAKER: Reply to Question No. 18 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 18 reads as follows:

Will the Minister take appropriate action to ensure that adequate street lighting is installed and regular **debushing** is done as a matter of extreme urgency along the public road which leads from Banks Breweries Ltd., past the Sanitation Service Authority to the Errol Barrow

Memorial Park, all in Wildey, St. Michael, thus improving the safety of the users of those areas, especially at night?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking on behalf of **the** Minister. The reply to Parliamentary Question No. 18 is:

"The Ministry will weed the road as part of its maintenance programme. Lighting in the area will be upgraded when funds become available."

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.
12.40 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The supplementary, which the Honourable Member thought was a supplementary, in my view, was not a genuine one. It would be better if the Honourable Member rephrases it.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Sir, I am seeking guidance from you in relation to rephrasing the supplementary question. As set out **here...**

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot make a speech.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: No, Sir. I **am** clarifying...

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot be clarifying and then at the same time make a speech.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Will the Minister please state how soon he would be able to advise the Ministry concerned to 'cut down the tall trees that appear along the Highway?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member may be assured that "weed" was inadvertently used but "**debush**" would be better, or "cut down the trees" on the road. The Minister will take all steps to remove anything that even remotely may **hide** criminals of any colour, shape or creed and with all **deliberate speed** will see that these matters are dealt with.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Since there have been several complaints to the police about criminals hiding in this particular area due to the lack of street lighting, will the Minister state how soon he will have street lights installed to illuminate the area, at least, to **deter** such criminals?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I give the Honourable Member the assurance **that**, as soon as funds become available, this will be done.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Will the Minister please state in what period of time the funds will be available?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is fully aware that the Estimates will shortly be done. All of these matters will be revealed at that time.

Mr. SPEAKER: You had 3 supplementary questions. Any other supplementaries? If not, we have come to the end of Replies to Questions.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. **Speaker**, that brings us to the end of Government Business for today. I do not know if Honourable Members are ready with Private Members' Resolutions. I do not see that any Honourable Members are ready.

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Hon. B. M. TAITT 1494

Notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 18 was ready.

I beg to move that this House be now adjourned until Thursday, March 19, 1992 at 10 o'clock a.m. It is hoped that at that time we will begin consideration of the Annual Estimates. It is anticipated that the Estimates will be done on Thursday and Friday and break on Saturday and Sunday. Bearing in mind the average age of Honourable Members it might be unreasonable to go on. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the following week we shall complete debate on the Estimates.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Thursday, March 19, 1992 at 10 o'clock a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
12.45 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. B. M. TAITT 1494

Suspension of Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of the Sitting.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BRADSHAW, Mr. DeL. O. (St. Michael South East)
GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy)
TAITT, Hon. B. M. (St. Michael West)

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, March 19, 1992

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.20 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)
Mr. 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, G.C.M., B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M. (Minister of Tourism and Sports)

Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Community Development and Culture)
Hon. 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, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)

Mr. D. W. BOWEN
Mr. G. W. PAYNE
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of March 10, 1992.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes to which you have just referred, the Minutes for the meeting of March 10, 1992 have been circulated, Sir. I move that they 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 the minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: The Annual Report of the Management Commission of Parliament is now laid on the Table, and, as Chairman of that Committee, I therefore draw to Members' attention that the Report is now available.

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Estimates 1992-93.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am giving notice of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of a parcel of land at Vauxhall, Christ Church for the purpose of erecting a village for senior citizens.

I am also giving notice, Sir, of a Bill called the Financial **Intermediaries** Regulatory Bill 1992.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am moving, Sir, that the Financial Intermediaries Regulatory Bill 1992 be read a first time.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am moving that a Bill to grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of Barbados for the year ending March 31, 1993 be read a first time.

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

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that reply to Parliamentary Question No. 15 is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is necessary to suspend certain Standing Orders. I move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this sitting.

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

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

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

ORDER NO. 1 - THE APPROPRIATION BILL, 1992

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my capacity as Minister responsible for Finance to move the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, 1992, and I do so in accordance with the law and custom of our Constitution.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, section 107 of the Constitution of Barbados provides for the establishment of a Consolidated Fund in and for Barbados, into which, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force, shall be paid all revenues of Barbados.

By virtue of section 108, as Minister responsible for Finance, I am under an obligation before the end of each financial year to have prepared Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for services during the succeeding financial year. The Estimates must display separately the sums of money required to meet statutory expenditure as well as the sums required to meet other expenditure proposed to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. Those Estimates must be laid before the House of Assembly.

Furthermore, under section 109 of the Constitution, the provisions of which are repeated under Section 6 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, Cap. 5, in my capacity as Minister responsible for Finance, I have the further obligation, before the commencement of the financial year, to introduce in the House of Assembly an Appropriation Bill stipulating, under appropriate heads for the several services required the estimated aggregate sums proposed to be expended otherwise and by way of statutory expenditure during the financial year.

The sums voted on by this Honourable Chamber in respect of the financial year, represent the limit and extent of public expenditure for the financial year, except where supplementary estimates of expenditure are voted on by the House.

10.30 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, the obligations I have just mentioned have been complied with and this is, therefore, now a convenient time under your direction, Sir, for this Honourable Chamber to proceed on the debate of the Appropriation Bill, 1992 and the Barbados Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1992-93. As is customary, during the course of the debate on the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, I will be moving certain amendments to those instruments.

I, therefore, now wish to turn, Sir, to a review of the current financial year 1991-92 which, of course, still has

some time to run before it comes to an end on March 31, 1992. It is, therefore, to this situation that I wish to speak before formally moving the passage of this Appropriation Bill and the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the coming financial year.

I am sure, Sir, that all Honourable Members of this House fully appreciate the fact that those two instruments to which I made reference, that is, the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, represent vital initial steps in the important process of Government budgeting and financial accounting, which are completed by the introduction of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. It is my intention, in due course, to bring these two processes closer together so that they can be seen as parts of a simple process, which is indeed what they really are.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of this exercise for the good governance and management of the financial resources of the country should not be underestimated. This year, the process to which I have alluded assumes particular importance, not due to any significant change in the procedural format, but rather because of the circumstances and backdrop against which the events are cast. That is why I have indicated that it is that situation to which I wish to address my mind and direct attention of this Honourable Chamber before we may pass the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the current financial year it was estimated that Government would record a total of \$1 350.3 million and have an intake of revenue in the sum of \$977.6 million which, in turn, would result in an average overall deficit of some \$372.7 million or 6% of the GDP.

During the first 6 months of the fiscal year, for several reasons which are now well known, and which I have explained to this Honourable House on a number of occasions, the Barbadian economy showed little sign of vitality amidst the recession experienced in 1990. The major foreign exchange earning sectors, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing, performed poorly. The foreign exchange position declined by \$53 million. Moreover, capital inflows remained minimal and the capital market tight with the consequential result that Government's original projected deficit was too high and could not be financed at that rate.

Towards the middle of 1991, therefore, it became evident that Barbados was experiencing major economic problems. Firstly, there was a problem of the deficit on the current account and of the balance of payments, along with a near depletion of the international reserves. There was also the deficit in the Government budget and heavy debt

service payment commitments as a consequence of accumulated borrowing.

Most astute observers, Mr. Speaker, were, of course, aware that Barbados was not alone in having economic problems, since the data was showing that other countries in the region, the hemisphere and throughout the world were experiencing difficulties during 1991. In the OECD countries output is estimated to have grown by a mere 1.3% compared with 2.6% in the previous year.

Growth in all countries was slower in 1991 than in the previous year and in the United States and Canada declines were registered. In the United States the economy showed a decline of some 0.7% compared with growth of 1% in 1990, while in Canada economic output slowed by 0.3% compared with a growth rate of 0.5% in 1990. Output in the United Kingdom declined by 2.4% compared with a growth rate of 1.0% in 1990. In Japan and Germany, this slowing in the economy was also experienced though to a lesser extent than in the other countries mentioned.

As a small developing country, Sir, Barbados is adversely affected by the recession in these economies because of its dependency, first of all, on tourism for its source of foreign exchange which enables the country to have hard currency for the payments of its debts and for imports, and in the second place, for markets to receive its products.

During 1991, Barbados' problems were compounded since the international capital markets were unaccommodating for borrowing to support projects or to assist in the payment of debts. The scarcity of foreign exchange to the country meant that Barbados was forced to draw on its accumulated stock of international reserves for debt servicing. Those reserves which stood at \$80.8 million at December 1990 fell by a further \$53 million by mid-year 1991. The foreign exchange position was also aggravated by flight of capital. This was accompanied by a reduction of liquidity in the system, thus curtailing the availability of resources for on-lending to prospective investors.

10.40 a.m.

During August 1991, the Central Bank sought to restrict credit and bring order to the financial sector by adjusting interest rates. The minimum savings rate was raised from 5.5 per cent to 7.0 per cent and residential mortgage rates were increased from 9.0 per cent to 11.0 per cent. In addition the Bank's discount rate was increased from 13.5 per cent to 18 per cent and the ceiling was removed on the average lending rate which pushed the weighted average loan rate up by 1.8 per cent to 13.9 per cent, the highest since 1981.

As I indicated earlier, the sectors which should have been playing an important part in ensuring the recovery of the economy were performing poorly. Besides an 11 per

cent decline in tourism earnings during the first half of the year, there were problems in the agricultural sector with the yield from the sugar crop falling far below expectations, and there was a drop of 16.9 per cent in the real output in the non-sugar agricultural sector. The manufacturing sector was also adversely affected by a fall in domestic demand and, secondly, by its inability to access new markets. At the same time there was a noticeable increase in the demand for imports.

Stabilization

Budgetary measures instituted during April 1991 provided for an increase in revenue with a proposed net yield in the order of \$68.2 million and a reduction of the deficit to about 4.0 per cent of the GDP from around 6.5 per cent in the 1990/91 financial year.

These proposals were aimed at curbing consumer spending and included the introduction of a stabilization tax of 1.5 per cent on all personal income and increases in the consumption tax rates (including a 2 percentage point increase in the basic consumption tax rate).

In spite of those measures, and as a result of the continuing slippage and decline in the performance of the economy, with little evidence of recovery and in order to defend the external account and the value of the Barbados dollar, the Government was forced during September 1991 to seek to implement further measures to correct the situation. Government instituted cuts in expenditure in the third quarter and started negotiations on a stabilization programme with the assistance of the IMF.

Under the Agreement with the Fund, the country stands to benefit from the receipt of US\$58.1 million which would include US\$28.4 million on a **standby** basis and US\$29.7 million from the Fund's compensatory and contingency financing facility. The bulk of the resources, some US\$41.1 million, has been provided in the first instalment as balance of payments support, and the remainder will be payable over the life of the programme which will end in just over thirteen months from now.

Let me repeat. The primary objective of Government's entering into a formal **stabilization** programme with the International Monetary Fund was to correct the imbalances in **the** domestic and **external** sectors of the economy. In addition further **corrective** measures are being considered to deal with the structural imbalances in the productive sectors **and** in general to restore competitiveness to the economy **thereby** laying the foundations for the return of the economy to a growth pattern.

The main thrust of the programme, **then**, Mr. Speaker, includes a medium-term economic strategy aimed at restoring financial stability and **sustainable** economic

growth. Fiscal, **monetary**, incomes and external debt management policies combined with structural reforms are geared to maintain the exchange rate parity. To strengthen the base for a firm recovery of the productive sectors the Government proposes to introduce measures in the areas of taxation, the **trade** and tariff system, and the financial sector. These reforms will give priority to improving external competitiveness, removing disincentives to export activity and will encourage an efficient allocation of resources. The implementation of a comprehensive restrained incomes policy is central to the national strategy for competitiveness and defence of the parity of the exchange rate of the Barbados dollar.

Mr. Speaker, it will be recalled that on the 17th September, 1991, in my supplemental Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, I outlined the various measures which were aimed at turning around the situation. Among these were measures to increase the revenue by \$62.6 million and to reduce the expenditure by \$114.0 million.

At that time expenditure was revised to \$1 097.4 million and revenue to \$1061.8 million. Revised Revenue was set at \$1011.6 million to which must be added the net revenue yield of \$62.6 million as a result of the measures introduced in the September supplementary Budget and giving a total of \$1 074.2 million. From this must be taken Printing Office and Airport revenue of \$12.6 million leaving a revenue balance of \$1 061.6 million.

Turning now to total expenditure, this was fixed at \$1 350.3 million but had to be increased by a further \$61.7 million as a result of significant movements in interest rates giving a new total of \$1 412.0 million. When amortization of \$182 million is deducted, a balance of \$1 230 million remains from which must be taken Printing Office and Airport expenditure of \$18.8 million, leaving \$1 211.2 million. From this, the expenditure reduction of \$114.0 million must further be made, resulting in an expenditure balance of \$1 097.2 million.

10.50 a.m.

When, therefore the revenue balance of \$1 061.6 million is deducted from the expenditure balance of \$1 097.2 million, an overall deficit of \$35.6 million results.

However, as indicated in the amended memorandum to the Estimates, the Current Revenue is projected at \$1 012.1 million and total expenditure at \$1 247.1 million, leaving an overall deficit of \$235.0 million. With total financing of \$199.4 million the balance is \$35.6 million.

When the numbers are adjusted on the basis used by the International Monetary Fund, the results show that Projected Current Revenue is expected to be \$1 012.1 million: When the receipts of the Printing Office and

Airport, totalling \$12.5 million are deducted this will result in a net revenue yield of \$999.6 million.

On the other side, total expenditure is expected to be \$1 247.1 million. When amortisation of \$195.7 million is deducted, this results in net expenditure of \$1 051.4 million, from which \$16.2 million must be subtracted for the expenses of the Printing Office and Airport, leaving expenditure at \$1 035.2 million. When therefore the revenue balance of \$999.6 million is taken from the expenditure balance of \$1 035.2 million, an overall deficit of \$35.6 million results.

According to long-standing practice, the International Monetary Fund excludes amortisation; but in addition to that, the Fund excludes the operations of the Airport and Printing Office, since these are regarded as commercial enterprises. In any event, whether the national method or the IMF method is used, the deficit works out at \$35.6 million. That projected deficit of \$35.6 million as a percentage of GDP at market prices will be approximately 1 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, at the time of the Supplemental Budget last year, this country was saturated with much talk about the necessity or otherwise for the economic stabilisation programme, and some persons even went so far as to suggest that there was an over-adjustment. Those positions have turned out to be wrong, and the position today is that the rapid decline in the foreign reserves has been halted, and there has been no devaluation of the Barbados dollar as was predicted.

Fause.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the Honourable Member concluded?

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I have not concluded yet. I will not respond at this time, Sir. Sir, you know I am a counter-puncher, so I will wait.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, this is not the time for prolonged interruptions.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot accept the state of the debate. I am listening to the Honourable Prime Minister and I expect to do so until he is finished.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I expect so, Mr. Speaker. I expect that too, under your guidance. I don't understand these devalued comments and observations coming from the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not heard them, neither will they be recorded.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, we were able to meet the December indicators of the draft programme and all the indications are that we will meet the targets for 31st March. In other words, the economic stabilisation programme is on track. But of even greater significance is the very real possibility that after a second year of negative growth, set at around -4 per cent, the stage is being set for economic recovery during the fiscal year 1992-93.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: At this point, let me commend all of those persons who, in spite of the difficulties which we are experiencing as a country, and any dislocation that might have arisen, have maintained their confidence in this administration and have made a tremendous effort to ensure that our country succeeds in avoiding the depths of perdition which some persons were either hoping for, or expecting. I am utterly convinced that with the continued support of all Barbadians, we will emerge in the long run with a leaner but much stronger economy.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to the 1992-93 Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. These have been prepared in keeping with the commitments given in the Letter of Intent as amended, and they form a crucial element in the continued stabilisation of our economy and in the restoration of growth. Against all that has been said and done, Mr. Speaker, to derail Government's programme, we in this Government have set a clear and workable path, and have followed this path. Now is not the time to turn back. We must press on with our objectives. For at the end of the day, we have to ensure that we protect and enhance the living standards of all in this country and towards this end my Government has resolved to achieve certain objectives.

11.00 a.m.

It is anticipated that there will be real growth of 1.2 per cent and all of our efforts will be focused in that direction. The major engines of this growth will be tourism, construction, and the business and financial sectors. It is anticipated that the inflation rate will be around 5 per cent. It is anticipated that there will be a surplus of 1 per cent on the External Current Account. It is expected that the Net International Reserves of the Central Bank will increase by US\$29.0 million, implying a recovery in official gross liquid reserves to two and a half months of imports at the end of 1992/93. These are our objectives, Sir, and we will work for the attainment of those objectives.

It is an objective of our financial policies that central Government operations will be contained at a balanced financial position in 1992-93 and that an overall

equilibrium in public sector operations will be achieved for 1992-93. It is an objective of our financial policies that both revenue and expenditure will be clawed back and maintained at 29 per cent of GDP. It is an objective that the wages bill should be kept to 10 per cent of GDP.

Let me now turn, Mr. Speaker, to the Economic Classification of Revenue and Expenditure for the coming financial year.

I will deal with Revenue first. Taxes on Income and Profits will be \$293.4 million. Taxes on Property will be \$61.7 million, taxes on Goods and Services are expected to realise \$348.9 million, taxes on International Trade will amount to..;

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. That bears no relationship to us. This is a matter of procedure. Well, you see it here. It is a different thing. We are dealing with the Estimates.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is the centre column. No, that is wrong. The numbers are right. The year is wrong. I am reading from the central column.

Sir, I should point out these are on Page 3 of the Estimates. I am reading from those figures in the centre column at the top of that page called Functional Classification of Current Revenue 1991-92 but the year for that center column is to be amended. The figures are correct. It is not 1991-92 but 1992-93.

As I was saying, Sir, taxes on the Revenue side on Incomes and Profits will be \$293.4 million. Taxes on Property will be \$61.7 million, taxes on Goods and Services are expected to realise \$348.9 million, taxes on International Trade will amount to \$104.7 million and other taxes will be to the tune of \$103.5 million. Non-tax Revenue is expected to realise \$62.7 million. As far as Special Receipts are concerned, it is estimated that the sum of \$100.4 million will be raised, whereas Loans and Advances will be to the tune of \$2.6 million, thereby giving a total of \$1 077.9 million.

In the area of Economic Classification on Expenditure, Wages and Salaries are expected to amount to \$365.3 million. National Insurance Contributions and Levies are \$24.5 million and Goods and Services are \$106.5 million. Current Transfers will amount to \$231.9 million. Debt Servicing will be \$344.6 million. Acquisitions will be to the tune of \$4.4 million while Capital Formation will be \$104.8 million. In the area of Capital Transfers, the amount is fixed at \$51.9 million, while Capital Lending is \$14.5 million. All these categories of expenditure will give a total of \$1 248.4 million, leaving an overall deficit of \$170.5 million. Most of these figures, Sir, are under the Economic Classification of Total Expenditure on Page 5 of the Estimates.

Current Revenue is set at \$1,077.9 million and Foreign Financing at \$161.5 million, while financing from National Insurance Fund and Non-Financial Public Enterprises will be at \$9.0 million, giving a total of \$1 248.4 million.

When the above information is presented on the same basis as the International Monetary Fund, Total Expenditure will be \$1 248.4 million, less Amortisation of \$159.1 million, leaving a total of \$1 089.3 million. When Printing Office and Airport Expenditure of \$19.3 million is removed, this leaves Total Expenditure of \$1 070.0 million. On the other hand, total revenue is \$1 077.9 million, less Printing Office and Airport revenue of \$12.5 million, giving a total of \$1 065.4 million, to which must be added a surplus of \$4.6 million from the Post Office which leaves a total revenue of \$1 070.0 million and therefore a zero balance.

11.10 a.m.

As the foregoing information demonstrates, the total expenditure, excluding amortisation, will be financed from Revenue. However, the idea of a balanced budget has much more significance than merely showing a zero balance.

In the past, there has been much discussion about the size of Government's operations. There have been claims that Government was using up too much credit from the domestic banking sector and by that action was "crowding out" the private sector. Some persons have made a big issue about the use of credit from the Central Bank.

On this occasion we have sought to meet the expenditure, excluding amortisation, from Revenue. In other words, the Estimates of Expenditure have been tailored in such a way that they can be sustained by the resources available to Government. The expenditure is being contained to 29% of the Gross Domestic Product and the revenue intake is being limited to 29% of the GDP also. This level of operations is considered to be reasonable and it is not expected to result in any fiscal drag on the economy.

It is accepted, Mr. Speaker, that Government's operations can have an impact on the demand for imports and may contribute to inflation. As a result, when Government seeks to balance its budget, to limit its extraction of revenue from the economy to a reasonable percentage of GDP, and to arrange its expenditure on a similar basis, the result can only be beneficial to the economy.

My Government, in constructing the Estimates, has not only paid close attention to their composition in relation to GDP, but has taken the necessary steps to reduce transfers to para-statal organisations wherever possible, and to ensure that the eventual level of expenditure will be financed in such a way that the amount of credit which

Government will obtain from the domestic banking sector, including the Central Bank, will fall during fiscal year 1992-93 by approximately \$95 million. When this happens it will mean that more credit will be available to the private sector for expansion.

However, if the Government's efforts of fiscal restraint are to **have** the desired effect, they must be complemented by other policies, including a wages and incomes policy. This as I have said before, represents the bedrock of our efforts to restore competitiveness to our external sector without having to **adjust** the existing parity of the Barbados dollar *vis-a-vis* the U.S. dollar, and moreover, to ensure that aggregate demand for goods and services is kept within manageable limits.

Provision has been made in this year's Estimates for the continued implementation of the World Bank financed Agricultural Development Project and the start of implementation of the Consett Bay/Skeete's Bay Fisheries and Livestock Development Project. Both of these projects are being funded by the European Development Fund.

It is expected that the implementation of those fisheries projects will provide for the significant upgrading and improvement of fishing facilities and that they will commence during the latter half of this year.

It is also envisaged that the European Development Fund will be making its first disbursement of funds available to the Barbados National Bank during the coming financial year, under the National Fruit Orchard Project, for on-lending to tree crop farmers in Barbados.

The main activities in the Agricultural Development Project which are expected to be effected this year are the continued promotion of the availability of a line of credit for use by the agro-industrial sub-sector in Barbados, and the conduct of a feasibility study which will examine the prospects for the construction of an export marketing facility in Barbados to facilitate the export of fresh produce.

Moreover, Government will soon be signing a financing agreement with the European Development Fund to facilitate the start of implementation of the Livestock Development project. This project will, in the main, provide for the significant upgrading and improvement of the Ministry of Agriculture's Livestock Research and Development facilities at Greenland and the availability of a line of credit for use by livestock farmers in Barbados.

In the industrial sector, provision has been made in this year's Estimates for the more rapid draw-down of the remaining loan financing from the Caribbean Development Bank under the fourth Industrial Estates Loan. The availability of these funds will allow the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation to proceed apace with

the rehabilitation and expansion of industrial estates in Barbados. The successful completion of this task will provide the Corporation with a better framework within which it can operate, in order to lure more foreign investors to Barbados.

In this respect, it should be noted **that** the Government will shortly be commencing the **preparation** of a policy paper on the industrial sector in Barbados so as to take maximum advantage of the 2 million **ECUs** which the European Development Fund will be providing for the continued development of the country's industrial sector under **Lomé IV**.

In the transport sector, provisions are being made in this year's Estimates for the continued upgrading and improvement of the country's transport sector. To this end, the Government **has** recently signed two agreements with the Caribbean Development Bank to provide for the rehabilitation of Highway 2A (Phase **II**) and for the conduct of a feasibility study of the proposed expansion of the Grantley Adams International Airport. In addition, it is expected that the **Government** will shortly be signing a Technical Co-operation Agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank to facilitate the preparation, when all arrangements are completed, of a comprehensive National Transportation Plan for Barbados.

11.20 a.m.

The Government also envisages that it will be able to successfully conclude its discussions with the European Development Fund with respect to the conduct of a rationalisation study of the public transport system in Barbados. In addition to examining the feasibility of the proposed expansion at the Grantley **Adams** International Airport, the feasibility study will also provide for the preparation of the requisite final designs and cost estimates, so that a loan application can be made to an international funding agency **as** soon **as** possible after the completion of the study.

The **Government** will be seeking through the conduct of the Rationalisation Study of the **public** transport system to:

- (a) identify the most appropriate mix of publicly and privately owned transport systems to meet passenger transport demands for Barbados; and
- (b) determine the optimal organisational, operational and regulatory structure that will meet the requirements of this system at the least overall cost to the consumer and the Government.

The Government will **be** seeking through the preparation of a National Transportation Plan **to, inter alia:**

- (a) develop a comprehensive development strategy and a set of complementary policies for the transport sector;
- (b) to improve the efficiency, capacity and quality of transport services provided in the road, public transport, airport and port sub-sectors; and
- (c) strengthen the integration of the various modes of transport and co-ordinate transport, land use and environmental planning and development.

The Government will be seeking to continue with the upgrading and improvement of selected tenantry and subsidiary roads throughout the island.

In the Housing sector, an amount of \$3 million is being provided to complete the construction of 496 houses at Husbands, St. James and Cane Garden, St. Thomas. Two hundred and ninety seven (297) houses have already been completed at Husbands and another 83 houses are now under construction. Of the 116 houses proposed to be built at Cane Garden, 67 are under construction. Construction of these houses is being undertaken with the financial assistance of Venezuela.

The National Low Income Housing Project involves the construction of houses and the provision of fully serviced lots for the low income persons at Rice's, St. Philip and Valery, St. Michael.

The Education sector will continue to be accorded its place of importance in the economy. In this sector, Government, in continuation of its efforts to improve the quality of education, including technical and vocational education, and to strengthen the institutional capacity of the training system, will continue work on the new Ministry of Education Headquarters on the Old Queen's College site, the extension to Springer Memorial School, the Skills Training Centre in St. Lucy and the following primary schools - Black Bess/St. Boniface, Hillaby/Turner's Hall, and St. Stephen's Primary. The Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank are assisting with providing capital for the construction and equipment for these buildings. Training for teachers and staff is also being provided.

To ensure that the manpower needs of the country will continue to be met, an allocation has been made to provide loans through the Student Revolving Loan Fund Scheme to eligible Barbadians who want to pursue priority areas of study. The Inter-American Development Bank is also providing assistance for this area.

Provision has been made in the 1992-93 Estimates for the continuation of work on the Sherbourne Centre which, when completed, will provide examination, multi-purpose and exhibition facilities, and a cultural and conference

complex with a 2,000 seating capacity auditorium. This Centre is expected to diversify our tourism and cultural base by providing conference facilities to attract visitors and residents to the facilities.

Construction of the Hospitality Institute of the Barbados Community College (formerly known as the Hotel School) is being planned to commence this financial year 1992-93. The Institute will include an education block, together with a training hotel to provide more practical training activities for the students. Discussions are ongoing with the European Development Fund for contribution to financing of this project.

The strategy for tourism will centre around reorganisation of the entities responsible for the administration of tourism policy and the implementation of measures to tap new tourist markets, and to develop new thrusts in marketing and advertising.

Justice and Public Safety will get its fair share. The Hometown Complex is being undertaken to provide a new Police Station to serve as a divisional headquarters as well as to provide expanded services for the central parishes. The complex includes a Police Station, Magistrates' Court, Post Office and offices for the Public Health Inspectors, Land Tax, Licensing Authority, Public Library and Health Centre.

Let me take this opportunity to touch on an issue, which is of great concern. The level of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour in this country is unacceptable, and I will not tolerate it, and my government will not tolerate it. The Police Force will be more efficiently utilised to prevent criminal activity, to apprehend lawbreakers and generally enforce the law, and they are already embarked on that particular objective. Additional resources will be provided as funds become available.

11.30 a.m.

I wish to make my position clear. For those who are utterly incorrigible and who do not respond to milder forms of punishment, harsher penalties, including the death penalty, must not only be threatened, but must be carried out within the criminal justice system. The punishment must fit the crime.

In the vital Health sector there are a number of projects being implemented in an effort to improve the health services offered to individuals. These include the Polyclinic Development Programme and the Health Services Rationalisation Project. Provision is being made to complete the new polyclinic at Black Rock.

Under the Health Services Rationalisation Programme, consultants have already been selected to undertake the sector study. The contract has been awarded to Northwestern University of Chicago and has been sent to

the University for signature. The project will get **underway** early in the new financial year. As the Minister of Health will indicate later and expand on that, the project has already started.

This study is expected to focus on areas which are directed at the rationalisation of the use of health services personnel, physical infrastructure and budgetary resources including: institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Health, upgrading the quality ~~of-hospital~~ based services, decentralisation of long-term care for the disabled, and project management support.

The Government and the Inter-American Development Bank recently signed a grant agreement to allow for the preparation of a solid waste management plan and feasibility study. Under the agreement the IADB would provide Y217.7 million, approximately U.S. \$1.6 million, and the Government will contribute U.S. \$230 000. The project, which should be implemented through the Ministry of Health's Project Implementation Unit, will include a feasibility study, final design and loan request for the resulting investment project. To date, the Project Supervisory Committee has been set up to act in an advisory capacity and to assist in the selection of consultants to undertake the study.

Government will not neglect the environment. The Coastal Conservation Project Unit has been established primarily to control beach erosion and effectively manage the island's beach and coastal zone. The Unit is currently undertaking a feasibility and pre-investment study for coastal conservation along with an institutional strengthening study. The feasibility study commenced in the second quarter of 1991-92.

The entire project will cost approximately **U.S.\$7.3** million. Total expenditure to December 31, 1991 was Bds. \$1.3 million. During the 1992-93 financial year the institutional strengthening study will be completed and the feasibility and pre-investment study and pilot structural projects will be continuing.

In the area of Sports, the Gymnasium Project will be completed in the 1992-93 financial year and it is proposed to start the **related infrastructural** works.

Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated earlier, the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the 1992-93 financial year represent an integral part of a total programme which this Government has embarked upon for the people of Barbados. These Estimates must be examined against the background of reduced resources available to Government, and the need to develop our human resources further, protect the environment, and to be more productive and enterprising in the quantum and quality of goods and services we output. At the same time, Barbados cannot be

a cultural wasteland. We have to nurture our cultural heritage.

We, on this side, recognise that we are, at present, and have been for some time now, been operating within a volatile, local and international economic environment and we have taken bold decisions to **take** stock of the situation and **reform** our positions. We have not done this in isolation but have taken into consideration all of the factors influencing and impacting upon this process which we have embarked upon. We care for people and seek to make **Barbados** a better place in which to live. We are seeking to achieve these objectives with realism. We know we cannot please everybody but we will certainly try to do what is best for Barbados and Barbadians.

These Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure are both respectful of and responsive to the circumstances that confront us at our efforts in economic stability and recovery. Many will charge the Government with all kinds of things but, at the end of the day, someone will have to make the crucial decision. What is amazing, however, is that when we had a Government budget that showed expenditure outstripping revenue, we were accused of being excessive and indulging in squandermania.
11.40 a.m.

One wonders what these elements will say now that we have moved to cut expenditure and balance the Budget.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, that is left to be seen and heard. But I have an uncanny feeling that we will be accused, yes, you bet, of cutting expenditure, yes, by the same people who were accusing us of spending too much. The same people who were not too long ago calling for cuts in expenditure. I wonder what convenient position will the politics of adaptability force them to adopt this time around. Such alas is the chameleon-like adaptability of those who would make their consciences not their guide but their accomplice.

Sir, there has been the charge that the Estimates will cause more unemployment and deeper social and economic turmoil this year. The major target of the Government in the preparation of these Estimates which even a blind man on a trotting horse could see is to make the Government live within its means. For too long successive Governments have failed to do this. I will turn that situation around. Barbados has **firm** leadership, and courageous leadership. Our efforts are directed at maintaining current levels of employment in the Central Government and generating additional employment opportunities. We must have a sustainable **capital** works programme to contribute to economic activity in Barbados. Unfinished projects will be

completed and these will help to put the unemployed back to work. No wonder our critics do not wish us to succeed in that regard.

I end, Mr. Speaker, with the words I used last year during a similar exercise, for they seem even more appropriate this year. And I quote: "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, 1992 subject to any amendments which will be made be now read a second time.

Thank you.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the very outset of this debate, I want to make it very clear that in my assessment these Estimates and the Budgetary process this year will have far-reaching consequences for this country, Sir. In many respects we might well be involved as 28 Members of this Parliament in the most important effort at socio-economic engineering in Barbados since the grant of Adult Suffrage. In that spirit, Mr. Speaker, I believe and the Barbados Labour Party believes that we have to take this year's Estimates very seriously.

In the course of these Estimates decisions will be taken that perhaps will lead to the dismantling of the welfare system that this country has put in place since the early 1950s. We want to know what will be put in its place. It is also clear that the Barbados economy has come to a watershed in the course of its evolution. These Estimates will carry the Barbados economy from one order to the other. It behoves the House to take these Estimates very seriously. It is my wish and my desire that the House should in fact have the opportunity to examine every Ministry and every Head so that at the end of the day we can come to some sensible conclusion as to the precise ways in which these Estimates, as a reflection of Government's policy will affect the people of this country and its economy and will affect the future of this society.

But I have, at the outset, to say that the Minister of Finance has not put us in a position to discuss these Estimates in the way in which the situation requires. I speak not only with anger but with a sense of disappointment because the Minister of Finance taught me at school, Sir. My knowledge of the Minister of Finance goes back to 1965.

This morning we were given, on this side a set of amendments to the Estimates which are so fundamental that, in point of fact, what I have laboured over for the last

week bears absolutely no relationship to what we have to discuss today. I will take the House through the changes to show how fundamental they are.

The Minister has called for us to adopt a mature approach to the discussing of these Estimates this year. The Barbados Labour Party does not have to be told about its **need** for a responsible or mature approach. For the last year this Party has been hying to put an alternative position. We have not been trying to inflame public opinions. We have approached our criticisms of Government policies in a balanced and constructive manner. We do not have to be told about the need for maturity and the need for responsibility.

But I say this House has been done a great disservice and we have been subject to an act of perfidy and irresponsibility of a kind never before seen in **this** Parliament by what this Government has done over the course of the last week. Last week Thursday the Government circulated Estimates and it issued a press release summarizing details in those Estimates that were substantially different from what the Estimates contained. I say that to make clear that within the Government and within the **Ministry** of Finance there was information a week ago that what they were sending to us as Estimates were far different from the information to which they had access. They are not minor changes. They are fundamental, substantial changes that go to the heart of policy and prospects of this economy, Mr. Speaker.

All Members of this House who have looked at these Estimates this year would agree that they have been a nightmare to read. They are replete with arithmetic mistakes, with mistakes of method, with computations that do not make sense at all. I have read these Estimates in good faith in the belief, Mr. Speaker, that I was presented with a series of numbers from which I was to draw sensible conclusions about what had happened in the Barbados economy, what had happened to public finances and what would be likely to happen with public finances in the year. I want to carry the House, Mr. Speaker, slowly through what we were presented with at Estimates and what we now have to discuss. We can't discuss Estimates, Mr. Speaker, but I want to show the House what is the 'perfidy' involved. The cover, Sir. This is perfidy. This House has been done a great disservice. On the cover, Mr. Speaker.

11.50 a.m.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I think, Sir, the use of the word **perfidy** is **unparliamentary** and I respectfully ask the Honourable Member to withdraw it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Repeat what the Honourable Member said on a point of order. I have not heard what the Honourable Member said. What was your point of order?

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I said the Honourable Member used the term perfidy and is therefore, in my understanding, accusing the Honourable Minister of Finance of dishonesty. I am asking therefore that the Honourable Member withdraw the remarks because it is **unparliamentary**.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. ~~Speaker~~, Sir, the Member for St. Lucy is too experienced in these matters for him not to **know** ...

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I rise, Sir, on a point of order. In his opening remarks the Member said that I taught him at school. I am saying that the word *perfidy* is not used in a commendatory sense and it cannot be used in that sense. It is offensive and insulting and it is also imputing, either improper motives or improper actions and I am objecting, Sir, to that word **as** it applies to me. If it applies to public officers, notice of that kind of criticism should be given to this Honourable House, to you, Sir, under our Standing Orders, and on all counts, Sir, I am asking the Honourable Member to withdraw the word.

Mr. SPEAKER: May I bring this matter to some balance. There are, apparently, two opinions on the matter. The interpretation, in my view, in a situation **as** this, would rest very much on the Member who would probably explain his position in a way as to remove, if there is a belief that there is some unpleasantness about the language. I think the Honourable Member could clear that up by simply adjusting the statement to suit.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I genuinely feel that the Minister of Finance acted in bad faith. He really acted in bad faith, because a week ago ... Mr. Speaker, he violated the confidence of this House, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Honourable Member gives that as an explanation then he knows very well ...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with this country ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. Will the Honourable ...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the remark.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are trying to get Hansard correct so the Honourable Member has ...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. ~~Speaker~~, I am anxious to proceed. I withdraw the remark, Sir. I want to proceed.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is on the basis of the Member's interpretation therefore I accept his interpretation. So we can move on with the matter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want only to say, Sir, that a week ago the Ministry of Finance circulated these Estimates and they issued a Press Release in which the numbers were substantially different from those in the Estimates. I want to establish, Sir, that a full week ago, the Ministry of Finance and the Minister of Finance could have been in a position to have circulated these amendments so that this House could have been operating upon and discussing these Estimates, upon the basis of information available to the Minister of Finance and not upon the basis of these bogus numbers that are contained in the Estimates. I want to proceed because these things are substantial, Sir.

On the cover, Sir. I am doing this, as much for the benefit of my side as for the benefit of the other side because I sense that other Members have not seen it either. I will take this House through these numbers, Sir, on the cover. The cover has been changed. Estimated Current Revenue stands as stated. Estimated Total Expenditure for the year to date is to fall from **\$1 272 891 039** to **\$1 248 439 209** with the result, Sir, that the estimated deficit for the year to come is to fall **\$194 963 294** to **\$170 511 464**. That is not too bad, Sir. Page 1 of the Memorandum, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I spent a long time, a large number of days, over the course of the last week, trying to read meaning into page 1 of the Memoranda of the Estimates. Page 1 of the Memoranda to the Estimates is important because on this page Government is giving an account of how public finances perform in relation to what was projected at the start of the financial year. The memorandum item therefore shows, Sir, what Government's revenues and expenditures were supposed to be when they were estimated last March and what they are likely to be at the end of the financial year, based upon the information available to the Minister of Finance.

So when one picks up the Estimates and looks at page 1 of the Memoranda, Sir, one will draw a conclusion as to whether public finances have **performed** as expected or not. This year where there has been a substantial departure from what was projected at the start of the year and what is now likely to be the outcome because of three budgets, page 1 becomes of fundamental importance to Members.

Now, let me carry this House through the contrast between what we have been studying for a whole week and what we have been provided with just five minutes ago. Make notes as I go along because they are going to be very important.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I have to interrupt. The Honourable Member is replying to statements or figures presented in here. I do not have a copy and I think, as an Honourable Member, I should have that right and I am asking you, Sir, to protect me and to accord me that sort of right that I should have in here. I am not going to make any notes. These amendments should be circulated.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East just made a point, I just wish to establish that no one else on this side has the figures either. I am just making the point because it might be felt that somehow the Opposition is being disadvantaged. The Honourable Member in his capacity...

12.00 noon.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not make your point of order so long.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ...was given an indication early of changes which usually come every year with a big long sheet of the changes to be made. The Honourable Member was given the privilege. I am just explaining that we do not have it either.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. I have heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. One would agree the point that the Honourable Member made is one in which one would be having some concern about the late arrival of the amendments. But in the circumstances and in other cases, as has happened all through this Parliament from my own recollection, this has always been dealt with in this manner. The Honourable Member will raise and make his objection. I will accept it, but generally to debate is never ever carried to a point where it cannot continue. I have understood the Honourable Member's point and I have accepted that.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, this matter to me is very, very serious indeed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have made my ruling already. You cannot now speak on a point of order when I have made my ruling.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have some Estimates here and I am hearing figures proposed. Can I have a copy of them so that I can follow? My memory is not too good.

Mr. SPEAKER: As I said to the Honourable Member, my understanding is that the amendments came late and they will be circulated. I am trying my best to accommodate the Honourable Member in every way. We

need not allow the debate to be side-tracked where we have been able to solve these matters without any difficulty in the past.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The point here is not whether the amendments came late. The charge is that the Minister sent out figures that I now understand his Cabinet colleagues did not even see which are incorrect and have misled the Opposition in its preparation to reply to him. The figures are bogus. In other words, we are asked to prepare for debate on a set of Estimates in which there is a fundamental change.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not entertaining much debate on this. I have already made the matter known. I have accepted the Honourable Member's appeal. But I am not allowing a debate on the basis of that kind of appeal which this House from time to time has been able to allow amendments coming late to be discussed. This is not unusual.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if we were talking about small adjustments, I can understand that this would be all much ado about nothing. But let me explain why I want to make an issue of it, Sir. On Page 1 of the Memorandum, it is shown that the Projected Overall Deficit for the financial year ending 31st March is set at \$14.8 million. In the amendment in my hand, Sir, the Projected Overall Deficit for the year is \$235 million.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the difference between \$14.8 million and \$235 million is substantial and I will explain why, Sir. I picked up these Estimates in good faith. The arithmetic is wrong, because based upon what is said here it should not be \$14.8 million. It should be \$84.8 million. I picked up these Estimates in good faith, Mr. Speaker, and I said let me read into these and determine how the Government of Barbados has managed its financial affairs in relation to the targets that were set by the International Monetary Fund.

Mr. Speaker, a deficit of \$84 million and not \$14 million would mean, using an IMF methodology, that in the course of the last financial year the Government of Barbados would have imposed \$150 million in pain more on the people of this country than was required by the IMF Programme. Why, Sir? The IMF methodology requires that we take the repayment of debt out of Government's expenditure. If we had a deficit of \$84 million last year and \$201 million of repayment of debt principal as these Estimates show, it would mean that using an IMF methodology the Government of Barbados would have, in fact, incurred an overall surplus of \$116 million while the programme with the Fund allowed the Government to have a deficit of \$35.8 million.

Page 1 of the Memorandum led to the conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that the Government of Barbados in the course of the last financial year imposed \$150 million in excessive

pain on the people of Barbados in relation to the target set by the IMF. As I said, Sir, it led to the implication that when you took out amortisation and the other charges there was an overall surplus of \$116 million in the context of a situation where the Government was allowed by the IMF to run a deficit overall of \$35.6 million.

Mr. Speaker, that is a fundamental issue and look at where the errors are, Sir. The projection of Actual Revenue up to February is correct. A week ago the Government was telling us that the Projected Revenue for March was \$192 million. It is now cut down to \$159 million. It has changed its Projected Current Revenue for the year within a week from \$1045.0 million to \$1012.0. million Sir, on the Expenditure side, a week ago we were being told that Current Expenditure up to February 29, 1992 was \$881 million. Now we are being told in these amendments that Current Expenditures up to the end of February 1992 are \$983.3 million, a difference of \$100 million. Substantial changes have also been made to the Capital Expenditure, Sir. But I will not delay the House, Sir. I read these Estimates in good faith and came to a conclusion on the way in which the programme with the IMF was working and the effects of Government's cuts in expenditures based upon the numbers that were contained here. These numbers, as I said, will show very carefully that Government inflicted \$150 million more in pain than the programme required, Sir. This is a fundamental issue because one of the things that we want to deal with in this House, Sir, is what really has been the effect of the IMF Programme on the people of this country. This House has been presented with the disservice of having before it two sets of Estimates, one showing \$150 million in excess pain and the next showing the Programme is going to be within the limits.

Go over to the next page, Sir. The next page is the deficit. Now the lack of professionalism in the preparation of these Estimates is so great that this House must censure the Minister of Finance for allowing these Estimates in the initial form to come here.

12.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if you had a deficit of \$14 million you will not have to raise \$241 million in financing to cover that deficit. If you had, in the course of your own personal finances, a situation where your expenditure exceeded your income by \$14 or \$1400, you will not have to go out and borrow \$240 000 to finance it. But what the initial Estimates told us is that the Government was projecting an overall deficit of \$14.8 million, but to finance that deficit of \$14.8 million it was telling us that the Government had in the course of the year borrowed \$241 million. That clearly could not make sense. It would obviously have meant that if the Government had a deficit of \$14 million and it had borrowed \$241.8 million, the Government would have wiped off its overdraft at the Central Bank, it would have brought that overdraft from out of the sky within the

legal limit and have it at zero and there would also be a surplus to help to start the consolidation of its debt. One reads this Table in collaboration with the other Table and asks the question: "If this Table is correct, why is the Central Bank's overdraft still up in the air when the Government had access to \$241 million in financing to clear a deficit of \$14 million?" It makes no sense whatsoever, Sir. One spent a whole week trying to understand what was behind this and now, a week later, we are given a different Table showing a number of important things. This Table is showing that Government repaid more in Treasury Bills than it took in to the extent of \$24.8 million. The initial Table did not say so, it said that Government had access to \$10 million in savings bonds, this Table says \$2 million. But above all, Sir, this initial Table tells us that the Government of Barbados drew \$188 million in Central Bank financing during the course of the year and the new Table is telling us \$117 million, and so on and so forth. The initial Table did not include the sale of shares, this Table now includes it. A complete confusion, Mr. Speaker, of the situation.

The other Table of great importance to Members of the House would be that Table on page 6 of the initial Estimates which sets out how Government intends to finance the gap in its financial operations for the year to come. Let me explain, Sir. The initial Estimates that were circulated last week show that Government proposed then to have a deficit of \$194 million and that it had identified \$79 million in Capital revenue by way of loans to finance that deficit, leaving a gap to be financed of \$114 million.

Mr. Speaker, I picked up this Table and I read it in relation to what is set out in the IMF Letter of Intent. This means that if Government had \$114 million as a gap to be closed, under the IMF Letter of Intent it is only allowed in the next financial year to borrow \$20 million on the short term market. It is not allowed next year to use Central Bank financing at all, as compared to last year when Government used \$114 million. In point of fact, the Government is required under the IMF Letter of Intent to reduce its overdraft and credit position with the Central Bank and therefore the Central Bank financing is not an option at all that is open to Government. Under the Letter of Intent with the IMF as well, Sir, the Government of Barbados is not entitled either to use the domestic banking system in order to finance the deficit. As this Table shows, if the Government of Barbados was going to have a gap of \$114 million and it had already identified all the project loans from the IADB and other places to help finance it, it could not use Central Bank financing, it could only use \$20 million in external short term financing, and it could not use the domestic banking sector, it would be clear to any economist that the Government of Barbados would have to come and raise \$90 million in taxes in order to help meet the gap for next year. This is what this Table leads inextricably to when one discusses the Table in relation to what is contained in the IMF Letter of Intent.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we have been looking at for a whole week, a situation where the Government of Barbados had identified in the Estimates that it would be short this year by \$114 million after it had brought in all the money from the World Bank, IADB and so on, that it was in a position where it could not borrow from the Central Bank, could not borrow from the domestic banking system. One was therefore **thinking** in terms of a whole new range of taxes. This leads to this conclusion. A week afterwards the Government of Barbados brings us a new Table where it is showing that it has a reduced deficit to finance, it is going to get relatively the same amount from the World Bank, IADB, and it is going to raise by way of divestment \$40 million – and this House must discuss this – and it is going to have access to domestic financing through the NIS, putting the Government in a position where there is no need in April, if these numbers are correct, for the Government to come with a budget in excess of \$24.5 million. In fact, I have that wrong, Sir, I am misleading the House, because that is foreign financing. These new Estimates say that in point of fact the Government of Barbados will not have to come with a budget at all.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a week ago this Opposition was looking at Estimates that raise the prospect of potentially \$90 million in taxation and now this week it is zero. I am not going to take this matter lightly, because these Estimates are not only about the reconstruction of this economy and the structural adjustment of this economy and the amendment to the way in which the people of this country live; these Estimates raise fundamentally disturbing questions about the competence of the Minister of Finance.

In a way it saddens me, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Finance came to this House as if nothing had happened over the course of the last year, and I really must refresh his memory. Last April 2 the Minister of Finance came to the House and told us that he was, in opposition to advice given to him by his advisers, going to undertake his own structural adjustment package to seek to avoid a structural adjustment package imposed from outside with massive layoffs, painful spending cuts, devaluation of the Barbados dollar and rising interest rates. He said, "I have already stated, and I give this House the assurance, that I have no intention of devaluing the Barbados dollar nor do I intend to preside over massive lay-offs in the public sector." This came after the Democratic Labour Party's manifesto which said:

"Our opponents call for reduction of expenditure ... What can we cut?"
12.20 p.m

We cannot cut wages.

"We cannot cut interest payments. If subsidies and transfers are cut..."

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member is reading from a document and for the records of the House...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The Democratic Labour Party Manifesto, 1991, page 8. We cannot cut our capital works programmes.

This House, Mr. Speaker, last year, was taken for a ride by the Minister of Finance. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I had better develop the argument more carefully. The people of Barbados were taken for a ride by the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister. Before the election, he told the people of Barbados that his opponents had been urging him to exercise expenditure control but that he could not, when he examined the whole range of public services and whatever else, find it within himself to cut anything. He took this Parliament for a ride by telling this Parliament...

Mr. SPEAKER: No. You can't take Parliament for a ride.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Figuratively speaking, Sir. The Minister of Finance was in a position last year to know that he had already given certain undertakings to the World Bank that would have involved structural adjustment imposed from outside. He came on April 2, last year, and told this House that his Budget and his Estimates were designed to bring about his own version of structural adjustment designed to avoid a structural adjustment imposed from outside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Member has said that I gave certain assurances to the World Bank and certain undertakings and that I came to this House and subsequently acted in a way that was contrary to those undertakings. Mr. Speaker, I am indicating that that is in fact accusing me of acting in a way in which the Member was called upon earlier on to withdraw.

I would ask the Honourable Member to withdraw the imputation in the statement that he has made.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has risen on a point of order and a point of order always requires some response. The Honourable Member has objected to the statement.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir...

Mr. SPEAKER: No. We just can't gloss over the statement like that. If an Honourable Member has objected to a statement that is not true, the onus is on the person who made that statement.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, my difficulty is that I do not know what you want me to withdraw. I withdraw the imputation, if that is what the Minister of Finance wants, but I go forward.

Mr. SPEAKER: One cannot go without the other. The Member either withdraws the statement or I will withdraw the statement for the Member.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, in January of 1991...

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you withdrawing the statement – the imputation in respect of the Member? The Rules clearly state that. Therefore if you are imputing improper motives to a Member then it has to be withdrawn.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have said already I withdraw the imputation.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying categorically that a World Bank Mission came to Barbados between November 5 and 19, 1990 in support of an export development project; that that World Bank Mission held extensive discussions with Government officials; that it left behind a number of undertakings with Government including undertakings that found their way into policies on which the Government embarked in the latter part of 1991. I am saying, therefore, in consequence, that when the Minister of Finance spoke on April 2 in 1991, he was in a position to know and knew of structural adjustments measures that his Government had given the undertaking to the World Bank that it would introduce. Yet, he came to this House and told this House that he was bringing a Budget that would avoid his having to accept structural adjustment imposed from outside.

You can draw whatever implications, Sir, you want to draw from that, but I am telling the House that he knew April 2 what were the undertakings the Government had given the World Bank and that some of those policies came in the latter part of the year. So, I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that he took this House for a ride.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have said already that I am not accepting that language, "taking the House for a ride".

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the weight of evidence would suggest that the Minister misled the House.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise again because the Member is accusing me of misleading the House and up to this particular time he has not produced any evidence in support of that. We cannot conduct our public affairs in this way.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not responsible for a World Bank document. I produced a World Bank document? Is there something there to say that I gave an undertaking to the World Bank? Quote the passage to say

that I gave an undertaking. You are making a shift from Government to me. Your logic has abandoned you.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing unparliamentary about misleading the House. It is only when a person emphasises that the person has deliberately misled the House that that becomes an offence.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, let me put it decently for the benefit of the House. When economic historians come to review the Estimates and the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals of 1991, and compare what Government set out as its programme and what Government said were its aims and what has been the result, they will have to observe and draw conclusions upon the fact that, at no stage in 1991 when the Estimates and Budget were being presented was there ever any thought of any massive lay-offs in the public sector. In fact, the Minister of Finance said to the very contrary that his programme was designed to avoid massive lay-offs. But the reality, as we know, is that there have been massive lay-offs. When the economic historians come to review what was said then and what happened eventually, they will be staggered when they realise that in the course of 1991, on the very day when the Estimates were being presented to the House, Government was voting an increase in salaries to parliamentarians, and in the course of that same year it had to cut wages and salaries of the public officers of this country, and there was not even the slightest hint from the Minister of Finance as to the eventuality or possibility. One would have to ask what manner of man was that?
12.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, they will read of a Minister of Finance who said he wanted to avoid having to increase interest rates in April and in the course of the rest of the year businesses in Barbados were driven to the wall by the Government pursuing the opposite of the policy that the Minister of Finance committed himself to in a Budget in Parliament. They might even begin to wonder what pack of jokers Parliament was because we were taken for a ride.

Mr. SPEAKER: Surely not the Speaker of this House. All debates come through the Speaker. I have no objection to the Honourable Member putting his case but he still has to remember that it must be put in a way that the House does not become offended by the way it is put. The language is not accurate enough.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the Minister taught me at school. It would have been a matter of civility between people, if the Minister knew that there were so many fundamental changes in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure rather than put people through a charade

of going through Estimates which he knew were not for real could have just said, as a matter of courtesy, these are the real numbers. He then had the nerve to go to the Press and say that he wanted a mature debate.

Mr. Speaker, he took, as well, not only the people of the country and the Members of this Parliament for a ride, but he took the trade unions and the private sector for a ride. How do we reconcile the fact that the trade unions and the private sector were supposed to be involved in consultations with the Prime Minister last year, and at the end of the day when those consultations had been concluded and the first Letter of Intent drawn up, matters of fundamental importance to both the trade unions and the private sector of this country had not been discussed with them? It came as a shock to them that fundamental changes had been made to the severance arrangements and unemployment benefits and it had not been discussed leading to a situation where one had, which is unusual for all countries, a supplemental Letter of Intent drawn up to accommodate matters that if they had been discussed in the first instance could have been dealt with properly.

As for the private sector, how do we explain that they went through a whole process of consultation with the Minister of Finance leading to important concessions being withdrawn by the private sector and at the end of the process they did not know anything about that? I think he took them for a ride. The Prime Minister even tried to take the IMF for a ride, to say nothing of his Cabinet colleagues because I am submitting to this House that they were as much in the dark about those Letters of Intent as they are about these amendments that have come to this House today. I submit to this House that when I read the Letter of Intent it does not reflect at all the pragmatism of seasoned politicians. It is a lot of theory but it does not, in my view, reflect the pragmatism of serious and sensible politicians. I want to believe that they too were taken for a ride.

Mr. Speaker, this whole debate this week will be about whether or not we will allow one man to continue to take the people of Barbados, Parliament, Cabinet, the IMF, everybody in this country for a ride. This is what this is about. The Prime Minister is already trying to take us for a ride because when I compare these (the draft Estimates) with this (the amendments) I do not know which to believe. I am really at a loss, Mr. Speaker as to what I should believe. I could draw the conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that the new Estimates which conform exactly to IMF requirements have been concocted only in order to tell the IMF that...

Aside,

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR:..contrived then. Mr. Speaker, I do not really know what to believe. Do I believe these new Estimates? I submit to Members that if Members are interested in discussing these Estimates this week they have now to follow through how these changes will affect all of

the Heads. Sir, do we believe these (Estimates) or do we believe these (amendments)? Which one will take us for the ride this time?

More to the point, Sir. These Estimates are about our preventing the Minister from taking us for a ride this year. When I read these Estimates, both Estimates, Sir, because I might have to speak in terms of both hereinafter, one thing stands out above the controversy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I need to be a bit clear about what the Honourable Member has just said. For the purpose of this House, there is only one set of Estimates with amendments. If the Honourable Member is saying that there are two sets of Estimates before the House, then I have a problem with that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I made the concession that one thing stands out above any controversy, as the initial Estimates indicates, that in the course of this year the Government of Barbados intends to draw heavily on the resources of the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank to finance its operations. Last year Barbados, without the prior approval of Parliament, was drawn into a stabilisation programme with the International Monetary Fund. In the course of these Estimates debates we will have to measure the effects of that programme with the IMF. For sure, last year we were not provided with the privilege, as Honourable Members of this House during the course of either the Estimates or the Budget debates, of discussing in a frank way what we as the 28 guardians of the public purse, the 28 ultimate managers of this country's affairs would want in terms of any programme with any external institution.

This year the character of the financial arrangements specified in these Estimates would imply, and in fact, establish that at the core of these Estimates for the year to come is the fact that the Government of Barbados is going to broaden its relationship with the international institutions, and in addition to the stabilisation programme with the IMF it is going to have a structural adjustment programme with the World Bank and other international lending agencies. And in addition to the stabilization programme with the IMF that it is going to have a structural adjustment programme with the World Bank and other international lending institutions. I believe that it behoves this House to enter a discussion as to what that programme should involve because the sad history has shown us that we dare not leave it to the capacity or ingenuity of the Minister of Finance and Minister of Finance alone to adjudicate on these matters for Barbados. 12.4 p.m.

I am saying that if this Minister of Finance was levelling with this Parliament today, given the manner in which his financial operations are set out in these

Estimates, he would have told this House that the Estimates of this year are about our giving effect to a structural adjustment programme with international lending institutions and that the elements of that structural adjustment programme are X, Y and Z. But you have sat through, Mr. Speaker, an entire diatribe from the Minister of Finance and not a word.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member cannot characterize the speech of another Honourable Member of this House as a diatribe.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my concern and the Barbados Labour Party's concern is to make sure that if the Government of Barbados knows that it has worked out the designs of a structural programme with international lending institutions and it is basing a set of Estimates on that design, then in all good faith the Minister of Finance has an obligation to tell us what the elements of that programme are. But we have heard him speak for more than an hour and not a word.

I believe that this House would be failing in its responsibility if it were to leave this debate without our pressing the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs to disclose what programme of policy measures he has agreed to or has started to draft to put the Government of Barbados in the next financial year where it can draw \$43 million from the IADB, almost \$9 million from the World Bank and \$9.6 million from the Caribbean Development Bank.

I think it is also incumbent upon the Minister of Finance to tell us what additional new policies have been discussed and agreed to, and to say precisely what those policies are. But these are structural adjustment Estimates, Sir.

The Minister of Finance also told us about how wonderfully well the economy has performed and in recent time he has also been given to congratulating himself for the skill with which he has led Barbados into the hands of the International Monetary Fund. He was pleased to announce that we have joined the programme.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I review the course of the last year's events and when I review what the Minister is speaking of in terms of his future commitments, I fear that a kind of dependency and mendicancy seem to be the major factors which are now governing Government's policy. For example we are in danger of accepting, without comment or criticism, the fact that this year's Estimates are to be based upon an undertaking that Barbados should have a zero deficit. Everybody knows what mendicancy is. Because what a zero deficit simply means is that the Government of Barbados cannot borrow to finance its

operations but that it has to finance everything from its given resources.

But Mr. Speaker, if you were to analyse all of the arrangements entered into between the IMF and independent countries in the course of the last two decades, you will not find any set of circumstances in which any sovereign country has been put to the indignity of being told that it cannot run a budget deficit.

Indeed if you go back to 1967 and read the words of Errol Barrow in his contribution to the debate that year, he spoke about those who would take advantage of the financial innocence of **bi-standers** when they leave this House and trumpet the fact that Government should not encourage deficits. But there is a kind of a mendicancy and a dependency that is overtaking the way in which Government is relating to the International Monetary Fund. I say that because there seems not to be any sense of balance in the way in which the Government is **examining** the Economic and Financial **outturn**. As long as the Government passes the International Monetary Fund test, irrespective as to whether or not it has had to pay tremendous prices for passing those tests, all is well in Barbados.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of what I would have had to say, as you would appreciate, based upon the initial Estimates I have to revise. Because I was going to ask the question, based upon the original Estimates whether our programme with the International Monetary Fund has in fact been worth it. I do not subscribe to the impression that is being put abroad by the Minister of Finance that the IMF programme and the stabilisation measures that he has put in place have been bringing about the results that he would want us to believe have **been** brought about. The Minister told us that he has put in place a stabilisation programme with the intention of cutting spending in the Barbados economy so as to reduce imports as well as to improve the external position of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, Sir, he made the assertion. The question is, do the facts bear out the Government's assertion **that** the programme with the International Monetary Fund has in fact been working in a direction of reducing Barbados' imports and improving our external position. What are the **facts?** **The** Minister made the assertion that the programme is working. I am citing from the Economic and Financial Statistics of February 1992. These statistics show on page 68 that Barbados, between the period January to August of last year, imported \$39 million more than in the previous year. In 1991, during the first eight months of the year, when this country was being governed by the **DLP** stabilisation programme involving credit controls and budget slashes and whatever else, Sir, contrary to the impression the Minister would give this House, the Government stabilisation programme did not succeed in stabilising the

external position of Barbados in so far, Mr. Speaker, that the import bill rose by **\$39** million in the course of the year.

12.50 p.m.

Then we come to the reserves, Sir, to find out what happened after September. Our reserves position was supposed to have improved by the introduction of those **draconian** measures of September **1991**. Between January and August imports continued to climb. At the end of September the reserves of our monetary authorities were **\$11.8** million, they fell despite the introduction of the measures to **-\$16.5** million in October and to **-\$38.3** million by the end of November.

Despite the existence of the measures designed ostensibly to stabilise the external position of Barbados this economy's external position continued to deteriorate. There was a **\$75** million increase in the reserves in December alone because of tactics which, as you know, Sir, had nothing whatsoever to do with our exporting goods but had to do with the private sector bringing money into this country in order to bail out the government. The question is, what has happened after December when those moneys were brought in by the private sector to help bail out the Government. The answer, Sir, can be found here. After the reserves of the Central Bank were artificially propped up in December they have continued their downward trend in January. As you will see, Sir, the total reserves of the Central Bank fell from **\$161** million in December foreign reserves to **\$142** million in January - by **\$20** million dollars.

The evidence is clear, Mr. Speaker, that if this country is relying on the IMF programme to stabilise our foreign exchange reserves and if that it is in point of fact, Mr. Speaker, the sole measure by which we are to judge the efficacy of the IMF Programme, then upon the weight of evidence one would have to draw the conclusion, Sir, that the programme is not working. If one should go the additional step in the analysis and therefore ask the question: Is the IMF Programme worth it? Has it been worth it for this country to be put to the pain that it has been put to in terms of wages cuts, interest rates increase, and what else, in search of a balance of payments solution? The clear evidence, Sir, is beginning to show itself that it is not worth the while.

I am raising this consideration, Sir, linking it back to the other issue of structural adjustment programmes because the World Bank will also see these numbers, Sir. The World Bank will also see these numbers and they will be looking at these numbers with a critical eye. The Government has already put in place, wage cuts, it has tried **to** take spending power out of the economy by bringing the economy to a standstill by cutting back credit. It has raised taxes, cut government expenditure, increased interest rates, but yet, having done all of those things that

are supposed to stabilise the foreign reserves position, the reserves position continues to weaken. That is why, Sir, I am asking in this debate, what are the elements of structural adjustment programme that the Government of Barbados is going to agree to, given the facts that these preliminary information about the out turn of the IMF Programme are not encouraging?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, what lessons do we derive **from** last year? If the Minister of Finance wanted to take the House fully into his confidence, he would have told this House, Mr. Speaker, that last year's experience illustrates the counter productivity of Government relying upon increasing taxes after taxes as a way of raising revenue in this country.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government started with the initial estimate of revenue before the Budget of **\$977** million. The April Budget was supposed to raise another **\$64** million. The September Budget was to raise another **\$62** million and then the December Budget was intended to raise another **\$10** million giving a grand total of **\$1.123** billion. The Government is now telling **us, Sir**, that in point of fact, after raising taxes three times last year it is not going to raise **\$1.123** billion, that it is going to raise **\$1.012** billion, a short fall of almost **\$120** million.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, a sober government would sit down and reflect seriously **about** that statistic, that **tax** after tax after tax in this country has led, on the basis of what these numbers now say, to a situation where the increasing, rate of taxes do not give rise to an increase in revenue. The lesson that should be drawn, Mr. Speaker, is that the Government has to provide a basis for growth of **this** economy if it is going to simultaneously address the problem of revenue improvement and the resolution of our balance of payments problem.

Last year's return, Sir, shows the counter-productivity of increasing taxation three times in one year. In point of fact, Mr. Speaker, one wonders if it would not have been **better** for the Government not to have come with those two other budgets after April because revenue for the six months of the last financial year was **13** per cent greater than revenue for the same months in the previous financial year. **One** can only be led to believe, Mr. Speaker, that the massive increase in the rate of taxes so compressed activity in this country, Sir, as to undermine Government's financial position itself. The Government's financial problems are feeding on themselves once you act on this mistaken belief that the way to raise revenue is by increasing the tax rate. The Government of this country therefore has a responsibility to create the environment for growth.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the out turn for last year also reflects the contradiction and the ignorance in Government's policy of putting in place, policies to reduce

consumption, as it has done and then relying on taxes on consumption for the increase in its revenues. That policy, Sir, to any sensible person must be a contradiction. If your economic policy is designed to reduce the amount that people consume, then clearly it has to be piece of nonsense, Mr. Speaker, for the same Government to rely upon taxes on consumption as the basis of its revenues.

I say that Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the Barbados Labour Party acknowledges its responsibility as an alternative Government. I subscribe strongly, Mr. Speaker, to the need for fundamental changes in **the** taxation system of Barbados. If structural adjustment in this **country**, Sir, is going to mean a fundamental change in our taxation structure, I will support it, Mr. Speaker. Since 1987, we have been warning on this side that the Democratic Labour Party was putting itself in a box of bricks in so far as it was relying more and more upon indirect forms of taxation. We warned that if the day came when it had to simultaneously protect the balance of payments as well as to increase Government's revenues, it was going to find itself in a position where it could not do both. In this financial year, Sir, the Democratic Labour Party paid the final price for the ignorance that it **started** in 1986 and continued for the subsequent 4 years. The time has come in Barbados' interest, Mr. Speaker, to change it. I want to say, therefore, since the Minister of Finance has not told us about what structural adjustment may mean, that we will lead from this side if necessary, Sir. If there is a need for a fundamental change in our taxation structure, we will support it.
1.00 p.m.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. **GREAVES**: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today, Sir.

Hon. B. M. **TAITT**: I second that, Sir.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2:00 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
1.04 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. **SPEAKER**: This sitting is resumed.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR**: Mr. Speaker, when the sitting was suspended, I was trying as calmly as possible to attempt to read into the fiscal out-turn for last year to see what lessons we can generally derive from them to carry with us into the future. I also want to look at the Estimates of this year with a view to **see** what they say about the direction that is being set for the country and the economy in particular. I really would have wanted to stress the point

in the latter part of my presentation that the out-turn for last year illustrates the counter-productivity of increasing taxes in our present environment and they underscore as well the futility of Government's current policy of relying upon taxes on consumption for revenue in the context of a situation where at the same time it is trying to compress consumption for the purposes of **protecting** the balance of payments.

It means therefore, Sir, that for the immediate future Barbados has to move away from the high **tax** policy that has been in vogue of late and, secondly, to the extent that you cannot any longer rely upon taxes on consumption for increase revenue, the justification for a complete revision of the taxation system is clearly warranted and it will find support on this side.

In addition, Sir, the out-turn for last year illustrates that Government inflicted a lot of the economic pressures on itself. It is true, Mr. Speaker, that Government's Expenditure last year in total was reduced. But within the context of a reduced Government spending, Sir, Government's Debt Service increased and it increased in two specific and two peculiar regards. The Estimates show that Government found itself in a position of having to spend far more to service its Ways and Means Account and far more to service the Treasury Bills issue than it initially intended.

I want to speak to the facts because the implications can be very considerable, Sir. Government set out last year with the intention of spending \$2 million in interest to service its overdraft with the Central Bank of Barbados. It ended up, Mr. Speaker, according to Revised Estimates, having to spend \$14.3 million. Government's reliance upon Central Bank's financing, Mr. Speaker, last year created its own economic problems. When we consider that Government was being forced continuously to send home more and more people, we can draw the reasonable conclusion that had Government managed better its relationship with the Central Bank of Barbados, kept its overdraft within tolerable limits, kept the payment of interest on overdraft as well within what was budgeted, then the level of lay-offs from the public sector could have been as much as \$12 million less than turned out to be the case.

In addition, Sir, Government found itself last year on the basis of the preliminary data, having to spend \$30 million more to service the interest on Treasury Bills than it had initially budgeted for. We have been warning since 1990 that the Democratic Labour Party's commitment to a high interest rate policy was going to lead eventually to a situation where the interest rate policy of the Government itself was going to create its own special **financial** problem for the Government. Sir, clearly within the context of last year's financial circumstances where Government was forced to cut and keep cutting, this business of having to

find \$30 million additional to service the payment of Treasury Bills was the kind of financial humbug that really was not welcome in the circumstances. I say that merely to underscore the need for Government to re-think its interest rate policy.

In the early 1980's, Mr. Speaker, when international interest rates were high, we were being told by the Central Bank that we had to establish some alignment between domestic interest rates and foreign interest rates. Therefore, Barbados needed to have a high interest rate policy. But clearly, Mr. Speaker, if that argument held in the early 1980's, it cannot hold in the early 1990's. As you know, Sir, in the early 1990's international interest rates are at historically low levels. If the argument of the Central Bank in the 1980's was applied today, Sir, then the Government should not be finding itself in a position where a high interest rate policy is forcing it to have to divert some \$30 million service interest on Treasury Bills in the context of a situation where it is sending home people, Sir.

I want to deal with that business of sending home people, Sir. I cannot speak with certainty on the matter, Mr. Speaker, because of not having had the opportunity to examine the new numbers in detail. But when you look at the overall picture, Government's Expenditure went down. However, Government's Debt Service went up which means that Government was forced last year to reduce its Non-debt Expenditure by far more than we were led to believe. My calculation suggests, Mr. Speaker, that Government's Non-debt Expenditure last year was not reduced by \$112 million but as much as \$180 million. These are not just numbers, Sir. It seems to be Government's policy that in order to keep within the limits of the IMF programme it is treating the temporary staff in the Public Service like sand in a pouch. If you have to bring down expenditure more and more because the debt payments are rising, squeeze the pouch which contains the temporary staff of the Public Service. These numbers suggest to me, Sir, that again next year the Government, in order to stay within the limits of these programmes, will have to send home more workers.

2.15 p.m.

We are not in this debate dealing with the question of arithmetic, these measures are going to have painful effects upon the people of Barbados. I want to say very clearly that this hunting season which has been declared by Government on the temporary staff of the Public Service is a concept without conscience. There are Barbadians who are living virtually in a state of siege. There are persons who hold temporary appointments who do not want to go on leave, because they have seen a large number of their colleagues go on leave and when they come back get a brown envelope in their hands stating "your services are appreciated but you are terminated from tomorrow." I want to see an end to that economic policy which treats temporary staff of the Public Service as a financial

residual. You are **dealing** with people, many of whom have taken on financial responsibilities that they have to honour and are living in a complete state of uncertainty as a result of these particular measures.

The numbers are saying that the Government did not cut by \$112 million in that particular area, it went as high as \$180 million. It means that the numbers the **Prime Minister** has given us in **relation** to the layoffs in the **Public Service** could perhaps be very erroneous and I would be glad if the Prime Minister could give us more accurate, up to **date** information on the situation in relation to the laying off of staff in the Public Service.

Mr. Speaker, I made a statement earlier today that these Estimates are intended to give effect to a Government's structural adjustment programme with the World Bank, and that if we are to read sense into these Estimates then we have to understand what that structural adjustment programme will entail and whether Government can in fact implement it. Lest there be any doubt about it, Sir, on page 26 of the Estimates under the Ministry of Finance, Head 19, there is a provision under Investments, that was never there before, the note to which says: "To finance projects which **are** being identified to boost the productive sectors of the Economy." The vote for that is \$44.7 million. If there is any doubt in this House, that is the provision that Government anticipates this year to **use** to finance the structural adjustment programme in collaboration with the World Bank and the IADB.

As we know, Sir, the Ministry of Finance is not in itself a productive sector. In order for the Government's structural adjustment programme to be put into effect, this \$44 million has to be allocated to the other Ministries, so that a large number of issues arise. In order for the Government to finance its budget this year, it will have to depend, as these Estimates show, on a draw down from the World Bank and the IADB almost to the extent of over \$50 million. As it stands now, all of this merely is in the mind of the Ministry of Finance. In order for the Government to be able to get this structural adjustment programme in place, these projects have to leave the confined comdors of the Ministry of Finance and have to go into those Ministries which deal with the productive sectors. The question I am asking, Sir, is, to the extent that that has to be done, how far and what progress has been made at the level of the respective line Ministries in giving concrete definition to the projects which will utilise the bulk of this financing around which the Estimates **are** centred?

There is also an additional implication. The World Bank and the IADB will want to have as much private sector involvement in the execution of the structural adjustment programme as necessary and as desirable. A lot of this \$50 million that is at the heart of the Estimates this year will, if the World Bank and the IADB have their way, be spent not just on public sector projects but on projects

in the private sector. The issue is, has the Government as yet met in good faith with the private sector of Barbados with a view to soliciting, collecting and collating their input into project identification and preparation, such that the structural adjustment programme can leave the corridors of the Ministry of Finance and begin to benefit the Barbadian economy as a whole? Mr. Speaker, I want to underscore this point, because if the Government of Barbados, for whatever reason, is not in a position to draw down on the \$50 million that these Estimates have it drawing down from the World Bank and the IADB, then Government's whole financial plan for the year will go awry. And rather than there being a no tax situation this year, Government will have to identify alternative sources of financing in the context of the situation where we know there is a limit on how much Government can borrow abroad, how much Government can borrow from the Central Bank and how much Government can borrow from the domestic banking system.

It becomes very critical, Mr. Speaker, for us to be told in this House how much progress has been made with a view to having a set of public and private productive activities defined and developed to be put in place to allow a draw down of funds this year. Otherwise the whole logic behind these Estimates will fail. Remember, Sir, the logic behind these Estimates is that the Government this year will want to have a no tax budget, but it can only have a no tax budget if it activates the structural adjustment programme with those two institutions. I think the Minister of Finance therefore owes it to the House to update us as to where he stands, where his Ministry stands, where the private sector stands as regards its capacity to give effect to a structural adjustment programme. The Estimates will fail and become just a simple exercise in arithmetic unless that particular matter is dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, the revised Estimates that have been put on the Table also cite proceeds from divestments as one of the main ways by which the Government proposes to finance its operations for the year to come. Some \$40 million coming on top of the \$45 million that was raised last year from the sale of assets has now been identified and will now form part of the financing of Government's operations for the new financial year.

I want to say from the very beginning, Mr. Speaker, that in many respects I personally subscribe to some of the goals and objectives of privatisation. I have no difficulty in principle with the Government doing what the private sector does. Mr. Trump, when he ran into trouble, had to sell assets in order to pay his debts. It is a common practice in the private sector and we must not be startled if a Government which is facing a problem with paying its debts looked to the sale of assets in much the same way that the private sector does. But it has to be done in a manner that is carefully thought through. We do not want to be involved in panic selling, selling under pressure.

Already Directors of institutions formerly owned by the Government have drawn critical reference to the manner in which shares formerly owned by the Government were sold during the course of last year.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this matter is of such strategic importance that the Government of Barbados ought to set up an office of privatisation within the Ministry of Finance through which it should treat this business of divestment as the serious specialised task that it is. We cannot afford to be penny wise and pound foolish putting enterprises in a condition to move them from the public sector to the private sector, the sale of shares, the valuation of enterprises that have to be sold off, are all exercises that in many respects require specialisation that presently does not reside within the Ministry of Finance. We might well find ourselves, Mr. Speaker, in the absence of Government paying for the required services, in a position where there is a recurrence of the situation which arose last year when the Government virtually gave away the public property of this country precisely because it was not properly advised in the matter. I would love to recommend to the Ministry of Finance that it moves a vote in this year's Estimates. If it is going to be committed to divestment of public assets as part of its overall economic strategy, and if it is going to depend on an inflow of \$40 million from the sale of such assets to help finance this operation, it has to be done properly. There is no resident expertise nor experience in the Ministry of Finance in relation to these matters. Pay for it!

2.25 p.m.

I also want to say that the time has come for Government to comply with the Financial Administration and Audit Act in relation to the sale of public property. As I said before, in a previous debate, the laws of Barbados prescribe how we can sell land and public conveniences. The only guide that we have in relation to the sale of other public property is that section of the Financial Administration and Audit Act which says that Cabinet should prescribe rules governing the sale of these assets and that such rules should be subject to the negative resolution of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, when the BET shares were sold, no rules were published by Cabinet nor was Parliament involved in the examination of the conditions under which that public property was disposed of. Yet, week by week Government invites us to come here to adjudicate over the sale of public conveniences all across the length and breadth of Barbados. I am saying that, in the same way that this Parliament is competent to adjudicate over the sale of public latrines, there is all the more reason why a clear format should be devised for the sale of enterprises and the sale of shares to be supervised by Parliament. On the basis of past experience, I have absolutely no confidence in the Ministry of Finance treating this as something unto the Ministry of Finance alone. Therefore, I want to urge again

at this matter be brought out of the realm of no-policy and put under the governance of Parliament.

The Estimates also suggest that Government has taken position in relation to the Statutory Boards. It would seem to me that the financial position that the Government as adopted in relation to many Statutory Boards will leave many of them in a state of limbo in the course of the next financial year. The National Housing Corporation may well find itself in the best position insofar as it has been given a subvention by Government in order to help it meet its operating expenses. If you are getting no money, then you now clearly the framework within which you are going to operate. There are instances, in which the provision to some statutory institutions has been so drastically amended that those institutions are going to be put in a position of financial limbo unless very draconian changes are made to the rates that they charge for their services, or unless very draconian changes are made in the level of their staffing.

Let me illustrate selectively. Two years ago the National Conservation Commission spent \$19 million. This year it is given a vote of \$6 million. In order for an institution to make an adjustment from spending \$19 million to \$6 million in the context of a rapid increase in prices, that institution will have to make very far-reaching and fundamental changes in the level of its staffing. We need to be told what those far-reaching changes are. The Child Care Board two years ago was spending \$10 million. It is given a budget of \$7 million this year. Again that institution has been put in a situation of limbo. In the context of rising prices in the society a 33% cut in the vote of an institution is going to cause it to drastically change its scale of operation or, in fact, close down many of its subsidiary branches.

I believe it would behove the House, during the course of this debate, to systematically go through each of these Statutory Boards and examine what are the real implications in respect of change of fees, scale of services to be delivered and level of employment that will ensue from the change in the amounts given. What Government is doing to the Statutory Boards this year, Sir, except in the case of National Housing, is very much similar to a case where a man is told to build a house but he is given only enough money to carry it to beam level. At the end of the day, he will not have a house. It would be better if we started by knowing the true position rather than going through this and agreeing to the arithmetic and also agreeing to the programme that lies behind it.

On that point, Mr. Speaker, I want to make a general statement on the Estimates for the coming year. We are involved in this House in an arithmetic exercise this year. The Government is under a commitment under its Letter of Intent to show a zero deficit for the financial year. It has therefore thrown together a set of numbers without rhyme or reason because at the end of the day the arithmetic must

satisfy the IMF and the World Bank that the Government of Barbados will have no deficit. In the process of doing so, I believe that the Government has really made a large number of changes that will compromise the objective being sought by the Minister of Finance to bring about growth in this economy.

I do not subscribe, Mr. Speaker, to any economic philosophy which says that there must be across-the-board cuts in public expenditure in Barbados. The notion of an across-the-board cut is one that treats every aspect of public expenditure as if it were the same. The requirements of Barbados at this time demand that, even if they have to be cuts in public expenditure, given the critical nature of some activities in the national economy, those activities must continue to get the same or increased provision relative to what they have received in the past. The notion that you have therefore to cut tourism promotion expenditure this year is, in my view, false economy.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I want to contrast what the Government is doing this year to what was done in 1982. In 1982 we faced in many respects a similar kind of problem, if not to the same extent. There was an international recession, we had to protect the balance of payments, and to protect the balance of payments we had to reduce the level of domestic spending. The Barbados Labour Party did not proceed with any across-the-board cut in public expenditure. We recognised that while it was necessary to reduce domestic spending, there were some areas of the domestic economy which had such a low import content that they needed stimulating.

If you go back to the 1982 Budget, you will find that the Minister of Finance then determined that domestic agriculture had to be an area in which there should be stimulation precisely because import content of activity in domestic agriculture was so low that you could stimulate the sector without there being any fear of adversely affecting the balance of payments. Government's present approach whereby it is seeking willy-nilly to cut expenditure in all the various sectors does not draw upon what we know about the Barbados economy. There are some sectors which are more import intensive than others. To that extent there is still some scope for selective stimulation of the Barbados economy to provide us with a ray of hope.

When I read these Estimates, Mr. Speaker, I draw the conclusion that the Government itself has no confidence in the capacity of this economy to perform. In 1982, as I said, Sir, the Minister of Finance of that day gave incentives to expand agricultural production for the domestic market. In each of the years thereafter domestic agriculture in Barbados emerged as the leading sector of this economy in the various areas after the food import bill of Barbados was reduced:

We have the most amazing situation, Sir, that in the context of our present circumstances, when there is that need to stimulate those **parts** of the economy that do not make extensive use of foreign exchange, incentives, for example, to agricultural production, page 39, are to be cut from \$2.6 million to \$450 000. We have a situation where expenditure on food crop research and development will be cut from \$1.6 million to \$641 000 and where services to increase the output of crops **are** to be cut from \$3.4 million to \$1.2 million. I will not go into all the other Heads, Sir. This, however, clearly has to be a policy that is as self-defeating as any economic policy that you can ever find. Therefore when the Minister speaks about his hope and desire that this economy will grow by 1% this year, I want to say to this House that I cannot share that optimism. Any growth in our economy now has been predicated on the Government's ability to get its structural adjustment programme in place with the cooperation of Government Ministries, the private sector, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.

I am satisfied, Sir, that enough work has not been done nor has there been a sufficient meeting of minds on policy between the Government of Barbados and the World Bank to activate a structural adjustment programme that can get a large infusion of money into the productive sectors. Even if that were the case, I am also charging that the draconian cuts in all of the productive sectors, as implied by these Estimates, mean that any monies that would be drawn down from the World Bank/IADB will not be effective or efficiently dispensed and disbursed because the Government's budget itself is designed to shrink activity in precisely the areas where a greater productive effort is required.

These Estimates, therefore, Sir, are at cross purposes with themselves. The Government wants to stimulate the economy but it is by its expenditure cuts in the productive areas reducing its own capacity to do so. I know that I am going **to** be hearing a lot of arguments that you can get more for less. The only person who believes that is "Crazy Eddie" in the United States of America. I believe now, Sir, that it falls properly on this House to take these Estimates and systematically examine them in terms of how they will affect people, in what respect they will lead to a cut-back in Government services and what those cut-backs will mean.

There are areas in which these Estimates will lead to an increase in user fees. I am not going to trespass on the province of some of my other colleagues. The relationship between the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to the rest of the society will change. The relationship between the Ministry of Education to the rest of society will change. My colleagues will be going through these things.

It behoves the Government to tell the Barbadian society what these Estimates mean in terms of increase of

fees charged by the public for services that the people of Barbados have come to take for granted. These Estimates will also lead to further job loss. I believe that this House has a responsibility to Barbados to make sure that if there is going to be a retreat it must be an orderly retreat and not a row.

To date, Sir, the Government's experience with the World Bank and the IMF has suggested that the Government, which started with no policy, has been put to rout by those institutions. We are seeing the effect of it in the general economy and the lack of confidence expressed by every section of this society in the administration of our affairs. The time has come to stop the rout. The adjustment that we all agree, and I am agreeing on the need for adjustment, should be brought to this economy for the benefit of this society needs to be undertaken in an orderly fashion. And the public should be told of it in advance so that the confusion which has overtaken this economy, to its own detriment, can become a thing of the past.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put to the House.
2.45 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has asked for a division and therefore a division is called.

The bell was rung.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please! Order please!

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing itself 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. H. A. BLACKMAN, Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, Hon. W. W. HALL, Hon. C. V. WALKER, Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, Mr. R. L. MORRIS, His Honour T. C. ESTWICK, and Mr. D. W. BOWEN – 15.

NOES:

Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. R. TULL, Miss B. A. MILLER, Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. G. W. PAYNE, and Mr. R. C. EASTMOND – 8.

On the motion of Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD 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.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

HEAD 10 – GOVERNOR-GENERAL – \$289 960

Head 10 – Governor-General – was called

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 10 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 11 – JUDICIARY – \$45 433

Head 11 – Judiciary – was called.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 11 for that sum stand part.

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

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with this Head in relation particularly to the establishment of the new Court of Appeal because the Vote for this Head relates principally to the judges and their salaries.

I think it was the 4th November last that a separate Court of Appeal with two new Judges **was established** in Barbados. This new court in the judicial system of Barbados was set up to overcome the problems of which there had been perennial complaint in the past of Judges sitting in judgement of each other and those Judges being at the same level.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member but we cannot hear what he is saying.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let me start again then, Sir, and you will give me the two minutes towards the end, because if they cannot hear I cannot blame them, Sir.

What I **am** saying is that the 4th November last year – I think that was the date – saw the introduction of the new Court of Appeal. For many years before that I think all of us and people connected with law had longed for the day when we would have a separate court of appeal with its own judges distinct from the Judges of the High Court. Provision had been made in an Act during the regime of the Barbados Labour Party but the fulfillment of the matters provided for in that Act had not come about until last year. I **am** saying that it was a welcome step.

It was not a matter of any great moment for the press and the media of Barbados because in the review of 1991 which comes out in the newspapers as a supplement at the end of the year, it did not get a piece, it did not get a mention. You have a new Court of Appeal, some new people as Judges and so on and that does not merit even two column inches in a review at the end of the year. But be that as it may, the establishment of a new Court of Appeal was perhaps following the trend of the Sherbourne Museum of Madness precedent and similar projects of the Democratic Labour Party. It was the latest example of the kind of bad planning, shoddy planning, and inept management of the Democratic Labour Party that we have seen for a long time. The latest example. I will tell you why I said that. As much as everybody wanted a separate Court of Appeal, those people on that side went ahead in defiance of advice and put the thing in place without the judges of the Court of Appeal having adequate accommodation and proper facilities to do the work. 2.55 p.m.

Let me say more. As recently as last week... This court was set up since November 4. As recently as last week a member of the Court of Appeal from the Bench had to tell the Attorney General: "We don't even have any laws of Barbados, see that we get some". Five months after they put four new people in the Court of Appeal they had not given them the tools to work with.

There can be no excuse. I don't want to hear any quarreling on that side. There can be no excuse. You can't set up a Court of Appeal and don't give the Judges even the Laws of Barbados, after five months.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to caution the Honourable Member not to hear asides and put them into the record because no asides are registered.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have to hear them. We did not bring it in because we could not bring it in at the time. They brought it in badly. Everything they are doing is pure **ad hocism**.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay, I just want to say to you that you said somebody was quarreling and I heard nobody else but yourself speaking, so that enters the debate as ... You follow what I am saying?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. There was a long period of time when the judges were in place and they had no proper facilities in the Chambers. Deny that. Just to say that you have set up a Court of Appeal you are going to set it up any old how? That is not good enough. What I am saying is, the thing should have been properly planned, put in place, and then appointments come and they start functioning in a proper way.

Up to now the Court of Appeal is not properly staffed. They have the judges in place but they have inadequate staff. The judges want research assistants. There is no provision in these Estimates for them. Why can't they, instead of spending \$2 million at the museum of madness, up at Sherbourne, why can't they take some of that money and appoint three people who have come from Cave Hill, qualified as lawyers, to work as research assistants for all the judges – the Court of Appeal and the first instance judges? Create three jobs. Don't tell me times are hard because we will show throughout these Estimates how you are throwing away money foolishly.

Indeed it might even be appropriate to finish **Sherbourne**, if you are going to finish it. Why not put the whole court system up there? You could not build the Hall of Justice that for four years you used to come in here and see money in the Estimates for to pay all sort of consultants, and then abandon it. You could not build the Hall of Justice. Coleridge Street, Bridgetown is overcrowded. Use **Sherbourne** and turn that into the new judicial centre. Put it right next to the Prime Minister to help him to comply with the laws. The judicial centre next to **Ilaro** Court may cut out some of the lawlessness at the top, like bursting the overdraft at the Central Bank.

No proper chambers for the judges for a long time, even though the Court has been opened. That is a disgrace. You have put the people in position and then put them in substandard conditions and expect them to work. I am saying that is evidence of very bad planning. What you have done ultimately, is to have redeveloped, to some extent, the existing court building. So you now have as a result of this wonderful planning, the area which was used as a passage to get from the main entrance of the courts over to number 4 and up to three and two and so on, you have had to block off that area. That was an area where witnesses who were waiting to give evidence in assize matters in number 3 and number 4 used to congregate. When I say congregate I mean that was a waiting area for them. I am not using that in any pejorative sense. That was the waiting area for the witnesses because the police used to be there among them and so on. There is no place for witnesses to congregate who are waiting to give evidence in cases.

Next door to that was the robing room for the lawyers which was an outer room where the lawyers themselves, who had business in Number 1 Chambers, before the Chief

Justice, would congregate. Witnesses have to come all through there because they can't use the former area; so that the waiting room for the lawyers is now a thoroughfare and it is hot because above the Court No. 1 has been completely enclosed and airconditioned. The renovation of Court No. 1 is a good job but it has had the effect of making the robing room for the lawyers too hot.

I will go a little further. If there is a little rain, because there are still no facilities for witnesses and people who have to do business generally in the Magistrates **Courts**, they all run back under the archway and shelter and they spill over into the ground floor of the Supreme Court. So that there is not sufficient consideration paid to the needs of the general public who have to wait and do business in that area.

Now then, what about prisoners? Prisoners now have to be brought up out of the cells and pass them through the lawyers' waiting room to get into court or sometimes to go around above in the yard, so the day there is rain and you have to go out there, everybody getting wet.

The whole thing has been a temporary situation. It is a kind of palliative but it is engendering all kinds of problems in its train. One has to be concerned about the security in respect of prisoners and in respect of the judges who occupy the Chambers. I don't suppose they would come kill any lawyers or so on ... but it was a rush job. Let us face that. It was a rush job and it has turned out to be less satisfactory than it ought to have been if it had been properly planned.
3.05 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Not the Labour Party alone, because we are the good fellows. But this very caring Government, Sir, has now created all those additional problems.

Now a note about toilet facilities. For all of these people who now use these facilities, **there** are two toilets. You have got to go upstairs and down towards Number 5 Court and you can find the 2 toilets there. I would like to know if Government has any plans to...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I put in those toilets in 1985-86. They were not always there. When I built Number 5 Court, I put in those two toilets. They were not always there. But I want to know what plans you now have to increase them because there is more traffic using the place.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, there is one other problem. I do not want to spend long on this Head. We have provision, I believe, for 5 judges but we do not have space for 5 High Court Judges. We do not have enough Chambers for 5 High Court Judges. The law was amended in 1985 to have up to five. We only have space for 4 at the moment but the workload is great. I must not be taken to be calling at this time for the appointment of any additional judge. If you do not have the space and we have constraints of money, I am not going to be unreasonable. I am not asking to appoint a fifth judge if you do not have space and you do not have the money. But what I want to know, in the light of all I have said about the congestion and so on that is occasioned as a result of the remodeling and renovation of the main building, what plans Government has to add on any additional facility down there. I do not think it is realistic now to think in terms of going anywhere else, except **Sherbourne**, as I may have said. Add on additional facilities which would give us another court and perhaps some more accommodation for the general public in terms of sheltering and laboratory facilities and what-not.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to respond to some of the things which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said regarding the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court in general. First of all, the renovations are ongoing and, therefore, we can expect during this year to have better facilities. I think that we have to liken the renovations to any other renovations in any building that you are living in. Once you are renovating and living there or working there, there is going to be severe inconvenience until it has been completed. This is known. Unless you move out and close down shop, renovations are always much more inconvenient than building a new building, because you are living or working there and you have to continue until such time as it has been completed.

It is not true to say that judges are working in substandard conditions. As a matter of fact...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I never said the judges are working in substandard conditions. I said there was a period of time after the Court came into effect on November 4th when they were working in substandard conditions. I said they were for a period of time. They had no air conditioning. They did not have any carpets. They had nothing.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: This is part of renovating a building while working there at the same time. You believe that you are going to complete at a certain date. You are not the worker yourself. You are promised that the electrical fittings will be in at a certain date and they are not there. I think the carpeting and furnishings move in stages. You cannot complete the masonry unless the electrical fittings are in. You cannot put in the air conditioning until the electrical fittings are in and you give

yourself a **date**. My own belief is this. If we had waited in the same way you had waited, probably we would not have started at all. I think it is a good thing that we started and, from all reports, it is not perfect but it is doing reasonably well. From time to time we have to upgrade it and give them better facilities.

As far as the books are concerned, again I know that a request was made for the **books** and I believe that things are being put into place. This week I understand that money was released to have the computers for the staff. The Deputy Registrar is in place now. But again, as far as that is concerned, I think you were in Government as well. You would know when certain requests are made and one would think that things are in place, it is only a couple of months after one realises that somebody would not release somebody because that person is too important to them. These are some of the problems which we face there. I do not think that things are as bad as that.

I am glad to hear that you did say it is a welcome step. Again, if we do not start, we will have a difficult problem. I understand the judges are working on a daily basis. It means that some of the backlog of appeals should be cleared up over a period of time. Unfortunately, every case is an appeal these days. Although we think the backlog will be cleaned up, at the same time there will still be a number of cases going.

As far as the upgrading of the building is concerned, I can say to you that what we want to do is to have a Chamber Court separate and distinct. At the present moment, I think you know the Chief Justice's Chambers are used for Chamber matters. What we want to do, which will not cost that much money, is to have the Chamber Court where the Library is now and have the basement renovated to have a section for lunchroom facilities and toilet facilities. Across from the offices of the Court of Appeal Judges, which is the new floor that has been put in and next to the Library, we want to put toilet facilities there for the staff of the upper floor. That will take care of their facilities.

My own view is, and I agree with you, that we cannot move to the new Hall of Justice in haste. My view would be and we have been discussing it in the Ministry that we have a two-story building in the back of the Chief Justice Chambers and add any other facilities that we want there. We are looking at that. I do not know what the cost will be. This will provide waiting accommodation for people who come to the Court and that should take care of that. The Hall of Justice will cost around \$28 million. I reckon that building will cost about half a million dollars at the most and it should be adequate for what we want.

As far as the space for the fifth judge, if we can get a fifth judge...I think we were looking at St. Matthias School to convert that because the Magistrates Courts

are most inadequate. There are three courts with little space for staff and there is no room to expand plus the fact that the Probation Office is also used as a court now. It would be better to try and get some courts somewhere else and allow more space in the Magistrates Courts and move out the Magistrates from the Civil Court and then convert that into a court for a judge. These are some of the options that we are looking at. Whether or not we can do it is something else.

I do not think that I need to respond to anything else since I have cleared up those points. I hope that has made it easier for the Member for St. Thomas to understand where we are going. That is what we are looking at for the time being.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not want to be misunderstood because sometimes the Press will write some headlines based on a misunderstanding of what you say. I want to make it clear because sometimes when you are critical in here you see the headline the next day: "Simmons Blasts the Judiciary" or "Simmons Blasts the Church" and all of that foolishness. I want to make it clear that I have not attacked the Judiciary. Further to that, I want to say for the benefit of the Minister that the new Court of Appeal is functioning well. I mean the whole system. There is a steady supply of magisterial appeals and High Court appeals going to the Court of Appeal and they are constantly being employed. Four days out of five the Court of Appeal is in session.
3.15 p.m.

What I was complaining about was that this uncaring Government... I wasn't limiting this to toilets. I am not reducing any debate to toilets. That is a kind of mentality that does not understand that politics has a human face nor the activities of the Government. You have a bunch of jurors, sixty jurors or more during assizes, endless lawyers, members of the public as witnesses hanging about all over the court complex because the designated areas for the public...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ... To answer nature's call there are only two places, upstairs. So, I am glad that the Minister has said that in their plans for the continued development of that site all these things will be taken into account. At the moment, no attention is being paid to those small but important things that members of the general public complain about. They complain to me about them. The President of the Bar Association complained to me, about two week ago, about the same thing.

The question that Head 11 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 12 – PARLIAMENT – \$3 494 392

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that the sum of \$3 494 392 under Head 12 – Parliament, stand part.

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

The question that Head 12 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 13 – PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (AS AMENDED) – \$27 058 957

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that the sum of \$27 058 957 under Head 13 – Prime Minister's Office, as amended, stand part.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, this Head deals with general administration and coordination services of the Government, the Prime Minister's official residence, Defence and Security, Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, Government Advertising, Information and Media.

Mr. Chairman, I would have expected that the first cut which would have been made would have been to cut out the Prime Minister's office itself. The Prime Minister spoke today about a sizing down of Government and coming out with a leaner government. Since the Prime Minister, who is the person with prime responsibility for formulating and directing and coordinating policy in the Cabinet and the Government of Barbados, has brought this country to the sad pass that it has reached, I would have expected that he would have done the correct thing, recognised his errors and his failure to give the direction that was necessary to the administration in the past year, and size himself down appropriately. Apparently, the statements made by everyone in the country, including some of his colleagues in the Democratic Labour Party, have gone unnoticed by him. We will get a greater opportunity to speak a bit more on this under the Head of Cabinet when I will be reiterating the need for reestablishing in this country various concepts of responsibility and, particularly, the concept of collective responsibility.

I also want to say that it is noticeable in this particular Ministry that the cuts under the statutory personal emoluments are of the region of just over 21%. There has been a change of \$4 million when I did my figures on the \$31 million in recurrent expenditure. It has gone down by another \$4 million. Obviously, that is about a 26% cut in that area.

Personal emoluments are being cut by an excess of 12% and the statutory emoluments by 13.8% and the non-statutory emoluments by about 10.2%. There is a

reduction in the goods and services of about **21.8%** and in transfers of **24.6%**. I want to relate these specifically to some areas of the Prime Minister's responsibility. I don't propose to speak to this House on the official residence of the Prime Minister. In the past years I have made my position clear on that, but I do propose to speak on the Defence Force of Barbados.

The position in the Defence Force is that the Government has not made any significant reduction in this area at all. I am talking about the way in which it **has** done the reduction in other parts of the Government Service as a **whole**. The second point I wish to emphasise is that I find it difficult to believe that the Government does not have an overview of the way **in** which the Defence Force should be used in this country and the correct relationship which the Defence Force must have **vis-a-vis** the civil responsibility for law and order. I am not going to subscribe to the view that the Defence Force can be pulled out and used for providing normal law and order duties in Barbados, a function which is the prime responsibility of the Police Force.

3.25 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I recall very well several years ago, I believe it might have been in **1978** or 1979, when a fire engulfed a part of Swan Street and threatened the Bryden's building and other areas. The Defence Force, at the urging of both the Commandant at the time and ~~the~~ Chief of the Police Force, was called out in order to provide a limited amount of assistance. That brought forth from the Democratic Labour Party a stringent criticism of the use of the Defence Force on a limited occasion, in the limited circumstances of an emergency.

It would be a wrong concept to get into the thinking of Barbadians that the Defence Force must be responsible for day-to-day policing duties. It is a measure of the failure of the Government not to have provided adequate security forces for the normal day-to-day functions of law and order in this country. Not one of us in this House should be and can be satisfied with the collapse of law and order which has occurred in Barbados.

On January **6**, 1991 the Prime Minister, speaking at the Democratic Labour Party Constituency Branch in Ellerton at the time, made the point that my statement that law and order was breaking down in Barbados was reckless. He said that it was as reckless as the statements I was making about the country going to the International Monetary Fund. Both statements have been proven to be correct in Barbados – the statement that we have come to the pass because of the policies of this Prime Minister having to go to the International Monetary Fund cap in hand and, secondly, today there is no right thinking Barbadian who would not say that law and order in

Barbados has broken 'down. People are afraid of being even in their homes, Sir. We have had murders in the street, at the Airport, of pregnant women and within people's homes.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am not talking about first time murders as the Honourable Member is saying. I am talking about the state of fear and panic in this **country**. It is nothing new because we have been forecasting that this would have happened and, therefore, if the Government had any overall programme, the Prime Minister should not be reduced to having to say that he is using the Defence Force now because there is an emergency situation. The emergency would not have occurred if there was proper planning and deployment of resources in the country in such a way as to make sure that the Defence Force provides the correct service that it has to provide and performs its correct role.

I find it very difficult, Sir, when dealing under this Head, to accept that as a general rule in Barbados **we** are going to see the Defence Force called out to be on the beaches patrolling between November and April every year. Something must be wrong there, Sir. It must be wrong in the context where the Prime Minister has no proper overall view how to give priority to the proper use of resources.

There is a duplication of resources now in a way that could be avoided. I cite the programme which is being called special training of athletes in the very Defence Force itself. I believe that if there is money to be spent at this time it should be spent in the areas it is most needed. Certainly, I would not consider – not that it is not a laudable objective – that money should be used in that way at this time within the Defence Force itself.

I am also concerned about the level of security which is being maintained in relation to arms and ammunition. At page 5, Sir, one of the functions of administering the security aspects of the country include checking on various foreigners visiting and living in the country, screening of applicants seeking **employment** in the Civil Service, **processsing** of applications for the importation of firearms and explosives, and advising on security matters.

Now, Sir, none of us can be happy knowing that there has been a tremendous increase in Barbados of illegal arms and ammunition coming into the wrong hands. Daily we have reports of people being held up in their homes, in the district to the northwest of me, Edgecliff, only last night two people, allegedly men (I have to say so because you cannot see for masks on their faces) just after 7 o'clock with shotguns went into people's homes looking for guns and ammunition and firing off shots. That is the latest incident that has come to my attention.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two more minutes.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It has got to that stage, Sir. A lot of the problems previously only even within the urban areas, have shifted to the rural areas and they have got beyond the suburban areas. The constituents of St. Joseph have had a dusty time with this sort of thing occurring. Whereas the Barbados Labour Party has at least on one occasion said we had no objection to the use of the Defence Force for that sort of exercise, one must know when and where to use it.

I want to know why are we having in Barbados such an increase in **arms** and explosives in the possession of the private citizen if the function under this Ministry was being properly carried out in the last few years? Surely the country needs some explanation. Is it not the correct use of the security forces in these circumstances to look into the gullies where you are having the problems and really not to be used for day-to-day law and order functions? There are circumstances, and limited circumstances, in my view – where you can use a defence force as a shock force, quickly **and-out**, but not on a long-term basis.

The Honourable Member may say, "do not tell me this". Four months or 5 months is not a **short-term** position. There are a lot of examples throughout the world. He must know this. He should also know there are certain things I do not say in Committee. If I have to, I will. I know what is the position in relation to certain security functions in Barbados. I try to keep myself briefed on what is up-to-date. The Honourable Member must understand that this side of the House has been firm in relation to the issues of law and order.
3.35 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired though.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: And that therefore, Sir, I would wish to hear some explanation, within the bounds that are allowed, in relation to the security aspects on the matter as to Government's understanding of the current status of security level in relation to firearms and to explosives being in such large numbers in the hands of the public today. I will come back on this later, Sir.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this is not a Head which... I believe it is specifically because it is Head 28...But I think some issues were raised which fall within my competence and therefore I should respond.

If I understand the Honourable Member correctly, when they were in Government they used the Defence Force along with the police when they thought it was necessary. It boils down to that. The circumstances required it.

Asides.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I do not mind what you say. The circumstances required it; in the same way that the Barbados Labour Party Government used the Defence Force for cane fire patrol, I believe along with the police, because there was a problem.

Are you suggesting then that we cannot identify a problem and decide that it is necessary to use them as well? You used it for the Swan Street fire and for **cane** fire patrols because there was a problem. Now that we use it when there is a problem, we are wrong. You cannot blow hot and cold at the same time unless you are suggesting to us that we should wait until the problem really gets out of hand, recruit 500 policemen, take three years and then say we should have used the Defence Force five years before that. It takes, as you know six months to recruit at least 30 policemen in Barbados. We cannot take up all the space up there. There are some who believe that we do not need any more policemen either. Let us say this as well, when we decided to use the Defence Force along with the police, we had consultations with a number of private sector people to see what they thought about our ideas. It is not that the Government one day got up and decided that the Defence Force would be used with the police. We spoke to a number of private sector people so that we could bounce off their ideas of how best to use them and where to use them. I do not think – as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West says – that we need to go into details where we use the security forces because then, quite frankly, it will no longer be security. I do not want to go down that way.

I think you would agree with me that since we have been **using** them they have been very successful in apprehending a lot of these youngsters who have been playing the fool.

Asides.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Sorry?

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Well some people do not want to know. Sometimes you are more blind when your eyes are open than when they are closed. What I can say is that all the guys in the St. Joseph area have been apprehended now. I believe that he did say that the St. Joseph area was the worst. My understanding is that all of them have been apprehended. That is my understanding of all the cases up there. There is some measure of success.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: The fellows are not all from St. Joseph. I think that we have got to be very careful.

I want to say this to you as well. You knocked the sports programme in the Defence Force. On the one hand there are some people who are saying that we should do something with the young people. On the other hand when we do something, you say that we should not do it. Some people are saying they need discipline and when you put them in the Force where they can get that discipline you say you should not do it.

What I could say to you about the sports programme is this: They have not been beaten yet and they have won throughout the Caribbean. The footballers have not done as well as we expected. The athletes are doing much better than they ever did before. They are not really part of the Defence Force. They are only stationed there. They are doing the six weeks training programme which is important. But beyond that they are not involved in the Defence Force programme at all. They go there and they train and they learn trades, et cetera when they are there. But as far as the military training, let us say pioneer, or the infantry or in the commandos they do not go through that training at all.

I am not quite sure what we should do with the youth. I believe in 1982 the Member for St. Joseph, as he is now, mentioned that we should have had a compulsory military national service. I think he will remember that. Ours is not compulsory. It is voluntary and it is **within** the Defence Force. They are **doing** exceptionally well. I do not think that you need to push that but those are the concerns I want to respond to. Both sides have used the Defence Force when it was thought necessary. I believe on both occasions they were criticized but they did the job. I think that now we have to use them the public at large is grateful for the use of the Defence Force in this specific case.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have to respond to the last speaker about the Defence Force, Sir. Nobody, and certainly this side has denied the right of Government, in circumstances which the Government deems to be of an emergency kind to resort to the use of the Defence Force. But it is all a question of the degree to which the Force is used. When they came out in respect of the fire at Swan Street, they were out for a night trying to control that area there by Sports and Games. When we used them in respect of Hurricane Allan, in 1980, it was to clean up the country. Nobody could object to that.

What we have now is the Defence Force being used for an extended period of time. Let me just trail in before I come to that. When this Government used the Defence Force on Kadooment Day 1990, they got the support of this Party for that limited exercise.

What is the concern now is the use of the Defence Force on an extended basis of four months and that matter itself, if the reports in the press are true, is something which has caused the Prime Minister himself, who has responsibility for the Defence Force, concern. I read last week that he said that he is not in favour of any – I am paraphrasing now – extended union between the Defence Force and the police. So it is a matter certainly in that regard for which there is common ground.

I am not going to go into the reasons why we as a Party opposed the use of the Defence Force on that basis because hopefully we will come to the other Ministry at page 42 where we can deal with that in greater depth.

As I understand it, when these joint patrols started the Government's plan was to use them in certain areas frequented by the tourists where it was known that there was trouble, Nicholas Abbey, Farley Hill area, that kind of general area, Hackleton's Cliff and one or two places like that, Flower Forest.

3.45 p.m.

Now, I am not in a position to say that the joint patrol has been a success. You know why, because when I was in Trinidad, week before last, I heard on the radio, I had tuned into Barbados to hear what was going on and I heard that some men had fired shots in the same flower forest area which should have been patrolled by the joint patrol, at a coach with tourists. So what are we boasting about, how are we talking about success when in the middle of this thing in one of the areas that you had designated to put under surveillance this kind of thing happens? I say that I am not in a position to say if the enterprise is a success or not because I have here the criminal statistics for January and February and this is since you have had the joint patrols and I am going to give them slowly. Let me deal with crime against visitors:

For the period January to February 1988 – 155, 1989 – 130, 1990 – 183, 1991 – 141, 1992 this year compared with last year.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the Honourable Member want to deal with that under this particular Head?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. You heard the Prime Minister on the Second Reading speech, Sir, talking about the level of crime and we are dealing with the

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He spoke in general.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Why I am dealing with it under this Head, Sir, is that the joint patrols were to be used especially to try and control crime as against visitors and I have tested the efficacy of the joint patrols.

Generally for the same period, Sir, apart from crimes against visitors, with the Defence Force men now working with the police generally, let me give you a few, Sir:

Robbery, January to February 1991 – 78 offences of robbery reported. For January to February 1992 – 152, twice as many and the Defence Force and the Police working fine. Other **breakings**: 137 last year, 159 now for January to February. Larceny from the person, 67 last year; 89 this year. That is a sample. When we come to the other Heads ... I am taking your hint, Sir. I am not going to dwell on this.

There has been a dramatic increase, a doubling, in relation to offences involving the violence against the person, aggravated violence, robbery and so on. I hear something coming from the Deputy Prime Minister. He says, that requires more Defence Force men.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Deputy Prime Minister has not spoken.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I don't know, Sir. Since there has been an increase in crimes against visitors, take robbery ... The Minister will know that I was looking at the bottom column, the grand total. He should have these too. Take robbery against visitors, you have your Defence Force men in place. Thirteen for the period January to February 1991. Twenty-four for the same period in 1992. Almost double, despite the fact that you had the Defence Force and you are still going to tell me that you had more visitors this year than last year? That is a joke. You know that is not true. You know it is down. I just wanted to get in those figures, Sir. I think they are important.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the use of figures by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas shows that really you can use figures for any purpose you like. The Honourable Member used figures in relation to crimes against visitors in order to prove the point, so he thought, that the use of the Defence Force combined with the police was making no difference. There were areas where the Defence Force and the police were patrolling.

Now the statistics talk about crimes against visitors. The statistics don't show you where those crimes were committed. They don't show you whether those crimes were committed in the hotels, where I believe most of the crimes against visitors are committed. The point I am making is that those statistics do not in any way demonstrate the connection with the joint patrols by the police and the Defence Force, so that those can be used for no purpose whatsoever.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Not to prove the point you are making.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I wish you would give the figures to make the point you are making, because where visitors are robbed on the beach there is a Head called Larceny from persons on the Beach – 6 last year, 10 this year.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. **Chairman**, the Minister of Justice has the figures which he will deal with in due course. The only point I am addressing at this stage is that those figures as bald statements do not tell you, in most of the cases, and you are talking about the beaches, but in other cases for instance, where the crimes against the visitors have been committed and whether they have been committed in places where there have been joint police and Defence Force patrols.

Now, dealing with the general point about patrols for Defence Force and police the Honourable Member for Christ Church West began his presentation with the comment that there was a total breakdown of law and order in the country and that there was a state of fear and panic in the country and that kind of language. In the next breath he goes on to criticise the use of the Defence Force in support of the police. One would have thought that if there was a breakdown of law and order and there was fear and panic in the country in the terms in which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was speaking then that would be every justification for the use of the Defence Force in combination with the police. So he is destroying his own argument in the same speech so to speak.

Now, I think we are all agreed that the defence force should not be involved as a matter of routine in the maintenance of law and order which is, after all, a police function. I think, in a small country like ours, what we have to be concerned with is, the best and the most effective use of the resources we have. Ideally, if we are well off, if we can afford it, ideally the best thing would be to have neatly **compartmentalised** arrangements for various institutions to function.

The point has been made that there has been an increase in certain types of criminal activity in the country. There is no dispute about that. If you look at the overall statistics of crime...

3.55 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. M. A. KING:...you will see that overall the statistics for crime in 1991 decreased over the year before, overall 849 in 1990 and 750 in 1991. But that is nothing to be proud of. That does not prove anything. I am saying that despite that there has been an increase in certain types of criminal activity which have become high profile criminal acts and those have to be dealt with.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West talked about people being held up with guns and that kind of thing. Now what is wrong with getting the Defence Force to patrol with the Police in those areas of high criminal activity? What is wrong with that? I do not see anything wrong with that. I am saying that...

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Find them for me. You find them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are having interruptions that are not allowed.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am saying that what we have to do is to make the best use of the limited resources we have, especially at a time like this when we are trying to conserve our financial resources. I believe it was Sir Frank Walcott at one time who used to talk about Barbadians who are inclined to have champagne taste and mauby pockets.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Both of them used that expression. But that is symptomatic of what we are. We complain in one breath about spending what we do not have and in the next breath, when we try to make the best use of the resources that we have without spending much more money, we are being criticised and being told: "Well, look the thing to do is to give the police a lot more people". Give the police a lot more people. Give them guns. Give them the whole lot. You can equip the police with guns to take on the criminals whom they say have guns out there.

The point I am making, Mr. Chairman, is that one has to look at this issue of the Police Force and Defence Force in the context in which the country finds itself and recognise that there is a problem which has to be addressed. We are making what we perceive to be the best possible effort to deal with that problem.

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

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I rise to respond to some remarks made by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in regard to the Defence Force programme. He said that he thought the money could be better spent or words to that effect. I thought, perhaps, I would explain a few things to him, Sir, so that he would not be of that opinion by the time I am finished.

'Sir, in the 1940's, 1950's, and through the 1960's, most of our great sportsmen were found at Harrison College and Lodge and Combermere Schools. Even though some of them went on to win Barbados Scholarships and

things like that, they were the ones who played cricket and football and were the athletes. Even in this Chamber, Sir, as I look around, I can see evidence of this. I can see the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who ran 100 yards in 9.9 seconds and things like that, a great athlete. Sir, there was no need for him to go into the Defence Force programme. Now the Defence Force programme comprises 50 youngsters who were all unemployed. They were not picked by a Minister of Government or by any parliamentarian giving favour to people from their constituency.

Those 50 young athletes were selected by their respective associations. For instance, the 25 footballers were selected by the Football Association. Out of the 25 selected for the Defence Force programme, 11 of them are today in the Barbados team. Someone alluded to the fact that the Barbados team did not do too well a few months ago and that is true. But it is not the fault of the people in the Defence Force programme. Those 11 footballers are today playing in the First Division Programme. In other words, Sir, as a team that practises everyday, they are not given the opportunity by the Football Association and the authorities to play in the weekly competition. They are out there waiting for international games. Sir, this is ridiculous and perhaps that is the reason why we did so badly in the Shell Cup.

As far as the boxers are concerned, Sir, the Amateur Boxing Association is very happy to have these youngsters. Indeed, Barbados is among the greatest exponents of the art and our youngsters from the Defence Force programme have actually boxed unbeaten. Sir, they have been a credit to Barbados. The girls and boys who are in the athletic programme have been selected by the Athletics Association and they have done us proud whenever they play for Barbados.

It is, therefore, passing strange that the Leader of the Opposition would give the impression that money is wasted on these youngsters who get a stipend of \$50 a week. Sir, that is ludicrous. I think it is wrong to suggest that and I do feel that most of those youngsters who were unemployed and were conditioned to failure, having sprung from the proletariat and sometimes getting into the wrong company, were tempted to do the wrong thing. They had a lot of time on their hands. Now they are disciplined young people and they practise their sport everyday. We will see the day when many of them who are in this programme will represent this country with distinction. I am sorry, Sir, that there are not more of them. Indeed, I feel there should be 100 instead of 50. I believe there should be some cricketers because we have some unemployed cricketers that can very well do not only with the \$50 a week, but also with the discipline. They can do with the camaraderie that goes with it all and makes good sportsmen, and people who are worthy ambassadors for this country. If we were to recall, Sir, in many countries especially on

the Continent, you will find that most of the **great** sportsmen are indeed in the Services. They are either in the Army or the Navy. They are either in the army or in the navy. They do that in order to keep them gainfully employed so as to benefit from their talents. I, therefore, do not see how we can think that the \$50 a week that we are paying these youngsters is too much for them. I believe we should have more of them. Indeed, when Adelbert Browne, bare-footed, last December, ran **26** miles 332 yards in just over two hours, having only **24 hours** before pulled the roller at St. Catherine, I said aloud that I hoped we would be able to get him into the **programme**. When I spoke to the Lt. Colonel I was reminded that these youngsters are all on stipends of \$50 a week and Browne was working at least as a groundsman at St. Catherine and therefore they did not think that they could get him into the programme on that basis.

4.05 p.m.

I do believe that when we have our sportsmen unemployed or not particularly gainfully employed that we should **try** to do something more for them. That is why I have risen to make the point that it is not a matter of us straitjacketing and **militarising** our youth. Indeed, if we were doing that under the programme that was in England during the 1950's and 1960's, it might be better for us. That is debatable. What we are doing is giving them the necessary discipline and we are bringing them under a strict programme which **will** augur well for the future.

I was very proud, Sir, at the Independence Day programme, and if any members of the Opposition went they would have seen – I didn't see any of them, Sir – that these **fifty** members, footballers, boxers and athletes were there in that parade, and they were not conspicuous by their inefficiency. They were equally well drilled and their appearance was a joy to behold. They requested to go because they were enthusiastic about the whole idea.

As long as you are disciplined, whether in the home or whether at school or whether in any workplace, it becomes a habit. The same with indiscipline. So, it is good to see these youngsters in this programme. I am sure that if the Honourable Leader of the Opposition knew these facts he would say that it is a good thing. I can think of nothing in the programme that would give him the impression that the money is wasted. Let me repeat, Sir, had it not been for this programme, there would have been hither, thither and yon, on every street corner... The very crime statistics that the Member for St. Thomas alluded to would be three or four hundredfold.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: The statistics that you read out are what is reported, but there are many crimes in this country that are not reported, especially crimes against visitors.

That brings me to the point concerning the remarks by the Member for St. Thomas when he talked about crime, not only against visitors but against Barbadians as well. I have **gotten** hundreds and thousands of letters from people who claim that Barbados is the most beautiful place in the world, that we have the friendliest people in the world, **but** they were robbed and that **is** the reason why they are not coming back and they are going to tell everyone that they meet that it has happened to them.

I appealed to the Minister and I told him I have **gotten** to the stage where he can do anything to combat the upsurge of crime in our community. When the idea of joint patrols between the army and the police came up, I understood the army would not go on the beaches during the day but would join the police in the areas where they were getting trouble. I wish to make it abundantly clear that as far as I am concerned this is nothing to do with anybody else in Barbados. I am satisfied that we had reached such a state in this country that we had to get either more policemen, get the army patrolling with the police or use some measures, whether a neighbourhood watch or whether a banding of us all to patrol the streets where we live, but something had to be done.

I do not know if the other Members of this Honourable Chamber understand fully what has happened in the last five or six months in this country as far as crime on the streets and harassment of people is concerned. It is a diabolical act when people cannot walk the **streets** unmolested, when our womenfolk are raped and all manner of things are happening against them. We, of this vintage, are not accustomed to that sort of thing. Personally, if the army has to join the police to combat crime as I see it today, so let it be. I make no apologies for that.

There is so much semantics and so much dishonesty and so much irregularity of thought and deeds. When people start talking about what is to be done, **the** point is that we must have this crime wave stopped. I am telling you, Sir, that if the crime wave subsides now in Barbados the people that I have talked to all over the world – some of them have heard about it but most of them believe that this is a beautiful country... Indeed, we market Barbados as a place of **tranquility** and peace. Therefore, we need to put our house in order. The methodology used in putting our house in order is open for comment and even criticism, but discussion **too**.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Thank you very much. I am saying, Sir, that this is one area where we must close ranks. We are all Barbadians. When I hear that someone has entered the home of any Member of the House of Assembly, whether he is from this side or the other, or if a Member is attacked by criminals, it womes me. I would feel very bad if it happens to anyone in here or any

Barbadian, not only Members of Parliament. If it happened to a Member of Parliament it would hit the newspapers, but the proletariat would not get a line.

I hope the Leader of the Opposition understands why the Defence Force Programme is there, that he understands fully that it has been done all over the world. We have no situation such as in Australia that from the time a man makes twenty in a test match he is given a public relations job in some big firm and he is secure for ever. You should ask the Member for St. Thomas how many hours he spends in order to chart a course for some of our young sportsmen and to advise them what to do with the few pennies they work for.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. W. W. HALL: It would offend me if it can be truly said by any Member of the Opposition or any Member on this side that the Defence Force Programme is not meaningful when **all** it does is to cater for those without hope but who have an abundance of talent and through this talent could become more famous than anyone sitting in this Chamber.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude now.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central has made a most amazing speech, amazing from several points of view. Once again it illustrates what I said about this Government. They really do not understand their function. The function of a Ministry of Sports is to provide programmes for sportsmen to do exactly what the Minister has said such should be done. What is the point of having a Minister of Sports, and a national sports council and national training coaches other than to perform exactly those functions that the Defence Force is performing. His people are not performing their jobs, and there is duplication.

The argument which I got up and made from the start is that the Defence Force must perform its correct functions. You should not have a wing or section in the Defence Force simply to perform the job of **looking** after sports people. The Honourable Member who spoke just prior to the Minister said that the young men are not doing anything other than sports. Now, if they have gone into the Defence Force only to be trained in sports my contention **is** that the Ministry of Sports must deal with that problem.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I did not say that is all they do. I said that they learn skills as well. I even identified some.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am not going to go any further on this point, other than to say that I am not

surprised that the **Government** is so confused about their particular roles and functions as they are on this particular matter. The Honourable Member must not get up and suggest that anyone on this side is against the training of young people in general, or against a youth programme that is properly conceived, thought out and is being properly implemented. We will talk about that when we get a little further on. You **will** hear a lot more about that from the Honourable Member who has shadow responsibility **for** the overall programme. That is not the point we were talking about. Do not confuse the issues that I have been talking about.

There is another amazing speech which the Honourable Member made. It bore out and said exactly what I got up and said about this Government. He said that things have reached such a stage in Barbados that he has been getting thousands of **letters** from visitors saying that they are not coming back to Barbados because of crime.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: He said "hundreds". Then he moved from "hundreds" to "thousands". I saw the Honourable Member for St. Michael West begging him to sit down. My charge against the Prime Minister – when I opened the debate under this Head – was that if he was coordinating the Government properly he would not have allowed the **country** to have reached the stage where there was a breakdown in law and order, that thousands of visitors are going to write back to say that there is a breakdown of law and order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I do not really feel that the debate should now turn to thousands of people. We have to be careful that we do not start a whole debate on thousands.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am relying on the Minister's words. I am not misquoting him in this debate. I **am** saying that the Government now must accept **responsibility**. This is a government that never takes responsibility. It does not take responsibility for the economy, for the lack of employment or for the breakdown of law and order in the country. It always has some **palliative** and excuse. It is always somebody else to blame at each stage. That is the whole point. I intervened and opened this **debate** exactly on that note. I referred to the position where the Prime Minister, on January 6, 1991, was attacking a **statement** which I made concerning law and order. I made two statements that have been proven right in this House and in the country as a whole.

I want also to talk about the further confusion of the **Government** under this Head and to deal with it in relation to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. The Prime Minister in his opening remarks today made the point that he hoped to come out with a leaner and stronger

economy. As he dealt with the statutory corporations, he gave us the impression that the Government was doing a lot to restructure the statutory corporations. He said that one of his policy objectives was that central Government operations would be brought to a balanced position. The transfers to statutory corporations will be reduced wherever possible.

The way of treating CBC illustrates the total confusion that exists within the **minds** of the Government and the Prime Minister in particular. If there is an operation that should be commercial, it must be that of a radio station and a television station, the former of which is in competition with other private sector enterprises which are operating and showing a profit and have been showing a profit for several years.

You would not expect the National Housing Corporation – to illustrate my point – to show the same financial picture on its balance sheet as you would expect from the CBC. Nor would you expect at all the Child Care Board to show the same balance sheet position as you would expect from CBC. Their social purposes do not necessarily run along the same lines all the way. In any event, one lends itself more readily to commercialisation than the other does. When one inspects these Estimates, you will notice that this year the Government is continuing to take public funds and transfer them for the normal recurrent cost of CBC.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member wants to know where it is. I would have expected him to have seen the figures when the matter was before him in Cabinet. If he would look at page 6 he would see it. That is not the only Head. CBC is now being given \$1.4 million under that Head, item 316. The Honourable Member would know that Head would relate to recurrent cost. It is not "capital."

The Honourable Member would also see a little later in the Estimates as well that further sums are being given to CBC. Let us take the different approach of Government when it is dealing with the National Housing Corporation, to illustrate my point. It has cut loose the National Housing Corporation to operate on its own resources. It has cut off all of its vote at one go, as compared with how it has dealt with CBC.

4.25 p.m.

Sir, what the Members must realize is that parastatals – those that are commercial – must be able to stand on their feet. We must not mollycoddle them all of the time, in the manner in which we are treating a Board like this.

I can understand why the Government is so anxious to keep the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation as the

Government's propaganda **arm**. I am going to illustrate it. I will illustrate it by an event which happened. There was filed with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation a report on the negotiations between the BSIL and the BWU and the Prime Minister's intervention in those negotiations. Prior to the news being read the News Desk had information that the report which they were going to put out was no longer valid, Sir. Despite this the News Desk proceeded to read the news as it was originally written.

I **ask**, what has become of professional standards? And what has become of professional standards where people who have the task to work on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party's public relations campaign also have the task to be reading the main news and to be the main person now replacing another officer in Current Affairs. We cannot have that if we are serious about standards.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: We must be very serious about what is the function of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation in Barbados.

I want to hear from the Government a statement about the personnel problems that have been **occurring** at the CBC, why there is such a heavy turnover particularly among news people up there. I want to know why this is happening in this section of the Corporation.

It is obvious to me that the Prime Minister needs CBC in order to make him look good, not to be an objective organ of public information but to make him look good. That is why we cannot see the substantial change that must of necessity be made, if we are to have genuine freedom of information in this country **and** if the corporation should be made to stand on its feet commercially. I object to my money being used in that way to make the Prime Minister look good. I am taxed. It is my taxes that are going into it. I object to CBC being used for propaganda purposes, just as I object to the Ministry of Information which is misused these days, sending out the sort of pejorative language and criticisms of Members of **Parliament** that they have sent out on occasions. I **have** spoken on that in here before, on their misinformation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Because it is a misuse of funds, wherever I see it, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will as a taxpayer be condemning it from the Floor of this House and outside of this House.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I would not normally enter this debate but the Honourable Member who just sat down made a couple of statements which, since they run counter to my own views on a couple of things, I had better put them in the record. On the question of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member in discussing the parastatals said we must not mollicoddle them, *et cetera*. I *am* not going to spend any time on that view, except to say this. I do not really understand a concept which seems to suggest that because some people somewhere say so, we must all jump on the bandwagon and the reason why we establish parastatals in the first place must be thrown out the window, bath water and baby, everything through the window. I do not share that view.

On the question of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation the Honourable Member must be aware that in the countries that are themselves prosperous – private sector countries, the United States and the United Kingdom – both of those countries have utilized their resources to promote aspects of their cultural and other interests by literally giving money to agencies that are deemed to be "commercial". The Honourable Member must know that in the United States there is a public broadcasting system that is paid for by the taxpayers. And he should know that in the United Kingdom the British Broadcasting Corporation is a *parastatal* and that they nearly had a war in Britain last year when Margaret Thatcher determined that she would cut the subsidy to the BBC.

We in Barbados have one single, little station with 250 000 people and 166 square miles. We are not in a position to have a public station on the one hand and a commercial station on the other. So we cannot have a PBS in Barbados. We do not have a BBC in Barbados. What we have is CBC. It was established and it has a commercial part to it or it is a commercial operation which the Government established. But it has a public sector part to it. It always has had it – the *same* policy position which was taken by Nigel Barrow when he was lord, god of information. The same policy positions prevail.

You talk about bad conditions? The Government under the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had the people working at CBC in bad conditions. And their Minister, Nigel Barrow, the Minister at the time – I am not calling his name pejoratively, Sir – indicated that he felt that they should have better conditions.

Certain remarks made by the Hon. B. M. TAITT were ordered, by Mr. SPEAKER, to be expunged from the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The point I was on, Sir, is about the conditions at CBC. The Minister knows that when I went there in 1979 I found the station just as they had left it in 1976. It was then accommodating a staff of 132 when it started with a staff with probably 20 or 30. I put the two chattel houses above, to give some elbow room, and then did a development plan.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member and I have no quarrel, Sir. He is in fact assisting my point that by the time CBC had grown to the numbers where it had been divided into a separate staff for the radio station and a separate staff for the television station, they were all still working in the same motley quarters that they had had when it was a fledgling station that nobody could hear outside of Pico Teneriffe.

The point is that a decision was made by the Barbados Labour Party Government – and I am not criticising that decision – that they would get proper accommodation. And the Government of the day was responsible for the loan which came from CIBC, if I remember correctly. That loan has to be repaid. One of the conditions which the Government indicated at the time was that it would give the CBC assistance – because it was capitalizing the station – to repay the loan. I submit that part of the allocation which can be found in the Estimates today has to do with CBC's repayment of loan. The Estimates are no longer separated into Capital and Recurrent as it used to be. You now have all of it in one Cohoblopot. The point is that transfers to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation are not dealt with in the way the old time Estimates used to deal with them. All of the transfers to the parastatals are showing up as both Capital and Current but the reason for the money is sometimes global, sometimes not global.

4.35 p.m.

I don't want to get into the details. I just want to make a philosophical point that we cannot take the position that there should be no public broadcasting in Barbados and that it should not be paid for by the taxpayers because somebody else has said so. There is such a thing as local programming. You cannot get the commercial people to sponsor some of the local productions which have to be done for television in Barbados. Those have to be paid for and the Government has a duty, any Government of the day has a duty, to allow the Barbadians to have artistic expression by way of the television station. We have one television station and therefore if you agree that you are going to have a television station, if you agree that there should be some black faces on it and that you should try as much as possible to avoid making the entire fare the foolishness that comes from North America on an

ongoing basis, then you will have to pay for it and the commercial people will not pay for that so the Government has to pay for it. So it is a part of the social programme at the CBC. We have agreed to pay for that. If you wish to quantify it and say it is too much I will hear that, but to suggest that CBC is in competition with VOB or with BBS and therefore the bottom line should be comparable with the other bottom line is to distort the actual position.

I understand that CBC ~~Radio~~ has always made money. I understand that CBC has been making an operational profit but it is when you do the amortisation and you look at the capital plant which we the Government of the day put the Pine then that is where the question of profit and loss takes on another look.

I am not here defending the programmes of CBC in their entirety. I myself have quarrels about how CBC handles some news items. Recently the CBC went to the cemetery and took an empty grave and then confused a whole lot of people in Barbados, giving them the impression that a young man was buried in what they called potters field; and the child who said "potters field" did not even know that potters field has a particular meaning. It was only after they had put the story out and confused a whole lot of people that it became apparent that it was a slight error. That should not happen in the twentieth century, a few years before the twenty-first century. We should not have any news editors so ignorant that they don't know that you cannot talk of potters field for someone who was buried by a funeral director and had a proper service. The man had a service at the funeral director's place.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Look, I am discussing CBC and what CBC carried. The Honourable Member for the City is in no position to tell me what to say, yet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Except that the Honourable Member for the City has not yet spoken.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I know she has not yet spoken, except that you do not know when she is speaking, Sir. Anyhow, Sir, I just wanted to make the point, Sir, that we in Barbados have to have public broadcasting. I really think that we should separate the criticisms of the methodology which CBC is using and how they are operating from criticisms to do with whether the Government should make any contribution to CBC or not.

It is my feeling that it is necessary for any government, if we are going to develop our cultural heritage, to make a contribution to local programming in this country. My understanding is that this is the money that has been donated by the government towards the development of cultural aspirations. If I am wrong I am

sure that I will be corrected but I think that is what this is about. \$1.3 million in the context of CBC is not a great deal of money.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: These interruptions will not be tolerated.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I understand the Minister will explain that. I really wanted to speak, Mr. Chairman, only on that aspect – whether we should have a public broadcasting element in our general policy positions in Barbados. That is my position, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to contribute to two particular matters that have arisen during the course of debate on this Head. The first relates to the fourth programme by the Barbados Defence Force for young sportsmen and sportswomen and the second relates to CBC. I think I will start with CBC because I wish to reinforce the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

I have never been of the view that CBC is a statutory corporation which should be considered when we are talking about privatisation. I say so, not from an economic standpoint, even though very often matters financial and economic reign when these debates are taking place, but because I think that, from the perspective of developing a Barbadian identity, there have been few institutions as successful as the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, particularly CBC Television, since its inception.

The point is this, Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has said, and I want to reinforce it, that you can travel to any of the islands in the Caribbean and have access to cable television, particularly islands like St. Lucia, Grenada, Antigua, St. Vincent I think, and perhaps Dominica. They all have cable and very limited domestic television productions. You can go to the larger, both in economy and size, Caribbean islands like Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica and these countries also, by comparison with Barbados, have a higher foreign content when it comes to programming and a substantially lower domestic or local content.

It has been a tribute to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation that, despite the economic problems that it has faced and the lack of sponsorship from the private sector, it has been able to put on television, our children, our parents, our neighbours, the people we represent, to discuss their views of matters affecting this country, all for everyone to see, both in Barbados and outside. I think it has made a statement, certainly to other parts of the region and to Barbadians themselves about their own culture but, more importantly, about their own contribution to public debate and so on.

I wish particularly, in this debate, to single out the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation for some outstanding local productions. Now, I do not judge freedom by who reads the news. If we were to carry out an analysis from the 1960s to 1986 in relation to charges, some of which are reckless, some of which are envious about who reads news, we will see that nothing much has changed.

4.45 p.m.

The **point** that I want to make, however, has nothing to do with who reads the news or the news contents. Because I **do not** think Barbadians judge their freedom, **liberty**, and their access to information on the basis of the political persuasion or interests or self-interest of the persons who are presenters of news. But there are some politicians who feel to judge their relevance by how often they are on public television when asked, but not when the public television asks them or when they complain that their Press releases are not being carried in the newspapers even though everyday one sees two or three. I am not talking about that. I am talking about local programming.

Let us look at it. We had Independence last year. Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation teamed up with the Ministry of Community Development and Culture and produced a debate of the re-enactment of the 1966 Independence Debate which was shown on Independence Day in Barbados. They are presently working on a 13 part series of debates of this Chamber with people like you and me – big debates in the context of the history of Barbados. Perhaps the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act might be able to be eased in if people feel that that is a particularly path-breaking piece of legislation even though I might debate that. But we are going to have the opportunity through CBC to have Barbadians see young people re-enact debates that have taken place in this country.

A programme is presently being produced by CBC with young people from the National Youth Forum which the volunteer ring of the Youth Service called Youth Rhythms. They are seeking to project positive images in young people and give them the opportunity to be articulate and to face the public. We are also re-introducing programmes similar to the understanding programme which was aired in the 1970's and which was banned when it became obviously too difficult for politicians to accept.

This programme, APEX, again young people are being given the opportunity to discuss issues that affect them. This is a locally produced programme of a high intellectual and cultural value. The NIFCA Finals – Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation produced these so that you and I could see our children on stage acting out **aspects** of Barbadian culture and life.

I want to commend CBC because there is no other local television station in the Caribbean region that is doing

as much to place its 'own people in the forefront of its programming. There is going to be a cost because the private sector does not sponsor that kind of programming easily or any other kind of programming unless it is a game show at Christmas, or unless it is some other kind of production which they might think is relevant to the advancement of advertising, or some other interest. There have been attempts by the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to attract revenue by having people sponsor local programmes. It has been for a long time noted that local programmes are not considered a priority by the private sector in terms of its advertising dollar.

I want to commend CBC and I hope that with all the facile and puerile criticism we hear from time to time about the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation that Barbadians would stop and consider the impact of their own local television broadcast station in identifying what is Barbadian in promoting values. We can play a very important part particularly among our young people in promoting value through public television. I think it is a tribute to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation which sometimes on its own sees a particular initiative and moves forward with it. We cannot always quantify these things by any economic argument. We cannot quantify it by stupid arguments about partisanship and politics and that kind of thing. Therefore, I hope that CBC will accept its accolades this evening and that other broadcast stations will also assist it in giving those accolades.

Now I want to deal with the Barbados Defence Force Sports Programme. I wish to start, Mr. Chairman...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ...from the position or perspective that I had always been very reticent about the Barbados Defence Force being involved in programmes that moved outside of its traditional and circumscribe military role. I was one of the people who, as I said before, in the 1980's objected strenuously when the Honourable Member for St. Joseph – He denied that he ever made this **speech** in last year's Estimates in speaking to the Westview Club's one day educational community seminar at West St. Joseph School. He made the point about our young people that as far as he is concerned the church and home had failed to inculcate values and the state needs to intervene to set up institutions providing compulsory national service for young people. His concept was summed up in these words. This is what he said to the young people way back in 1982 in the midst of an IMF Programme and other economic difficulties. This is the message he sent to the young people then: "The service must be in a military setting where a person does what he is told and does not ask **questions**."

I remember this speech so well last year but I could not quote **from** it. I assiduously set about during the intervening years to find this speech. Now that was his view then. We have not introduced any military national service scheme. We allowed the Defence Force to come in and set up a hierarchy in relation to things like discipline and drill and the relation to survival skills and map reading.

I think that is a good **thing** for the Defence Force. The soldiers need sometime to have a release from the tensions of their environment to work with other young people and to feel good about their contribution to the society. I think that is good. I will not be part of any policy which puts guns, because that is what military service is, in the hands of young people in this country. I understood from the television programme that I saw relating to the sports programme that the young people involved are not even recruits of the Defence Force. They do not bear arms. They are only involved in basic drill.

Now the purpose of drill for anybody who does not know, and I was never a cadet myself so I am speaking from a position of incomplete knowledge, is that it is important for coordination. It is important for accepting instructions and commands. It is important in the context of teamwork and it is vital in relation to discipline and order. That is my understanding of drill. There are people who do not need drill like me.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is right. I already look **wrong**. But there are some people later in life who might need drill but they do not understand the value of drill at that stage. They are too far gone. The point is this. I am not giving the Barbados Defence Force any criticisms in relation to its sports programme. It has been placed before the public. The television programmes have shown its value and the value of the programmes relate to this. First of all, the majority of recruits come from very poor background, they are certain of having a balanced diet from which they are able to participate more actively in sports. 4.55 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes to conclude. Can we have some order?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You may not understand the need of a balanced diet in relation to sports. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas would, because that is his forte both in and out of the House, but the point is that a balanced diet is critical, and he can tell you how critical it is, to being proficient in sport. The Defence Force programme seeks to put in place that balanced diet. Nobody is suggesting that you were not eating before. I was not saying they were hungry before, so there is no need to carry an argument to a puerile extreme. The point

is they are getting a balanced diet and this assists them with the kind of rigorous training they need for the sports programme.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: **They** are receiving a stipend and they are receiving important discipline which is part of the inculcation of the skills that they need to be effective sportsmen. I hope Barbados will shortly be going down in the record as a country that produces outstanding and enthusiastic sportsmen in the international arena.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 20 minutes past 5.00 by this clock.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 5.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply is resumed.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West attempted to castigate the **Leader** of the Opposition for his contribution during this debate. They feel that the Leader of the Opposition was wrong in criticising the allocation for the sports programme. I feel it is time Government understands that the Leader of the Opposition does not stand alone in this matter, and as one who headed the Ministry of Sports...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In a minute. We are actually dealing with the Prime Minister's Office. I understand the connection which you want to make, but you are going down the wrong route. We are dealing with that under the Head of the Defence Force programme.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am dealing with that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not on Sports.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the programme which I heard the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member, the Minister of Sports, speak of is a programme which is conducted by the Defence Force and has a sporting component. I have advised the Honourable Members from that side on several occasions that it is time they listen to the voices of people who know better than they. In this regard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West would be best advised...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. Do you mean West Central?

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I did not say anything about Sports.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: He should understand when there is criticism or direct attack on his Ministry. The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that such a programme should be within the National Sports Council. I tend to agree, because the National Sports Council was set up to deal with sporting activities and to train people, potential athletes, to devise programmes in order to assist them. If you have, as is the present case, the Defence Force initiating a sporting programme with the same objective, then we feel that it is saying that the National Sports Council has failed. It is time that we understand either that you are going to let the Defence Force handle sport - overall and all sport - or let us put things back in their proper perspective.

I want to ask the Minister and the Government what is going to happen at the end of this training programme. Are these people who are now trained mainly in sporting activities going to find a job out there? What sort of job? Are they being trained to train other youngsters? If there is the component of trade or skills, what is that really for? You must have an understanding as to what you are training young people for. It is not sufficient to say that you are training them in sport, or taking them and developing their sporting skills, with a small component of discipline. I want the Government to understand that before there was a Defence Force programme Barbados had national teams in netball, in football, in basketball, as well as athletes and they have done extremely well. They have represented this country at the very highest level and with distinction. So anyone who seeks to give the impression now that this programme is going to throw up something that has never been seen before is operating on a false

premise. What this programme should be seeking to do is to assist those players, once they have been selected by the sporting organisations, in their final preparations. I feel that is lacking. We see ever so often that, once national teams are selected, they lack that cohesion. There is no discipline. That is where most of our national teams have fallen down in the past. This will continue if this approach is not adopted.

5.30 p.m.

There is one thing about this programme that worries me a great deal. Those persons who are selected and are undergoing training are not playing first division football. I would have thought, if they are selected and said to be the cream of sportsmen in Barbados, they should be exposed to top level competition. It is not enough to have them playing in Division 2 because everybody knows that the best football or sport is not played in the second division. That is why the programme needs to be looked at. What is true about the programme is that there is a lot of criticism and all is not well. Even the sporting organisations and some sporting administrators are critical of the programme. Once you go into this programme you are not allowed to play for a club. Some sportsmen who have shown promise at the national level have refused to go into the programme because it restricts them. Let the Government deny that!

Take "Potato" Forde who is one of the national players. He would have liked to have further training, but he cannot go into this programme. Fifty dollars a week sounds like a lot of money. We must not make laughing sport of the young people of Barbados to come in here talking about 4 square meals. Is that what you are reducing Barbadians to? I am listening to this debate carefully. I hear what sort of contributions Honourable Members from that side are making. I want the Honourable Member to understand that the athletes in Barbados are not starved athletes. If he is talking about a programme and 4 square meals, he is saying that they are hungry. That should never occur in a debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let's have some order, please.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I would have thought that the Defence Force would be involved at a level where it could train some of the coaches because some need further training. As the Government is not in a position at this moment to send them abroad for relevant training, I feel that somewhere in the Defence Force they could be exposed to this. Train the coaches and let the coaches go back into the community! At present there are community coaches within the National Sports Council. Why not train them? Train people like "Gas" Clarke. He is a community coach appointed by the Barbados Labour Party Government. Go to St. Andrew, to Nascimento, and help develop those people in the country.

I do not want to hear it is a good programme within the Defence Force and you are giving them \$50. That defeats the purpose. I feel that if you are an athlete and you have shown promise you should be encouraged and given at least a couple of days training with some monetary assistance. To pay athletes on a full-time basis and say you are giving them \$50, is an insult to them. We have to ask ourselves what are they going to do? What are you preparing them to do? What if they get a breakdown while training? Are you going to **continue** to give them the \$50? Are you going to abandon them? Throw them out of the Defence Force? These are questions that need to be answered.

The Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, is correct when he says that this money should not be paid into the Defence Force. I am opposed to its being put in there. If the Defence Force has the personnel, let the personnel go out and assist rather than have the people in there because the 50 athletes in the Defence Force are just a drop in the ocean.

What womes me about this programme is that when the Barbados Labour Party talked about encouraging young people in a programme in which the Defence Force would be involved, we mentioned particular skills like navigation, where the Defence Force has the necessary expertise, but the Democratic Labour Party criticised the Barbados Labour Party and said that we were **militarising** people. What is also significant is the fact that we identified the naval base. We went there and we identified the workshop so that the young people could, while training, have exposure to certain skills.

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

Mr. DeL.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I cannot understand what the Government is seeking to do here. It is a duplication of the programme and I hope that the words of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition will not fall on deaf ears. It is all right for us to find a job for somebody, but the same person could be sent out to the Sports Council and into the community to do the job. It would still bring some credit to the Defence Force. If all the equipment is at the Defence Force and there is none at the National Sports Council, then in fact, what you are doing is denying the other athletes – and there **are** more than 50 athletes out there – the opportunity to expand their skills. Something must be done to have a more far-reaching programme in order to help athletes in Barbados.

I hope that the Honourable Members from that side do not hold on to this argument that you are helping poor people. Athletes are not poor. I do not know if they are talking about financially poor. They have qualities and

abilities that can be developed and, in that regard, I always say that athletes **are** rich. If they are allowed to develop their talents and skills then they can become the outstanding sportsmen they are supposed to be.

The aim of the programme is laudable but the method of adopting this programme is wrong, and I join the Leader of the Opposition in condemning the approach Government has already taken in this regard.

5.40 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be long. I just wish to ask a few questions. I should be obliged for some answers. In relation to CBC, Sir, I am not at all satisfied, from what the Minister of Culture said, that the quantum of local programming of CBC is better, or more than that coming out of Trinidad and Tobago or Jamaica. I do not think it is true. I appreciate that CBC has made the effort over the years gradually, as finances permitted, to expand the local programming content. I am not going to be critical of CBC in these times, but I want some answers to a few questions.

The incident some weeks ago where some men are alleged to have shot at a tour bus with tourists in the area of the Flower Forest made CNN News. It was telecast on CNN. My information is that details of that incident were sent from Barbados by persons at CBC to the correspondent station CNN, while, at the same time as that was happening, members of the Government were appealing to the Press in Barbados generally to be more restrained in the publication of matters which had the potential for damaging the tourist industry. Here we were volunteering information about an incident which could cause **damage** to the tourist industry and, indeed, to Barbados' image and reputation generally.

Now, I think that was a matter worthy of the intervention of the Prime Minister as Minister responsible for the broadcasting station. I think he has a duty to cause an investigation to be carried out to determine how that information got on to CNN's screens.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I did not see it. I was in Trinidad. I want to know if my information is **correct** that **the** story left Barbados and went to CNN and, if it was a fact that it happened, who was responsible for it? I am asking the Prime Minister, in due course, to tell us what steps he has taken to get to the bottom of that incident.

For some time now also, since this Government has been in power, the "*Guttaperk*" programme that used to provide an outlet for some people to vent their concerns was taken off the **airwaves** suddenly and without explanation. A few weeks ago an attempt was made by

CBC to restart the "*Guttaperk*" programme. I always hear the Government and particularly the Deputy Prime Minister...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, the Honourable Member must not say that because the Deputy Prime Minister has not spoken.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said I always hear.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You must not say that because you are **putting** it in the records.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He never has any knowledge of these things. He is always on Concorde at **66 000** feet above all the turbulence. He never knows what is happening down here in Barbados. That is your problem.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are on the Prime Minister's office.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation went so far as to discuss with potential moderators the number of days they could be available to chair the programme. They also got responses. Some of the persons contacted were surprised after they had been approached about the **restart** of the programme to be told, all of a sudden, within the last 10 days, that the programme was no longer flying. Somebody **pulled that**. I would like to know what is the Government's **policy** in relation to call-in programmes on CBC. In particular, will the Minister tell us in his reply whether the Corporation intends to resuscitate that programme or not?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the Minister can get the information if he does not know.

This is the last question, Sir. In relation to the Prime Minister's official residence, I see here a cut in personal emoluments of \$21 364 which **appears** to be more than the 8% cut which you can see fairly often throughout these Estimates. What I want to find out from the Prime Minister is whether he has appointed anyone to succeed the Honourable Member for St. John's mother who he so unceremoniously dismissed **from** her position at Ilaro Court during the last financial year. Has the job been filled?

Those are the only **three** questions I would like answered.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to put paid to all the criticisms about the youth programme of the Defence Force. First of all, there seem to be a lot of misconceptions. The age group is **16 - 23**. The goodly gentleman from the Pinelands is far past **23**. He cannot qualify. That is Mr. "Potato" Forde. He is out of the

question. He was a **good** player but he has passed his best, if you watch football. He cannot kick corners **anymore**.

Secondly, the selection process is done through the associations. It is not true to say that the associations are most critical about the programme. Indeed, in respect of the Football **Association**, it is that **Association** that refused to allow the guys to play **first** division football. They refused and the Minister of Sports had discussions with the executive in an effort to allow the youngsters to play first division football so they have to start at third division although the same Football Association allowed a combined school team to play in the first division. It is not the Association that is critical of it. They are part and parcel of the whole selection process and the organisation of the programme.
5.50 p.m.

When we speak about food, we are really speaking about diet. I have had the opportunity of managing two football teams and an athletic team for Barbados and food is a problem, if you want me to use the word food. The youngsters do not eat properly. If you are an athlete you have to eat properly. I do not mean quantity. Ask any manager of any Barbados team. They will tell you the same thing. It is a problem of diet. When they go away they have a doctor or nutritionist with them and they will not listen to the advice of these people. This programme will help them, at least, in that area.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East spoke about training. Let me say this, most of these guys are potential national players. If you are to perform at your best you must train at least **6** hours a day. That is the minimum. Weight training, you rest, stamina, you rest, skills, you rest. It is **6** hours and you cannot get it if you just go into Nascimento for half an hour or half a day. You must have at least **6** hours **training**.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: That is the past. We are dealing with the present and future. You must have at least **6** hours training. You cannot get it unless it is a very **structured programme**. We are dealing with the youngsters as well and the question of discipline. You cannot get the discipline on any Sports Council programme. You cannot get that type of discipline. However you **try**, you will not get it. Even in the National Youth Service we have now, we had to take a Sergeant Major from the Defence Force and put him over there. You should see the change in the youngsters in 4 weeks' time. Sports is not the only programme they have under the Defence Force programme.

Remedial education is one because, whether we like it or not, a lot of our sportsmen are not the brightest people. If you deal with them on a daily basis, you

will notice that they have a problem. You have to face the problem and face it up front. Remedial education is part and parcel of the programme. They do skills training. They do first aid. So these are some of the aspects of that programme. I do not want you to think that, when the fellows leave **kicking** their football, that is the end of it. When they leave they should have a rounded education. That is most important. When they leave they should **be** able to fit into a job quite easily because they would have a skill as well. So it is not only the sport they are playing. They are doing much more for these youngsters. These are the pluses for the programme. No programme is perfect but I think this is as perfect as we can get. Another thing is that if a person is going to represent a country – it is one of the problems we have, and we have to face facts as well – people who are representing a country, when you take them away their behaviour is not the best, they are not true ambassadors for their country. That programme helps it as well. Let us call a spade a spade. It is pointless when you **carry** people overseas to have to speak to them about their behaviour. When they come downstairs to go into the dining room you have to send them back upstairs to dress properly. When they are leaving the country they do not know how to dress. When the National Anthem is being played they do not know how to stand up to attention or what else to do. These are things that we have to **train** them for. The only way you can do it is in a structured programme where you have the time to do it.

We have tried to train youngsters for the National Team on afternoons from 4.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. It takes you 45 minutes to tell them to behave themselves and 45 minutes to teach them about the game. It is a waste of time. You cannot train for 45 minutes. You are going to **see** the benefit of this programme not in one year but probably in 2 or 3 years. As a matter of fact, we have seen a lot of benefits **from** the programme, as it is. I would ask you, rather than to criticize it, to give it some encouragement. We need another 150 people.

My view about it is this: Once you get enough footballers or enough of one sport then you can farm them out to the clubs. But at the present moment, if you send those youngsters back to the clubs they go back to the same environment from which you took them and it is counter-productive. That is the problem. They go back there with the same bad habits. The youngsters come to train and they do not want to train. They sit down and talk foolishness.

When they come to train with our programme they go straight to training. They run 6 or 7 miles on mornings, *et cetera, et cetera*. But if you do it the other way around it is counter-productive. I hope you understand that aspect of it as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I should just like to make a few comments....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Before the Right Honourable Prime Minister winds up, Sir, I should like to ask a few questions in relation to Head 13 – Grants to Public Institutions – \$17 921 320, the Defence Force. As I understand it, this is a cut of some \$5 million.

I should like to know whether, in determining the amount to cut, the Minister of Defence could tell us the specific areas in the service that would be reduced as a result of this apparent \$5 million cut. Is it going to fall on the army or the Coast Guard? What is the area? I know the Defence Force has built up a reputation of providing 3 square meals a day but not paying the suppliers. But it is fairly obvious to me that something must give, if you are going to cut \$5 million off a vote. It is hardly likely that the quantity of the food that is being served is the one that is going to give. **Are** we going to send home soldiers or some people in the Coast Guard? The House deserves an explanation as to where the impact of this reduction in expenditure will fall. I look forward to hearing the Minister of Defence tell us how it is going to affect the Force.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I should just like to make a few observations in reply to some of the questions that have been raised as they relate to this Head we are discussing. I will start, first of all, with the last question relating to cuts in the provision for the Defence Force. Let me say that the Defence Force, like other agencies and departments of Government, has had to make adjustments in their provisions. But I am **pleased** to say that the Defence Force represents one of the outstanding **agencies** that has sought, not to go complaining about cuts, but to make the available resources fit the objectives, the activities and the programmes they have in place. Perhaps it is part of the confusion on that side of the House that one Member – Sir, I do not remember which Member it was – seemed to have been giving the impression that other departments have been cut but not the Defence Force. 6.00 p.m.

The question is asked now about the cuts to the Defence Force. The Defence Force will obviously have to do with a smaller provision. They will continue to carry out the missions and the mandates that they have in all of the **areas** that they are required to carry out. They will still do search and rescue, they will still do their drills, they will still do their training even though that will be reduced because they cannot participate in the same number of training programmes as they did before. They will still not be able to have the kinds of long range patrol boats that they would wish to have just as other areas or other agencies might not be able to have all of the facilities and equipment and so on that they might wish. They will still respond to a variety of requests from the public for

a variety of forms of assistance. So, the answer is that there is no particular area that is targeted for the reduction but there will be a general reduction.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: **They** have always been able to make do with their resources. While I am on the Defence Force let me make a few comments about the sports programme. If there is one thing that this **society** needs, it is a greater injection of discipline but the problem is that that Opposition does not wish the Government to take any **particular** steps to deal with any of the problems in this country. They would like to see us frozen and petrified and do nothing about problems. They will complain about youth on the street corners not being disciplined or not doing anything and harassing people as they pass. They will complain if we have a sporting team and it does not perform to its maximum ability. When we do anything about it or attempt to do anything about it and put a programme in place then the word spinners over there **try** to find all kinds of devices and methods to criticise the programmes and to find ways of opposing what is being done.

Let me say this, I have no brief for the Leader of the Opposition and he **can** make his own comments about policy and about programmes. He is entitled to do so. My Government is also entitled to put in place, policies and programmes as it sees fit and that is what we are doing. We have instituted a sports programme and I believe that the only problem is that over there they did not have the foresight or the capability or the ability to put such a programme in place. I believe that it is out of envy and jealousy that they are opposing us. I have sat down very peacefully here and listened ...

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: This is the first time I have heard the Leader of the Opposition **talking** about sport. What does he know about sport? He does not know the difference between a leg break and an off break. The only position he knows on the field is **silly** mid-on. He also knows slips. To hear him waxing so warmly on this question of sport, it is really amazing.

I have confidence in that particular programme and I believe that in the years to come, as a result of the identification of the young sportsmen and sportswomen in this country and the application of professional techniques and the accompanying discipline applied in that programme that there will be a significant elevation and enhancement of the sporting talents and capabilities of this country.

I will say no **more** about that. Let me go on. I think there were some references to the Defence Force participating with the Royal Barbados Police Force in patrols. I know, Sir, that there are three or four persons over there, I see one is not in his chair now, who have held the office of Attorney General in this country and who are therefore by their experience and training well versed to speak on these subjects. There is a fifth, Sir, the Member for St. Joseph who could have been Attorney General, I believe, if for no **other reason** that his stature and so on ...

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: ... and by training, Sir. To be serious, Sir, let me make one comment on this question of law and order. I have no apologies to make for the fact that the Royal Barbados Police Force and the Barbados Defence Force together felt that there were areas in which they could work together and cooperate in seeking to reduce the level of criminal activity in this country and the level of harassment on the beaches and other places in Barbados as it affected visitors to Barbados.

Sir, I believe if we have problems we must find solutions to those problems. We must be problem solvers in this country.
6.10 p.m.

I find it very strange, Sir – I do not remember which one of the Honourable **Members** over there might have been the Attorney General at the time – that there could be complaints of the Defence Force going into parts of the country to help to reduce the level of the very fear that they are talking about. Apparently, it is all right to send the Barbados Defence Force into **St. Vincent** and the **Grenadines** or perhaps Union Island. It was the Barbados Labour Party Government. I do not remember who would have been the person who gave the legal advice and everything on that. I do not know who it was.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: But there is something wrong in sending that **same** force to help a situation in **Barbados**. I believe that it is time we should put Barbados first.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Will the Honourable Member hold his point of order? Just hold your point of order. I am having difficulty following the debate.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I must admit that the Prime Minister has held the office of Minister of Defence long enough to have gained some knowledge of the circumstances under which any of the forces are used outside of Barbados and the procedure for so doing. If not, he should look at the National Security Council's minutes for the occasion as well as the necessary order that was signed by His Excellency The Governor-General. The circumstances, as represented to the Government which is now public knowledge, was that ~~there~~ there was a rebellion in a neighbouring country. Under the then existing bilateral arrangements between St. Vincent and ourselves, a request was made and the then Leader of the Opposition was notified. Those were the circumstances in which the Labour Party Government would, if there are problems in the Caribbean as we did in Grenada, use the Defence Force.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am just finishing the point. The Honourable Member must not misrepresent the position in which the Opposition has stated that the Opposition, in limited circumstances, and in emergency circumstances, where there is a real security problem, we will use the Defence Force. We cited for a short period of time and the argument which the Prime Minister will now address is the argument of where shortage exists. He is short in arranging properly to have law and order in the country.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is becoming a speech. Can I have some order?

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The fact is...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Prime Minister hold a minute? It appears to me that some Honourable Members are uncomfortable seated in the Chamber. There are rules which govern the conduct of the Committee. Proceed.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I will not pursue that matter anymore apart from saying that there was a situation in Union Island affecting some particular individual. I do not know if he was outside of the law, if he was a criminal, or if he was Dr. Rat or whoever he was and they sent to assist in that particular regard. Was it Dr. Rat?

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is another incident. I do not even know. Do you mean that there is more than one? Sorry. I do not know, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Dr. Rat had nothing to do with Union Island, nor did Dr. Rat have anything to do with the Defence Force. It was a police officer who shot Dr. Rat dead on a boat on the west coast. Why does he not talk about his Government that in 1990 sent soldiers to Trinidad? You sent soldiers to Trinidad. Talk about that.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am saying that it is the responsibility of the Government of the day – this is the point that I am making – to take decisions in respect of the use of security forces and that is all that we are seeking to exercise. If it affects or relates to law and order in Barbados or to a security situation or however it may be described and we deem that it is necessary and that the agencies wish to co-operate in the matter, we will have no hesitation in using the resources to try to deal with it within the legal framework applying to such matters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Prime Minister wind up in two minutes?

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order? I have endeavoured so far to permit each member speaking, the opportunity to speak uninterrupted and I am having difficulty if this is the way it must proceed. I do not want any guidance in the matter.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I do not think there was anything else of substance that ~~was~~ really raised from over there that I can recall at this time. Oh, yes! There was one question raised about CBC and the programmes. I do not deal with the day to day matters of CBC. You have now drawn to my attention that to the best of your knowledge there was some programme sent from CBC. Is that what you are saying? I do not like how you are going that way. You are not quite sure that is what you said.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I was very careful in what I said. I said that I had information to the effect that the Flower Forest incident – you know what we are talking about. It is the shooting of the tour bus – was sent to CNN and telecast on CNN, and that programme was sent from CBC or by persons connected with CBC. I asked the Minister to investigate this. He said that he is now hearing of it for the first time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He was answering me on the Flower Forest. I asked two questions.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Honourable Member has drawn this matter to my attention and I

will ask the CBC authorities to let me have a report on the matter. I will at the earliest opportunity let the Honourable Member or the House have the information hopefully before these debates on the Estimates are ended.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is news to me. I do not know anything about any "*Gutterperk*" programme. I really do not know. I am not involved in the day to day operations of CBC. If there is something that is drawn to my attention or that I myself hear or see which I believe is contrary to public policy or contrary to the framework within which they should be operating, I will draw it to the attention of the authorities there. You have drawn this to my attention about "*Gutterperk*" and I will have to ask about that, but let me say, and I make no apologies for this either, that the programme is off the air and I think the programming for CBC is much better **as** it is. That is my feeling on that.

6.20 p.m.

The question that the sum of \$27 096 081 under Head 13 – Prime Minister's Office – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 – CABINET OFFICE – AS AMENDED
– \$3 423 235

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. **Chairman**, I beg to move that the sum of \$3 423 235 under Head 15 – Cabinet Office – as amended – stand part of the Schedule.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask a question. I know every Prime Minister is entitled to run the Cabinet how he likes, but I just want to know whether any guidelines have been given by the present Prime Minister in relation to his Cabinet Ministers whether they are entitled to practise whatever profession it may be in the afternoons, **from** the very early time of about 2 o'clock. There are a few persistent breaches of the law, of the normal customs and conventions.

The other thing I want to know is whether there are any rules in relation to conflict of interest, like if your Cabinet Members are participants in **any** magnificent, grandiose development schemes and things of that kind. I believe that you have the same interest as I have in maintaining the overall image and integrity of the Government.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think I will respond to **that** one quickly without the general response to the debate because of the importance of the matters the Honourable Member has raised. He is quite right. We have a particular special relationship in these matters. Let me

say that the custom& guidelines relating to the conduct of Ministers are issued to Cabinet Members when the Cabinet is sworn in or if there are any changes in the Cabinet from **time** to time. I think these are the guidelines that have been drawn up for quite some time. I do not recall exactly when they were drawn up, but those customary guidelines are issued to members of Cabinet and both tradition, custom, as well as the practice and conventions relating to Cabinet Government apply to conflicts of interest and all such matters. Those matters are covered within the guidelines and I believe my honourable friend would know about these matters.

Mr. H. **deB.** FORDE: Mr. Chairman, under the General Management and Coordination Services, the Subprogram makes provision for the payment of emoluments to Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and staff. We have heard so much today from the Prime Minister about the necessity to cut everything lean and come out with a stronger and more effective government, one would have thought that the political directorate would have sent the correct message to the public by first **looking** at a cutting of the number of Ministries concerned. We have had none of that, but I believe that one must talk these things in the open when you are dealing with the way in which the Prime Minister's style of government, **as** the person in charge of the Cabinet, operates. They must not only be said in the corridors.

There is at least one Minister to whom the Prime Minister does not give adequate work. There are files that he deals with that other Ministers do not ever see, although they have similar responsibility.

Aside.

Mr. H. **deB.** FORDE: Would the Minister of Concorde just keep quiet? He does not even see his own files.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. H. **deB.** FORDE: I am talking about the Prime Minister's Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I want to find out if the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is referring to the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs who had no office, no staff, no responsibility, no Permanent Secretary during the period 1981 and 1986, but was getting a ministerial salary. I want to know if that is whom he is referring to.

Mr. H. **deB.** FORDE: Do not misinterpret what the Honourable Member wants me to do for him. He wants me to say to the House what he would say in the comdors. I am referring to the treatment meted out to some of

the Ministers by the Prime Minister. The Honourable Member should know that too. The fact that there are things in his Ministry of Economic Affairs that sometimes his very Minister who has some responsibility does not see. Let us face the fact. His style of government is such that he keeps everything to himself, and I am going to say it, because he says he wants to trim down his Ministries. If he believes that he is a one man show, why does he not send them all home?

A lot of the problems of this Government surrounds the manner in which this Prime Minister has chosen to **run** the government. I do not expect his colleagues to say a word on the Floor of the House, it would be asking too much for them, but I will say it. Therefore, he must understand, if he feels that he does not need his Ministers, he should scale down the government. That is what I am asking. The Minister also should know that in at least one other Ministry, not a Minister in here, there is a general complaint that he does not even understand what is happening in his Ministry. That is a fact.

I want to hear from the Minister how he proposes to improve the style of government, because one of the things that have bothered me considerably in this House during the time I have been here, over the last 21 years – and it is 21 years since the Honourable Member and myself have first been here – is the failure to recognise that collective responsibility means **what** it correctly says. I have challenged the Honourable Member in the last Session of this House to deal with the situation where you would get the Cabinet agreeing on a course of action, as happened in the 1986-91 Cabinet, getting the stamp of approval from the public on the course of action. Then we have seen the **spectacle** in here, subsequent to that, of the Prime Minister himself who obviously does not understand the classic concept of collective responsibility saying that that was a particular Minister's programme.
6.30 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West looks a bit puzzled so I am going to be specific. We had a position where the Cabinet of Barbados in 1986-91 agreed on a policy in relation to the Budget, and came in here with specific measures. It happened, not once nor twice, that the then Minister of Finance got up and put that policy as the **policy** of the Government, and it was approved. I have seen the Prime Minister then claim that that was the policy of that particular Minister and not of the Government and castigated – I am talking about the Budget of 1986 – the alternative budget which was brought down. A lot of that is, Mr. Chairman, at the heart of the problems that we have in the country.

I am saying in no uncertain terms that the Cabinet approved of the alternative budgetary measures that were implemented in here in July 1986. I have seen the

Honourable Member who was then Deputy Prime Minister, and who voted in favour of the measures, come in here and praise the Member for implementing them. I have seen the Honourable Member on the Floor of the House get up and castigate those **same** measures.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The point is and this must become a point that has to be understood by the public of Barbados. If you understand the concept of collective responsibility, then there is no way that the Government can later repudiate in that manner what it had collectively agreed to. It is the Minister's style of dealing with his colleagues and he has to be told. I do not expect them to say it.

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I want to understand what measures the Minister has for improving the...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member just hold a minute. It is very disturbing to the Hansard Reporters to hear all these voices at the same time. Please desist from cross-the-table interruptions.

Mr. H. deB. Forde: ... I want to understand how those concepts are going to be implemented. I find it a bit difficult when the Government begins by laying off thousands at the lower end of the governmental system, and the Prime Minister protects people in a higher political post whom he seems not to have any real role for. Sir, I am talking about the Prime Minister's style of dealing with all of you in Cabinet government.

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I just want to briefly respond to two questions. The question of collective responsibility is one of the guiding principles related to Cabinet government and there is also the concept of individual responsibility. Two principles – collective responsibility and individual responsibility. These have not come through any tablets handed down from on high. They have to operate within a given system, and each prime minister and each leader of the opposition has his or her own style of government. I am the father of this Parliament.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I have been in here for a long time and in this game you have to have survival skills, and we can get some very ironical situations.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Christ Church West, who gets up speaking and laying down the law...

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: He is talking about collective responsibility and I have sat in this Parliament and heard his Prime Minister launch a very blistering attack on him.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It ended up, Mr. Chairman, with the Prime Minister turning full face to him and saying, "Who wants to resign, resign now!" He sat down very timidly and meekly. Now he gets up talking about collective responsibility. On the **Floor** of the House, an open, direct assault on a minister holding the office of Attorney General, the only one apart from Prime Minister which is designated in the Constitution.
6.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is only one person who has been given permission to **speak**, that is the Honourable Prime Minister and he is on his feet.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Each Prime Minister has his style. The then Prime Minister had his style in relation to you. If you ever become Prime Minister, I hope you would have the courage to have your own style as well. You can deal with those over there in the way that you see fit and in accordance with the principles and conventions that you feel to follow or to lay down. As for me, I operate as I see fit within the framework that I see fit. There is nothing else to it. If you can operate in a particular way as Leader of the Opposition, as Prime Minister I can operate in the way that I **see** fit. When you reconcile your own position then from your glass house you can throw the stones that you wish to throw.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I just wish to put my position very clear in this matter. There is some strange myth which people have that when you are in a Cabinet you are like a little schoolboy, the headmaster comes in and gives you a slap around your head and you can meekly go along and do what you have to do. You read in the newspaper about collective responsibility and there is a whole lot of myth that has been passing in this country about what exactly constitutes collective responsibility.

They have some vision of the great Cabinet in Britain, where the Prime Minister has the rod of correction and the people in Britain have collective responsibility and they rush to accept whatever else each Prime Minister says each time which is coincident with precisely what they think. That has nothing to do with collective responsibility.

Collective responsibility has to do with the considered policy of the political party in the first instance. It has to do with the decisions reached as a Cabinet. If you cannot agree with those decisions you resign from the Cabinet. It does not mean that every time a Minister speaks that he has to telephone his colleagues and find out if he can say what he has to say. It does not mean that a Minister does not have a view. When you are given a portfolio you have responsibility for that portfolio and for everybody else as well in the Cabinet. The collective responsibility, therefore, extends throughout the entire Cabinet.

Now, I do not wish to be invidious in a discussion like this. But the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, must not, by the phrase of what you would say in the comdor, leave any impression that Honourable Members in a Cabinet are afraid to say one thing on the Floor of the House that they would say in the comdors. **Obviously**, there are things which every single Member in the House of Assembly will have a view on that they will not necessarily put in the record of the House. But to leave an impression that these are some Members of this Cabinet, because it can only be this one at the moment, who talk in the comdors but are afraid to talk on the Floor of the House is to leave an impression of cowardice.

The Honourable Member in talking about collective responsibility sat as an Attorney General...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I understood the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to be talking about what happened when the Prime Minister was in Harare and what happened when he came back. That is what I thought he was talking about.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is the Honourable Member's way of trying to get around it. I. I was not in Committee I would call him a mischief maker but I would not do that.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You do not have anything to expose. The Honourable Member is always bluffing.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Except that the Honourable Member is not on his feet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The point I am making, Sir, is that the Honourable Member himself knows that on one occasion when he was Attorney General he formed a position and subsequent to forming that position on re-examining his position he changed his mind to take a completely opposite position. Now, Sir, that is perfectly possible. The Honourable Member would be the first to agree that can happen.

On the question of the Budget the then Member for St. Michael South Central brought to the House – the Honourable Member knows that a budget speech comes to the Cabinet 2 hours before it is delivered. The Honourable Member knows that. I think the country needs to know that this question of a budget speech a Minister of Finance...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House because he knows that particular **Budget-Speech** was implemented virtually in full. The programmes of the Manifesto had been out and discussed since **May** of that year.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not going into any back and forth about that. I am making a point of principle. To give the impression that a budget speech is something that is worked out, carried through and edited by the Cabinet over a period of time or over a period of a day. A budget speech comes to the Cabinet literally hours, sometimes 2 hours or 1 hour before it is delivered. Therefore, without prejudice to any view which one might have had, to give the impression of collective responsibility when the person who delivered the Budget himself – it has to be said that Dr. Haynes himself went the length and breadth of this country after he left this party indicating that the Budget belonged to him wholly and solely. He said that we had nothing to do with it. My mother will tell you that if you are not with me I am not with you either. I do not want anybody to give the impression that I was involved in the putting together of any budget. I am capable of looking after myself at any time. I do not want anybody to leave any impression that we are a bunch of little boys because we are in the Cabinet. The Honourable Member is talking about collective responsibility. It is a phrase. That is all it is.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I can understand why this Government has performed so badly. I have listened to the Prime Minister trying to obfuscate the issues by launching a permanent and personal response to put me off. I have listened to the poor and weak argument of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West by trying to say that the policy implemented by the Budget of July 1986 was a policy which came to his attention as a Cabinet Minister only 2 hours before it came to this House. 6.50 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the Honourable Member would give way. I do not want there to be any misunderstanding. The Honourable Member spoke and I spoke on a point of principle of how the process occurs. That is what I was speaking of. I took no position on the specific Budget until I talked about when the then Member repudiated it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am not speaking in any generalities about a question of principle. I am speaking about actualities that I witnessed in this House that is part

of the record. I am saying that I have seen the Democratic Labour Party constituted with most of the members who are now in the front bench go to the country on one set of policies, came in here and argued that that policy was absolutely correct, became the Government of the country, based principally on that policy, came in subsequently and implemented the policy in this House with the Right Honourable Member praising it as promises made, promises kept. The Member who claims he is the father of the House and should know better, I have seen this very Member who says he is a political scientist and understands the principles of political science, come into the House afterwards and repudiate the policy as part of the policy of Government. I am saying that if he understood his role as the proper leader of the Cabinet he should have not only his tail between his legs but he should have walked out and he should have resigned. As the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, speaking on a programme has said he should shape up or ship out.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I understood it. He was paraphrased in saying that. The Honourable Member has made a very weak defence of his concept and understanding of government. I am surprised that in his many years as a teacher of political science, which he says he is, and seeing that he is in the House, I am surprised that he understands so little about what is the concept of collective government. And no citing about an incident in the House and all the foolishness is going to put me off. I am saying he is a bad manager of the Cabinet. I am making the allegation against him that he hides too many things from his colleagues in the Cabinet. That is a fact and it must be said for the purpose of history. He can talk about it as his style and that you must have positions of survival skills. His survival skill is that he is frightened to let his right hand know what his left hand is doing. That is his survival skill.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Is that his survival skill? Is that what you are talking about?

The people of Barbados want proper government. They do not want any one man government. Is that the survival skill? I am not frightened. The Honourable Member knows very well that when I have a disagreement whether it is with my then Prime Minister or anybody else, I am man enough to come and talk about it here. I have never run away from any situation, Sir.

What I am saying is that if he has no use for taking his Cabinet colleagues fully into his confidence including this very IMF programme and this is reflected in the measures here. Members on the other side did not

have a clue about them, Sir. This is not the only time. Does the Honourable Member want chapter and verse?

When I came into this House, Mr. Chairman, and revealed to the public the position of dope, cocaine in the diplomatic bag, you would have expected that a **matter** as weighty as that would have gone to the knowledge of his Cabinet Members.

The Honourable Member might have a style but it is an unfortunate style. It is one that leads to bad government. It is part of the problems that have got us where we are today. That is exactly what I am telling him. He must have trust. If he has not got that, Sir, then we would not get proper **government**.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to support some of what was said by the Leader of the Opposition. The question of trust **first**, Sir. They may call me a mischief maker. I do not ever say anything that is untrue in here. You will never be able to say that I told a lie to this House of Assembly. You may not like my style because it is blunt and direct. I do not mix words. I do not have any pretty, pretty dressing to put on anything that I say.

I understand the problem of trust. The Prime Minister is in a very strong **position** in relation to the Cabinet and generally. He will find all **kinds** of people coming around him to befriend him and to ingratiate themselves with him. He has to choose carefully those on whom he relies. Even within his own Cabinet. I understand that, Sir. But I feel that this Prime Minister and particularly when functioning as Minister of Finance should be more **trusting** of his advisers. It has been long said, Sir, that when he was in the Ministry of Education he used to behave like he was a super civil servant. He wanted to do everything that the PS should have been doing. He has now taken that same attitude into the Ministry of Finance. The result has been that in this desire to hoard everything, to try and understand everything that comes before him, it has the effect of causing him to be indecisive and to be dilatory in dealing with important matters which require, particularly in this kind of volatile economy that we operate and the volatile situation of the world economy, and has adversely affected Barbados' position.

He has to pay more regard, Sir, to the advice of the senior officers in the Ministry, otherwise he will find that that Ministry will soon be depleted of the kind of quality intellect that it has and that should always be up there. We have **seen** instances of other persons who have got fed up – be frank – and left.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not calling any people's names in here whom I have not given notice about. So I am **asking** the Prime Minister, in that regard, to examine self and he may find that there is a fault with self in relation to his dealings with members of the public. The Prime Minister has to be more sensitive of the need for the extension of courtesies to members of the public. I know it **is** not **deliberately** intended to be offensive or discourteous or insulting to members of the public by certain of his actions. I know him a long time and he has never been like that. I think it is just not carelessness, not indifference, it is thoughtlessness. Members of the public write the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister does not give them the courtesy of a reply. After months, they come out and talk about it.
7.00 p.m.

It reflects ill on the office of the Prime Minister. I am asking him to so structure his department that those criticisms cease.

From London we have had those criticisms, not only at the level of former High Commissioner, but we have had them from persons who work closely in Barbados' interest in London. I had terrible complaints last summer when I spent four weeks in London, from people who told me, people who can do a lot for Barbados. I am not calling any names. When they write the Prime Minister they do not get a response and they **compare** and they say, **Errol** Barrow always responded, **Tom Adams** always responded. Sometimes the two of them wrote in their own handwriting.

These are little things, Sir. I hope I am being constructive because the Prime Minister has to recognise there is a criticism that is all **pervasive** of his style of management and I am giving him some instances which I hope he will take seriously. They are meant in a sincere spirit, that perhaps his image as Prime Minister of Barbados will improve as a result of these things if he takes care.

Why I have said it, Sir, is that it did not make good reading. In the recent business with Mr. Boos who had identified ... He is a strong supporter of that Party. The **Government** wanted foreign exchange badly. He claimed that he found a source **from** which he could get foreign exchange that would be beneficial to Barbados. He got the foreign exchange. He wrote the Prime Minister and told him of the transaction and up to the time they published that long article on Sunday he claimed that the Prime Minister had not condescended to thank him for his efforts on behalf of Barbados.

There were other people, Sir, who were Chairmen of Boards, not in this session, but in previous sessions, who resigned from Boards directly under the purview of the Minister because they said he did not communicate with

them. I understand he is not communicating with the Minister of State in his own Ministry but then he put himself in that by being pouncy. He said, he has got choices and he must know what to do. As I said you are lucky still to have a job today.

Sir, I think the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had made a very important and serious point when he urged ...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We hope it does not happen in this session. We hope with the Budget coming up within the first ten days of April we may be tempted to get on to this wicket again, Sir. If Members of Cabinet sit and take decisions and ultimately 2 to 3 years later on those decisions **turn** out to be wrong, it offends the concept of collective responsibility to then appear to resign from it. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is nodding, he agrees. What we are saying is that certainly in the last session we have had the spectacle of Honourable Members coming in here and **trying** to disassociate themselves from policies that were introduced by Dr. Haynes which at the time they supported and then ...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, it is a fact that Dr. Haynes himself repudiated his cabinet. He said that we had nothing to do with it that we wrote it by himself. If he said so, do you want me to beat time and tell him that I support it? That is all.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Even if you take that issue out and say even if he said so let that rest. There were other instances. In relation to Government's not settling its accounts payable in a particular financial year and padding figures in Estimates, when we drew it to their attention and Dr. Haynes had not fractured the relationship with the Democratic Labour Party they all stood behind and said we on this side were wrong. There were three of us at the time. After he left and we got into economic turmoil, within the last two years they were then blaming it on him. Not fair, Sir. That is all the Honourable for Christ Church West was saying.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Head 15, Cabinet Office is that Head of the Estimates which has also to do with the National Insurance Department. There are a number of very specific matters I want to raise now that the opportunity has presented itself, if only because under the Revised Estimates that we have been given, the National Insurance Department is expected in the course of the next financial year to contribute substantially to the financing of government's operations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I recall the days when the Democratic Labour Party used to take the Barbados Labour Party to task for the fact that the surpluses of the National Insurance Department were seen as a pool of funds that could be used and particularly in the capital development of the country. I was struck to hear the irony but there was a time when the Barbados Labour Party were criticised and we were advised that what we should do is put the National Insurance funds into the bank.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, last year seems to have been a **particularly** difficult year for the National Insurance Department. Difficult because the unemployment claims recorded by the National Insurance Department were some 18 209. Eighteen thousand, two hundred and nine Barbadians last year made claims for unemployment benefits under the National Insurance Department and one found the situation, Sir, where the payments to the Unemployment Benefit Scheme were far more than the receipts by the Scheme, that the Severance Payments Scheme, Mr. Speaker, came under pressure. But more to the point, the National Insurance Scheme itself had a situation where the total expenditure of \$171 million by the Scheme was less than the total revenue. The pattern of past years, whereby the National Insurance Scheme developed healthy surpluses, had been departed from in the course of the last calendar year.

7.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, given the nature of the problem that the National Insurance Department has experienced in keeping the Unemployment Benefit Scheme viable, and the severe problems the National Insurance Department has experienced in keeping the Severance Payments Scheme viable, and also the fact that we know the National Insurance Department is committed to a programme of capital development requiring a claim on its own resources that had not been there in past years, I think it is incumbent upon the Minister of Finance to tell the House precisely how much Government intends, in the course of the next financial year, to rely upon National Insurance's surpluses in order to finance Government's own operations.

As I said, Sir, this matter has **arisen** because included in these Revised Estimates we have been provided with today is the item called Domestic Financing, where it is indicated that there is the expectation that the National Insurance Fund will, in the course of the next year, contribute substantially to relieving Government's financial problems.

I also want, on this matter, Sir, to say that in the last financial year, the integrity of the administration of the National Insurance Scheme of Barbados seem, in my judgment, to have been called seriously into question when there was a public altercation between the Chairman of that Fund and the Minister of Finance who went on public record as contradicting the Minister of Finance on

the question as to whether or not the Chairman and the Board of the National Insurance Department had participated in and agreed to fundamental decisions taken about changes in benefits and contributions to the Fund.

I believe that the National Insurance Department is one of the pillars of the Barbados society whose operations we must keep free from any doubts whatsoever regarding the soundness, soberness and sanity of its administration. I really believe, Sir, that the controversy that arose last year has not probably been resolved. It raises very serious doubts in my mind as to whether the affairs of the National Insurance Department are being administered in the manner we expect. I would not like to see the National Insurance Department, Sir, put at risk as a result of a process of administration at the level of its Board which would allow ordinary Barbadians to call into question the seriousness of this board.

Mr. Chairman, I am raising this because there has been a pattern. In the previous year, we had a statement from the Chairman of the National Insurance Board to the effect that some \$600 million in funds was missing and could not be accounted for, a wild and erratic statement which could not stand public scrutiny. It is the combination of these wild and erratic statements emanating from the Board of the National Insurance Department which leads me, therefore, to ask the Minister of Finance to clarify what really was the true position regarding the matters raised last year when his own position in relation to the involvement of the Board of the National Insurance Department was challenged in public, Sir. When that was challenged in public, Sir, we heard questions raised on this side as to whether the Prime Minister is in charge. I want to say to the Prime Minister, Sir, that the statement issued by the Chairman of the National Insurance Board was a direct challenge to the integrity and the truthfulness of the Prime Minister of this country. I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, that in such a fundamental matter the public interest is served by a chairman of an institution that each year manages hundreds and millions of dollars appearing to be in such direct contradiction and contravention of what the substantive Minister would have us believe.

I believe the House deserves a response that the National Insurance Department's affairs must not, in my judgment, be allowed to be the subject of such a ridiculous controversy. If the Minister can cast light on that as well as on the extent to which the Government this year will be relying upon the National Insurance Fund to meet part of that \$9 million which has now to be found to help finance the budget in the light of the claims on the National Insurance resources for other purposes, Sir, I would be truly obliged.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Is anybody else coming back on National Insurance?

Aside.

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 and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, a lot of serenading is going on at this end. I do not understand what it is all about, Sir. Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be suspended until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning Friday, March 20, 1992.

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

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

7.20 p.m.

RESUMPTION

THE CLERK: His Honour the Speaker is absent. His Honour the Deputy Speaker is absent. Is there a nomination for a temporary Speaker of this House?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to nominate the Honourable Member for St. George South.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL took the Chair.

Mr. L. R. TULL, TEMPORARY SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it now reverts.

Mr. L. R. TULL left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Resumed)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House resumes Committee of Supply. We will continue on Head 15, Cabinet Office, as amended. The last speaker was the Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I only recall one question which was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Peter. While I have the information I do not think I would wish to give it at this stage. I would prefer to wait for the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals which should be presented very soon.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask the Minister a few questions relative to the National Insurance Department. What is the manner of investment of the funds of the National Insurance Department? What yield is expected from that investment?

With respect to the building which is being constructed, it would appear from its size that there are not adequate parking facilities. I should like to know whether or not it is intended to **construct** a multi-storey car park in the area and whether or not the existing parking would be adequate.

With the construction of this new building in the past few months there has been some delay in the repairs to the National Insurance Building. Quite naturally, the excuse has been made that a new building is being constructed and repairs will have to wait. My understanding is that the lift has not been working for months. This is a situation that should not be allowed to continue for too long. I should like to know whether it is the intention of Government to effect the necessary repairs in the interim.

There is just one other point relative to the **subhead** under National Insurance. From the figure for Personal Emoluments and Other Emoluments, for the Statutory and Non-Statutory Staff, it would appear as though there is no intention to replace people who are going home. With the massive layoffs in the public sector which have **been** followed by layoffs in the private sector, it is fairly obvious that there would be increased demands on the National Insurance Department in the applications and claims for severance and unemployment benefits.

In **looking at** the most recent Economic and Financial Statistics for February 1992, one notes when **the** staff at the National Insurance Department was 147, from the records of the Personal Emoluments which went with the 1982 Estimates and by 1987 we had a staff of 160 representing claims in the region of 1 722. There has been a tremendous increase in the latter half of 1991. There were claims totalling 10 640 and the amount of claims for the entire year was 18 209 which was about 15 times more than the position in 1982. Yet we have only had an increase in staff of 65%.

I should like to know whether it is the intention to increase the staff, if only on a temporary basis, in the National Insurance **Department** to avoid the chaos that we have seen in recent months when a number of persons could not get any proper answers as **to** their claims - this also happened at the Labour Department - and ugly incidents occurred at the National Insurance Department.

One would have thought that, in preparing the Estimates and in dealing with the **structural** adjustment programme, the appropriate Minister would have noticed the pressure which this particular Department would have

had to **bear** and, rather than a cut in expenditure, that there would have been an increase to take care of these applications from people who are desperate for cash, and people who, in some instances, are breadwinners with their only means of income at this point as the monies received from these benefits.

Thank you.

Rt. Hon. L. E. **SANDIFORD**: Mr. Chairman, in reply to the question of parking at the new National Insurance Building, arrangements are being made to provide car parking facilities. Work is being carried out on that at the moment. I believe that not only those areas which might be visible from Culloden Road but an additional area is also being examined. Parking, of course, will continue to be a problem. It comes from the fact that there are not many open spaces in the area to provide the car parking in the numbers that might be required. I am not aware of any proposals for a multi-storied car park. I do not know if you have information that that is on the cards or if this was a suggestion from you. It may be or it may not be. At this time I am not aware of that particular proposal.

As far as the existing National Insurance Building is concerned, there are plans to carry out repairs to that building. Those repairs will generally await the movement of existing users from the building or at least some of them into the new National Insurance Building. Then those repairs could be scheduled. Some of the repairs cannot be carried out with the present occupancy of the existing building. Funds are being made available for carrying out those repairs.

In terms of the pattern of investment of MS funds, in particular the yield, according to the information available to me the investment income in 1991, according to a Table I have before me, appears in the region of some \$40.3 million, if I am understanding this Table correctly, if you wish a longer series than that, that would have compared with something like \$34.1 million approximately in 1990. I hope that information satisfies the Honourable Member. As far as the staff is concerned, we are of course seeking to provide the services with existing staff. I believe that some temporary staff was allocated, but I speak subject to correction. At the same time I think the Honourable Member appreciates that to provide staff increases at a level that might be indicated might very well defeat the very purpose that we are trying to achieve.
10.20 a.m.

I hope you will protect me, Mr. Chairman. I see some missiles coming down here, rubber missiles at this stage. I do not understand. They are coming across the Floor and in my direction. They seem to be rubber, Mr. Chairman. I hope the Honourable Member is satisfied with that information. If he is not I will get further information when the information is passed to me.

Thank you..

The question that Head 15, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 16 - MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE -
\$4 454 988 - AS AMENDED

Head 16 - Ministry of the Civil Service - was called.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that Head 16 for the sum indicated and, as amended, stand part.

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

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the developemnt effort in this country and indeed in all countries with our system of Government calls for many elements to support it including mature, responsible and far seeing political class and a well-trained highly motivated and professional public service. For as you are aware, Mr. Chairman, the public service has both a policy formulation and a policy implementing responsibility. For 20 years and more, Sir, I have been a student of the local bureaucracy and of the bureaucracies in the larger territories in the region.

I have been fortunate that as Minister responsible for the Industrial Development Corporation I had the opportunity to see, at close range, the functioning and the performance of our own public service. That informed my decision about 1979 to introduce a Resolution into this Chamber calling for a thorough-going investigation into the public service, not as was thought by some public servants at the time to expose and embarrass anyone but to ensure that the public service was so organized as to meet the challenges of an independent Barbados. I felt that it was important that in our recruitment, in our promotion, in the rules and regulations, in our whole notion of the role of the public service that we should ensure that those ideas, rules and regulations, in particular, that had grown up in the period pre-Independence when the state had a much more restricted role, that we revisit them. And that we should ensure that given the new role of the state post Independence playing a role beyond the maintenance of law and order and a key role in economic development in the social and cultural life of the country that the public service was modernized and reformed to meet the challenges of that new responsibility.

The Right Honourable Prime Minister yesterday displayed a long memory for details of parliamentary incidents long ago. Perhaps he will himself recall that all Members on this side spoke in support of the Resolution,

except ~~the~~ Prime Minister. All Members on this side, in the end, voted for it. I am happy to say that I had the support of the then Opposition. It is strange that the then Prime Minister not only voted against it, but that Parliament having its strong wish that we should have that investigation....

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am talking about the then Prime Minister, the late Tom Adams... in the end nothing was done. I think it may be left to his Biographer to really investigate why is it that he had a change of heart at the last minute and that, even though he was one who respected Parliament to the extent that he did that he did not try to carry out the wishes of Parliament. On one occasion I tried to engage him in some discussion on the matter and he led me to believe that he was reached by senior public servants who felt that it was not in the interest of the public service that any such investigation be undertaken. What precisely were their arguments and who they were that reached him I am not sure, even to this day.

But I would wish to submit, Mr. Chairman, that the case for a thorough-going investigation into the functioning of the public service, in particular, to ensure that it is equal to the task of managing the country in a very complex environment is as urgent as it was then when I spoke 10 years and more ago.

I am not surprised that a senior public servant, Mr. Besley Maycock has been speaking out about a certain aspect of the need for reform. In contact, as I am, with senior civil servants from time to time, I must tell you that they speak in private with great intensity about the extent to which the system is not working and some of the ways in which it needs to be modernized.

The first point I wish to make, Mr. Chairman, has to do with recruitment. The role of the state in nation building is so important and its responsibilities so complex that there can be no doubt that it deserves to have some of the best of the talent available.

One gets the impression that there is no aggressive recruitment of talent in the public service, that you try the oil companies, the insurance companies and other private sector groups and if, perchance you do not succeed, well then you turn to the public service. But given the totality of the package of remuneration in the public service I would submit that a career in the public service is not unattractive.

10.30 a.m.

The pension is good, there are opportunities for training and retraining on the job and if one can be assured, assuming good performance, of moving up into the upper reaches of the public service over 25 to 30 years, it

could be a very rewarding experience. So my first point would be that it seems to me that the public service needs to take aggressive steps to make sure that it gets an appreciable proportion of the talent available out there. I am not too sure that those steps are being taken in any systematic way.

I would want to comment too, Sir, on the need for a fast track in the public service to ensure that once those of talent, with initial qualifications – most likely these days it would be a degree or diploma – come into the public service they will be allowed to get on, provided they perform, with some speed into the middle and early senior reaches of the public service.

I think it was the Godson Report that recommended, and I speak subject to correction on this one, that there be a cadet system to address this particular issue of a fast track. It was never systematically implemented, if implemented at all, but I believe that the case for a fast track for recruits of ability, of training and some substantial formal qualifications, needs to be accepted.

The whole question of promotion in the civil service is also a matter of some concern to a lot of public servants and to me too. Indeed I must tell you, Mr. Chairman, that at least two senior public servants have told me they are satisfied that there is a **mafia** operating within the public service itself that to a **large** extent controls questions of promotion. What they are **referring** to is a small group of public servants who are in key positions, mainly in Personnel and Establishments who because of their connections, social and otherwise, with others in the public service, are concerned to see these public servants move on.

One gets the impression that the public service in that respect is operating quite like the old cow, whom it likes it licks and whom it does not like it kicks. Now that could only happen if indeed it is true, Mr. Chairman, because we do not have a full-time Public Service Commission Chairman who is energetic, independent and with a large sense-of fair play rather than rubber stamping any proposals given to him... If there are only three men for a particular job shortlisted, he would say to his establishments officer: "Give me the files of the 30 or 40 people who are in the zone and I will interview them myself and make my own short list or supplement your short list." I make bold to say that, were that done, many of the people who were on the original short list would drop off.

With all respect to him, Sir Keith Hunte is far too busy to do that sort of job in the public service of today. We need a full-time, independent chairman, energetic and with a large sense of fair play, who is prepared to work along with Establishments in ensuring that the injustices which pass for promotion do not take place.

I have called for that for over 10 years and neither my Government, at the time, nor the present Government has seen the necessity for it. It seems to me that what is happening is destroying morale in the public service. At this particular point morale is extremely low indeed, Mr. Chairman. I think the case for that full-time **Public Service Commission** Chairman cannot be **more** urgent.

I would say further that the seniority principle which is still involved in promotions, almost exclusively undermining notions of merit, is not at all in the best interests of the country. I call no names but I see some people moving on to the top who are, with great respect to them, unequal to the challenge of public service management in the 1990s.

When that category called Deputy Permanent Secretary was created those who were in large measure responsible for proposing it and ensuring its establishment made it clear that it was supposed to represent the end of the career line for a lot who have since moved through that and gone through to that of Permanent Secretary.

I think that is such a dangerous development that it may be making the case for the removal of that category. They ought never to have reached it. If you can't be a Permanent Secretary you should not be made, except the day before you go home, a Deputy Permanent Secretary. But once you were made that in the early fifties and so on, a lot of people looking on may very well believe that it was intended that you should make the next step and become a Permanent Secretary.

Now, I am concerned also, Mr. Chairman, with the lack of **ease** of people moving between the public service and the private sector and vice **versa**. I really think that the public sector could benefit, and the private sector **too**, from movement across the board, cross fertilisation, not only of ideas, but movement of people from one sector to another, and I think that the rules need to be so **structured** that that could be facilitated.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The **Honourable** Member should conclude in two minutes.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The position is, Mr. Chairman, that all of our efforts at creating relevant institutions and improving the competitive efficiency of the country will be in vain if, at the end of the day, we do not have a professional, well-trained and highly motivated public service. The ball is to a large extent in your court, Mr. Prime Minister. You may not be remembered in history as the most effective and most efficient manager of this economy but you do have an opportunity to be remembered as the Prime Minister who started in a serious way the process of reforming, modernising and professionalising our public service.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I think, Mr. Chairman, that I wish to join the debate for the simple reason that the Honourable Member, ever since the days which the Honourable Member referred to, tried to keep the discussion about the professionalisation of the civil service at a certain level. I think, on this occasion, I was surprised at the speed with which he finished because I expected that he would have gone on to develop some of the concepts which he has advanced. More specifically, I would wish to suggest, however, that a person who is not familiar with developments in the service over the last few years might, on **hearing** the presentation of the Honourable Member, be misled into believing that no reform has actually **occurred**. The truth is that a careful study of the system would demonstrate that very slowly the system has been evolving toward the goal which the Honourable Member apparently is setting.

I believe it is **fair** to say **that** the Public Service Commission as it currently exists has been trying to change systems.
10.40 a.m.

I speak because I am observing the system as it presently operates. The present Public Service Commission has been responding positively to efforts to change especially the concept of seniority as being the main factor in promotion. I have seen evidence that the Public Service Commission does not feel itself bound by the concept of seniority as the basis for promotion. The professionalisation of the Service has benefited from the increased capacity and ability of the Service to provide training, and the level at which many of the officers now operate in the system, that is the professional level at which they operate, itself guarantees that there is a certain professionalism which has come to the Service.

I do not know that the concept of the small elite group being in charge of or responsible for the informal movement upward in the Service is as prevalent now as it might have been, say, 15 years ago. The colossus at a particular point in the Service is no longer present as a phenomenon and I believe it is fair to say that the advent of women into the higher echelons of the Service, if you regard higher as middle and upward, is an indication that the walls are beginning to crack if not crumble. I feel that it is only a matter of time before the great wealth of talent available amongst the female members of the Public Service becomes apparent to the Public Service Commission.

I am satisfied that, within the next 5 years, there will be a solid and effective cadre of female officers at the very highest level and it has been a source of regret for me – as you know, the Honourable Member is fully aware that politicians have very little input in these decisions – it has been a source of regret for me that one of the finest officers I have ever worked with as a Minister has found

herself in a situation where her appointment as Permanent Secretary has turned out to be a non-appointment. The result is that that officer who, I repeat, is one of the finest officers I have ever worked with, has found herself in a position of inferiority vis-a-vis some of her colleagues who are not as competent as she. That in itself is an indication that the system needs further and better examination.

I have no difficulty with a call for reform. I do not believe, however, that we are in a situation now where it can be undertaken with the thoroughness for which the Honourable Member is calling, because the whole fabric and ambience which are now evident might militate against the kind of dispassionate objective analysis which the Honourable Member called for as early as 10 years ago. One of the errors we continue to make in Barbados is not to have become aware that the United Kingdom, which is alleged to be the model we follow, has turned to other systems, both from the European Continent and from across the Atlantic, borrowing generously from those systems and, therefore, as a result, bringing reforms which have worked toward the betterment of the public sector, thereby increasing and improving the quality of the private sector.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On certain days the Honourable Member can be quite **anachronistic**. Do not get involved. On certain days the Honourable Member harks back to his origins. So I do not bother with the Honourable Member when he is in that kind of mood. I wait for when he emerges and rejoins us as we **move** towards the 21st century.

This is not fully understood in this system. Indeed, we have some people in Barbados whose writings occupy the newspaper columns and who have become regarded as gurus but who are fairly ignorant about these matters and write with as much passion and confusion as any primer standard person. The result is that they have misled large numbers of the population as to how the system actually operates.

In the United Kingdom, for example, I was mortified to discover that there are large numbers of people who would be regarded in this country as knowledgeable who did not know that it is the Minister, in the theory of the administrative system which they have in Britain, who dismisses people. That is not widely known in Barbados. The Minister is the one in the administrative system who has the authority for dismissal of a public officer and there is no Public Service Commission like that creature which was created in 1966 and foisted **upon** the society. The Public Service Commission which we have is a unique instrument in the Caribbean and in former colonial countries.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Public Service Commission as currently existing in the Constitution which we created in London is entirely different from the Public Service Commission which exists in the United Kingdom. The Public Service Commission in the United Kingdom is an entirely different animal. Indeed, it used to be the Minister responsible for the Treasury. The Treasury was the agency responsible for the Civil Service. They have subsequently created a Department of the Civil Service which Mrs. Thatcher took back into the Prime Minister's Office. She exercised that power the Prime Minister continues to exercise the actual power over the Civil Service. That is to be distinguished from the Conventions which allow a civil servant to have a certain immunity from the political system. One is not discussing whether there should be political power over civil servants. One is just saying that, if there is a careful examination of the British system, the errors of thought which now occur in the Caribbean, and especially in Barbados, might not occur because people would have a clearer view.

The **truth** is that professionals on either side have nothing to fear from those on the other. If, as a politician or Minister, you have a clear view of what your role and what the realm of your powers are, if the Permanent Secretary or the other senior officials are clear in their minds that they are **professional** people, then they need not have any fear about the relationship between the two because they will have the same objective and it would be understood that the policy set out by the Government is to be pursued vigorously by the professional officer whose job after is to implement the policy.

10.50 a.m.

It would be recognised **as** well that it is the professional officer's duty to give the best advice as perceived by him or her to the political directorate.

I do not think we need detain ourselves with these arguments. I think what will be necessary not long from now is a thorough examination, in the **truest** sense of the term, which allows everybody to have a view and to determine what kind of Public Service we wish to have as we go into the 21st century. It is clear that the kind of Public Service we wish to have will have to be directed toward the productive sectors of the country. The Civil Service cannot, in my view, go on being the repository of archives and archival information where people continue to feel that, the longer it takes to do something, the more study would have gone into it and the better it is done. What has to be understood is that the same goals and targets which are required in any enterprise for that enterprise to be successful must be brought to bear to a governmental enterprise if the governmental enterprise is to be successful.

There is not much difference in the modern world between the bureaucracy in the private sector and the bureaucracy in the public sector where there is a progressive environment. Both sectors will have goals and targets which must be met. They must be met with the minimum of resource wastage and the maximum possible efficiency. That can be done if fair **play** is the order of the **day** in the key areas of promotion, career development, opportunities for training and that sort of thing.

Certainly I can speak for this Government when I say that a serious effort has been made and is being made to bring some of these things to bear in the decision making process, but it is a very difficult problem which we face and that is because of the size of the country. There are many people who become afraid of the future and have a fear of failure, when they get into the last rung of their career development. This translates into a certain tentativeness in decision making, which itself translates into a multiplication of the bureaucracy. That is difficult to eliminate where you have so small a society and where the size of the society is going to have an effect on the body politic, because almost every senior civil servant must become aware that, with a change of Government, he or she is still going to be exposed to the decision makers who come in. There is hardly any position a civil servant can take that will not be open to scrutiny by all and sundry in the elite of the community and therefore a senior civil servant has to be extremely careful that he is not identified as being politically partisan on the one side or the other.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Many civil servants are extremely careful not to make a public statement for fear that that public statement when analysed will be identified by somebody **as** supporting one cause or the other, whereas senior civil servants should feel free, as long as they understand the parameters within which they **are** operating, to make valued, considered statements about policy. I **see** no difficulty with a senior civil servant at Permanent Secretary level making a valued input into what is going on in the community. A public officer **who** is speaking out of turn is a public officer who does not understand his responsibility. There is a vast difference between that and what I am saying. I am saying that this society is too **small** for us to lose the thought processes and indeed to lose a lot of the people in this country.

My time is up. I will come back.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, this debate now is not only becoming academic, but we are being subjected to a lot of nice little homilies about the Public Service. I did not intend to speak at this stage, because I really think that there are other matters in these Estimates that would better warrant the Opposition's time.

I believe the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has got a tremendous amount of nerve to get in here this morning and talk about the Public Service in the terms he did. That Government has declared war on the Public Service in this country. **All** this talk of the terms in which we are listening to them is entirely inappropriate to the circumstances obtaining in the Public Service in Barbados. It was only a few months ago we heard all this talk about politicisation of the Public **Service** and the role of the Public Service Commission. Those are nice **little** theories. They do not operate like that in practice. **Perhaps** what the Minister of Health, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, can tell us is how many civil servants have been unceremoniously thrown out of their jobs in the last few months, how many years of service they had when they were given letters and chased home, and what kind of remuneration they are getting as a result. If we have to talk about the Public Service, let us talk about these things.

We want to hear, Mr. Chairman, how many Public Officers have been sent home from Departments and new people came in to replace some of them on letters from Ministers of Government arriving up at the Chief Personnel Officer's office. We want to hear about those things. Do not let us play around these things.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Minister of Housing is **not** in his seat. I will deal with the Minister of Housing and the Ministry of Housing later in these Estimates, but it is common knowledge that a lot of people have been sent home from the National Housing Corporation while new people have been brought in to work. It is happening at the airport and in several Government Departments. I am not surprised that they say they do not know. They know very little about what is going on.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am hearing the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The question is being asked, Sir, when is the first time it happened.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want you to address the Chair.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is not the first time it has happened. That Government has done it before, it is not the first time they have done it, and they are coming in here with a lot of pious statements this morning, wasting people's time. The Civil Service is operating under a great deal of duress at the moment. Last October the civil servants were asked to vote on an 8% cut and Ministers of Government went into Departments and twisted many civil

servants' arms almost **out** of the socket to get them to vote the wrong way. In several Departments that happened and I can call the few I know. The people were **temfied**. The Minister of Health went into the hospital and did a number on the nurses. He knows that.

11.00 a.m.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation. I state categorically I have never twisted anybody's **arm**, in any department, to get any vote for anything, at **anytime**, anywhere.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West had a long history of fighting with the nurses at the Hospital. That is nothing new. The Minister of Health has made such statements about the nurses in this country that I am surprised they continue to work with him. He is the last person who should get up.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Attorney General as well declared war on the police. They said the most demeaning things about the police officers in this 'country. The people at the Government Electrical Engineering Department were abused by Ministers on that side.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have cautioned members not to shout across the Table.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The officers at the Town Planning Department were abused by members on that side. Even the Prime Minister in recent times took a good swipe at the employees of IDC and the Tourist Board.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. L. R. TULL: The **morale** of the members of the public service is very low. They are terrorised.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Sir. The Member for St. George South has accused me of taking a good swipe at employees of the IDC and the Tourist Board. Let me make it clear, Sir. I do not play any one-day games. I am a test player and I do not swipe. I would make a well executed drive through the covers and to the boundary because I know exactly what I am saying. For purposes of the record, I did not take any swipe at anybody. I made it quite clear that, in their operation of some of their overseas aspects those two departments were behaving – some of them – like independent republics.

It had nothing to do with the individual personal performance of people but the institutional way in which the operations were being conducted. If you want to call that a swipe you can.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister when he gets up **to** intervene should really say something of substance. What he has just said, in my submission, Sir, digs the hole deeper for him. The Prime Minister did say that a lot of them were **concerned** more about their allowances and perks than about the job they were doing. The only trouble is that that is more **true** about the Cabinet of **Barbados** than any public officer and nobody is saying that about the Cabinet. The Cabinet are the ones who are concerned about their perks because when civil servants were being asked to give up **8%** of their salaries, the Ministers were voting themselves increases.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The asides across the Table are **too** loud. The Honourable Member for St. **Thomas** is shouting across the Table.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I didn't get any increase in salary.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: **1** really must **ask** Honourable Members again.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, **anytime** you **see** them behaving in here like that it means they can't take the heat.

Hon. B. M. **TAITT**: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member said that he did not get any increase in salary. Unless he goes on to point out that he gets **tax** free pension that is higher than his salary he would leave people not understanding. Therefore, he is **misleading** the House. That is why he did not get any increase. He preferred to take the pension. He elected not to take the salary **because** the pension is **tax** free and it is higher.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That should conclude the point of order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The way the Members of the Government are behaving, it will not be long now before they can be drawing pensions instead of salaries.

I **am** not going to prolong this. I just felt that with things as bad as they are in Barbados and the way in which the public servants are being treated by that Government, I could not sit down and keep quiet and listen to all these sermons from the Honourable Member for St. Michael West glossing over all the problems that are confronting people in the service.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Even though the Honourable Member for St. George South who just spoke may be annoyed that an attempt is now going to be made to bring the debate back to the level of homily rather than whatever other level he pursued, which had no homily and certainly is not above it, I am going to do so.

The criticism which he makes of this Government is in fact equally a criticism of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. Perhaps he is suggesting to him that he should have **gotten** up and, instead of placing before the House a sensible analysis of the needs of the public service, should have spent the time gossiping about people who were discussed, who talks to whom about what on the **corridors** in Barbados and other kinds of political approaches, to some of which we were treated yesterday, while the peoples' business, according to the Honourable Member for St Peter, is being so greatly neglected. I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Peter that this House should deal with issues that relate particularly to the Estimates, to the peoples' business which he alleges is being neglected. Based on yesterday's contribution and the level to which the debate has now ...

Mr. H. **deB. FORDE**: On a point of order. The Honourable Member cannot reflect on yesterday's debate. He is reflecting on the Chair.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I have not set the level, Mr. Chairman. It is for the public to determine whether, when they think on the corridors of Government Headquarters and who speaks to whom there, or who is still in Bridgetown practising, those things are more important than the business that apparently caused some men to sit down for several days reading through the Estimates. That is just my contribution, but I want to commend the Honourable Member for St. Joseph for seeking to pitch the debate above homily.

11.10 a.m.

I want to deal with the substance of the contribution in **1978** of the Honourable Member. I read the debate in which the Honourable Member moved that particular Resolution. It came at a timely moment. The point is, however – this is my view and I **am going** to be very brief on it – that an analysis or an investigation into the Public Service alone is not going to produce the results that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is seeking. The Public **Service** is but an interlocking mechanism of a total system of Government which, in itself, in **1992** needs considerable analysis. I **am** talking about analysis from the level of the functions of the Queen's representative to the level of the newer introductions to the governmental system like statutory corporations over time.

It would not make sense to carry out an analysis of the Public Service only in relation to things

like appointments and procedures and the role of the Public Service Commission if, in Barbados today, statutory corporations, which **are** having more impact on the public in terms of policy by their own personnel mechanism, are in fact defeating the whole purpose of administrative reform in the Civil Service. The systems relating to personnel matters, both in the general service and in the statutory corporations – I am assuming that your analysis calls for that **too** – need to be looked at, very seriously.

The level of homily to which the Honourable Member for St. George South refers probably could relate to the fact that people do make trite statements about this highly motivated, well trained and professional Public Service. Comments have been made about Britain. I do not necessarily agree with what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has said because the British have sought to carry out reform, but one of the major criticisms of that reform is that it is being carried out within the context of the existing governmental system, the Westminster model, and seeks either to decentralise but provide the same service, or to contract officers who **then** themselves build bureaucracies. At the end of the day **sometimes** you end up having a larger bureaucracy outside of the Public Service than you had before to deliver the **same** programme. It is not just a matter of considering the Public Service Commission and things like **promotions, appointments, independence** and all of the other things that the **writers** and others talk about. It has much deeper implications.

There are many statutory **corporations**. I will give the example of the National Cultural **Foundation** which over time has been predicated on this concept of employing cultural officers. Many of those programmes can easily be delivered by persons who are contracted to **provide** services, for example, **NIFCA**. Somebody who is dealing with speech and drama can be contracted at a much cheaper rate and in a more efficient way to do **that** service rather than to employ a literary officer or someone else to work 365 days a year and spend 9 months in an office doing basically nothing. All of us have observed these things. It just shows when you observe the entire system of statutory corporations and the Public Service properly of the relationship of temporary appointments to those who have tenure and the whole series of other perks and benefits, that the system is not working satisfactorily.

You say there are public servants who talk to you in the quiet confines of privacy about reforms that are necessary. There are younger people in the Service, more my age, who also talk about the need for this reform and the considerable frustration the process can place on them, the **frustration** at the top where senior officers may not wish to see this particular officer's talent shining through and a whole host of other retardants to the delivery of programmes.

There are **departments** in Government, I am certain, which only exist because the staff exists. This has been going on for years, not yesterday. One of the reasons why you cannot reform the departments is because people then look at you and ask what you **are** going to do with the staff. You are then back to square one because it then becomes the issue that you have staff, but you are not delivering a **programme**. The programme could very well be excised from Government. Let us be frank. The whole system of Government which, in itself, developed out of an accommodation beginning in the 1950s and going into the 1960s is what needs the analysis, not just the Public Service. What is even more important is that we need to look very sincerely at the role of the Public Service. I do not mean that in a trite way.

Mr. Fred Nunez who was here as a student with us at Cave Hill, a sociologist now working with the World Bank, has recently written an article on the question of neutrality in the Public Service in Small Countries.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He quoted from **your** thesis. I must let the Honourable Member for St. Joseph know that his thesis was quoted in this particular work. It was recently published, an article in a series edited by Professor Mills. But he deals with the question of neutrality and the Public Service particularly in small independent countries, **Therefore**, when you are looking at the Public Service, **do not get caught up** in promotions, appointments, independence and **all** of this kind of thing.

My interest is **this**. Can the structure and the persons who are in it deliver the programmes that I as a Minister wish delivered? That is the first question. It has a lot to do with the question of attitudes, **both** those that they contract before they enter the Public Service and the attitudes that they develop **after** they enter the Public Service. You can go through that analysis from there. Do not start, lest the Honourable Member for St. George South thinks that people are getting **too** excited about perks and so on, because it **seems** as though the only issue in the lives of politicians is **pension, perks and benefits** according to people out there. It emanates from in here because people give the impression, particularly when they are in Opposition, that all the Government Members think about is those kinds of things. We will not start from the point of view of perks. Let us start before the perks and look at the whole of the Public Service and what configuration in the Public Service can best deliver the programmes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes more.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The second point is the system of Government. The analysis cannot **begin**

in the Public Service and then move out into the system. In other words, we cannot look at the relevance of our Government from an analysis that proceeds from the investigation of the Public Service. It has to start the other way around. We start with the analysis of Government. What is it that the people require and what is it that they want, and how can it be delivered in the context of the system we have? That is a very important feature, I think, of this debate. We should not lose sight of it even though from time to time there might be transgressions that relate solely to scoring political points.

I will support this particular debate as being important to the very economic changes we have to carry out in this country because the management of change, not only by politicians, but by public servants, is going to be the critical and decisive factor in the success of any structural, political or other adjustment in this country. The people who really manage that change are members of the public service. It is a timely intervention and I am grateful to participate in it.
11.20 a.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are now into Committee dealing with the Schedule to the Bill. The Second Reading speeches are over. The times when we should speak on principles and all these high flown ideas and so on was yesterday. We really should be going through strictly each item here asking questions about the money.

I want to leave the area of generalities and deal with specifics. Because we are dealing with money and the treatment of people in the Civil Service. Sir, in asking questions about the treatment of Civil Servants by this Government is in fact dealing with the people's business. The last Honourable Member who spoke wanted us to fly in the clouds and be very generalised. But I want to submit that dealing with particular instances which affect Civil Servants as a whole and individually is also dealing with the people's business.

Now, Sir, last year the money to be spent on the Civil Service was \$498 million. On page 7 of these Estimates we see a figure of \$414 750 880 for Personal Emoluments. The Prime Minister came in here yesterday and submitted this document late which now further cuts that \$414 million to \$389 million, a cut of \$25 million. Do not open your hands so. Do you know what it means? It means that another 1 500 civil servants will have to go home. That is what it means and that is what you all should be talking about.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If the Ministry of Finance or the Minister of Finance, whoever calculated wrong the first time, that is the clearest example of the Government's incompetence. You move from \$414 million in this that everybody has to a cut of \$25 million and none of us is prepared to examine what are the implications of that further cut of \$25 million.

I want the Prime Minister to tell the country, through the House today whether that implies that another 1 500 public officers can be expected to go home and structurally re-adjust their own private lives. Because that is what it means.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to remind Honourable Members again only one person is permitted to speak at an audible level that can be heard across the Chamber. I am having far too many interruptions in the debate. The Member for St. Thomas may proceed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Prime Minister came in here and read is prepared brief in a very uncritical way. I do not think that the House deserves that. He should have told us the implications of the revised figures. And if he has not then we have a duty as Members of the Opposition to examine the implications in terms of job losses. That is fundamental, Sir.

I agree entirely with what the Honourable Member for St. George South said, they have declared war.

Certain remarks made by Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS were ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is this same Government in their treatment of the Civil Servants of this country that, at the end of 1990, gave the ones at the top \$33 million in handouts and the ones at the bottom, not an ackee seed. Do you understand me, Sir? Not a cent! The policemen from Constable to Sergeant did not get any increase. The ones at the top got. The ones at the bottom have to go out at night looking for all the fellows who have escaped and who have not escaped but are doing as they like in this country. Not a cent for them. The ones at the top got the money. That was the handiwork of a senior Civil Servant. He wanted to keep the gap between those at the top and those at the bottom. I cannot call the name in here. He is now retired. Subsequently the Minister of Finance in a speech in here acknowledged that perhaps the right thing had not been done.

But that **caused** great dissatisfaction in the public service. And notwithstanding the fact that you had in the ministry for at least two years somebody holding a job saying that he is there to motivate public workers. He has been promoted and shipped out of Barbados and all the time the public officers of this country have been thoroughly demotivated. He has been a total failure but he has been promoted for his failures and sent as an Ambassador somewhere or the other. .

We have public officers throughout the **length and breadth** of Barbados and the Civil Service who are **thoroughly** dissatisfied and demotivated. On top of all that, Sir, you have the 8% cut. I am not going into that because there is a case pending about the 8% cut and I am not going to reflect on it. But I want to support the Honourable Member for St. George South because there was evidence that members of the Government went into the departments and tried to twist the arms of...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member knows what he is doing. Mr. Chairman I draw to your attention that this is **a matter** that is *sub judice*. The question of Ministers going into departments and doing whatever. The **Honourable** Member therefore would wish to be reminded.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I always try to help, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. That is true, Sir. I therefore withdraw that, Sir. But what I will not withdraw is that on the Saturday that the votes were counted in relation to the option forms, the **Prime** Minister went on television at Ilaro Court and said these words and I quote:

"I wish to thank my Ministers for the advice and urgings"
plural:

"that they gave to the staff of their **departments**."

I have it on tape. It is *sub judice*. I will call you as a witness, if you did not say those words. You said those words.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He thanked his Ministers for the advice and urgings given to the staff of their departments in relation to the option form. I do not know what that implies. We will deal with that later on and elsewhere.
11.30 a.m.

Sir, within the last three and a half to four weeks a set of public officers, working ... Will you ask the bad behaved ones on that side to keep quiet, Sir? Again, Sir, appeal to them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will have to remind Honourable Members that the rules which govern debate in this House can be used and will be used if I am forced.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Much obliged, Sir. Recently, about 3 to 4 weeks ago, in fact I remember it well, for Valentine's Day, this Government, but in particular the Prime Minister, because he has responsibility for this area, gave public officers working in foreign missions notice to go home without any termination benefits. A day's notice. Some people who had in 20 years in an overseas office, got one day's notice to go home. You will tell me that is a caring government? You will tell me that these are matters not worthy of discussion under this Head? I reject that contention, Sir.

Sir, I was in here when the Honourable Member for St. Joseph brought the Resolution calling for an examination of the Civil **Service** by a commission of inquiry to be set up and I seconded that Resolution and I still believe that after so many years of independence we need to re-examine the structure and functioning of the Public Service to bring it in-line with what is happening in other countries and contemporary conditions generally. Government when it can motivate itself to do it ought to put the machinery in place so that we can look at the public service, especially now he had made it more lean and slim – your belly down to your back. Now he has got it slim and neat, now is the time to examine how he can make it more efficient.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two more minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Government must not delude itself that there is happiness in the Public Service with the way this government has functioned, in the past five years and in the last **fourteen** months. If necessary I will come back, **Sir**. Much obliged.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I should begin very simply by saying that the main objective of the IMF programme has been the destruction of the human resources of Barbados. It is obvious to me, having looked at what has happened to almost 10 000 people in a short space of time, within and outside of the Civil Service, that the Government, and I am not blaming the IMF for this, the Government by its very bad running of the affairs of this country has consigned a large number of our citizens, with skills and some without skills, to the rejection heap.

One of the greatest tragedies of the manner in which the Prime Minister has implemented this programme is that up to today there has been no proper planning for retraining or helping the human resources who have been destroyed by his actions. Don't let us get any misunderstandings about this. The blame for what has happened to Barbados is not to be blamed on the IMF, it has to be blamed on the Right Honourable Member and we must never let the country forget it. It has to be blamed on the Minister and Prime Minister. The over 4 000 people in the public service who have gone home have only the Prime Minister to blame. Up to now we have not got the correct numbers and in fact every month there is somebody else being sent home from a statutory board, losing their jobs in some way, because of his careless action in running the government of this country.

So there can be no credit for the Government and no nice talking about the Government when it comes to the public service. He has by measures, destroyed the Public Service and therefore he should not be surprised if the motivation which existed before, no longer exists in the country. If anything it is to the credit of those Civil Servants who remain, that because of their loyalty to Barbados they still soldier on in circumstances where they were so unceremoniously treated by this Prime Minister. There will be no nice words about this, Sir.

When I spoke on the Bill which came before this House for cutting their salaries I adverted to the human tragedies which will occur. I don't know where the members live, but I don't live in cuckoo land, Sir, or cloud land. Daily I have people who have been thrown out of work from the **Public** Service by the Prime Minister, can't pay their bills, can't meet their rents, can't honour their commitments. Some of them as I had forecasted are beginning to dispose of the few little buildings or anything that they have accumulated. They are turning in insurance policies. That is the human tragedy of these circumstances.

When as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas says we see a more drastic reduction in what we are spending we have to ask ourselves when is this going to stop. It has had repercussions, not only in the Public Service, but now right down into the private sector as well. That is the tragedy of this. This is not a time to come in here just to pass Head 16.

There has been a massive cut in the training vote. Yes, we can talk about training because I have here the training figures for 1985 and I can go back and look at what money was voted in 1985 under the Heads where you all said we did not vote any and compare it with what you all have done. We have got the figures now. I made sure that I read all of these reports, not representations. There is a 78 per cent cut under this Head at the moment. I would

have thought that by now the Government would be telling us what they are doing for the human resources by way of retraining. I want to hear about that. What has been the fate of those 4 000 people who have gone home from the Public Service? What unit has the Government set up in order to allow them to readjust? That is what I want to know.

I am hearing that there were about 18 000 claims last year. People who are unemployed is a waste of resources. There is no greater waste of resources in a country **such** as ours **than** to have people on the unemployment dump out there. That is where we waste our resources. I do not mind how much the **Prime** Minister may say he is bringing the economy into equilibrium. He can say that but I contend in this country that we cannot destroy people for some mathematical formula that the Prime Minister thinks he is smart about. That is where we are. You cannot continue to create the conditions that people are going to continue to be suffering in the way they are.

11.40 a.m.

I see nothing. I hear about all the plans about restructuring. I see no provision throughout the whole of these Estimates for looking at the human resources aspect of what we are doing, Sir. I am not surprised, Sir. This Government is a very fortunate government. It is a government with a lot of words. They can sell themselves well and fool people how they like. Black people and other people are white minded and all sorts of hifalutin words. The master artist at that has flown. He has got his pocket full and he has gone. He is no longer around. This master artist every time would **carfuffle** the whole country with a whole host of words and foolishness and attack all of us. When you go back and look beyond the words and rhetoric and beyond the pastiche, this country has never seen its people treated in the way that we have witnessed, Sir.

I am very concerned about the emasculation of the human resources of Barbados. I believe that if we need anything for the Public Service it is first to **try** and find out about those people who are now outside and suffering. You cannot be serious by telling them that you are giving them a month's **termination** benefit. The Honourable Member spoke of what happened in the Foreign Mission, **Sir**. **It** is inhuman, I say, for a Minister to give people a day's notice, people who have been working in Barbados' overseas missions beyond the call of duty for almost the 25 years of independence and who man us overseas as much as they can. That is inhumane. When I got calls and letters from people overseas who have worked with me as a Foreign Minister, I was shocked to see how the country was being **treated** by this Government. What sort of caring government is this? They are boasting about a caring government. Caring about who? They keep a few of their political appointees in place. Instead of retiring

some of them home who have done their day of duty, talking about pensions, retire them home and keep a few of those civil servants who are at the lower end. Retire the High Commissioner to Canada also like the High Commissioner down in Trinidad for whom you found a job and brought back into the Ministry...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: ...and the one in London as well too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to tolerate this kind of behaviour.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: But the poor little civil servant down at the lower end of the ladder, there is nobody to protect them. Why must you find jobs for those at the top and have no feeling for those people who cannot pay their rent? What are we talking about?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member just hold on a minute? I am reaching the end of my tether with Honourable Members not given the permission to speak and shout about in certain tones. I cannot tolerate it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: For the balance of my life in politics, I have no nice words for people. I have always followed a course of being very straight in politics and said what I wanted to say and I am always thoughtful of people. I have no nice words for any High Commissioner to London or anywhere else. So the Honourable Member need not understand this. When I have to say words about anybody, I say them. I say that if you have a policy and those people who have been retired and who have pensions and have given their lifetime should not be continuing in work while other people have to go home, as it is. I do not care who it is. It could be my brother or sister or what not. I am making that point, Sir. There are no nice words on that. There is no point in the Honourable Member shouting across the floor.

The Minister of Health wants to know why I am not specific about other cities, Sir. I am saying that there are a whole host of political appointees. In London, both the Deputy and High Commissioner are appointees if you want to know. In Canada, the High Commissioner is one too and Trinidad if you want to know. Those are the people who should have gone home first and you can give them the day's notice. It is not fair to take people who have given 25 years service at the time when Barbados had just come under the steps of independence and treat them in the way in which they have been treated.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: They do not feel good about it. It has not helped our image overseas and we must not either treat those who have been at home in the way they have been treated. What facilities have they got in the Ministry of the Civil Service for looking to the replacement of those people? What have become of them? Who is spending any time thinking about them? Nothing at all, Sir, is in here for training or getting the resources back on stream. My time has expired. I will come back though, Sir.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I rise really to deal with a specific point in 'relation to the Foreign Ministry about which the Honourable Members for St. Thomas and Christ Church West made comment. They talk about the inhuman government, which according to them, gave the locally recruited staff in the overseas missions of the Foreign Service one day's notice. What interest? Do you mean the interest that you all gave me of 4 hours' notice? You were the Foreign Minister at the time.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: What interest do you want me to declare? I am not quarrelling about that. I did not get a chance. That is the whole point.

Aside.

At this point certain remarks made by the Honourable Members for St. Michael West and Christ Church West were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.
11.50 a.m.

Hon. M. A. KING: According to your ruling, I have said nothing so far.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not the point I am making, I am saying that the kind of behaviour that transpired since you rose from your seat I cannot really allow. The Honourable Member can make his intervention now.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am beginning now, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Precisely.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I rose really to deal with the statement by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that the locally recruited staff in the Foreign Ministry got one day's notice of termination of employment. I think Honourable Members would know that if by your contract of employment you are entitled to one month's notice, you either get your one month's notice, or, if it is more convenient, one month's pay in lieu of

notice. What happened in relation to the locally recruited staff of the Foreign Ministry who were terminated is that the decision was taken to reduce the staff, the locally recruited staff in the Missions knew of the decision of the Government for some time and when the actual point of termination came they were given one month's salary in lieu of notice of termination and they left.

That is the normal thing ~~in-relation~~ to termination of employment, so that the Honourable Members who wish to castigate the Government for acting unfairly should put the true position and indicate that it is quite proper and appropriate to give the appropriate pay in lieu of notice in circumstances of the time.

I believe mention was also made of termination benefits. Mr. Chairman, let me say that the issue of termination benefits in relation to the members of the locally recruited staff of the Foreign Ministry is being addressed and that fairness will prevail in deciding on those benefits. In general theory what has happened is that there are some jurisdictions in which local laws provide for termination benefits which may be more generous than termination benefits which are available according to Barbados' laws and I think the principle on which the issue will proceed will be that where termination benefits in the local jurisdiction are more favourable than are provided for in the Barbados laws, then of course those termination benefits as required by the local jurisdiction would be the ones which would be paid. In all other cases the termination benefits are very likely to follow the benefits which have been provided for public servants which have been agreed in relation to persons in the Public Service of Barbados generally, so it would be misleading the House and the public to state that the position of the locally recruited staff who have been terminated in overseas Missions has been any less favourable or advantageous than those in the Public Service in Barbados who have been terminated.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, listening to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I must say that there is quite a bit to be said on this particular Head. All is not well within the Civil Service and we need not fool ourselves that it is. All this pretty language coming from the Member for St. John does not say anything, it does not address the real problem. I think it is time that Honourable Members on that side, especially the Honourable Member for St. John, realise that there are fundamental problems that strike at the heart of people generally, and no amount of pretty language can erase the hurt and the damage that was caused by this Government last year.

I am concerned that there is a reduction in this vote. I am speculating that it would mean further retrenchment within the Civil Service. That must occupy the attention of

all civil servants. It is no wonder why civil servants operate in a climate of fear and uncertainty. The uncertainty surrounds whether they are going to be allowed to work tomorrow, when they are going to be sent home, if and when they are going to be paid, because some people recognise that the law relating to redundancy is there and they are entitled to severance **payment**, but they would want to know how soon they will be paid. I am worried about that. It is a matter which has to be addressed. Civil servants have committed themselves to mortgages, to buying motor cars, to educating their children and paying their hospital bills, but what have we got? People are being dismissed without any notice at all, as was the case last Wednesday when 25 more people from the Transport Board were laid off without notice. They were just given letters sending them home, and 300 will be going home by the end of this month.

The writing is on the wall and I am worried about the public servants who have given their sweat and blood to help develop this country. Those at the top need not be consoled either, because they are the ones who are being hurt as well. It is not enough to have a civil servant operate in a position today and tomorrow at the will of somebody that officer is transferred to a Ministry or Department in which he or she lacks the competence or the ability to perform. I am worried about that and the Civil Service must address these problems.

You have permanent secretaries being moved because the political directorate of the day does not like them. That cannot lead to any confidence, and all the language about training and upgrading cannot work when there is fear. Nobody knows for whom the bell tolls and therefore civil servants will assist Ministers, but they are looking over their shoulders wondering who is going to take whose name to whom. There have been accusations, some justified, about political victimisation.

12.00 noon.

I am worried, therefore, about what is going to happen when we are talking about a scaled down civil service to handle structural adjustment.- re we not worried that we will have a civil service that cannot handle a structural adjustment programme which is crucial and critical to Barbados and its existence? We have never seen the like before. We would need to have people retooled and retrained. Is there any provision in these Estimates for severed public servants to undergo training and to have that training which is absolutely necessary? After all, they are people too. They have served the Government of Barbados and the people of Barbados, sometimes as long as forty odd years. What are we going to do – abandon them? People in the Public Service are now asking this question. What is going to happen to them after they are retired or sent home? I want to know that adequate funds are

made available for the retooling or the retraining of these people so that they can fit themselves back into society or come back into the Public Service because some of them are still capable of more years of service.

Mr. Chairman, I say this because people sometimes have a tendency to feel that those persons who are severed are people who are useless, who have not performed well or who are old. Every time you ask someone who is sympathetic to the present Government or you raise the question of severance he tells you that the people did not perform, when, in fact, there is no mechanism within the Civil Service to say whether an officer performs or not. Are you going to tell me that when a permanent secretary sends up a memo or a few notes about a civil servant that that is enough? Is that monitoring the performance of a civil servant? I say no.

If we are going to start talking about merit and awarding promotion on merit then I want to see a system, a committee of some sort set up to analyse the performance of these public servants. I am not going to be satisfied with what obtains at the moment. No permanent secretary – there are some permanent secretaries who do not like officers, especially, if they do not have the same political complexion. I know them. I can speak with this voice. They don't have to wait for me because some of them will be long retired when I am back there. I want to let them understand that I am not satisfied with that behaviour. It has seen a number of civil servants who have a lot to contribute to this country being retired from the Service because certain progress reports were submitted. In some cases, mediocre performers are recommended and given top rating, and these persons find themselves at the top. That is what I want this Honourable Chamber to address. No holds are barred. I ask no favours and I am not giving any. When it comes to people's business, I have to be frank.

These are the things that you have to strike at. All the training courses for civil servants are wasted. There are people who cannot go overseas and if they do go overseas they hear they cannot be paid. Some of them have to shortchange their training and get back here because there is no money to enable them to train overseas when in fact the Government knows full well that the type of training is not available in Barbados or at the University of the West Indies.

These are the problems. No wonder the morale of the Civil Service is down. They tried it with some person who is now an ambassador abroad. Nobody has replaced that person. Are you going to tell me that a couple years ago it was seen fit that you needed a business psychologist to instil in the Civil Service motivation skills and now you don't have one? What are you telling me? I really can't understand the logic. Mr. Chairman, I am confused. Are you telling me that you have someone employed to develop

motivation skills? The person is no longer there. There is no replacement. So are you telling me that the Civil servants are motivated? You are telling me one of two things. Either that the person in the job did not succeed or that this Government is treating the public servants or the public of Barbados with contempt because it has not seen fit to have that person replaced.

These are critical areas. We have to ask ourselves, are we getting the best? I am going to say if you see how the civil servants operate. They sometimes cut their work by ten percent because they realise – they are human beings – why should they work so hard when they are not getting any more money. Some of them have gone home with \$400 or \$500 less at the top. Do you expect people to work and be motivated? At the same time do you expect the maids to feel happy when they cannot survive and they still have to pay all these dues and taxes and levies?

Mr. Chairman, I will give one example. A customs officer working for \$1800 takes home \$150 a week in pay.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am saying there are certain rules within the Public Service and it applies to employers that the deductions should not exceed a certain amount of money from your pay packet. I think that is a standard thing. The Minister of Labour does not know it. He is just holding the post...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Labour has not yet spoken.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am speaking of another Minister of Labour.

What I am saying is that you have to be realistic. It is quite all right to talk about training and rewarding civil servants but you have to be concerned with how they operate. You hear about victimisation. You have a system. You agree with the union representatives that you will adopt a system, if you are going to lay off, to consult first and produce a list to be scrutinised, but you depart from that and people who were in first serving 47 years, as with the case of a fellow I know from St. Michael South East who worked at the Ministry of Public Works, Communication and Transportation, are the first to be sent home.

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

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Forty-seven years, and for no reason he is sent home. I am worried about that. Permanent secretaries and deputy permanent secretaries must be wowed about that too. They fall within that category because it is said this Government has a long arm and is reaching right across the Civil Service. As I said, I am wowed about those things.

I would like the Government to address the immediate concerns of people – it strikes at the heart of their livelihood – and stop talking all of this pretty language. I do not want to hear any more pretty language coming from the Member for St. John. Let them get down to the nitty-gritty and face up to reality and know that people want to have the assurance that they can operate without fear and know that they will be promoted with fair competition and, at the same time, know that there is job security and if they have to be severed they can have what is justly theirs.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Barbados has come to a humiliating pass. I hope that we all now have the veil torn from before us. Those who had scales on their eyes can now see, and those who have eyes to see will see. We now fully understand that we are fully in the grasp of the International Monetary Fund having been led there by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

These are IMF Estimates. Some wondered how and why they came so late to this Honourable House. Some are still wondering about the infamous amendments. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, when he introduced the Estimates yesterday morning, if he were a different person, might have said, from the outstart, what the truth really was. We had to learn that from the Honourable Member for St. Peter. What has happened, Sir, in plain lay terms is...

12.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member accusing the Prime Minister of not telling the truth?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Of not telling the whole truth. We got the amendments after the Prime Minister made his speech. He did not make any sufficient reference to what was coming afterwards in his speech. I said if he were a different person we would have heard the whole story from him. As it was we had to hear the whole story from the Honourable Member for St. Peter.

The Deputy Prime Minister can schupse as much as he likes. That Government failed the homework assignment given to it by the IMF and the Estimates had to go back to the IMF for them to re-mark and correct. The amendments which are before us now, this is what Barbados has come to.

In all of this talk under this Head, those who have uttered concerns in respect of Statutory Personal Emoluments and the implications of IMF inspired, Minister of Finance executed cuts, are correct in their concerns. I am deeply concerned myself at the number of persons who, of necessity must go home and not only under Head 16. This Head has implications for all the other Heads. Civil servants are employed in all Ministries. When you go through from Head to Head and look at the Statutory Personal Emoluments and Other Personal Emoluments, you will see cut after cut and decreases in terms of the provisions made for the payment of people.

By our calculations on this side we believe that at least another 500 people must go home from the Ministry of Health and another 500 people must go home from the Ministry of Education. The Union representatives in this House are strangely silent on this Head especially those who represent the interest of the National Union of Public Workers.

I am deeply concerned at the level of gender discrimination against women in the Civil Service. Everywhere else in the Caribbean, in the smallest OECS countries, in Dominica, Antigua, St. Lucia and St. Vincent you will find among the ranks of permanent secretaries at least one woman and in some of those countries more than one woman. In Africa I have worked with them. In North America I have had to work with the equivalent of what would be a permanent secretary in the Ministry who was a woman.

It is a matter not only for regret but for concern that Barbados, the leader in so many things, should be the one country in the Caribbean where a woman has never properly emerged. I cannot now go to a Ministry and say there is a permanent secretary who is a woman. This gender discrimination against women is not only to be found at the top. It is to be found throughout the Civil Service.

All these thousands of people who are going home from the Civil Service, the majority of them are women, and the majority of those women are heads of households in Barbados. It is true. Nobody dares to get up and contradict me on that. They are from Health and from Education, the social sector Ministries, that I have pleaded and begged in here for the Minister of Finance to understand that vicious cuts in those Ministries are not the answer. It is not going to give the productivity that one needs for structural adjustment.

As the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has said, it is a destruction of human resources. It is an erosion of the human resource base we need to carry the productive sectors forward.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No assurances were given to me. The Minister of Health at the time, at least on one other occasion when I had made this point, and I made it on divers occasions last year, every time we have had a budget. We have had at least 3 or 4 Budgets last year. The Minister of Health wants to jump up and say it could not happen in his Ministry and his Ministry has been devastated. He is going to pretend that there are no civil servants in his Ministry.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. Either we are discussing the Ministry of Health and I get a chance to respond or we are **discussing** this. The Honourable Member says that my Ministry has been devastated. Am I permitted to respond to that?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In the context of the Civil Service.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: My Ministry has not been devastated in the context of the Civil Service, Sir. Over 100 people went home when the other people went home.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the higher the monkey climbs the more he shows his tail. He is getting up here...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There are obviously no monkeys in here.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No. I am not saying that the Honourable Minister of Health is a monkey. I **am** saying that the Honourable Minister of Health has now **gotten** up and **told** the whole of Barbados that he does not know about cuts coming in his Ministry of Health. I am not surprised. Let me tell you. By our calculations over here on this side at least another 500 more will go home from the Ministry of Health.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, if we are discussing the Ministry of Health I would wish to know. The Honourable Member cannot say categorically that she knows 500 people are going home from the Ministry of Health. I deny it. You cannot work out the arithmetic and decide that 500 people are going home and put out that 500 people from the Ministry of Health are going home. That is misleading.

I do not understand, Mr. Chairman. If that is the way we are going to debate then let us have that debate now. Nobody is going home from the Ministry of Health as far as I know. The Honourable Member cannot get in here and say that 500 people are going home. The next thing you know the Press write that 500 people are going home and

have the people **working** in the Ministry of Health confused. Nobody is going home.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before you proceed. The Honourable Member for Bridgetown has made a statement. The Minister of Health does not know about it. I think we can leave it at that until the Minister of Health wants to make an intervention even under this Head if he wants to do so. Do not let us go on with that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, it may well be that the Minister of Health may be the first one to go home from the Ministry of Health. That is a possibility. Mr. Chairman, there is a lot of concern. That is in the Ministry of Health. I **am** going to deal with the \$1½ million cut in Personal Emoluments when we get to the Ministry of Health. Right now I am dealing with it in the context of the Civil Service generally. There will be massive cuts, the Ministry of Education too. Another 500, at least, will go home from the Ministry of Education. This has nothing to do with the 4 000 who went home in 1991.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. I **have** been trying to attract your attention to the fact that Personal Emoluments for the Ministry of Health can be found under Head 36. Therefore for the Honourable Member to be discussing that people are going home from the Ministry of Health when we are discussing the Civil Service is entirely improper and wrong. Therefore, you cannot allow the Honourable Member to continue. They are civil servants but the money for them to be paid can be found under Head 36. We are not discussing Head 36.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we move off the...
12.20 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The point I am making, Sir, is that I am concerned about the number of women amongst all of these people in the Civil Service, those who have gone home already, those who are going to go home as a consequence of this, Mr. Chairman, Sir, not at all secure in the knowledge that welfare services are going to be there – because they are getting cut too – to protect them as they seek, not only to maintain **their** status as persons, but as they seek to support and maintain their children and the elderly among them, mothers and grandmothers and uncles and grandfathers and so on and so forth.

There are people who say that the extended family is dying in Barbados as it is in so many other parts of the world. But these Estimates and particularly this Head, Sir, is a large nail in the coffin of the extended family. I am deeply concerned about this. Other Honourable Members in here this morning have asked what can anybody on the other side tell us about retraining for some of these people. What is unemployment, some "nirvana" somewhere? Unemployment is hell on earth.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon, Sir?

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: ~~Some~~ people are not going to have access to any unemployment benefit. There are mothers in Barbados today who Cannot properly feed and nourish their children, who cannot clothe their children. That we should come to that now in 1992. And more and more as we go through these Heads, Mr. Chairman, Sir, and we look particularly at those Heads which touch upon the civil servants, the Heads to do with Personal Emoluments Statutory and otherwise, this is going to become clearer and clearer to us. We have another three and a half days in here, and I serve notice now on the other side that as the Heads come up and particularly social sector Heads, they must look to have to answer to me at least on this question of civil servants who are destined for unemployment.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I give way, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not replying to the debate now but I wish to make a clarification lest there be misunderstanding spread further on this whole matter. I wish to state that any reduction in the sums provided under Personal Emoluments as circulated in the amendments to the Estimates that we are considering should not and must not be interpreted to mean that public officers will be sent home as a result of those reductions.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, the amendments result from the fact that certain Ministries submitted their Personal Emoluments without the effects of the 8% reduction being taken into account and others had taken them into account. Therefore changes had to be made so that the 8% reduction and the consequential effect in the National Insurance provisions would have to be adjusted as a result. This is the sole purpose for that amendment. It had nothing at all to do with any reduction in the level of the Civil Service. It is not any intention or forward look that there would be a further reduction in the Civil Service as a result of that and therefore there are no cuts or no devastation or whatever emotive word some members may

wish to use, such should not be imported in the cuts, as far as the amendments indicated. That is what it is all about and I want to make that abundantly clear because you cannot come, put forward a proposition and then argue, on the basis of that proposition, that the proposition itself is incorrect. That is what is happening. You see a reduction in a figure. You then go on to say ~~that~~ that reduction means more people being sent home. I am saying that that would be a wrong....

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, we can do arithmetic on this side too. The reduction in Personal Emoluments, Statutory and otherwise are not the only indicators. They are a reduction in services too. The services which are "manned and womanned" by people and when those services are reduced, I have to deduce that people will go home.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, "womanned". Have you never heard that word yet? That is a word now. There are indicators that people are going home.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not know. There may be other indicators and you may be able to read those indicators.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, can I be specific and help the House? Whole departments disappear.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am trying to help the House, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what point do you rise?

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Right Honourable Prime Minister is saying he does not know about reduced services.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I want to make it abundantly clear. As far as I am concerned there are two interventions, one on a point of order and the other on a point of elucidation. Prime Minister, proceed.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, my time has not expired. Members have risen on the point that amendments which have been circulated showed a reduction in personal emoluments and there was a calculation of about some \$25 million or \$75 million. I do not remember what was the figure that was given. The interpretation of that reduction in the amendment circulated was that it meant that additional public officers were being sent home as a result of the amendment that has been circulated.

I am saying that that is not so. I am giving the explanation for that particular reduction. It was because the actual expenditure since the staff cuts were not fully taken into account in the submissions from certain Ministries. If the Member for the City of Bridgetown can read indicators where there has been a reduction in goods and services in the amendments that have been circulated – because we are not talking all over the place. We are talking about the amendments circulated – then I will examine what she says.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Prime Minister has called me out. I have taken the trouble to have listed schedules of Personal Emoluments. I can start at Head 10 and come down to Head 43 showing what was approved in 1991–92, what was actual in 1991–92, and what is now proposed to be budgeted for 1992–93. The largest cut of all, \$37 million, is to be found in Public Works. Ninety-four has to be queried in Health and \$130 million has to be queried – this is Personal Emoluments alone – had to be queried in view of the amendments.
12.30 p.m.

These figures were the figures that were calculated on the basis of what appeared in this document, not on the basis is what has appeared now on account of these iniquitous amendments which were served on us yesterday morning. We can do arithmetic out here too. I am saying that not only are there Personal Emoluments indicators which can be interpreted to mean layoffs but there are other indicators as well, such as reduction of services. The Prime Minister is going to live to be quoted on this in the weeks and months to come when people start to go home.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: At this point I am rising to deal with just one aspect of this debate. The Honourable Member for the City is the only one I heard suggesting very strongly, arising out of her interpretation of the figures and amendments before her, that some 500 people will be going home from the Ministry of Health. That is what she says. I have no indication that five people, furthermore 500 people, will be going home from the Ministry of Health. The Estimates that we have before us have made provision for \$94.6 million for the Personal Emoluments for the Ministry of Health, that can be added to what can be found in the Estimates for the goods and services and other things. For Personal Emoluments, if the Honourable Member looked in the Schedule of Personal Emoluments she will see that \$94 619 014 is the amount that has been put aside for the Ministry of Health.

I think there is a diabolical attempt to tell the people of Barbados that the services in Health ...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN Can we have some order, please?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There is a heinous attempt...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: This attempt to tell the people of Barbados that they're not going to get a whole lot of things they are used to get in the Ministry of Health; and one in particular has been a very vicious rumour which they are putting out among the 65-year olds that the drug service has been cut to the point where they are going to have to pay for drugs and it is not true.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Over my dead body. I just want to make it clear, because when we come to Health we will be able to discuss it in great detail. I want, just in case we do not get to Health, to make it clear that there are not cuts that will, in any way, interfere with the services which people now get with regard to the drug service. They are putting out that people are not going to get their drugs and I will explain in great detail what cuts appear in the Ministry of Health when the time comes. Don't let us get any confusion about this. How can 500 people from Health go home? Where will you send them from? From Sanitation? You are sending them home from the Hospital? If you send home 500 people from the Ministry of Health you will have to shut down the place. You would have more epidemics ... Honourable Members can't be serious. There is no way ... The Government would have to be completely drunk to send home 500 people from the Ministry of Health.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The truth is, Sir, that, since the Honourable Member mentioned that in passing, let me say that the cut to which I referred was that you can't cut AIDS.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will you let the Honourable Member address the Chair. All other comments should be in undertones.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, when I commenced the debate on this Head, now almost two and one half hours ago, I did not anticipate that the debate would have ranged so far and wide, nor did I anticipate that I would have to justify having a debate on the public service when in truth and in fact the public service consumes some \$400 million and more of the resources budgeted for financial resources every year. I think that if a criticism can be made it is that we in this House do not debate and discuss as often as we should, matters

affecting the Public Service, when in truth and in fact, it is responsible for almost 50 per cent of the financial resources consumed here every year.

It seems to me that in the course of the debate two sets of points have been made. There have been those who concentrated, and I refer to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and the Honourable Member for St. John, on the Public Service itself, its structure, its organisation, its role, its performance and there have been those who were concerned to make the point, and the quite valid and relevant point that the Civil Service has, in recent times been severely savaged. The 8 per cent cut and the freezing of their increments and the substantial number of lay-offs have caused a sharp decline in morale and has caused a lot of anxiety and a lot of distress, not only on the part of those who have gone home and who have experienced a virtual death, but on the part of those who have remained in the Public Service.

That as I said, is a valid point to make and I can find no quarrel with the Honourable Members on this side, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and the Honourable Member for St. George South, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who addressed themselves to that particular issue.

I would hope that nothing that has been said would serve to dilute or minimise the importance of the contribution of those of us who have been concerned to look at the role and the contribution and the relevance of the structure of the Public Service. In fact, I make this point in all seriousness that unless we, the political class, are united in our determination to see reform in the Public Service there will be no reform because there is a significant constituency of resistance within the Public Service itself and that constituency will exploit the divide among us, unless we, the political class, are united in our determination to see reforms.

I hope there is no confusion or doubt on this side or on that side of the House about what we have to do as a political class. I say further, that a lot of our efforts will be lamed, considerably lamed, if in truth and in fact the structures, both in the statutory corporations and the Public Service main stream are not refashioned to help the political class to deliver the goods which we seek to deliver to the people of Barbados.
12.40 p.m.

So that there are two separate, relevant, important but unrelated issues. Now I do not want to be misunderstood when I speak about the Public Service because I was referring not only to the main stream Public Service, the public servant as he is defined within the meaning of the

Constitution, but also to the Statutory Corporations. In that respect, there is no divide between myself and the contribution made by the Honourable Member for St. John. Equally, I am agreeing with him that attitudes form an important part of what we are talking about. I would very much hope that notwithstanding the financial and economic climate in which we are currently operating that there could be a beginning made, Mr. Prime Minister. I really hope that there could be a start made in looking at this whole question of re-examination and reform if even on a piece meal basis.

Now the whole question of responsibility and initiative in the Public Service is a very serious one and it was my experience when I was Minister that very few public servants were prepared to identify themselves with any viewpoint whatsoever. It was a very disgusting experience being Minister with senior public servants sending you files stating: "Mr. Minister, you may care to look at 92, 47, and 54 for what is contained there." You have to go through and look and nowhere in that file is any civil servant saying, "The problem as I see it is this. The solution, as I see it, is so and so and I so recommend." Everyone wants to be anonymous and faceless. They just say, "Please see the necessary page. Over page, Sir, for necessary action." They write a lot of meaningless acronyms and so on that do not help with the decision making process and do not advance anything whatsoever.

There are two other points which I need to make and make quickly. A few years ago when I made an inquiry at the very highest level of the Public Service it was indicated to me that there was no inventory of the talent within the Civil Service. No one knew at that point how many people had degrees, the quality of the degrees, the areas of concentration, how many people had post-graduate training, what were the areas of specialisation, and the people to whom you could call assuming that you needed manpower and specialist skills in a particular area. I do not know whether that has been corrected. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance may wish to address that in his response if indeed he has the answer. But it seems to me that that was a very serious omission and I very much hope that it has been corrected.

The other thing which I want to comment on very quickly is the continuing large number of persons within the Public Service who are acting in appointments for 5, 6, and 7 years and seemingly forgotten. Now when I was in the Ministry of Agriculture every now and again I would inquire of people how they are doing and I would be told "I have been acting in this position for 5 or 6 years." I, on my own, would take up the telephone and call the Establishments and ask them what has happened to so and so? Has she been forgotten? Sometimes in 2 months or so they would get an appointment, seeming to suggest

that along the way they were overlooked. They were forgotten. I want to know that the system is so organised that people who are working are not forgotten within the very system.

I hope, Mr. Prime Minister, in the course of your response you may wish to address some of these issues.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Now the Prime Minister intervened earlier and stated that this side came to the conclusion the lay-offs were based on the amendments to the Estimates he introduced here. I have listened very carefully and I want to state that I came to the conclusion that there will be further lay-offs before the amendments came out and I think this is the **true position**. We studied these Estimates well before the amendments were tabled in this House.

I would want the Prime Minister to tell me the following and I want to go through this very slowly. If you are saying that these Estimates reflect the **true position**, that is taking into consideration all the lay-offs that occurred from October last year, then I would want you, Sir, to tell me at what date did the Ministry compile or start to project these figures. In other words, this is very, very important. One, if you say that you took the 31st March and how many persons were in the Service at that time, you then would have to make a projection at that date. Let us say that if you have 2000 civil servants from January 1st you would now calculate for those 2000. If a date is not given, then I am going to be suspicious because in October I know that a certain number of civil servants went home. In November and December, some also went home. I want to know what date was used to calculate this. I am no fool. I know that in last year's Estimates there would obviously be a reduction in **the** expenditure as budgeted because the actual expenditure would reflect that and for 6 months you had a smaller Personal Emoluments bill. I want the Prime Minister to tell me. I am not going to be persuaded by this sort of argument because, if all the people who were to be laid off were laid off by the end of January 31st, it is obvious to conclude that there are not going to be any further lay-offs. Well, the Prime Minister must make that statement. I am saying that. I am no fool. I am not a little schoolboy. It has to be said in here. I took note of what he said. I can follow him. I was a teacher too. I can follow. This is where I am going to lay it down now. He has to tell me when he calculated the number of civil servants if the figure is based on that date. Otherwise, that argument cannot hold. I am not going to buy it and I am going to stand by what I say.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I was a headmaster not a teacher. I understand that. Seriously, Sir, this is very

important because I do not want the Prime Minister to pick up that statement. People who are not following would pick that point up. But I understand what is meant by the revised figures. I want to know because that, too, would tell me that the Prime Minister would have some further questions to answer. I would want to **know** how much money is calculated and if this is accurate. Because if it is not accurate, I would know whether there is going to be room for further employment. I am taking these Estimates very seriously. So I want the Prime Minister to address those questions.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, in the 10 minutes remaining, Sir, before we break for lunch, I would just like to reply to the debate and Honourable Members can rest assured that, if questions are raised or, as a result of comments which I made, additional questions are raised. I will seek in the most courteous way possible to find the answers and to give them. You are quite free to ask your questions. What I was seeking to do was to explain the changes as circulated in respect of the Draft Estimates which we are considering.

12.50 p.m.

If you will note, most or all of the changes relate to Personal Emoluments, they do not relate to goods and services. That is the information I have been given. What I am saying is that the changes resulted from the fact that the reductions following the 8% cut were not fully reflected in all of the submissions of all of the Ministries. That is the only thing I am dealing with in terms of reply to the question. I was further pointing out that to come to the conclusion that the amendment indicated a sending home of additional people was an erroneous conclusion to be drawn. That is what I am explaining. The amendment related to the Draft Estimates before us and therefore there was inconsistency in the submissions from some Ministries and we are seeking to correct that.

It had other implications which the Member for St. Peter fully realised, but I think we will have an opportunity to talk about that.

Let me, Mr. Chairman, thank the Member for St. Joseph first of all for trying to speak to this debate at the level that this Assembly should be considering these matters. I do not join with those who **try** to lower that level of debate and to import into the debate all kinds of suggestions and innuendoes and other kinds of perceptions that would cause some persons not only to be uneasy but to become antagonistic towards the Government and to myself in particular. That seemed to me to be one objective, because I am saying that all of the problems in Barbados are due to one man, that is, to me. That is what the Leader of the Opposition is saying, but I do not wish to go down that road because it is clear to me that

he is very preoccupied with me and I do not know why he is so preoccupied with me. I really do not know. He has lost his sense of balance.

Let me thank the Member for St. Joseph therefore for putting the debate at a particular level. I thought in 1978 or 1979, towards the end of that particular decade, when he raised the question about the Civil Service and its role in Barbados that he was making a very valid point. I myself do not believe that there is any need for anything called an investigation. That has certain implications and imputations, which I do not share, about the Civil Service in Barbados, but I believe an examination of the role and functions would be very helpful.

Sir, I admit I have never seen any analysis based on an inventory of the skills, the levels of skills, diversity of skills in the Civil Service. I think that is something that would really in our day and age call for computerisation and for an input of the necessary information. I would expect that this is something that will take place. We have been talking about the computerisation of the relevant Departments in that particular regard, and I would that in time that would come about.

Sir, I am really trying to recall matters of substance that have been raised in the debate. I do not know what is the modern terminology they use for the top of the Service, but its relationship to the middle levels within the Service, the clerical and other staff, the whole question of appointments, promotions, transfers, training and so on are all matters which should be taken into account. What we are really aiming at and what we are talking about is the ability of the Government and the need for the people of Barbados to have its human resources in the Public Service functioning at such a level that there is maximum efficiency in this particular area. My Government, and myself as Minister responsible, are very much interested in the welfare and wellbeing of all Public Officers, whatever level they may be operating at, and we have demonstrated that.

I think all of these accusations, charges and recriminations are really wide of the mark. We are seeking to operate a Service that is remunerated within the abilities of our country and I believe the Public Officers of Barbados have a better compensation package than other countries in the Caribbean. We will seek to improve that in accordance with the resources that become available to us.

I have heard in this debate that certain persons at the top, as a result of the reclassification exercise, were given increases and those at the bottom were given none.
1.00 p.m.

That is absolutely untrue. All categories...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. I made that statement in here. He is now calling me a liar.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Who is he?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tell me, if my wife who is a public officer got even a cent **increase**. Because she is my wife, she got none.

Asides.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am seeking leave to revert the Order of Business to Papers so that some documents that are now available can be laid for the benefit of all Members.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, then leave is granted.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the Annual Reports of the Chief Medical Officer for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 2.00 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.

RESUMPTION

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply has resumed.

HEAD 17 – OMBUDSMAN – \$29 139

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 17 – Ombudsman in the sum of \$29 139 stand part.

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

The question that Head 17 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 18 – AUDIT – \$211 561

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 18 – Audit in the sum of \$211 561 stand part.

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

Mr. R. deB. FORDE: I am not going to delay the Committee with debate on this Head, but I would not wish for the opportunity to pass without wishing a long retirement to the current Auditor General who has given exceptional service in the public service. I understand that he is going on pre-retirement leave in a few days.

I have had the honour of serving as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee on two occasions and his assistance to me and, certainly, to former Chairmen has been exceptional. The fact that the Public Accounts Committee has not reported to this House other than once in the twenty-one years that I have been in this House is not due to him in any way. I think that it proves almost impossible to get a quorum of the Public Accounts Committee to meet. He has made very valuable suggestions of improving the functioning of that Committee as also for improving the keeping of the accounts of the country and the auditing of those accounts particularly in respect of auditing for value.

I would wish, therefore, to put in the records of the House officially how indebted I am to him for the assistance he has given me in helping me to perform my functions and the assistance which he has given otherwise.

The question that Head 18 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS – \$89 690 412

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 19 – Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs for the amount of \$89 690 412 stand part.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Yesterday, I had the opportunity to discuss in general some of the matters of policy and principle stemming from these Estimates, but there are a number of specific matters pertaining to the Ministry of

Finance and Economic Affairs that I believe could benefit from some ventilation at the level of Committee.

To begin with, Mr. Chairman, in this year's Estimates under Head 19, there is a provision at page 26 of \$7 million for the payment of severance to former Government employees. I have a number of difficulties in relation as to how this particular matter is going to be dealt with. Page 25 under Sub-programme 01 entitled Pensions. Last year when the whole question of the severance to former government employees was raised, the Minister of Finance initially decided to increase the employment levy by 0.5% on the understanding that proceeds of \$3.6 million from that increment to the Employment Levy would have been put in a special account to be held by the Accountant General and used to finance in each instance the payment of severance equivalent to one month's wages to each public officer who was severed.

Subsequently, Sir, as I understand it, the Government took a decision later in the year to revise its arrangements in relation to the payment of severance, to pay the severance of public officers, not the equivalent of four weeks but on the same basis as obtained in the case of workers severed from the private sector. Indeed, the supplemental Letter of Intent to the International Monetary Fund specifically draws reference to the fact that part of the reasons for the supplemental Letter of Intent was to accommodate that particular change and that 0.5% increase in the Employment Levy was to be used for the purpose.

The issue that arises is this: in September when the Minister of Finance introduced the measure he indicated that the proceeds from the increase in the Employment Levy would be put in as a below the line item, which means that it would be separate and distinct from all other public accounts and that that below the line item be used as a basis for which payment of severance would be undertaken. I have searched the Estimates as carefully as I could, but I cannot find where there is that below the line item account held by the Accountant General to pay the public officers who have been severed. The issue is that the funds, as I understand it, to pay the public officers who were severed were funds which were raised last year. The expenditure is to be incurred in the next financial year and in order for that expenditure to be made, obviously, the Estimates would have to show that monies are being brought forward in some special account in order to finance the payment of severance to the public officers. I have searched the Estimates with as much care as one could in the prevailing circumstances and I cannot see where the Government of Barbados is bringing forward any funds to pay the workers who were severed.

There are a large number of former public servants for whom the payment of this severance is the lifeline

and I believe insofar as the Government has already given the assurance that the money is collected, there is also the expectation on the part of those former public officers that the money will be paid, not in due course, but immediately. In point of fact, as I understand from the account given to the House by the Minister of Finance, the increase in the Employment Levy that served as the basis for the funding of that arrangement for severance is to end at the end of March.

The question I have to raise is, what is the arrangement the Government is going to be putting in place to pay the former government employees who were severed? To the extent that one cannot find the source of funding in this year's Estimates, will the Minister of Finance kindly indicate precisely where the monies are going to be paid from? I notice that an amount of \$7 million are being here provided. Of course, one has to assume that this relates to public officers who would have already been severed in the course of the financial year ending March 31, 1992. One wonders by how much this vote will have to be supplemented in the course of the year to pay for those public officers who will be severed after the end of March 1992. My point is that this \$7 million relates to those who have been severed in the course of the financial year that is about to end. We know, of course that these Estimates themselves will also entail the additional severance of many other public officers and this is a vote that the House may have to supplement in the course of this financial year.

Mr. Chairman, this Head also deals with the Treasury, Budget Administration and Tax Administration. There is a particular general issue which I tried to get the House to focus on in my Second Reading speech which we really ought to give some flesh to at the level of committee. Following, I think, paragraph 25 of the IMF Letter of Intent, the Government of Barbados is committed to reviewing a number of its expenditure items and by implication to begin to charge user fees for some activities for which the public of Barbados would have been, until recent times, either charged nominal rates or not charged at all.

I have read these Estimates as closely as one can possibly do. You will find, for example, that the expenditure allocation for the Textbook Loan Scheme has been reduced and that in this year's Estimates there is an anticipated increase in Government's revenue from the Textbook Loan Scheme in the amount of \$1.45 million. Clearly, Mr. Chairman, this is not a figure pulled out of a hat. It could only imply that the Government of Barbados has already taken prior decisions to start charging persons for the use of textbooks an amount that is different from that to which the public is now accustomed. Insofar as there is going to be a user fee that is different from that that is presently charged, and insofar as we are talking

about \$1.45 million in Government's revenues accruing from the Textbook Loan Scheme, I really believe it is incumbent upon the Government as a whole to level with us and let us know what is involved and what are the designed features of this new arrangement.

A similar kind of consideration obtains in relation to the Ministry of Health where there is provision for a fairly substantial increase in the revenues derived from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. One looks forward to very clear clarification of Government's approach to user fees. It is obviously a very important matter. It flows out of commitments in the Letter of Intent. In this Committee we need to measure how these Estimates will affect people in terms of fees, job losses and cuts in services. It is a financial policy that comes out of a commitment by the Minister of Finance and I really believe that we need to know what is going to be involved.

Mr. Chairman, yesterday's experience causes me to believe that the Budget section of the Ministry of Finance has to be strengthened. I say that with a view, not in a manner condemnatory of the officers of the Ministry of Finance, but in recognition of the fact that the Ministry of Finance officers are serving two masters. They have a tremendous responsibility on their shoulders because these Estimates of Expenditure are prepared in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act which requires that certain expenses be shown, that certain items be treated as expenses, whereas at the same time the Government has to prepare expenditure of income estimates using, not the rules as set out in the Financial Administration and Audit Act, but following IMF conventions.

2.20 p.m.

As a result, a lot of the confusion arises from people trying to move from one methodology to the other and satisfying the House in relation to the requirements of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and, at the same time, satisfying the IMF. For example – if I may illustrate – the sale of Government shares was initially shown as a non-tax revenue to Government but in the revised Estimates brought to the House, it is showing, using IMF methodology, as a purely financing item. If you look at these Estimates as they are initially prepared, the sale of shares shows up in non-tax revenue to Government in much the same way as the sale of seeds by the Ministry of Agriculture shows it as a non-tax source of revenue. The revised Estimates show them as not a revenue but as one of the sources of financing of Government to close the deficit after the revenue has been taken into account.

It is obvious, therefore, Mr. Chairman, that the added responsibility that has fallen on the budget section of the Ministry of Finance to manage accounts quickly to both satisfy the requirements of the House following the

law, and also to follow the complex method set out by the World Bank/IMF, is causing problems. I really think that if the dint of confusion that arose yesterday that has, in my view, set back the work of this House is to be avoided, serious consideration has to be given to strengthening the budget section of the Ministry of Finance.

I also believe, Mr. Chairman, that the forecasting ability of the Ministry of Finance and Planning needs to be strengthened. We cannot, in this House, be satisfied with the taking of financial decisions of whether to tax or not where the forecasts are out in some instances by \$100 million. I have seen in instances where this House has taken decisions for tax on the basis of forecasts which an economic judgement would have said were bad forecasts.

The revenue was growing by 15% in the course of the first 3 months in the year. The Government projected that the economy was going to continue to grow by 3% for the year to come but suddenly we were told that the revenue was going to decline, or go at a slower rate. I believe that in so far as very fundamental decisions have to be taken whether to tax people or not that we must always get the very best judgement. I say "judgement" because there is nothing dogmatic about forecasts. But, at least, let us be sure that we have gotten the very best judgement when arriving at these forecasts. I really think that whatever has to be done to strengthen the budget section of the Ministry of Finance to improve the information at the disposal of Parliament upon which we have to take decisions would be money very well spent.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: My real concern in intervening at the level of committee is to get the exact details from the Minister of Finance regarding the arrangements that will be put in place for the payment of those civil servants who were severed last year in circumstances where, as I said, Sir, the undertaking was given that those funds raised from the increases in the employment levy would be put in a separate account which I now cannot find in the Estimates. Therefore, I want to know from what source they will be paid. Secondly, Sir, I want to know the criteria that the Government will be using this year to start charging or increasing user fees on services and schemes that were formerly attracting very low nominal rates. I am asking the Government to give us exact details as to what will be involved.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak on Item 02 – Tax Administration. Under this item I notice that this Department is the one responsible for advising the Minister of Finance on taxation and fiscal policies, the

Caribbean Economic Community matters relating to trade liberalisation and common protective policy. It is those 2 items I want to talk on.

Yesterday, Sir, a lot of challenges were issued in this House in relation to commitments made by the Government. I feel that the Government should not conceal from the public anything at all that has taken place between the Government of Barbados and the multilateral institutions with whom we have a programme. I believe that it is a great disservice to the public of Barbados if the impression is deliberately given that commitments are made which affect the interest of, particularly, the productive sector and they are not aware of the impact of those commitments upon their activity.

It is a fact, and I am quoting, that a pre-appraisal mission came to Barbados from the World Bank on November 5 and 19, 1990. It comprised a Messrs. J. B. Shim, J. Nash, M. Dorfman and V. Tandon. Discussions took place between the Government and representatives. After those discussions an Aide Memoire was prepared. What is more, after the Aide Memoire was prepared, certain letters were written by the Central Bank of Barbados.

I am going to state now I regard the Central Bank of Barbados as part of the institutional framework of the Ministry of Finance and there is no sanctity with respect to any commitments given by the Central Bank of Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could I ask the Honourable Member if there is a specific amount under this Head that we are discussing?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. It is tax administration and it relates precisely to the Personal Emoluments, the National Insurance Contributions, the Health Levy, the \$139 000, and the Agency that advised the Minister of Finance with respect to the Caribbean Economic Community.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What I want to avoid is a second reading speech in Committee of Supply.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am dealing strictly, Sir, with the general administration of this tax administration. You cannot get away from it, Sir. The Government has committed itself in a letter on March 8, 1990 to the World Bank on the elimination of non-tariff barriers and their replacement by temporary surcharges. This is a matter of profound interest to a lot of people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am still making the point that in my view that should come under a second reading speech.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have been around here long enough to know that if the Chairman rules that I cannot speak on a matter relating to how the taxes in Barbados are being affected, how the amount of money that is in this budget is being affected by a decision that has been taken by the Government of Barbados to change a whole series of legislation which affects how the taxes in Barbados arise I am perfectly prepared to give up and say that I am not going to talk on it. Well then I am perfectly prepared to give up. I am not going to talk ~~on~~ it. But the point is that this took place on March 8. We want to know. This is Estimates time. They have to tell us what they have agreed to.

2.30 p.m.

My understanding is that this programme calls for radical changes in this area. There is no point us having a department which we have to vote the money for to finance to advise on this and we cannot talk about what the advice is? This is the department that is to advise on it. It says so. Review of and advice to the Ministry of Finance on taxation and fiscal policies and advise on all proposals affecting those policies. I must be able to talk on this, Sir. Because Barbados was part and parcel of the Caribbean Economic Community.

The effect of this is, as I understand it, that we are now going to become an odd man out. We are going to treat our people completely differently from how the rest of the Caribbean Economic Community is treating our people. We are going to treat the manufacturers and others, agriculturalists too, differently from how the rest of the Caribbean Economic Community is treating them. I always understood that the policy was that you had your Caribbean Economic Community. I hope the advice that was given by this very department was consistent with this viewpoint that we move together *vis-a-vis* third countries in a single unified way. We are all part of the more developed countries and we all agreed on a Common External Tariff. A special department was created here to advise on that. And now here it is we are making commitments which are inconsistent with those concepts. This is a very serious thing. I really do not feel that we should not have an answer about this. But there are others too, Sir. We were part of the harmonization of fiscal incentive schemes. All part of the mechanisms.

My understanding now is that we are departing from that and that we are going to have a special regime which will no longer permit inputs to manufacture and others to receive ~~tax~~ concessions for specific periods or indeed for any period of time, that they must pay a special tax and only exporters would be able to get a refund.

I searched here, Sir, to see if I could find out what kind of specialized system that money is being voted for to ensure that there is no long hold up with respect to the

refunds. That is a constant complaint. Only recently, an industry as old as the hills in Barbados, the rum industry, made complaints publicly that as a result of this change of policy, having to pay taxes on inputs in the form of bottles, that Barbados has become uncompetitive. That is again a very serious thing. Because we are hoping, ~~contrary~~ to what is being said – this side has never ~~adopted~~ the attitude that it glories in the unfortunate position that Barbados finds itself in. We never adopted that attitude. As a matter of fact, the record will show that this side tried its best to advise successive Ministers of Finance on that side of the folly of their ways, if they persisted and the disastrous consequences if they persisted in the plans that they were putting into effect.

These are matters that one would expect that we can get some answers to on this occasion. One – reduction of anti-export bias. There must be some kind of study that has been done by the Ministry of Finance on these recommendations that have been put up. Because the fact that somebody produces a report does not necessarily mean that you must accept it. You must not give up your own critical faculties because of the fact that these studies have been put forward by people from abroad however eminent they appear to be. The accumulative experience of years and years of people in the Trade Protection Committee of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Trade is there to benefit from.

We find it strange that this about turn has taken place. And as I said from the beginning, it is has taken place in an atmosphere in which one can only get the impression that people are not to know. I cannot understand how the Ministry of Finance can expect the co-operation of people whose interest is affected, if they are kept in the dark and if they are not allowed to state their views upon the impact of the particular policy changes. I am going to wait with interest to hear the reply on this ~~matter~~. There is another area, Sir, in relation to this Budget Administration because this is another matter under the Head Budget Administration that I want to raise. It is a known fact – and I want to know whether there is any departure – that there are millions of dollars owed to people outside who have supplied to Government. I want to know whether it is no longer the practice, in the Ministry of Finance, of making it clear to all accounting officers that they must not incur commitments in a financial year where there is not sufficient provision in the votes for it. This is the first year for a long period of time that very few supplementaries were brought here.

I have been around long enough to know that with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health – at least the two of them – that there is a total impossibility for them to operate without having commitments that they have not met. We want to know about this because that is part, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two more minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: One more, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two more minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to come back, Sir. I want to get back to this. Because these Estimates give a very false impression if we do not understand that there is a roll going along and the first set of money that is going to come out of the Estimates off the top is last year's commitments. That is what is going to happen. I see the Honourable Member for St. Philip South looking at me. He knows that that is true. There is going to be a roll.

When we talk about passing tests and so forth, the international institutions will soon get accustomed to how people operate in Barbados that we will know that within the first month of April all the suppliers of the Government of Barbados are going to descend upon the Treasury demanding that they be paid. They are going to be paid for last year and it is going to go right through the financial year and the last quarter of the financial year next year it will be back in the same position. The fact that we have not brought supplementaries here is not fooling anybody.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Peter has caught my eye but before he proceeds I just want to make the point that my understanding of 64 (2) gives very general outlines as to what is debate under the Second Reading. All I am saying is I have no problem with your referring to such matters but then they must be tied to specific numbers under the Head.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I give you the assurance that I will speak with an **exactness** that will please you, Sir. I want to speak with reference to Head 19, programme 3, sub-program 3 that deals with management and accounting and the sub-program title says that this vote concerns money provided that allows the Ministry of Finance to undertake the review of, advice on and the financial management and accounting procedures relating to Government businesses with statutory boards and public enterprises.
2.40 p.m.

I want to discuss that specific programme and sub-programme with reference to paragraph 15 of the Letter of Intent and the relevance of the connection will become clear in exact detail when I read what paragraph 15 of the Letter of Intent says. It says that the Government is undertaking a review of major expenditure programmes with a view to ensuring that social equity and criteria of needs, adequacy and priorities, are taken sufficiently into account. This review will include school textbooks loan

scheme, the education 'scholarship programme and other expenditure programmes.

In addition a medium term "investment programme" will be developed for the central government and major public enterprises. This programme will indicate priorities and financing sources and will be ready for implementation in the fiscal year 1992-93 which is this fiscal year, Sir.

Now, Mr. chairman, Sir, paragraph 15 of the Letter of Intent commits the Government of Barbados to developing a programme of financial control for the major public enterprises and to have the programme of financial control for the major public enterprises with financial sources indicated to be ready for implementation in 1992-93.

Now we are at the point therefore, Sir, where in compliance with paragraph 15 of the Letter of Intent and with reference to Head 19 sub-programme 3 that the Minister of Finance should be in a position to tell us what he has worked out with the IMF as the financial programme to be applied to every statutory board in Barbados.

What we are getting from these Estimates, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a scatter shot approach. There are some programmes like the National Housing Corporation which has not found favour obviously, and its subvention has been slashed to zero. This subhead is the subhead which allows the Ministry of Finance to maintain a unit in the Ministry of Finance concerned with the financial management of statutory boards and profit enterprises and I am discussing that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Obviously matters pertaining to National Housing come under Head 37.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am discussing, Mr. Chairman, that section of the Ministry of Finance which under Head 19, Programme 3, Sub-program 3 is concerned with the financial management and accounting procedures to be applied to public enterprises and I am discussing that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is precisely why I am saying that I expect that line of discussion to have been dealt with in the Second Reading speech.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, you have asked me to resmt myself to a programme. I am discussing the work of that unit within the Ministry of Finance which is being voted \$311 640 on page 20 of the Estimates to advise the Government of financial policies to be applied to statutory boards.

You will agree, Sir, that the National Housing Corporation is a statutory board, hence the financial

balance falls under the purview of Head 19, Program 3, sub-program 3 and it will be accommodated within the advice given to the Minister of Finance arising from the expenditure of \$311 640.

I have been saying, Sir, that the Government of Barbados has to be in a position to implement, in accordance with paragraph 15 of the Letter of Intent, a programme for the statutory boards. That programme, Sir, has to be ready for implementation in this financial year. We are at the stage therefore, Mr. Chairman, where the Government should be in a position to tell us what its priorities are, and more particularly, Sir, what are the criteria of social equity, criteria of need, criteria of adequacy and criteria of priority as set out in paragraph 15 that is now guiding its allocation as between the different statutory institutions. Mr. Chairman, Sir, this paragraph 15 is very binding upon Government. It is telling the Government that it must introduce criteria of social equity.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to know what criteria of social equity would put a Government in a position where it would grant zero dollars to National Housing Corporation whose work is designed to fill the basic need of providing houses, while granting \$3.1 million to the CBC which is involved, Sir, in public propaganda and publication of public misinformation. It becomes important for us to understand the work that is undertaken under this sub-program for the Government to spell out what is the programme it has entered into with the International Monetary Fund on behalf of all of the statutory corporations in Barbados. No member of this House, Sir, nobody in Barbados has been told what are the specific targets that have to be met by each individual statutory board in this country as part of Government's overall programme with the International Monetary Fund. The truth is that each statutory board in Barbados, Sir, is having to pass tests as surely as the Government of Barbados has to pass tests on a quarterly basis. I am saying, Sir, that this House needs a full account of each of these tests from the Minister of Finance so that we can be in a position to read sense into what these Estimates are now providing for.

Now, I have spoken, Sir, on the National Housing Corporation since that is the extreme case. National Housing Corporation, Sir, this year, as a statutory institution is not going to get a dollar from the Central Government to help meet its operating expenses. There are other institutions which are more favoured. What are the criteria that the Ministry of Finance is now applying to make that discriminatory allegation as between its respective institutions. Unless we are going to be told what these things are this House is going to be glossing over a major part of its responsibilities to supervise the allocation of funds in this country.

Mr. Chairman, we have in recent times, as well, been hearing disturbing news about major mis-allocation of funds in some statutory institutions. We are hearing, for example, Sir, of probes into the operations of a major institution in which the Government of Barbados is a partner with another Caribbean country. Under this same sub-program, Sir, public moneys will be spent for public officers to advise the Minister of Finance in relation to how that probe should be undertaken, Sir, and all the surrounding problems pertaining to that particular institution should be resolved. I am speaking about **Caricargó**, Sir. Clearly, Mr. Chairman, this House would be failing its responsibility if that matter is not thrashed out in detail today and that is as much as I would want to say under this particular Head.

I must join my colleague who has just spoken, Sir, in pressing the Government to give us more forthcoming information on the amount of financial arrears that are being carried from the last financial year into the new financial year.

When we raise Estimates, Mr. Chairman, we see allocations and I am using examples, Sir. When we read these Estimates, Sir, we for example see an allocation of \$2 million given to conduct work at Sherbourne. Now in my view that is added to finance some rust proofing or alternatively, Sir, to pay arrears. When you see \$2 million for Sherbourne within the context of the amount of work that has to be done at Sherbourne in this financial year would only finance a stop-go exercise. The more generous interpretation is that the Government is not going to waste money in the future on the endeavour but that Government is voting money this year to honour the commitments to the long-suffering creditors of that project. We would like to get that matter clarified, Sir.
2.50 p.m.

There is also provision in these Estimates for capital work at the St. Joseph Hospital. Again, the question arises – is this to finance work in the future or is it really to finance monies that the Government owes?

The Child Care Board, for example, its allocation is to drop from \$10 million in 1990/91 to \$7 million. That is a 33 per cent drop. But it is known across Barbados that the only entity that will trust the Child Care Board now, Sir, might be Cave Shepherd or one of those big stores that have a cash flow that can absorb the kind of financial delinquency that Government has put it in. Not even the old Shamrock, Sir, would now trust the Child Care Board. The implication being obviously, Mr. Chairman, is that when we see reduced subventions to these institutions by as much as 33 per cent and we recognise that within those reduced subventions there might be \$1 million or \$2 million to clear arrears, then the real cut in the subvention in some instances can be as much as 50 per cent. It

is for that reason, Sir, that I have been making the case that Government has put a large number of state enterprises in a situation of limbo. In fact, the National Housing Corporation is in the happiest position of all, because if you do not have any money to spend then, in a sense, you have no womes. But when you have been given insufficient funds in relation to the programme that you are expected to discharge, then unless you have the capacity that you can feed large multitudes with four loaves of bread and fried fish...

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: As you wish. You would know because you have been put in a similar position in relation to the St. Joseph Hospital. But the point that is being made here is that, if we are to read sense into these Estimates, we need to know in some of the more important cases how much of the subvention is being granted to the budget where it presents payment for past work as distinct from funds being voted for works in the future. It is in that spirit, Mr. Chairman, that we on this side would like to see a more thorough accounting from the Minister of Finance. It also has a specific reference arising out of Government's general relationship with the International Monetary Fund. As we all know, Sir, the situation was apparently so bad that the International Monetary Fund made Government's reduction of its arrears to the private sector one of the pre-conditions of the Government of Barbados having access to IMF funds.

I am saying, Sir, that in the same sense that the Minister of Finance feels that he has an obligation to report to the International Monetary Fund about progress that his Government has made in reducing arrears, then by a similar argument he has a responsibility to report to us, the managers of the public purse, about the progress that has been made. We await the Minister of Finance telling us how bad the situation was before he entered into the programme with the International Monetary Fund, how much progress has been made in relation to the clearing of the arrears, and what proportion of these current expenditures to be voted during the course of this week represent arrears to be paid, Sir.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, these Estimates were prepared by the Ministry of Finance and I want to say that the point that I raised this morning has not been satisfactorily answered. In relation to the figures under Personal Emoluments in the printed Estimates, Sir, the printed figure in these Estimates at Page 7, I think it is, is \$414 million. On the document that was circulated

yesterday purporting to be an amendment of various aspects of the Estimates, that figure is cut from \$414 million to \$389 million which is a cut of \$25 million. When we relate it to various Heads, it does not represent the 8 per cent cut in civil servants' salaries which Government has to take into account. It represents in several cases substantially more than 8 per cent and, therefore, the implication is that a cut of \$25 million in terms of Personal Emoluments must impact on job losses. We are saying that it is in the region of 1500 more public workers that you are going to send home this year. Nothing that the Prime Minister has tried to say in my absence earlier today has convinced me. I checked with Members on my side and we all remain unconvinced. By next week since we have the weekend to do some calculations, we will be able to draw his attention to the fact that any explanation he made was not by deliberate obfuscation, but it certainly had that effect.

Sir, I have some problem with the format of the Estimates. All right, this is not the first year that we have had the Estimates in this form. But down the left hand column of the Estimates, there is the Sub-programme and Object Number, Sir. We have come to understand in the last two years since we have used this format that 623 usually is annotated as "Structures" and refers to Capital Expenditure.

Now there are inconsistencies in the presentation of the Estimates which I wish the Prime Minister to explain. When you go through your various pages and you look for 623 in the left hand column and match it with the explanatory note on the right hand side of the page, there are several instances where the Code 623 appears and the word "Structures" is just next to it but on the opposite page there is no explanation. In some cases, there is an explanatory note so there is a lack of consistency. What is important is that where 623 "Structures" represents substantial expenditure, there is no note. If it is a small amount of couple of hundred thousand dollars, 623 is produced on the right hand page and there is an explanation. But if it is an excess of thousands of dollars, you do not know. We are coming in here to vote \$2 million or \$3 million, for example, under the Ministry that I shadow. There is no explanation as to how that money is to be spent, whether we are doing it on the Holetown Complex or repairing District C or whatever.

3.00 p.m.

I wish the Prime Minister to explain the lack of consistency in presentation because I am being asked to vote in the dark about substantial sums of money. If those are matters of which members were not aware and if they represent confusion in the Ministry of Finance then we should not wonder too much because when we really think about it, it is not really the Ministry of Finance that

has gotten us into the problems that we are today. It is the Minister of Finance who has Barbados in this tail-spin today.

I was very embarrassed, two weeks ago - I will tell the Prime Minister privately the names of the persons - when I was in Trinidad for Carnival. I met a number of prominent people in government in Trinidad, and they all expressed amazement. One of them had lived here for a few years in a very high position. They were amazed as to how Barbados got into these difficulties. All of us would concede that we were obliged to have some repercussions from the international situation.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: These people who are indifferent and who keep a close watch on things in Barbados were amazed that Barbados could have slipped so quickly into the position that we are today. One said to me that they do not want to gloat over what has happened to Barbados, but when they have studied all the public documents and utterances, they have come to the one conclusion that Barbados has been badly managed since 1989.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want you to bring it back under the Head of Expenditure.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...Badly managed under the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance who is responsible for this Head that we are doing.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: These Estimates are estimates of those expenditures.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you know why they are relevant, Sir?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In 1982 did we send home people like you all? Did we cut back anybody's salary? In 1982, we gave civil servants \$108 increase.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let's have some order, please.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Look at these Estimates at page 26, Appendix C. They had the ability to do it, if they had listened. For the period April 1991 to March 1992 there were two supplementaries in this Parliament for a total of \$2 584 028 in a whole financial year.

For the period before the elections, April 1990 to February 1991, you had a total of \$53 million in supplementaries - 16 supplementaries in the months prior

to the election. Do you want to know how Barbados got into this position? Ask the Minister of Finance who brought this. Now that you have Estimates - I Must Follow, I-M-F, It's My Fault - prepared by them, you can only come in here with two supplementaries in a whole year for \$2 million. You could have done it all along. I am not saying you needed to spend \$2 million in the year before an election but \$53 million! And you want to know why we blame you? It is because of all of that. That's why you have to accept the blame. The West Indies team were beaten badly night before last and Richardson had to carry the blame. He is the captain. When things are going good, you bask in the glory. In 1989, you said you were setting records like Gary Sobers. Well, now, we are sucking salt, suck some with us too.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Now, Sir, I see in the document produced yesterday at the last minute these amendments. Sale of Shares - \$48.5 million that the Ministry of Finance is projecting.

I wish the Prime Minister to tell the House where he expects to get this revenue of \$48.5 million from the sale of shares, and which enterprises does he intend to sell off. Is it the Flour Mill? Is he going to sell the 60% in the Flour Mill too? You can not get it with the Transport Board because you do not have any shares in there and I do not know who will buy that old iron.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In regard to the relationship between the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank, I would like the Prime Minister to tell the House today what is the state of Government's overdraft with the Central Bank as of Monday this week. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance should get a print-out every day from the Central Bank. At the end of January this year 1992, they were \$45 million over the limit. Still persisting in lawlessness. That is why I recommended yesterday that we should put the Law Courts up at Sherbourne near Ilaro Court to prevent him from behaving in that lawless manner.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will have to come back.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in addition to having responsibility under this Minister for the direction of policy and economic affairs in general, this Ministry is perhaps the one concerned most intimately with the

collection of revenue and although we have to focus on the expenditure of that revenue, I am interested in seeing and getting **some** answers in relation to various, significant revenue changes that are forecast in the appropriate estimates relating to the gathering of **tax**.

I notice that it is forecast for instance that there will be another additional \$300 000 in passports and visa fees. I wish the Minister to tell me **how is** that projected, whether it is proposed to project any known amount of fees in that area. I notice that hospital fees will be increasing significantly and so, too, as the Honourable Member for St. Peter has said, will the Textbooks Loan Scheme.

In addition I want to focus on the revenue coming from the sale of Government's assets. I want to know if it is true that the Minister is presently negotiating with Hillsborough Company Limited of London for the sale of all of the shares in Barbados Mills and that responsibility for the task is being handed over to the Minister of Trade and Industry.

We have said before in this House that the Government must have a proper establishment for the sale and purchase of shares and indeed, to deal with the whole issue of privatisation. We cannot just sell off the assets at one swoop without looking at the full implication for the development of the country's affairs in the future. you will notice under this Head, Sir, there is no vote at all this time for what was referred to as the New Enterprise Administration on page 18. Last year the Government put in the Estimates \$1.2 million for this exercise. As a matter of fact, in the Throne Speech given by Her Excellency the Governor General, reference was made to this matter. It is obvious that the Government has abandoned its policy of economic enfranchisement. You cannot come in one year – this is supposed to be a Manifesto promise – and say you are going to economic democracy and widen shareholding in Barbados and you voted money ostensibly last year and did not spend a cent to go towards that policy.

This year you sold the **BARTEL** shares and the **BET** shares. You are negotiating with Hillsborough of London the sale of the Barbados Mills shares. You have been hawking the shares in the Barbados Light and Power Company and I am asking the Government how many more shares are they going to sell without giving the black Barbadians that they were preaching so much about for all these years and confusing the people and giving the impression in this country that they were more on the side of the "poor, black people", as one famous Minister since departed used to say. I want to know why is the Government, if it is serious, missing this opportunity to bring the small Barbadian into the property owning class of this country? Has it completely departed from all of these lofty ideals that it thought it had?

I would not **believe** that now the opportunity is being offered for structural adjustment in Barbados that the Government is missing an ideal opportunity to show that it really wants the mass of the people out there to have a stake in Barbados.

3.15 p.m.

I could not believe that the whole programme has been scrapped and the sale of shares is now seen as purely as a formula for the Government to get in some money to pay its debts and to get out of the financial fix to which it has brought Barbados.

When you look through here, as well, on other areas of fees, I want to talk a bit about the sudden increase in the Central Bank's contribution to projected revenue. There are some inferences you could draw from this. This is simply that the Central Bank is obviously making money out of the high interest rates prevailing in the country. I want to know when it is envisaged that, instead of this being used as a revenue garnishing institution in this way, it will have proper policies to enable genuine wealth to be created in Barbados as should be the case.

I notice as well, Sir, that as a result of the failure of Government's policies during the past year, the amount of interest payable on Government debt, whether on Treasury Bills or debentures has **risen** significantly. As a matter of fact, under Treasury Bills Government was forecasting \$17 million more in interest payments during the coming year. Likewise in interest that is payable on debentures I think there is something like \$11 million more in the Estimates.

I must ask the Minister what is the average amount he has been paying on Treasury Bills and on Government borrowings generally during the past year? It is obvious that the Government is not a good borrower in the market and the price of money to it has increased substantially. Therefore, from my calculations it seems, at the moment, if we look at what we are paying for money outside of Barbados, that we are actually paying more. We are a net exporter of foreign exchange at this moment on our loans and debt repayment as compared with the net imports of foreign exchange from the financial institutions. I wish the Minister would give us the figures of the inflows and outflows to the financial institutions in that respect.

One of the matters under this Head, Sir, relates to Barbados as an offshore centre. The Minister yesterday, in opening the debate, said that he expected growth to result from 3 main areas of economic activity, construction, the offshore sector and tourism. The Minister's forecast for growth does not accord with what we have been hearing and reading about from other economists, including some of the financial institutions. His forecast for growth is really supremely optimistic particularly having regard

to the figures which are showing up for the year in the main sectors of the economy. Nothing has happened in construction. Although Government has a limited number of projects that the Minister **adverted** to yesterday, it is really my submission to this Committee that most of the funds in the votes under these Heads will **be** paying for work already done.

I do not see in the private sector's construction field very much which is planned to come on stream within a time frame. In fact, private sector people have found themselves deprived of credit for new programmes and policies. I can give the Minister any number of people who, in speaking to us on the Opposition side, have said they have had loans approved by the Bank and then been told by the Bank: "I am sorry. You cannot go on with that project because we do not have the money." In some instances they had got beyond the drawing board and were ready to implement projects. That is well documented.

I am not as optimistic as the Minister that there will be buoyancy in the construction sector. Certainly, you can find no buoyancy in major projects in the construction sector, not even **Sherbourne** of which the Minister is, of course, the father. He said he was the father of the House. He is the father of that particular house.

When we look at the field of tourism, something drastic would have to happen within the next few months, in the summer, for this area to show a tremendous turn around because the winter has not turned out to be any success story. In fact, it has been a loss so far.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: When one, therefore, gets to the offshore sector, it is significant that this Government is blowing hot and cold. It has cut the provisions under the Head for promoting the offshore sector. Some \$850 000 is down on the vote under this Head for operating expenses part of which provides for postage, cleaning supplies, promotion of Barbados as a financial sector, advertising in the Financial Times and for miscellaneous provisions.

I am told as well that there are all sorts of problems occurring. I want the Minister, for instance, to tell this House whether the Government has any policy for the removal of stamp duty on transactions entered into by people in the offshore sector. That is one of the constant complaints one is hearing from that sector. I honestly do not see the opportunity for this tremendous forecast of a 1.2% growth occurring during the next financial year, if those are the three sectors being relied on. I still have not seen the impetus which must come to the offshore sector if the sector is to grow.

It was only a few months ago, Mr. Chairman, that we debated the International Business Companies Act. I spoke at length then on the opportunities offered to Barbados by the sector. I need hardly remind this Committee that the Labour **Party** had the foresight to push this sector significantly.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: We have not had the 'same impetus from the Government. I doubt whether that sector by itself can, in the coming year, provide the impetus for growth of which the Minister spoke earlier.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I am going to deal with Head 19, **Subhead** 10 - Capital Investments, Contributions to Financing Agencies. Under this Head \$44 689 749 is provided.

3.25 p.m.

This sets out, according to the notes, the financing of projects identified to boost the productive sectors of the economy. This Head I understand would be the mechanism used to flow funds from the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank to the productive sectors of Barbados. So far, none of us has been given any idea as to the mechanisms that will be used and also the particular areas in the productive sector in Barbados that will be affected by this. We know what the productive sectors are. We find it exceedingly strange that the Government on the one hand says that it will provide money for the productive sectors, and in respect of one at least, which is able to earn foreign exchange readily under guaranteed terms, the Government has so conducted its financial affairs that that sector tonight is uncertain as to whether it will be able to get \$8 million to be able to continue to earn foreign exchange in Barbados. Is it not strange? I think that is very shallow thinking and action that the sugar industry in Barbados that can **earn** foreign exchange under guaranteed terms finds itself according to all public statements finds itself today in the position in which it is uncertain as to whether a **flow** of credit to the extent of \$8 million can become available so that it can continue to be able to earn the foreign exchange.

There are pre-conditions. Again, Sir, we must not allow ourselves to be put off the terms and conditions of this structural adjustment loan. The Government must tell us, they owe us a duty to tell us about the regimes that the World Bank and others are insisting that they introduce as a pre-conditioning of financing. We know that the Government has now complied with some of the pre-conditions of the World Bank's macro-economic policy. That is that they have to run an overall budget surplus, an overall fiscal surplus. They have to **reduce** ~~the~~

Central Bank's net credit balance to the public sector. The Minister of Finance was warm on that. You have to pass through the petroleum price increases. All of these are conditions that the Minister of Finance had to accept before it would even go to the Board. Before the World Bank would even take it to the Board, the Minister of Finance had to agree.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The World Bank too. The World Bank has it in here. They work in tandem. The World Bank and the IMF work in tandem. You have to adopt policies to keep the public sector wage adjustments below **the rate** of domestic output. They said that in there. That is one aspect of it. What I **am** worried about here is that previously there was in existence in Barbados a mechanism through the Industrial Credit Fund which attempted to flow credit to the productive sectors at interest rates which **permitted** them to be competitive. It appears to me that it is now the theory of the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank that it is wrong to permit preferential interest rates to go to the productive sectors in countries like Barbados. I cannot accept that, Sir. We on this side cannot accept that. The World Bank and the Inter-American Development **Bank** and the IMF **must** be told that every developed country in the world has a specialized scheme for export credit to its manufacturers. **The** manufacturers in Barbados and the other exporters in Barbados cannot stand interest rates of 18% which they have to pay now. This interest rate mechanism that you have developed now is such that with the removal of the duties they now have to pay interest on their inputs, removal of their duty concessions.

I see here that there are **reflows** from the Industrial Credit Fund and things of that **kind**. This is a very important point, an exceedingly important point because the commercial banks are not lending anybody any money. The commercial banks, as a result of the policies that have been adopted particularly by the Central Bank in which they have raised the reserve requirement that they have a serious liquidity problem. They cannot lend people money to finance raw materials for export - I **am** not **talking** about Barbados' consumption - and when they can get it, it is at **18%**. I would expect that the Prime Minister will tell us more about these areas.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We now have to talk about CARICARGO because that is in the Estimates too. We **mu'** insist that some explanation be given to us and I **at** any Ministry explanation, I want a truthful

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I know the distinction. We have on record in Parliament statements as to what the position of CARICARGO was in **1987**. I do not wish to have any doubt about it. In **1987** both the then Prime Minister in this House and a Minister in the Other Place made it abundantly clear that in **1986** there was an operating profit of \$2.3 million and a small loss of \$385 000. This is what he ended off his debate with:

"We are expecting that it would come good in the new financial year because the return for the first 4 months are looking very healthy."

You had a wonderful heritage.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: This is what your Minister said, not me. Your Minister said that. That is what Parliament has before it. We want to know now whether it is not a fact that the position today is that it is over **\$88** million in debt. We understand that it is over **\$88** million in debt. I want to know whether that is correct or not. Because that would be a matter of profound concern certainly to the Minister of Finance, that in a short period of time **between 1987** that it could come so bad that we find ourselves in a position in which we are exposed to that large amount of money.

There can be no doubt at all that the way in which this very noble concept has been perverted - because that is what I am going to say. I am going to say that, Sir. And I am also going to say that here was an institution that was created for the purpose of servicing the transportation needs of exporters in the Eastern Caribbean. Every effort was made to **ensure** that it provided the service that was necessary. All of a sudden the purposes for which it was created **became** secondary to **the** interest of a number of individuals. That is a very serious thing because politicians don't run **these** things, politicians create the institutional framework but individuals have to execute the policy. 3.35p.m.

Now I want to say this very seriously, Sir. If people have carried away money from CARICARGO they should be locked up. You have it within your power to institute all the mechanisms and bring in the fraud squad, because CARICARGO is a company incorporated and registered in Barbados. Bring in the fraud squad and let them investigate CARICARGO. It is a private company and you can bring in the fraud squad. That is what we have to do because people must understand that if they work for Governments or for other people they cannot use other people's money for their own private purposes. It is a very, very serious thing and I feel very strongly about it, that between **1987** and today there could be such a deterioration in the position.

CARICARGO must have auditors. I tried my best in the Companies Registry to see if I could find the accounts of Caricargo since 1987. I can't find them. This is a company that is incorporated under the Companies Act of Barbados. We have to be very serious about this talk about fraud.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Two minutes, Sir? I will have enough time in the two minutes to wind up, Sir. It is a very serious thing because, whether it is government money or private money, the point is that it is a company incorporated in Barbados and it should comply with company law. It should do that and that is of great importance. So when I ask the Minister for a free and frank statement I do not wish a ministerial statement. I wish a statement that tells me what is the position of that company today, whether the accounts have been filed. Whether there have been any exceptions to the audit. I want to have all of those matters which one would get if there is a good financial press. An investigative reporter in other countries in the world would regard the CARICARGO story as something they could really get their teeth into. People would make a name on it, starting off with these words: "That Sir, is the position with CARICARGO, we are expecting it should come good in the new financial year because the return for the first 4 months are looking very healthy". I want to hear what was between then and now, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make a few observations on some of the points that have been raised so far. First of all I should like to respond briefly to a couple of points raised by the Honourable Member for St. Peter. I must say that his comments on this occasion were balanced comments searching for a helpful way in terms of some of the financial and economic issues with which this country has to grapple. I would make that particular observation at the outset.

I think I would like to clarify the position on the question he raised in relation to the severance. The 0.5 per cent to which he made reference, those funds are in fact in a special account with the Accountant General and, as such, will not appear in the Estimates. They will appear in the Report of the Accountant General in due course. The amount in the Fund is \$2.2 million approximately and the estimate was about \$3 million by the end of March. The intention is that the amount will be paid during this fiscal year, before the end of the fiscal year. The remainder payable will go forward into the coming year or thereafter or whenever it becomes payable. I like to be accurate because if it is not paid during this coming year you may get up and say that I said it would be paid during the coming year.

I can't have any quarrel with the particular observation, the observation made in reference to the Budget Division in the Ministry of Finance and the need for the strengthening of that division. It is one that is recognised by me and by the Ministry of Finance staff itself. I think you would know the reason why we have not gone ahead with substantial strengthening of that particular division. It is not only that division that needs strengthening. There are other areas within the Ministry of Finance that, in some cases would need additional resources – I can't even say strengthening – in order to deal with the many problems there are in there. But the staff is a very hardworking staff and I would like to take this opportunity to compliment those in that Ministry for the great efforts they have made, not only under the barrage of questions by the Member for St. Peter but they have to deal with all kinds of problems including his questions. We will strengthen that particular Ministry in terms of additional staff resources. I believe I have to make some observations on the question of forecasting. All of us must recognise that forecasting is not an exact science and, in the best regulated countries and in countries with far more resources and far more econometric and other models of the economy and things like that than we have they tend to make errors. As I said, it is not an exact science.

As far as the user fees are concerned it is a fact that, under our approaches, we will seek to get or to obtain more resources from them. Nobody is talking about any 100 per cent or whatever the fee may be. I am just saying that, as a broad financial policy, we will seek to get some additional resources from an increase in user fees. Any details that are available...

3.45 p.m.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am talking broadly. The Member for St. Peter is quite right in asking what is the overall drift or intention of policy. That is the framework within which we are working. There is room for discussion as to amounts and that kind of thing. But that will be dealt with in the individual Ministries when we come to those particular Heads.

Sir, as to the question raised by the Member for Christ Church South relating to visits by the World Bank Mission, we have had many visits from a variety of multilateral institutions including the World Bank. I have never denied that such visits took place or that there may have been correspondence between those missions and agencies of Government here. I have never denied that. I think that I will leave that particular point. I will not go into those details.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not really dealing with that. Regarding the question of the correspondence that has gone on between institutions as a matter of the day to day operations, you will have those kinds of comments. If you are talking about a policy issue involving the Minister of Finance, the determination of the policy, I am saying that you can produce the evidence. If that is so, I will admit it. But I do not think that you have anything there to indicate that at the policy level of the Minister the undertaking that you are giving is so. Let me say this much.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir.

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Only last week or two weeks ago, I think it was, officials of the World Bank flew down specially for discussions with me and we have not come to any understanding about the nature of anything called "structural adjustment" or that kind of policy-lending approach to anything.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not think it is quite right for any Member to say that the Barbados Defence Force does not pay any of its bills. That is **not true**. Let me put it this way. I am hearing everything about the roll-over of arrears and so on. Our intention is to eliminate all, or a substantial part, of arrears before the end of this financial year. That is what we **are** seeking to do. Of course, I know that there is a considerable amount of experience over there in these matters. I know there is a lot of experience in these matters over there. Right now we are still dealing with the roll-overs.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am making a serious point.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes more.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Even now we are still having to deal at Cabinet level with a lot of acquisitions that go back over a considerable period of time where the land has been used up. Do not give the impression that there are new procedures being adopted here to deal with the problems.

Finally, Sir...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Members *are* not permitted to respond like that. There is a way of intervening.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think that I will pause at this point.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Michael South East.
3.55 p.m.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, in responding to a query, said that the Severance Payments Fund, the amount that was levied last year, is about \$2 million so far. Looking at page 25, Head 19, Programme 9, Pensions, severance payments is \$7 million. I take it that this is a figure required to meet payments to workers **severed** last year, either that or the Fund does not have enough money. What I want to know from the Minister is the present claim. By now Government should know how many people have gone home and be in a position to have calculated the total amount of money due to these severed workers. I have not heard that figure. This House would be glad for that information so that it can assess whether this \$7 million is **adequate** or whether the money to be held by the Accountant General, as the Prime Minister says, will find its way into the Treasury, and how the claimants are going to get it. If there are **any** further lay-offs, as I am of the strong view there will be, what further sums of money will be required to meet these lay-offs. We are talking about budgeting. Therefore, we need to think in terms of having a near accurate figure. If you are talking about \$2 million, I would still want to know the figure so that we can understand what the Government's intention is as far as laying off in the public service.

Turning to Programme 10, this programme provides for contributions to the Caribbean Development Bank. Recently, we have seen reports in one of the daily newspapers that the Caribbean Development Bank is lending money towards a Transportation Study. The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister made mention of this, as well as the Minister for Transportation. One of the things that bothers me about this **Transportation** Study is that Government owns the Transport Board and it is supposed to look into the feasibility of transport generally. I would want to know if it is true that the Transport Board intends to reduce the present staff of 1300 to 800. When will this Transportation Study come into play?

We are looking at efficiency. I want to recommend to the Government that it does not make much sense to try holding back the horse once it has got out of the stable. The Transportation Study should come before this sort of programme is undertaken by the Transport Board. A lot of things have been happening and it is regrettable that this Transportation Study is coming now. So, I think

Government has complicated things by having the mix-up with the recent policy over the Z-vans and the taxis.

The other point I want to raise relates to the augmentation of resources of the Barbados Development Bank and the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company. The Barbados Mortgage Finance Company has a number of applications for mortgages which they cannot fulfil. I am appealing to the Minister of Finance in his budgetary proposals which will follow the Estimates to inject some funds into the BMFC so that people can get mortgages. It is all right for us to talk about reviving housing and for the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister in his presentation of the Estimates to say that housing projects are going to be revitalised. I want to tell him that it sounds good, but in reality the mortgage companies in Barbados do not have funds to lend out. If there are any funds, it is just a trickle. This is very serious because it is all right for us to talk about having housing, the Venezuelan...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This is exactly what I want to avoid. If there is a particular financial head either on revenue or expenditure that you are referring to, then let's deal with it that way. You cannot roam all over.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The position is that the National Housing Corporation is building some houses. Government has an input. It is a joint project.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, but there are Heads of the Estimates which deal specifically with housing.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am talking about BMFC, the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company which finances these houses. The houses are built jointly by the Government of Venezuela and the NHC, but the financing comes from the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company. So how are you going to build houses if you don't have the finance? I am asking the Minister of Finance to inject enough funds so that when the houses are complete people would not have any difficulty in getting money. If the Government does not have the finance the people will not able to get back the money that they have already put out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That point is taken.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It is not a matter of talking about housing. I am talking about the investment of Government because the Government must have back-up capital. Government has to put out its portion of money. I am saying that you must have a policy to make sure that this money is recovered by Government, otherwise it makes no sense. Under sub-programme 01: Contributions, I am not talking about the other banks. I could go far afield. What I am saying is, if Government wants to make sure its policies are carried out effectively, it has to make sure it puts in place measures to ensure these things are done.

As far as CARICARGO is concerned, this is still lending. Government has put a substantial sum into a joint project between the Governments of Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados. Government hopes to realise revenue from this undertaking, but with all the scandal and everything that is going on, from what I read in the newspapers and what I have heard the Minister say, I am at a loss. I am entitled as a Member of this Honourable Chamber to know what is going on. I want to know by how much money CARICARGO is in the red.

There is another question which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South did not ask. I want to know if the Minister is prepared to say all is well with the management at CARICARGO.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I want to know if it is true that the Chairman has been talking to the staff and all is not well with the staff.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Clearly. The Honourable Member is drifting.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: As I understand it, and from all reports, there is a question of loss of money.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I heard the statement from the Minister already that he was waiting to disclose this, but it came out. He is now on the defensive, so he has to wait a while before he can get up and say further.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order. I have never made any statement that at any time I would make a disclosure about any irregularities. I do not know that there are any irregularities, but I want to talk.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I did not say anything about any irregularities. Those are his words, not mine. I want the Minister to tell this Honourable House because the Government can ill afford to be spending money or making further contributions. I am not prepared to vote for further sums of money to CARICARGO unless or until the Minister tells this House the present state of affairs at that corporation. He owes it to this House and a full disclosure should have been here before these Estimates.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I welcome this opportunity to say a few things about CARICARGO and its structure because the whole problem of CARICARGO is the structure. The worst thing that can ever happen to a country such as Barbados is to enter

into a joint venture with anybody. CARICARGO is not the only example. We have the **Arawak** Cement Plant. I want to be very clear. One is paralysed if one wants to make certain decisions in terms of the development and wellbeing of the company. That has been the history of CARICARGO from the very beginning. I understand that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South had to make some very serious statements in the very early days in order to get another partner to do certain things. This has been the problem. CARICARGO has been a successor – not in terms of assets and liabilities – to Carib-West which was the very first freight airline in Barbados. The problem with CARICARGO, of course, has been, as with any other Government venture – in this case Governments' venture – that of capitalisation.

A second problem, Sir, has been allowing Trinidad and Tobago to foist two old, passenger aircraft on the company. The net result has been that, when we acceded to the Government in 1986 CARICARGO's indebtedness was \$20.5 million to the Barbados National Bank, \$2.1 million to the National Commercial Bank of Trinidad & Tobago, \$6.3 million to the Caribbean Development Bank and \$10 million to sundry creditors including \$649 000 to the airport manager, the total being \$38.9 million.
4.10 p.m.

It is now about twice that amount. I understand it is \$78 million now owing. It started in 1982.

The indebtedness to the Barbados National Bank at the point it was closing about 18 months ago was just over \$50 million. Deterioration in the company since 1987 has been the result of the servicing of this huge debt of \$39 million plus and at the same time, maintenance checks for these old aircraft. The older the aircraft the more checks one has mandatorily to take. In other words, the newer the aircraft the lesser the checks required. As the aircraft grows in age the manufacturer requires it to go in for maintenance at a more regular rate than previously. That has been the position with CARICARGO.

In 1987, Mr. Chairman, at the initiative of the then Prime Minister, Mr. Barrow, Venezuela agreed to take an interest in CARICARGO. The level of participation was not, at the point, determined. By 1988 Venezuela agreed to take a 20% equity in CARICARGO. We went to Cabinet with it. In September of 1988, not November, the Cabinet of Barbados agreed to the proposal that Venezuela should take the 20% interest in CARICARGO and the whole operation of CARICARGO would broaden to include Venezuela as well.

'We had been trying for months to get our other partner to make a decision for months. Eventually, in December, 1988 it went to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago and agreement was made at the end of that month

to what Barbados had agreed on in the previous September. Unfortunately, by the time the decision was made in Trinidad, the term of office of the then President of Venezuela had expired. Venezuela was not able to make a decision before President Luchinski left office. Immediately on leaving office, problems of riots and so on broke out in Venezuela. Venezuela was never able to take up the 20% shareholding it would have taken up if a decision had been made in good time.

CARICARGO continued to limp along, Sir. In the meantime I ordered within my own Ministry and outside of it a look at cargo freighting generally into and out of Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean. Eventually the then Minister responsible for CARICARGO in Trinidad and Tobago, Senator Ken Gordon, came to Barbados and we agreed to set up a joint task force to make recommendations with regard to CARICARGO.

The Task Force met and made recommendations. Within 4 weeks of receipt of the Report of the Task Force Barbados agreed to the recommendations of the Task Force. This is 1989 I am talking about. The Task Force was not only of Barbados but Trinidad and Tobago and BWIA. They too comprised the Task Force. To this day, Sir, Trinidad has not informed us whether or not they have accepted the recommendations of the Task Force. Nothing has happened about those recommendations.

Subsequent to that, Sir, the airline again, continued to limp along. The directors of the airline called for additional capital to do certain things. Both countries agreed. Barbados paid up its roughly \$800 000 immediately. To this day Trinidad has not paid up its share, an equivalent amount. I put it to the Directors of CARICARGO that, if Trinidad did not pay up its money by a certain time, we should convert the amount of money that Barbados had paid into additional shares. Of course, they said "No". They would not pay nor agree to the additional shares.

Other interests, including Trinidad interests, not Government now, decided that they would put forward proposals for the privatisation of CARICARGO. Barbados accepted. It went before the Board of CARICARGO. Trinidad and Tobago did not accept. It did not turn it down but did not accept it. It went on for more than a year. There was only one conclusion to which any right thinking person could come.

Eventually – this is now the sequence of events – on December 11, 1991, BWIA started flying freight into Trinidad in contravention of a treaty entered into between the two countries signed by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Eric Williams, and the Prime Minister of Barbados, Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams. Among the terms of that Treaty was that BWIA would not be permitted to fly cargo into any of their respective territories as

long as CARICARGO was flying cargo. CARICARGO is still flying cargo. That, Sir, is the whole position of CARICARGO today.

The Directors of Barbados have got so frustrated that they have decided they will not attend any meetings until we hear something definitive about the monies called up by the Directors. A Trinidadian, Mr. Look Hong, was Chairman of the Board and has always been Chairman up to now. He had an original vote and a casting vote. In other words, they had 4 votes to our 3. That was the way the company was structured. It is not unusual.

4.20 p.m.

I am not criticizing it. I am just stating the actual position of CARICARGO. I am just trying to show how CARICARGO has been made impotent as far as Barbados is concerned in getting things done in order to make the company viable and do something constructive about the company. The Directors decided that they would not be attending any meetings until they heard Trinidad had done something about the call-up of funds. Barbados had paid up and they had not paid up. The next thing we heard after that was that the meetings called could not be held because Barbados had said it was not going to any meetings unless they heard something about it.

The next thing we heard was fraud. As soon as you hear fraud, you know Barbados is going. You say fraud, Barbados has got to go to those meetings...

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: ... not only to protect our interest but to make its position quite clear that fraud must be investigated and that, where fraud is investigated, any person found to be fraudulent must pay the penalty. That is our position. It is not now a matter of not attending. We had to attend and we attended for that purpose.

I understand from the directors that a statement was made before the meeting began, given to the company secretary and circulated to the other members.

Barbados' position on that? What was the evidence of this fraud? I do not want to go into it just in case it might be investigated. There are two matters, I understand, of evidence of this fraud, as alleged: (1) a company car. The Manager in North America has acquired a company car in his name but being paid for by the company.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am coming to that. Precisely. That was ever the case, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: But, of course, he is not.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: What? A warrant of arrest is out for somebody? Why do they not arrest somebody? If they have a warrant of arrest then, arrest!

The position is this, Sir. The Manager of CARICARGO is due a company car as part of his terms and conditions of service. The company had been using a leased car from November 1986 for five years. In November 1991 that lease expired and the Manager was due a new car as part of his conditions of service. So the Manager took another car on another lease arrangement, only this time nobody was giving CARICARGO any lease or any credit because its credit rating had not been good.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Well, if you want to put it that way granted your position in the many companies you have like Southern Plaza and so on, that is a lot better.

CARICARGO's credit rating would not permit it to have a car and make it available to the Managing Director so the Managing Director, in his own name, using his own credit took the car but, of course, so that the company would have to pay for it because they owed him a car. Is that evidence of fraud?

The next thing, Sir, the final thing – just bear with me for a couple of moments to deal with this other matter – the other evidence of fraud is this, that companies other than CARICARGO are permitted to fly to various parts of the world, to fly to the Middle East and to Eastern Europe and so on using CARICARGO's call signs to be paid for.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. The time for that initial intervention has expired. But since it is a matter on which Honourable Members were asking for information, I just want to know of the Committee if it is alright for the Honourable Member to continue.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I will finish shortly, Sir. This other airline or these other airlines perhaps are using Barbados' call signs to fly and are overflying other people's territories. Those have got to be paid for. North America was strictly told by letter – I am not going to make a copy available to this House. I will show the Honourable Member a copy of the letter from Barbados – that Barbados would be handling those particular

matters, that Barbados, Head Office in other words, would be handling those particular matters.

These other airlines were using **CARICARGO's** call signs and building up liabilities on **CARICARGO**, because they had been charged to **CARICARGO** and probably had not been paid for. It is now claimed that those funds have now been pocketed by somebody in North America when Barbados had in fact told North America that we would be handling that. That is the evidence of **fraud**. I would welcome an investigation into those matters. I have my own conclusions and they are that these things **have been** put together to force Barbados to the table. Barbados went to the table to co-operate in anything relating to investigation of these matters. We are not prepared to co-operate in some of the other matters in which they wanted Barbados to co-operate in.

We have no doubt of what the other partner to **CARICARGO** has in mind for **CARICARGO**, because we have been trying for the past 3 years to get only a commitment, an acknowledgement from Trinidad and Tobago that they are responsible for 50% of the liabilities. **Look** at the amount of money owed the National Commercial Bank in Trinidad and Tobago, \$2 million. Look at the amount of money owing to the Barbados National Bank, \$50 million. And they are 50% shareholders, Sir? All of these debts were undertaken in the interest of the company. I will probably have to come back again. I do not know if Honourable Members have anything further to say on this matter.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is exactly what I meant by a ministerial explanation. Because I wanted to know the position with the deterioration from 1987 to now. My **understanding** is that they had a **retro-fitting** of the engines in 1986-1987...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: - I have here \$4 000 000 - and that before retro-fitting took place, for an elaborate study done by the Caribbean Development **Bank** on the condition of the aircraft and the feasibility of **utilization** of the freighters after retro-fitting. The Caribbean Development Bank lent the money. You know that is a development banking institution. It is not going to lend \$10 million unless it carries out some kind of study as to what would be the impact of the loan and the possibility of the loan being repaid. The Honourable Member delineates his difficulty with Trinidad. I have no doubt that he has difficulties with Trinidad. Commercial operations have difficulties among shareholders. It happens all the time.

But the basic position is that it is still the duty of the Board of Directors to watch the operations of a company

and the deterioration **that** we speak of which took place after 1987, because as I understood it, 1987 was very good, is something that I am worried about. Because the revenues in 1986, as I understand it, was \$32 million. It is claimed that the revenue in 1987 was \$38 million. That is the whole point. What about expenses. If the maintenance costs were accelerated, a decision had to be taken with respect to the aeroplanes. A decision was subsequently taken with respect to the aeroplanes. As a matter of fact, my **understanding** of the position is that the aeroplanes were sold and then leased back. I will tell **you** further. Immediately after 1986 the maintenance company in the United States was changed and the same maintenance company used to maintain Carib West came back on the scene to maintain **CARICARGO**. It was the duty of the North American Manager, a post created specifically for that purpose to ensure that a constant watch was taken of the cost of maintenance. I want to know why it is that it took so long after 1987 to decide to dispose of the planes. I gather now they have leased back the planes and the payments are less than the previous maintenance payments. That is my understanding. It is time that we got some figures. I know there are difficulties among the shareholders.

4.30 p.m.

There is only one thing I should like to correct the Honourable Member on. Discussions with Venezuela were not started by Prime Minister Barrow. Discussions would have been initiated in April 1986. The Government of Venezuela indicated they would be interested in becoming an equity partner in **CARICARGO** and a joint committee comprised representatives of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela. They were going about it in the typical **mañana** Latin-American style you usually get for these things. That was as long ago as 1986.

While I understand the difficulties outlined, I still want to know about the commercial operations. **CARICARGO** is a matter of principle for me. I am not one of those who **believe** that in these territories you are always going to get the private sector to do things which are absolutely necessary for the take off in industrial development. I believe that Government, whether you like it or not, will sometimes have **to** go into ventures, and I want **to** get it established that all who work with Government in the ventures understand that they have to bring the same standard of competence and probity to their work with Government institutions as with private institutions.

If **CARICARGO** establishes one point it is that the Government insists that, whatever has taken place, has to be investigated. We must understand that these institutions are created to serve a purpose, that is to provide **cargo-carrying** capacity for producers in the Caribbean, whether for vegetables, for electronic products, or otherwise.

You will always get the same problem with airlines because of their nature. You will get it with passengers. You will get it with freight. It is the nature of things. You must get it established. You must get it in the psyche of everybody in the Caribbean. This is an area in which, whether they like it or not, there has got to be cooperation and we must demand the highest standards in our operations. That is why I am focussing, not on the Ministerial aspect, for I know attention must be focussed on broader implications. I want to know about the day to day operations, about management. What about the accounts? We should know about the accounts. Those are the things I want highlighted. Why are we not getting the accounts, investigations in relation to the utilisation of the names and things like that, of the revenue. The allegations are very clear. The allegations point clearly on the facts. This is what people say. The allegations point to incompetent management, paying more for the maintenance of planes than the planes were worth. The allegations point to the fact that the planes have been sold and those same planes that cost so much for maintenance, were leased back and the company is using the same planes. They are saying to themselves: Wait what has happened that these people who have bought planes can maintain them and lease them back and the Board paper – and this is the most amazing thing as I understood it – the Board paper was that it would pay better to sell them and lease them back and it would be cheaper than the same maintenance costs.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is an offence to my commonsense. I would have to investigate the quality of the advice I got. It is an offence to my commonsense to tell me that I am retaining this and you are maintaining it for me at X dollars and you are going to buy it from me and lease it back to me at less than the maintenance cost I was paying before. I feel very clearly that you were robbing me when you were charging me for maintenance. I have heard of all kinds of North American devices but that one I don't believe. It couldn't be cheaper. The maintenance was not done internally. The maintenance was sub-contracted to the same people.

Anyway I am not going into that, that is not my function. My function is only to say that having been presented with those facts it would prompt me to probe deeper. That is all. The point is that we want to know how much cargo it is carrying now because we know that there has been a downturn in the electronics industry in the Eastern Caribbean. I want to know where it flies now. My understanding is that they fly all over the world. I want to know now, whether, having regard to what it does now whether we have not reached the stage where we must come to a decision in our minds and say to ourselves, this no longer provides any service to us which justifies its existence. That is what I want to know. You must tell us

how much cargo it **carries**, what contribution it makes now to the development effort in Barbados. I would really like to know these questions.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I was trying to compress into 15 minutes, if I could have done that just now, what I had to say about CARICARGO. The Honourable Member asked what accounted for the deterioration in the economic position of the company since 1987 and he, rightly put his finger on that particular problem. One was **hush-kitting**; and hush-kitting, of course, was that 'noise abatement device that one had to put on the two aircraft to enable them to fly over the USA, because the USA was not going to permit them to fly in unless they had attached those things to them so as to abate the noise over their **territory**. That cost \$10 million, financed by \$8 million to the CDB and \$2 million to the BNB. That was how that was financed – two million dollars to CDB and \$8 million to the BNB. But that was absolutely necessary. The problem with the **hush-kit** was this. It caused the aircraft to consume more fuel and it caused the aircraft to undergo more maintenance. That was the problem of the hush-kit. In other words, it increased the whole operational cost of the company not only in terms of paying for the capital cost of the attachments but also the actual operation of the aircraft.

4.40 p.m.

In 1986, to give you an example, before the hush-kit the maintenance cost was \$7.2 million. The next year the maintenance cost was \$12.8 million – almost double. The year after that, when the aircraft was getting older, \$16.9 million. That was in 1988. In 1989, it was \$7.6 million, not when the aircraft was sold but when the aircraft was seized and Barbados refused to put up any more money in order to get those aircraft back. They refused to do it and the aircraft were sold. They were sold then to the company which leased them then back to **CARICARGO**. That is what happened. It was sold to the company which then leased them to **CARICARGO**. Since then **CARICARGO**'s operations were reduced as a result of that because they were paid for on an hourly basis. As a matter of fact, more aircraft now are leased. How many **aircraft** does BWIA own? Nowadays the state of the aircraft industry demands that one enters into lease arrangements rather than purchasing arrangements because it is more prosperous for the company, not in terms of cash flow but in terms generally of operations to have leasing arrangements rather than to own the aircraft.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is the position of companies. That is a fact. That is the position.

Since 1989, and this is part of trying to reduce the overheads of the aircraft, the second aircraft was

sold. It was not seized – that one was sold. That was done in order to assist the company in reducing the expenditures of the company and the handling operations of the company. The handling operations of the company in Barbados were contracted out to Airline Freight Services. That was to reduce again the further expenditure of the company. The handling operations in Miami were contracted out to another company in Miami. Again, this was to reduce the operations of the Company.

In other words, since 1989 steps were taken to reduce the expenditure of the company as well as its operations. As a matter of fact, if these steps had not been taken, it would be in an even worse position **than** it is in today. CARICARGO has been in operation since 1981. From 1981 to 1985, no accounts were laid in this Chamber. I am not saying they were not done. But the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has called for accounts in here. Before that, he could not find them in the Registry and he said they should be made available here. It is a company. You do not have to lay the accounts of a company in here. You do not have to do it and they were not laid during the time when he was responsible for CARICARGO. But the accounts have been audited, Sir, every year. The same auditors that audited in your time are the same auditors handling the accounts now.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am glad to hear the Minister say that he intends to investigate allegations of fraud. Sir, the maintenance cost of this aircraft increased over 100 per cent within a period of 2 years. The allegations which are being made are that the maintenance cost was inflated by way of **kick-backs** going to people. The Minister must be aware of these allegations. It has nothing to do with any company car at all. The allegation is that the fellows had an arrangement by which Bachelor was a mere transit for money being passed into the hands of people. That is what the taxpayers of Barbados are going to ask to have investigated. That is what it was.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No Bachelor has anything to do with CARICARGO.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: There was a maintenance agreement. The Honourable Member must understand. The Member has to be satisfied that the maintenance company had an arrangement. This is what is being said.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Well, I want an investigation. I want to find out who was getting the **kick-back**. There was gross incompetence on the part of the shareholders of the company, and I am coming straight to the Government, to allow a position to continue where your maintenance cost is sky-rocketing. Any sensible person would want to

know when you are dealing in millions how within the period of 2 years when you have fitted out an aircraft with new equipment in circumstances where you have had a proper study, as I understand, made of the efficiency of the aircraft that you can get 100 per cent increase, more than 100 per cent, or \$16 million in cost for maintenance. We are talking a lot of money here. We are not talking chicken feed; Sir. We are talking a lot of money in which eventually the taxpayers including those people who have been made **unemployed** have to pay in one form or another. This is not a matter that we can take lightly. It has to be investigated.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, this is really a point of elucidation. I explained to this Chamber, Mr. Chairman, that not only did the hush-kit cause the maintenance to rise, the first year it rose from \$7.2 million to \$12.8 million and the next year after that to \$60.9 million. After that, Sir, we decided no more; let us use a different **operation** for the operation which is the leasing **arrangement**.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I hope that the Minister will not accept those platitudes coming from some of the advisers who have given him that, Sir. I hope he does not believe that.
4.50 p.m.

I hope he does not really believe that. He must now act as though he is a serious...

Asides

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Minister must know that I move freely between here and Trinidad and Miami, and that I hear a lot of the matters that have been going on. It is my duty. I am going to bring the Ministry and these air cargo people before the Public Accounts Committee.

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The point is that the Minister has to investigate the fact of the tremendous increase that took place in maintenance costs. One of the allegations is that there was no proper tendering system. The Minister has not told us why the change was made to this particular company. There was no proper tendering system to get the best price whilst maintaining the best or a reasonable standard of maintenance for the aircraft.

The Minister must be aware of the fact that..;

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: There are several maintenance companies and they could have gone out and looked around the several maintenance companies for a proper price. I am talking about the company.

The Minister must also tell us whether any of these aircraft were sold. The Government apparently...

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: ... They were sold by the maintenance people and you now lease them back from a company, with whom we understand the maintenance people have some connection as well. The Government does not know that. I am saying that this thing smells of fraud and needs proper investigation because the taxpayers cannot be satisfied in these circumstances. It would be unfair to ask the Barbadian taxpayers in those circumstances to continue with this situation unless we get a proper and satisfactory explanation of the matter.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order. I have stated that Barbados intends to investigate. Barbados asked for a directors' meeting in order to call for an investigation. I made it clear that Barbados intends that there should be an investigation.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The information coming to me in my capacity as Leader of the Opposition is that \$20 million was shared out. I only want to know who got the money.

The question that Head 19 stand part 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 asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker I move that this sitting be suspended until 5.00 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that. 4.56 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. 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.

HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY – \$30 410 441

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I beg to move that the sum of \$30 410 441 under Head 28 – Ministry of Justice and Public Safety, stand part.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this is a comparatively new Ministry. Last year we did not have a very long debate on this Ministry. The Minister was new and we were giving him an opportunity to settle in, but I think he has had a long enough time to familiarise himself and to deal with the criticisms that come from this side. This will keep us now for the balance of the day. I am going to start with sub-programme 01.

Now, Sir, it is fairly clear to me that this is one Ministry that has not suffered the depth of cuts that other ministries have suffered. That does not mean that it should escape close scrutiny or indeed criticism. I have never quite understood myself how a Minister of Justice functions in relation to an Attorney General. I know that it is an office which some countries have, but I wish to say that in regard to Barbados, one understood the reason for the establishment of two separate ministries. The Attorney General in the last session was unable, particularly by inclination if not by choice, to be effective. I had better put it another way now that he has come. He was thoroughly ineffective as an attorney general and he was unable to deliver a number of promises that he made to the country and his party made in the manifesto of 1986.

They promised a reduction in the level of crime. They promised to wipe out, I quote: "the scourge of drugs" from the face of Barbados and thirdly, to lock up those in high places who were associated with the drug trade. Those promises and pledges – they all signed a pledge – including you, Sir, in 1986 were made by the Democratic Labour Party and were not kept.

The Attorney General found it difficult to manage all of the departments under his purview without recrimination, without dissatisfaction on the part of persons who worked in the various ministries, and I think particularly of the police. He was happy to shed the load or the bulk of the responsibility that attended the Ministry of the Attorney General to a more energetic and enthusiastic and equally unsuccessful Minister. I chose the word "enthusiastic" carefully. The new Minister has launched himself into this Ministry with a tremendous amount of aplomb, a

certain bulldozing attitude. I am not saying he is a bull in a china shop. He has gone headlong with great gusto into this office. He has made all kinds of statements. He has seldom paused for breath and certainly not for thought in many of his public utterances.

I wish to say that that enthusiasm...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Has the Honourable Member concluded his speech?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the Prime Minister is interrupting to remind me that the Honourable Minister of Justice and I have been close friends from boyhood days. The Late Arthur Jordan who ran the Leeward Bus Service in St. James is my godfather and is one of his brothers' godfather. We used to meet in Paynes Bay as boys.

I welcome his enthusiasm, but I wish to warn that he is still a Minister of Government holding political office and the extent to which he allows his gusto and enthusiasm to cause him to bring the political side of his responsibility into the judicial aspect of our system of Government is one of which he has to be careful. He has made a number of statements and done some things which, in theory and in fact, offended the principle of the Separation of Powers which we wish to practise in this country.

I am warning him to be careful in his enthusiasm not to trespass. For example, he knows that when there was the incident of the minibusers protesting the sentencing of the Court at Hometown, he invited – he was not then Minister of Justice – a magistrate to come and talk. He said more recently that he was going to speak to the Chief Justice – that appeared on the front page of the Sunday newspaper – about the shackling of prisoners. The words were attributed to him. He cannot do that. That is a matter for the courts. Since the days of Hale's Pleas of the Crown, as long ago as that, and Hawkins, the courts have ruled that the prisoner must be brought to the Bar free from shackles. All the foolish talk that you hear on the call-in programmes and the emotional nonsense have no depth nor foundation in law. The Minister ought not to have given the impression that he is going to speak to the Chief Justice about a matter like that. Have you denied that it appeared in the Press and those words were attributed to you?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It appears to me that you are having private conversation. Please address the Chair.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Did the Honourable Member say that I gave the Chief Justice a directive? Are you saying I cannot speak to a civil servant as a Minister? What is he trying to say? You can speak to

the Chief Justice. There is nothing wrong with speaking to the Chief Justice.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The newspaper gave the impression that the Minister as a political appointee was purporting to tell the Judiciary what to do in relation to the shackling of prisoners. That is the impression that the public...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If that were the impression I was trying to create I would have responded immediately. I gave you a chance on it. It led the public to believe, and if the Minister is at variance with me on this, I will make sure that this debate does not stop tonight. I will get the newspaper clipping and bring it in here for the debate the first thing Monday morning. I am only saying to the Minister to be careful, that he is giving the impression that he is interfering or purporting to direct the Judiciary how to carry out its functions.

One has to be careful now that we have these twin functions as to what province is reserved for the Attorney General and what is reserved for the Minister of Justice, how the two are going to interrelate. Certainly, in the cross-fire, it must not appear that persons who can be accused of political interference are behaving in a way to lend credence to a perception that there could be political interference with the Judiciary.

Be that as it may, Sir, it is only by way of warning. The Minister has proceeded to try to do a number of things. Let us start first of all with Hometown Court. I have said in here before that that was a question of priorities. Whether you built Hometown before the Glebe Court was a question of priority. We wanted to do the Glebe. We had the plans ready and Mr. Athelstan King...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said it before but not last year.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Attorney General decided in his time that he would instead develop the Hometown area. Now, my criticism first of it is, laudable and as objective as it is, the Government proceeded to start the Hometown Development in fiscal year 1991–92 at a time when the Government must have known that it would not have had the funds to start and complete the project in a reasonable time. The Ministry made the request for the funds from the Minister of Finance. However you look at these Estimates the Minister of Finance is focal and

central to everything. The Minister of Finance, if he were strong and decisive, ought to have said "that capital project cannot start this year. We are going into an IMF Programme. We do not have the funds. Put it on the side as I have had to do with my pet project, **Sherbourne**." No. He releases some money. They blocked up all of **Holetown**...
5.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, one of the most current problems in Barbados is the whole question of **crime** and fear in the community. I was looking at the Estimates hoping to glean, apart from the statements from **time** to time by Ministers, what the Government intends to do about it. There was a debate at some length yesterday afternoon. I was not present for most of the time and, therefore, did not have a part in it. There was a discussion about the patrolling of Barbados by the police and the Defence Force together. The view has been expressed, not only yesterday, but long before, as to the position of the Barbados Labour Party in respect of that particular programme.

Now, I was looking at the Estimates and I see under Programme 5 – Police Services, Programme Statement:

"The purpose of this programme is the General Management of the Police Force and Police Band. The upkeep of **law** and order, the maintenance of peace and the protection of the public with an ultimate goal of achieving a crime free society."

I also see under General Police Services – Sub-program 2:

"The function of this sub-programme is to: preserve the peace, prevent and detect crime and other contravention of the Laws of Barbados."

When I look, Sir, at National Defence and Security Preparedness under Head 13, Prime Minister's Office, I see the role of the Defence Force under Sub-Programme 2 states:

"The functions of this sub-programme include:

- (a) defending the country from foreign invasion and attacks;
- (b) patrolling the coastline to prevent smuggling and other illicit activities; and
- (c) provision to meet recurrent expenses of the Barbados Defence Force".

The Government's document, a copy of these Estimates for 1992–93, articulates very clearly the difference in functions between the Defence Force and the Police Force. They spell them out here with a precision and an accuracy with which I can find no fault. When I look at the question of patrolling the coastline to prevent smuggling and other illicit activities, I am particularly attracted to the fact that the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, in very recent times opined that the bulk of the crime in Barbados had its origin in drugs.

Now, I like to go to first principles. There is no doubt at all that the importation of drugs into Barbados has reached an epidemic stage. Despite all the big words given by the Government, nothing has happened to arrest that **trend**. Drugs are coming in at an alarming rate. Whereas we use to see a few pounds nowadays we are seeing almost literally tons coming in on a weekly basis.

I am not getting into a Defence Force debate but the Defence Force has a responsibility to patrol the coastline of Barbados and to prevent illicit goods from coming into the country. I am suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that they would be better deployed dealing with that because if the Minister is correct that the crime in Barbados is, to a large extent, the result of the use of illegal drugs in Barbados, a more **determined** effort should be made to prevent those drugs from coming into the country.

The Defence Force should be equipped and given the resources to prevent the quantum of drugs coming into the country from arriving here. Very little good, in my view, is done by putting them on a jeep to drive around Barbados during the day and night with the police to deal with the problems that are created after the drugs are in Barbados. I am not going to spend any more time on that. It is absolutely clear on this side that the police have a very different role from that of the Defence Force.

On this **whole** question of crime, Sir, I looked into the Estimates to see what the Government is doing about it. The Estimates under Police Services are not particularly helpful in helping one to glean where we are going to have the additional resources of any kind whether of men or equipment to fight the problem. For instance, the **police** will lose over \$2 million in these Estimates over the figure of last year. This is at a time when the whole community is concerned about the rise in crime in Barbados. Like everybody, all right thinking people and those who are not so right thinking, are in a constant refrain zeroing in on this problem that is causing so much havoc in this society and the Police vote is cut by over \$2 million. I do not know, Mr. Chairman, whether the increase in number of the Police Force will make a significant difference. I am not getting into that part of the debate. I do know that they need equipment.

Now, the Commissioner of Police some years ago on his own volition and without any consultation or approval from Government, reduced the working hours of the members of the Police Force from **60** hours a week to 40 hours a week. That was a unilateral decision taken by the Commissioner of Police without consultation. The result was that all across Barbados at night Police Stations are so poorly manned that they cannot respond to calls of criminal activity.

The Commissioner of Police has asked his men – and I want this to be clear and this is how I see it – he has asked the Police Association to co-operate with him to work extra hours because of the high criminal activity at this time. They have agreed conditionally. I am submitting, Sir, that is no way to run this thing. It cannot be a private arrangement between the Commissioner of Police and the Police Association to deal with the question of the high incidence of crime in this country.
5.50 p.m.

No where in this equation does the Minister or the Ministry of Public Security and Justice figure. I do not understand how they get in. But when I look through here, to deal with another aspect to it, I do not see anything in these Estimates that suggests to me that the Government is aware that there is need for greater equipment.

They have what is called now, Sir; a rapid deployment force – Police on stand-by at night. I think that is the expression they use, Sir – stand-by at night at police stations who will respond immediately to calls from the public about any suspicious or criminal activity in Barbados. And the men get ready, they have the equipment in terms of **firearms** and flat jackets and the works. But they have no vehicles. I can say for a fact that on some occasions there is one single vehicle to serve St. **Philip** and St. John on any given night during the week. I almost hate to say it here in this Chamber because these things go abroad and if the people out there who are involved in criminal activity hear that there is only one police vehicle on duty at night for the whole parish of St. John and St. **Philip**, it may encourage them to behave in a certain way. I do not say it with any pleasure.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. **TULL**: I am not begging the press to do anything. They can do their job however they feel like. But I mention it because I am extremely disturbed about it. But that is not all Sir, police vehicles are not like the vehicles of any of us. We drive to work, park the car for a few hours, drive home within half hour, put down the car all night **and** so on. Police vehicles are working 24 hours a day and therefore they require proper and regular maintenance. They need to be taken off the road at regular intervals to be overhauled, tuned and have the repairs done

that are so necessary to keep them going. But there are a large number of vehicles, police cars, that are laid up on the blocks because you cannot run a vehicle 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without proper maintenance and expect that those vehicles will stand up forever. That is one of the problems that at times there are more police vehicles down than rolling. There are things like shocks, break pads and **rings and** parts of that **sort** that keep a number of police vehicles off the road.

I was looking in **the** Estimates, Sir, to see that this situation was going to be corrected. One of the constant refrains we hear from the members on the other side is this is not the first time that this position was obtaining in Barbados. But we are in extraordinary times and therefore we cannot argue in relation to any other time. These are extraordinary times in relation to the commission of crime in Barbados. Therefore we cannot argue in relation to any other time. The Government whatever else it may do at the end of these Estimates, I am suggesting that it should make provision for a lot more vehicles. I live in an area where people are waking up on mornings red eyed and hardly able to keep their eyes open. The reason they give for this is because they say that every black bird or sparrow that flies past their windows during the night wake them up. They jump up. **There** is a tenseness.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. **TULL**: I do **not** know. I was giving reported speech. I **was** saying what I was told. I am no expert in those **areas**.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: The Honourable Member has **two** minutes.

Mr. L. R. **TULL**: Two minutes, Sir? There is a lot of restlessness, a **lot** of fear, a lot of insecurity, a lot of nervousness in the community. I do not believe that we are making any partisan issue out of it because all of us are **involved**. Week after week, night after night we are hearing of the most outrageous and outlandish acts by people in this community of such a kind as is not common and familiar in Barbados.

I am urging the Government – I am going to speak again on this matter because I have just begun to warm up and you tell me my time is up – in that particular **area**, we will talk about others later on, in the particular area of vehicles to **make** a special effort, despite the exigencies of the moment and the need, as the Minister of Finance constantly says, to cut, to look in that area because although the Honourable Member for St. Peter yesterday in a different context said that less can never be more, I believe that if we do not provide the kind of backup support required in police services at this time that

the loss that will be incurred by that default will be far worse than the few dollars we are trying to save. I will come back, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to support the Honourable Member for St. George South in what he has said in relation to the need for more vehicles for the Police Force. I had the fortune, when I was Attorney-General in that year to provide them with, I think it was six **Granadas** at the time, in addition to other things that they had, a couple of motorcycles and what not.

But, as recently as Monday, I was on record as saying that I still stand by my position that I do not believe that the solution to the problems of crime at the moment, in Barbados, lies in the provision of more men. We need more vehicles and equipment. Yes. There is \$900 000 in the Estimates for vehicles. I do not know how many additional cars you have included in that \$900 000. I do not know how many you can purchase. But if Government can find some more funds, they will be well spent in ensuring that the police stations of this country have proper transport available to respond quickly to reports of criminal activity. I support that.

I do not support the Commissioner on any – he did not come in here this year – call for more men. I am fortified in that thinking by what the Honourable Member for St. George South said. He unilaterally – and I am assured by the Honourable Member for St. George South that he is absolutely sure of his ground in this matter. It was not a decision of a Government. It was a decision of the head of the Police Force unilaterally to reduce the hours of **work** of the officers. Both Governments have now been **lumbered** with the consequences of that action. I will show you why..

The Honourable Minister knows that prior to that and when we were growing up and so on, the police operated a shift system, three shifts. If you talk to senior policemen now – as I do – who are in the force, they will tell you that the problem is that we should go back to the shift system. But if you have a Commissioner who has reduced the hours, cut out the shift system and say the police are going to work 40 hours a week like everybody else, he is in trouble. Because the problem Mr. Prime Minister is that of a force of 1 250, as you have now – I have said it – at night up to January this year the best we could do on a couple of nights was to have 80 of those 1 250 in the whole of Barbados.
6.00 p.m.

Eighty, that is less than 10 per cent of the total force, guarding the whole of Barbados at night. I cannot be satisfied with that. That does not tell me that there is proper management and deployment of men. The heart of

the problem is in the hours and the duties which he reduced. Now, if out of 1 200 ... The Honourable Member for St. Peter is adept at figures ...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You, want this kind of quality over there? He won't be leaving. If out of 1 200 the best you can do is 80 let us assume for the sake of argument, you give them another 150 and bring it to 1 400, tell me how many of those 1 400 on the present figures you will have on duty at night? 5.3 men? Look, the Minister of Education is talking about 5.3 men. The point I am trying to illustrate is, it isn't a question of spreading numbers, it is a question of deployment.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I like what the Honourable Minister of Health is saying. If you give them now twice times 1 250 – that is 2 500 men – you would get 160 on at night. Good God Almighty, that is rubbish of the highest order. So that is not the problem. Look at the call for more men in that light.

I have said on a programme with the Minister that I redly feel that an appeal has to be made to the Force to let us re-look, re-think, revisit this whole question of duties and see if we can get back to a situation where we can have better **surveillance** at night.

I really feel that in 1992, because you have a situation where the men might be accustomed to 40 hours a week, if you want to change that, you cannot dictate to policemen now that they must do this and do that extra duty which they are not accustomed to. The men have legitimate and reasonable expectations about their duties. To get a change in that you have to approach the Association which is the bargaining unit for the men and talk with them. Explain to them the problem. They are aware of the problem of criminality and ask their cooperation and ask them to help you work out a system which would provide better coverage at night.

in turn you have to offer them some dollar bills for the extra duties, bearing in mind that when the Prime Minister gave the \$33 million in reclassification money, the ones from Sergeant down, as I said earlier today, did not get one cent. Not an ackee seed. Now this is the time to attend to them. Give them a piece of the action because it is not the ones at the top who go out at night and lead, they don't lead at night. Those fellows are cooling out.

In the old days the Assistant Commissioners of Police used to go out, one beat before midnight, one beat after midnight. Sometimes they would ride bicycles, the

white ones they had about here, **Armstrong** and Stoute, would ride bicycles all around town checking on men on the beat. The senior police officers in motor cars do not even pass around and see how the boys are getting on at night, if any of the vagabonds lying to lick them up or anything so. They are cool. I am suggesting that the Minister should **try** and establish a consultative process with the Police Association to see how they can change the duties but compensate the men. .

When I said that in January the Minister on television told me he has not talked with the Police Association. Wrong attitude. These are not days of dictatorship. You said on television that you have not talked to the Police Association. I have you on **tape**.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order. The question of the police working longer hours never came up when we spoke on television. Police working longer hours only came up two weeks ago when I was home sick, so I could not have spoken to the Police Association about working longer hours. It never came up until about three weeks ago and I was home sick and I had a meeting with the Commissioner of Police at my house. It could not have come up then. The question of the police **working** a 12 hour shift only came up about four to five weeks ago and I was home sick.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, **Sir**, I beg to differ. I have both programmes on tape. I am going home tonight and transcribe what you said and I am going to send the tape to his house tomorrow morning by my brother so he can see what he said. Look at the **tape** and hear what you said. I suggested that you had to **talk** to the Association. He said he was not **talking** to any association. I am going to write down the words and come in here with them Monday morning. I thought it was wrong attitudinally. What has happened, they went ahead and they asked the men to do extra duty. Since that has started it has now been recognised, and the Police Association issued a statement within the last ten days that they want to talk to the Minister now, and the authorities about these duties. They are being paid some extra money. I think it \$200, I am not sure whether it is a week or a month or what. That is not deemed to be enough and I believe that the money or the vote has run out.

The Government has to deal with this matter as one of urgency. The Prime Minister, on the Second Reading of this Bill, made a statement to the effect that crime in Barbados is now unacceptably high and it has to be dealt with and it has to be stamped out and so on. You can only do this with the help of the police. You have therefore to give the police some additional resources. I hope I have made the point today that it isn't men, it is deployment and management of men, it is vehicles. Give them some money

for the extra duties that they will have to undertake, having regard to the change of duties which will have to come about to make sure that you have more on duty at night.

Sir, what I have said just now implies that there is an inability properly to manage the resources of the Force. I make no excuse for that. Top management of the Force is not the **strongest**. Some of the problems of the Police Force, some of the matters which lead to a lack of confidence in the management of the Force, some of the problems which engender low morale in the Force and there is low morale in the Force, some of the problems which cause some of the lower ranks not to have any respect for those at the top, have their origin in attitude inherent in those at the top.
6.10 p.m.

One of the quickest things you can do in the Police Force, and it is getting worse every month, is to charge a policeman internally and discipline him by sending him on suspension on a charge for frivolous things, thereby weakening the Force of necessary manpower. **Every** little charge there is a suspension. It has got so bad that for a policeman to open his mouth and express an opinion as to the role of the Police **vis-a-vis** the role of the Defence Force for saying what he thinks – listen to me. I said for saying what he thinks is the role of one against the other – he is charged for discreditable conduct. I do not know how it can be conducted when you say something, but the bright fellows in the Force have charged as conduct words which are matters of opinion. It is my opinion whether I think the Police Force is trained to kill or trained to protect.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will give the Member one minute to wind up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is that kind of thing that the management of the Force would seek to be so restrictive of freedom. We talk about the Constitution. That is a bare joke. The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression. A man freely expresses his opinion and ends up being charged. What nonsense is that. How can you engender confidence when you have that sort of thing going on?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am coming back then. Thank you, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: We are trying to help you. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas when he said that the Police are not being properly paid for the new responsibilities that they are

undertaking. I am not going to mince matters. The Police are now finding it extremely dangerous in a way they did not envisage when they **became** policemen. There are a lot of guns in Barbados and there is a new attitude with your criminals about the way they deal with both policemen and members of the public. Therefore, policemen are constantly being shot at by people in the community.

I think, Sir, if you want policemen to give the extra bit of commitment that is required to deal with this very serious situation, you have to sweeten the pot. The policemen are concerned that they are not being paid in a way that is commensurate with the growing risks and danger that they have to undergo. One policeman used to walk the streets of Bridgetown at night and that cannot work **anymore**, Sir. They have to operate in at least two's because the danger is very real. They feel insulted not only about a pay cut, but they are extremely angry because they were subjected to a pay cut. They feel that at this particular juncture, so far from getting a cut, they should be getting more money. But over and above that the new arrangement where they **are** given the extra hours, I understand they are only being paid about one-third as the going rate for their duty allowance they normally get. There is great frustration among the policemen and they are talking about reclaiming their hours. In other words, a number of them **are** saying that they are not prepared to give up their time **anymore** because the remuneration for so doing is so nugatory as not to worth the effort. This has to be looked at, Sir.

Now I want to mention too, Mr. Chairman, the whole business of the provision of equipment. I mentioned **vehicles**, Sir, but I mean equipment. Recently, Sir, the Police had their X-ray and finger-printing equipment changed in the Criminal Records Office. I believe, Sir, and the Minister can correct me if I am wrong, that a gift of X-ray and finger-printing equipment was donated by the United States Government or some agency in the United States. I believe so. I may be wrong. What I find very amusing about the whole thing is the fact that the equipment was so outdated and it was suggested that in return for the new equipment that was being donated to the Police Force in Barbados that the old equipment should be donated to a police museum somewhere in the United States. The people who made the grant said they had not seen such outdated equipment in use in many, many years.

I say this, Sir, to point out the extreme difficulty under which the Police Force in Barbados operated prior to the exchange of this equipment. I am very concerned too, Sir, in dealing with the Police, but I am not going to deal with the Police after this. I will deal with other things. I am very perturbed, Sir, about a statement made by the Minister about the Police which I thought was extremely misguided. It was a statement in which the Minister said that they did not need in the Police Force in Barbados all these...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TLJLL: I will say what I read in the newspaper, Sir. He said they did not need all these certificates and so on because they get too ambitious and they want to move on to other things. It reminds me, Sir, of something the late Prime Minister Barrow used to say that the police were big, black, flat-footed, ignorant men. He said that. That is what he said.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I heard him say it, Sir, and this is consistent with that kind of statement. But it is extremely offensive to young policemen today.

I want, Sir, to refer to the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police of Barbados for the year 1986. I understand, Sir, that this is a document of the House already and I read paragraphs 221, 222, and 223 into the record. Here is what the Commissioner of Police had to say:

"The drug problem remains the biggest challenge facing the Force. At the beginning of the year it was quite clear to police administrators that there was a widespread perception that the drug trade was supported by prominent people in society. This led to a general air of **mistrust** and lack of confidence in the willingness of the nation to bring drug dealers to justice. The Police Force itself suffered immensely from this **climate** since potential informers refused to supply information to the Force. This lack of information and an unsupportive public virtually emasculated the Force's Drug Control Programme. Eventually, members of the Force were themselves accused of supporting the drug trade. However, this climate changed quite significantly after the change of Government at the end of May and gradually the Force began to receive pertinent information once again. As confidence grew in the system, the level of information improved and by the end of the year the Force resumed with full **vigor** its drug control strategy."

6.20 p.m.

I spoke to the Commissioner about this. This is one of the most vicious pieces of police politicking that I have ever seen in this country. The climate changed significantly after the change of Government at the end of May and everything began to work. It ties in, Mr. Chairman, with the point I made earlier, that Barbados has never seen anything comparable to the level of drug activity in Barbados to date. It not only gives a lie to these written words by the Commissioner of Police, but it

underlines in a very bold way the kind of lengths to which some people will go to discredit a government or political party. It is a shameless document, Sir.

I want, finally, to say on this leg of my submission that we have talked for a long time and I have made a number of speeches in this Chamber relating to reviewing police action and complaints made against the police. I remember making a submission on one occasion, probably in 1985 or 1986, when the Honourable Member for St. Michael West said: "You and that again?" This is many years later and I am still on it. I believe that the **time** has come when something has to be done about the Complaints Committee of the Police Force. We as lawyers have always learned that no man can be judged in his own cause, the *nemo judex* rule, but in Barbados you make a complaint against the police for an unlawful execution of a search, all things of that ilk, and the **same** people who have a lot to do with decisions about the search are the very ones who have to do the investigation. It has become scandalous now, Sir, that complaints to the police about police wrongs are met with a certain level of disdain by the Police Force in this country.

I am repeating my call, Sir, **for** the Government to give some consideration to a level of independence in this Police Complaints Committee. This is not an effort to emasculate the police or to constantly have them on mal, that is already being done inside the Department. Week after week police are on trial inside the Department for all sorts of frivolous misdemeanours, so that is nothing new. I am not recommending that we go into it at a level of irresponsibility that ignores the sensitive and important work that the police have to do. I believe I am sufficiently responsible to say that I know the nature of the work they have to do and therefore we cannot be over sensitive to every little thing, but when there are very flagrant breaches of the law and where the rights of citizens in this country are being trampled, it is unfair for us to continue a system whereby the police continue to investigate themselves and pay very little regard to the public. Sometimes they do not give reports on their findings until many months after, and sometimes they reply in one sentence. I think that is wrong and we should do something about it.

Finally, Sir, this question was raised about the line between the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. I thought that everybody knew why the new Ministry was formed. It was a convenience by the Prime Minister to protect his Attorney General from having to deal with policemen for whom he obviously had very little time for. The Attorney General just did not have time to deal with these policemen who were complaining all the time and that manifested itself in public utterances and his general demeanour when he dealt with the police. Therefore, the Prime Minister made the decision to split it up and put it into the hands of the new Minister of Public

Safety, a policeman's Son, who brought a new kind of **zest**, more enthusiasm to the work than his predecessor. That is how I see it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the Barbados Labour Party Opposition Members never cease to **amaze** me when they deal with the police. It is always convenient for them, of course, to seek to exploit what they perceive to be my difficulties with the police, or theirs with me, whichever you like. The Opposition spokesmen have always attempted to make the police a political issue. They speak with double tongue when it comes to the Police Force. Was it not during the last election campaign you were talking about how the Police Force needed increased numbers?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Now I understand why the police chased you away. He is confusing this **Opposition** with the last Official Opposition. It was Haynes who was asking for 1500. We have been consistent. Check your records.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I am not confused about what I am saying. The **NDP** was a bit confused about what it was saying. The leader of the **NDP** was saying give them 1500 men and another **NDP** member was saying all that was foolishness, you did not need so many men. There was a lot of confusion in the minds of the public. The point I am making, Mr. Chairman, is that the Members of the Opposition were exploiting the police for political purposes, encouraging the police to curse me, and when you had the policemen making the rude remarks. . . .

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. That is a very serious allegation that the Attorney General of this country has made about the Opposition, imputing motives. He was pointing at us. When Sergeant Best told him that he was pregnant with promises and had an abortion, that had nothing to do with us, we were not there. That was of her own volition and she was speaking the truth.

Hon. M. A. KING: The point I am making, Mr. Chairman, is that Members of the Opposition encouraged members of the Police Force in indiscipline.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has to withdraw that. That is an allegation made against this Opposition saying that we are encouraging the Police to commit a criminal offence within the Force. In those circumstances the Honourable Member must do the decent thing and withdraw the statement and it be struck from the records.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, before you rule I will withdraw "Members of the Opposition". Members of the Barbados Labour Party encouraged the Police Force in indiscipline. That is **true**.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: I do not have to give you any example. You know as well as I do. You know all the examples I am talking about.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. It is not true. I cannot believe that an Attorney General would come in here and tell lies...

Asides.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN stands.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has, in my estimation, made an **unparliamentary** remark and the Member should withdraw that remark. He cannot accuse the Attorney General of lying. If the Honourable Member does not withdraw that remark, I will have the entire speech by the Honourable Member expunged from the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: About the lying, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. There is another aspect of it. The Chair cannot be shouted down and I was on my feet when the Honourable Member was looking at me and continued to speak. That is not right.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I withdraw the words about lying. I was on my feet speaking with vehemence and making sure that you heard me, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But not while I was on my feet.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You were also on your feet. I beg to apologise.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the point I was making is that for political purposes opposition elements in this country, including Members of the Barbados Labour Party, encouraged the police in indiscipline.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading this Committee. It is not true that any Member of the Barbados Labour Party encouraged...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I do not care what he is saying. He must not leave it in the record. I could say that you all suborned the Government too. I could say members of the Democratic Labour Party steal too.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The point is I am saying it is not true, The Honourable Member knows it is not true. He just was an inefficient Attorney General.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to have the debate now turned into a free for all. I am sure that on either side neither Member of Parliament can speak for an entire organisation. We will have to leave it in that particular area.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am making the point that I am not going to have any long drawn out debate on whether "them" meant Member of the Barbados Labour Party or not. He cannot accuse Members of the Opposition in Parliament. But then, we will have to leave it as it is at the moment.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, when in this country or in any other country anyone begins to encourage disrespect for authority, that is the beginning of the crumbling of society. They are good at that.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Members of the Barbados Labour Party. That is who I am taking about.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. You heard his words, Sir. He said about encouraging disrespect for authority and pointed at **all** of us over here. He smeared all of us with that finger. I refused to be tarred by the brush of the Honourable Attorney General. Otherwise we would tell him about instructions he gave to have the citizens of this country searched in front of Rediffusion.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am going to ask the Attorney General to withdraw or rephrase his remarks based on what was subsequently done and said. I am also going to ask the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to withdraw the final remarks of his statement.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What was the statement?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You rose on a point of order. You made an accusation of the Attorney General.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You are saying to me, Sir, to withdraw what I said? We must receive the abuse and the nastiness from your colleagues on that side but do not give it back?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is now abusing the Chair.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But you are being **unfair** to me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must withdraw those remarks.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I withdraw them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member cares to understand what I said, I instructed the Attorney General to withdraw or rephrase the remarks he made in relation to the Opposition.

Hon. M. A. KING: Withdraw what?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is an imputation on "all of them over there."

Hon. M. A. KING: I should not have mentioned the Barbados Labour Party, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You pointed at the Opposition bench.

Hon. M. A. KING: I cannot point? I must speak and back them?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, in relation to the remark that was made.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: When we speak we all gesticulate. Do you not gesticulate when you are speaking? You speak with great gusto and point your fingers. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South **too**. He is good at gesticulating. If I do **that, what** is wrong with that?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am very serious when I said that you should withdraw the remark made in relation to "all of them over there".

Hon. M. A. KING: In relation to what, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If you want me to ask for the record I can do so.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am not clear what you want me to withdraw. Withdraw the word "them", Sir? The Barbados Labour Party Members?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. If the Honourable Member would take his seat for a moment. I am making the ruling that a comment **was** made by the Attorney General which generally could have gone unnoticed. However, the imputation of pointing to the Opposition benches is clearly not what can be allowed. I am asking the Attorney General to withdraw the **imputation**.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the remarks. I withdraw the pointing.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I know that both Honourable Members have withdrawn the respective remarks.
6.40 p.m.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I also want to categorically deny that I ever gave police instructions to search anyone. I categorically deny that, wholly and solely.

The Honourable Member for St. George South read from a police report in which – page 223 about:

"The climate **changed** significantly after the change of **Government** at the end of May. And gradually **the** force began to receive pertinent information once again. As confidence grew in the system the level of information improved and by the end of the year resumed with full vigour its drug control strategy."

That is what the Commissioner of Police said.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has made the point that we said that we would remove the scourge of drugs from this country. I think that was in the 1986 Manifesto. We said that. But you have to remember that all that was said against the background of the state of crime in the country at that time. The country was infested with drugs then. Did you not know that?

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: There are still a lot of drugs in the country. Yes, I agree. I am not denying that. The country is infested with drugs. We are not denying that. But what we are saying is that the drug problem is not something which sprang up overnight. We were concerned about the level of drugs in the country, the level of crime.

I believe I heard in the memorial statements for the late Tom Adams, his comments on the drug situation at the time **and** the crime situation. Somebody made the

comment that what he was saying then, before he died, would have been just as relevant today.

The point being made that the crime situation in Barbados is serious today, it was serious in 1985 and in 1984. What has happened is that the trend of crime throughout the world has continued on an upward spiral. But we think we can insulate ourselves I suppose from the rest of the world. We know the efforts which the drug barons in countries abroad made to use countries at all levels for the purpose of moving their illicit drugs, moving illegal monies and that sort of thing. When Honourable Members over there talk about the level of crime which we have in this country, remember that in your **time**, you had an equally serious problem, and we said you were doing nothing about it. But I suppose all Oppositions will say that.

The essential point I am making is that crime is something which does not have an entirely political dimension.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: I will give you two minutes to wind up.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: We have crime in our **societies**. We have to ensure that the steps we take are not counter productive, that oppositions when they comment on these issues do not provide an opportunity for people to be able to **exploit** their comments and to misuse and to abuse their comments for political purposes and to try to create differences between political **parties**, based purely on **perceived** differences.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: And what the Police Commissioner's Report shows, is that it was not only a perception, that it was much more than a perception.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: Listen. We did not interfere with the Police Commissioner. I have never interfered with the Police Commissioner in operational forces.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: But that is absolutely nothing to do with me. I do not even know what you are talking about. If you can point to any connection between me and anybody's gun, and who got back their gun, expose it fully to the public.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: Your time has expired.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: The Honourable Minister.

Hon. N. K. **SIMMONS**: I think this is an appropriate time for me to respond to...

Asides.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: Can we have some order.

Hon. N. K. **SIMMONS**: Mr. Chairman, I think it is an **appropriate** time for me to respond to some of the comments made by Members on the other side. I believe that the Chief Justice has given a directive as far as shackling is concerned and therefore whether or not I did discuss it with the Chief Justice a good purpose has been served because now the Prison authorities, the Police and the Courts are quite clear. I think the lawyers as well because from the information we got in the Ministry the Bar Association was also contacted as to what procedure should be adopted and I am very grateful for that. There should be no mistake now as to when people should be shackled and in what circumstances.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. **SIMMONS**: Pardon?

Aside.

Hon. N. K. **SIMMONS**: Yes. The law is always there but if people do not know the law... For instance it is there and there is some confusion about the law. It is best to make sure that all parties involved know. A lot of law is there and people do not know it and it is good to bring it to people's attention. That is the only point I am making. For sure the Prison authorities might not have the wherewithal to do the research. It has been done and they know now the circumstances under which they can shackle people. So there can be no misunderstanding between the Prison, the Police or the Courts. That is the point I am making.

As far as the Hometown complex is concerned I would just like to say that the Hometown complex consists not only of the police station but there is the library, there is also the health centre and the post office. We thought it a priority because all sections were under severe pressure. 6.50 p.m.

Indeed, as far as the Hometown Police Station is concerned I remember that in 1945 my father was Crown Sergeant, that is what it was called in those days, at Hometown and it was due at that time for serious renovations. In 1945, that is 47 years ago. It is a place that was infested with rats. I am only saying why it was a problem for us and I am hoping that somehow we

do get some funds. We have \$2 million in the Estimates here for it and I believe it will cost around \$800 000, I think. I am saying that we are hoping that somehow during the course of this financial year, it might be possible to complete the complex for the simple reason that the station at Holders Hill now houses policemen from District D and Hometown, about 80 men or so, and therefore the facilities there are not of the best and it has always been my wish, in particular, that we have the Hometown complex completed for the policemen.

The Member for St. George South spoke again about the question of members of the Defence Force working with the Police and he quoted from the Estimates. I believe that in the Defence Act a section also says that the Defence Force is supposed to assist the Police whenever the Commissioner of Police deems it necessary he can request that the Defence Force be brought out to assist the police.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Of course he requested it. Nobody can do it unless he requests it. On both occasions he requested the use of the Defence Force. Incidentally I had better say as well, I want to make it abundantly clear this question of what I said and I hope I did not misunderstand the Member for St. Thomas. I believe what the Member for St. Thomas said, is that I said on television I would not discuss with the Police Association the question of the police working extra, hours. My understanding was that. Before then the Police working extra hours was never discussed with me until about four weeks ago and we were on television longer than four weeks ago. Therefore I could not have said that I would not discuss it.

I want to say this too, that I have had about four or five meetings with the Police Association since I became Minister and they know that whenever they want to discuss anything with me the door is open. I have told them that and that there are certain decisions which I believe that if you are making for the Police the Association should be involved in those discussions. I have told them that in the presence of the Commissioner of Police as well. I don't think we have any problems with that.

I also told them that they must understand that the Commissioner of Police is really in charge of the Police Force and if there is a difference of opinion then, obviously I might have to take views of the Commissioner of Police. I also said that as well. So you want to think that if there was a disagreement that I would say okay, you are the Association, you have the numbers so I will go with you. Different policy there. You cannot arrive at a policy unless you discuss with the people involved unless it is a dictatorship.

The Member for St. George South also mentioned the question of my saying that a large amount of crime has its origin in drugs and he wanted to know, more or less, what we are doing about this problem.

From my own information a lot of drugs seem to come by way of the sea and we have on order now, three boats. We have had a long discussion about the type of boats. The Commissioner and another officer went to Trinidad and Tobago to look at the boats and I think they were satisfied. I think they had further discussions and as it stands now I think the boats are coming from America. The idea is two quick response boats and one patrol boat. Whether or not that will suffice, I am not sure. The people who operate the drugs are always ahead of every Government. They might even bring it in by air and drop it down, you never know. You are up against people with enormous sums of money and we have to understand that and all law enforcement agencies to my mind, seem to be always catching up with the drug people and that is a problem.

I think we all agree that the Police Force needs more equipment. Sometime ago when the Police had suggested there was not enough vehicles we set up a system whereby after 4 o'clock they could have some vehicles and we would hope they could have some vehicles from Friday afternoon until 8 o'clock on Monday mornings but then as the Member for St. George said we do not have enough men for the vehicles because at that time they were working 40 hours a week.

We are trying now to see if we can, besides providing them with some of the vehicles which they need, to make available vehicles from the various Ministries for the police to use in the evenings after 4 o'clock until 7.30 to 8 o'clock in the morning and on weekends and that should help to reduce the number of vehicles which the Police have.

I find, as far as the vehicles in the government services are concerned that the purchasing of vehicles is not done properly. We tend to buy vehicles all at once. We buy up to 20 vehicles for the Police. I believe what we should do is stagger the purchase of vehicles throughout the year so that even the servicing of the vehicles can take place in a more routine and organised fashion. When you buy 12 vehicles for policemen at one time, assume that they are all working the same way, you find all break down the same time and they all go in the garage the same time. I was discussing it with the Commissioner of Police only this week. Phase the purchases, only buy 6 now, the next three months buy 6. Instead of buying 24 for the year buy four sixes and you will see the servicing of those vehicles would be better organised than if you were to buy all 24 at the same time.

At the same time too, I think, knowing you have police vehicles, and the amount of work involved you would be able to sell them. Every three years you would be changing a police vehicle. It can be done, but we do not do that we wait until the vehicle does 300 000 miles, breaks down and then it is put aside. Sometimes you can't even purchase the parts, they are all worn out. There has to be some system developed, not only in the Police Force, look through the Government Service and it is the same thing. It is management. Unfortunately we need to have a proper workshop in the Police Force. There is a workshop but it is not properly equipped. I don't think it has a pit for example and the equipment which goes to service vehicles. We should be servicing our own vehicles.

Some time ago the Barbados Labour Party provided funds and started to build a workshop at the District A but that was discontinued. We are hoping this year that we can complete that workshop because it is absolutely essential, if not it is a waste of time paying well trained mechanics to sit around doing nothing because they have not got the equipment and that is a problem. That is as far as equipment is concerned.

The Member for St. Thomas mentioned the question of men. This is something which we have to look at carefully. It has created severe problems for the servicing of the country throughout the day. I think it is a security matter for me to say how many policemen are at the stations at night, but it is a severe problem. What has happened now that they have gone on this 12 hour shift is that they are working 8 hours and on **standby** for 4 hours. This means that the coverage is that much more. 7.00 p.m.

I should like to say that as far as remuneration for these extra hours is concerned that the Commissioner of Police has had discussions with senior ranks from the Assistant Superintendent, the Inspectorate, Sergeants and the men. My understanding is that the men have agreed to work the extra mile in an effort to combat the crime upsurge which we have at this time. I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to the policemen for the extremely good work that they are doing beyond the call of normal duty. I am aware of the fact that a policeman's job today is 20 times as difficult as it was let us say 10 or 15 years ago. Therefore, they have got to be much more careful than they were in the past.

I believe that I have been misunderstood about this question of qualification for police. I still say that I do not believe the only criteria for a policeman is 5 "0" Levels or 5 feet 8 inches. You have to have character as well. Because a fellow has 5 "0" Levels does not mean that he has character. I think that we have to look at the whole system of recruiting policemen. Gone are the days when you can go into a village and more or less shout a person's

name and get all the information on that person. You can go into certain districts and go to some person next door to the person whom you want and they do not know who lives there. The system of recruiting people has got to change.

Let me say this, Sir. I have had the experience, Sir, of seeing fellows having lined up to collect uniforms to go to the Training School – I was a magistrate at that time – where somebody pointed out to me that three of those fellows were not suitable characters. I called the Recruiting Officer myself and, when he checked out what I told him, 1 was correct and they were withdrawn. They could not do a background on the people. You go into a village and you ask for people and sometimes you get the most glowing reports. From the schools, you get the same report.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could the Minister wind up in two minutes?

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I can stop now and come back Monday.

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 and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: This brings us to the end of this sitting and I move that this sitting be suspended until Monday, March 23, 1992 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until Monday, March 23, 1992 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 7.08 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Ms. Speaker took the Chair.

Mr. J. O. Tudor joined the sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: The sitting is resumed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am seeking your leave at this point to raise a matter under the privileges of this House. I am referring to an article that appeared in *The Sun* on Saturday on page 1 and headlined "THE \$20 M. QUESTION" purportedly written by an Albert Branford

who has been excluded from this House some time previously. But that is not the privilege. It is claimed here, Sir, and it reads:

"SOMEBODY has pocketed as much as \$20 million in 'kick-backs' out of CARICARGO's maintenance operations."

It goes on to report that these are **matters** that took place in this Chamber when in fact that never was said in this Chamber. Nobody at all made mention that there was any **kick-backs** of \$20 million during the Sitting in the House when that matter related to CARICARGO was debated. It goes on to say a number of other things, that I said it had not **adequately** been investigated. I did speak about an investigation. But it was certainly not related to any \$20 million because I never heard about \$20 million until I read it in the newspaper the next day.

There are other matters here reported in this newspaper that did not take place in this Chamber and I am seeking your leave, Sir, to have this matter **referred** to the Committee of Privileges and also have it dealt with as expeditiously as possible. It involves a whole number of other things, Sir. I am going to make this a document of the House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, in supporting the call for the reference of this matter to the Committee of Privileges I also want to draw to the House's attention that the coverage of these debates has been less than adequate – that may not be a matter of privilege but a matter of editorial choice – but what I strongly object to, Sir, is that Honourable Members on both sides have got inadequate publicity and the NATION newspaper could devote one whole page to people allegedly sleeping in the House of Assembly and other sundry trivia.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I think that is a matter of privilege. There is nobody who can sit from up there and say whether any of us in here is sleeping. Our eyes may be closed – he did not refer to me – as some of us will close our eyes from time to time for rest of the eyes. But that does not necessarily imply you are asleep. I think in fact it may be an affront to the dignity of the House and it may be an implication that the Presiding Officers are allowing conduct unbecoming of Honourable Members to persist.

I would like the matter looked at and if you come to the conclusion that Friday's article by Mr. Vanterpool, "From The Gallery", is an affront to this House, Sir, then I would like it dealt with, of your own motion. I think that journalists in Barbados have a responsibility to report fairly and accurately and as fully as possible. These are important matters affecting the whole country and you devote a

whole page to **foolishness**. Of all the contributions I have made in here up to Saturday morning I got 99 words coverage. I counted every one. They did not even get **100**.

Mr. SPEAKER: In reference to the first question I think that that matter would be referred to the Committee of Privileges and I hope we would be able to deal with that matter expeditiously, **as** the Honourable Member asked.

On the second point I myself have had a second thought. Since the **Honourable** Member has raised it, I will now give it further consideration and I will probably get back to the Honourable **Member** in due course, possibly before the Estimates are over.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it now reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply is resumed.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, when we suspended last time, I was trying to complete some responses to concerns which the other side had.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just one minute. I would just explain that when the Committee had reported on Friday, you were the last person who spoke so someone should have to intervene.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Sorry, Sir.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am reverting to Head 28. I had asked a question when we were on the Prime Minister's Head about the format of the Estimates where Code **623** refers to capital and is subheaded Structures. But I have noted in going through the Estimates that in relation to **623** there is in the notes no consistencies. For example at page 45 under Head **28** Structures is to be voted \$2 million. The note on the opposite page does not condescend upon any particulars as to what is involved in these Structures. We are left to guess. Page 45 of the Estimates, **623**, look on the opposite page. The Minister will know what it means from his Estimates Committee meeting and his own internal information. But Honourable Members do not know. We would wish to know.

While I am on that, perhaps the Minister could also turn to page 45, the side code 623 marked Structures in the sum of \$2 million does not have a corresponding note on the opposite page saying what it is for. Similarly on page 47...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. I do not think there can be any deliberate intention to obfuscate, although where elsewhere in the Estimates there is a small amount voted for structures, there is a corresponding note 623 on the other side saying what it is for. But when you get the big ones over \$1 million, there is nothing to tell you. So we are going to have to rely fairly substantially on the Ministers when we come to the various Heads to tell us what is involved in the capital expenditure.

Mr. Chairman, on Friday I was dealing with the Police Force and some of the problems. I have had numerous calls on the weekend from policemen one a former Commissioner of Police and another a very senior officer, I think he reached the level of Assistant Commissioner in the old days, who have complimented me and found a lot of sense, to them, in what I have been saying. I wish to make it clear, Mr. Chairman, that I am supporting an increase in the number of vehicles available to the Police Force. I know that the life of a police vehicle is shortened because of the extent of the work it has to do. It is on duty 24 hours a day whereas private vehicles have a period of rest. One cannot expect to determine the longevity of a vehicle in the Police Force against the same criteria that may be used in relation to private vehicles.
10.10 a.m.

There are stations in this country where some nights there is no vehicle at the station for any part of the night. There are other stations where there is one vehicle to be shared between certain stations and that affects adversely the response capabilities of the particular station involved. We on this side are fully in support of the call, if there has been a call for more vehicles by the police, but we are not satisfied that there is any immediate need for an increase in men. I am making a distinction between personnel and vehicles and equipment.

What the Honourable Member for St. George South said on Friday was a matter of amazement to all Members. I could see it on their faces when it was said. The Honourable Member for St. George South said that the decision to reduce the Police Force from the shift system to a straight 40 hour week was taken unilaterally and it was not a decision of any Government. That is where the problem is. That has affected the ability of the Force to have an adequate deployment of men at night to provide proper surveillance for Barbados.

I have focused, since January, on the problem at night but there is a problem during the day and a lot of crime is still being committed during the day and especially serious crime and crime involving violence and offences against the person.

I know the Minister, from the television programmes that he did with me in January, does not like statistics. True, criminal statistics can be misleading to the extent that they will only paint a part of a picture because it is not all crime that is reported and as Radzinowicz said, there is that dark number of offences that are committed which never get reported, take for example a lot of rapes and a lot of domestic assaults and so on which people do not worry to report. They are never reflected in the criminal statistics, but from those that are reported it is my contention that one can still draw some conclusions from them even if the conclusions are tentative and not conclusive.

Sir, as you know, the police do not send me, as the shadow Minister, criminal statistics. The Central Bank sends me reports but I never get statistics from the Police Force. In fact they ostracise me a lot in their behaviour. I don't mind, I am in Opposition so I expect bad treatment from time to time. I have to get my figures surreptitiously but I got them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Are you reading those? What would be the source of the document?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: My source is handwritten. You can see it, Sir, it is not typed – it is a handwritten record of the criminal offences reported to the police for the period January to February 1988 to 1992. For those two months, January to February and we compare, Sir. Grievous bodily harm for those two months was 56 as compared with 47 in 1991 and 35 in 1990. Robbery was 152 reported as against 78 cases reported in the same two month period of 1991 and only 35 in 1990. As compared with 1990 we have increased by 1992 five fold in robbery. Other breakings, 159 in January to February this year as against 137 in 1991. Larceny from the person, 67 last year, 32 in 1990 and 89 this year. I am only dealing with these which involve some element of violence against the person. Last week, Sir, I gave the figures in relation to crime against visitors. I don't have the breakdown for those months into divisions, Sir. When I was on television in January with the Minister, up to December we had seen a clear trend from the figures available for 1991 to show that there was the heaviest concentration of criminal activity in what is called the Bridgetown Division and extending to the South, Christ Church in particular.

I am saying, Sir, that the figures may not inexorably lead to a particular conclusion but I am also suggesting that the figures do point, for what they are worth, to the fact that there is criminal activity in those areas to a higher degree than in other parts of the country. Those figures

should therefore inform police policies and management in relation to the deployment of persons in those areas, particularly in the **day** time and at night. We have a problem at night but in the day time I **think** there should be that concentration.

The members of the general public are complaining that during the day police spend a lot of time giving people traffic tickets and so on. We have traffic wardens. There is a vote for them here. I am glad to see that the Minister and the Commissioner spoke with Island Constables on the weekend. These are areas, where perhaps, if we can get the **1 200** island constables integrated into the system we **could** make better use of them out in the bus stands doing surveillance and places like that and free up as many policemen **as** we can for additional duty.

I know Government is strapped for finances but I still want the Government to bear in mind that as soon as financial circumstances permit we ought to move to something that was in the Labour Party Manifesto in 1986 and we had intended to do it if we had the chance of being in government and that is to relieve the police of the duties of prosecution and employ qualified lawyers to take over those responsibilities.

The police do a good job but in heavy cases they are at a distinct disadvantage. In any event, if we are aiming to use what police manpower we have in the most efficacious way then we need to free the police who are on these various assignments. If we can use lawyers – so many of them are being turned out every year – that there **will** be openings for them in those areas.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have two minutes to conclude.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, what I am going to say in the two minutes I am going to say. Friday night was very acrimonious towards the end of the speech of the Attorney General because the Attorney General tried to suggest that the statement...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a moment. I hope you are not referring to that aspect of the proceedings that was struck from the record?

10.20 a.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This is in relation to the Commissioner's Report for 1986 which was dealt with in here by the Honourable Member for St. George South where he castigated the Commissioner for his statements at paragraphs **221** to **223** which seem to have been interlarded with political considerations. When I criticised the fact that his party had promised a reduction in crime, in fact, the wiping out of crime, the Attorney General responded by, suggesting that crime had been at such a height in 1986 that it was necessary for his Government to write in those terms in the manifesto. Now I want to put in these figures, Sir. In 1986 in the Commissioner's own report – I do not think there has been one published since.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There have been others. I have been told there have been others but I have not seen them, Sir.

There were **274** cases of drugs reported in that report. For the **10-month** period from January to October 1991, not the whole year when the present Attorney General **was** the Attorney General and we had a Minister of Justice and Public Safety, the number of drug offences reported was not **274** for the whole of 1986 but **547** for that period January to October **1991**.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Sir, I was replying to other things because I wanted to get those things out of the way.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: That is all right. You have a lot of time to speak. Regarding complaints made **against** the police, I think that our manifesto is a document of this House. On page 34 of the 1991 manifesto, it states:

"(f) The **DLP** Government will establish an independent police complaints body to **hear** serious complaints from aggrieved members of the public concerning alleged **wrong-doing** on the part of a police officer. The **procedure** will be that the complainant would first make the complaint to the police through the customary channels. If the matter is not settled satisfactorily and there is residual dissatisfaction, the complainant may take the matter to the complaints body for further investigation."

The **truth** of the matter, Mr. Chairman, is that we have been so taken up with what is happening in the country generally as far as crime and law and order is concerned that we have not got down to the business of trying to regulate that. But it is still under my consideration and we will deal with it as soon as possible.

As far as pages **45** and **47** of the Estimates are concerned, I had noticed, too, that there was no information on Item 623, pages **45** and **47**. I can say now that the "Structures" under page **45** of **\$2** million is to go towards the **Holetown** Complex. That will not complete it. I had better add that. It will help to clear some of the debts and hopefully when things change we will get around to completing it. It is a must. Under page **47**, likewise that **\$1 250 000** is to complete the St. **Cecilia** project. The dormitories are more or less completed. It is just that the yard has not been completed and the auditorium will be completed with that sum. Hopefully, they will move in as quickly as possible.

Turning to other matters raised by the Member for St. Thomas with reference to vehicles, I think you will notice in the Estimates again there is a sum of \$900 000 to purchase vehicles and other equipment. I mentioned last week as well that I think it is a matter of how we purchase vehicles throughout the Government Service. I do not want to repeat it. I think we buy in bulk and then when we have to service we get rid of them in the same way. This is something which we talked about in the Ministry only last week and hopefully we will deal with it.

As to the shortage of manpower, I know nothing about the arrangement for the change in duties. The Commissioner of Police is quite capable of answering that at a later stage and I guess he will explain if it is so or not. I do not know.

I would just like to mention that as far as the parking tickets are concerned I think we are always in a dilemma. People complain that the city is blocked up. People complain for the indiscipline of the mini-buses and the Z-vans. People complain that they are being harassed in Bridgetown and, as soon as you put policemen in Bridgetown, they ask them to go and look for the criminals.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Yes, there has been a lot of snatching in Bridgetown, too.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Chairman. I was not talking about that, Sir. Unless he is making general statements, he has misunderstood me. Because I was trying to say deploy policemen in the Bridgetown area, which is not only Bridgetown but it extends beyond that. What I was talking about was in relation to the parking tickets and so on which they stick on the cars that wardens or constables could do.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: I also say that people are criticising the police for doing that. But that, if I may say so, has reduced considerably the amount of muggings we have had in Bridgetown and the general area.

Regarding statistics, I do not agree with the Member that I do not like statistics, but what I find sometimes is that we quote them to our advantage. The fact of the matter is that crime is unacceptably high. Let us say that. That is a fact and we are doing our best to get it reduced. The figures for February give some light at the end of the tunnel. That is the most I will say because we have noticed that in all the areas, generally speaking not specifically, there has been a decrease in reported crime in all the areas from January to February 1992 over January to February 1991. When I say area, I mean the northern area and southern area generally but not to specific crimes. If you

look again at robberies against visitors, you will notice that it is on par. But if you look at robberies against visitors in the outlying districts, that category has been reduced considerably in the areas where we have put joint patrols. I do not want to give statistics because then you have to go and give a big run-down. But crime is still unacceptably high.

The Member mentioned the question of taking the prosecutions out of the hands of the police. We have a problem in the sense that we cannot get lawyers.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: It is not only money. It is getting the people to do the job because we find it difficult even to get magistrates with the necessary experience. You ask people and you just cannot get them. That is creating a serious problem. The question of how much you are going to pay a prosecutor as opposed to a magistrate or Crown Counsel, *et cetera* is a problem. I agree that something needs to be done about that.

As far as the drug situation is concerned, we know there is an increase in the incidents of drugs in Barbados. We know that. But the fact of the matter is, drugs are big money and fellows will do anything to get the same. I think we must compliment the police, and in particular the drug squad, for their vigilance in apprehending those persons who are involved in this type of criminal activity. The prosecutions have gone up 100%, which means that the police with limited resources are doing an exceptionally good job, and I want to compliment them.

10.30 a.m

Those are my responses for the time being, Mr. Chairman. I shall wait until a few more Members speak and then come again.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be long, there are just three specific matters I would wish to raise.

I have had the responsibility of deciding on the debate which raged between 1984 and 1986 on the need for the increase in manpower in the Police Force in Barbados. We had then, as we have now, a profound conflict of opinion as to whether what is really needed are better policemen, more highly trained policemen with better equipment, or more numbers. That conflict is still in existence today. A former Prime Minister took the view that you need better training and I was persuaded and took the view that in addition to the better training at that particular period of time we needed more manpower. This famous Report in 1986 will disclose that the strength of the Force was increased in 1986 from 1000 to 1200. We must also remember that the Force at 1200 could not be compared

with a Force previously, for a number of reasons, that a number of the duties which formerly were performed by the Police over the period between 1978 and 1986 were taken away, particularly licensing, immigration and a number of other things. A number of new Departments were created which had the effect of relieving the policemen of some of those duties. As a matter of fact, my memory is clear that it was also envisaged that a number of the existing duties, what they call the static duties, of policemen, such as guarding Government House, would continue to be taken away and handed over to other appropriate agencies so that more policemen **would** be available.

We must not fool ourselves. Despite the boast and the promise and all of the perceptions which were created for political purposes, there is no political party which suffered as we suffered about the perception that Ministers and the Government were active participants in the drug issue. There is no question about that. That perception was deliberately fostered by the Democratic Labour Party. They got away with it. I remember it was so persistent that a candidate of the Democratic Labour Party actually had the audacity to put it in his pamphlet to the electorate. **That** was done a week before the election in 1986, the desire for power was so **great**. All Members of the Democratic Labour Party spread it, but the damage that was done to the morale of the police is great. That has had a damaging effect on the police, **because** the people are asking why did the police not prosecute one of them, if they **knew** that. That is the damage which has been done. The statement which was made in this document by the Commissioner of Police is not a reflection on the political parties, it is a reflection on the writer of the statement. That is a fact. I say thank God we have lived to see that the problems which we were accused of not being able to solve are still in existence. It shows, therefore, that these wild accusations about political interference and involvement in these matters should never have been made for the purpose of political gain.

Every Barbadian has an interest in seeing a reduction in crime in Barbados. Every political party has an interest in seeing a reduction in crime in Barbados. There cannot be any doubt about it. The economy of Barbados is dependent upon tourism to a very large extent today and unless we can solve the fundamental problem that the Honourable Minister of Tourism spoke about recently, all of us are going to suffer. Therefore, to attempt to make partisan political capital out of the crime situation in Barbados was a very irresponsible act, Sir, and there is a good Lord in Heaven, because the charge can now be made against other people. The statistics are clear.

The fundamental problem of whether what we need are more policemen is still back in your lap to be solved. The statistics coming before the House today are very

alarming. I only hope' that the utilisation of crime for political purposes would come to an end in this country. I also want to say that my personal belief – and I am frank on this – is, very clearly, that there seems to be a lack of unity in the Police Force. Since you are dealing with perceptions, that is my perception. My belief is that there is division among the top ranks, between the top and the middle and the **bottom**. That is a matter the Honourable Minister should **look** at. These are perceptions out there. You cannot read the speeches coming from the Police Association, read the public relations releases that are issued from time to time without coming to the conclusion that the Police Force is any different from what appears now to be the position in the West Indies cricket team. There seems to be a similarity in public perception as to what is taking place. That is the position. We have to deal with that, you have to investigate those matters. Those are matters that should be approached in a bipartisan manner. As the Report clearly points out, unless there is **co-operation** from the public to the police, the police are unable to do their duty to the maximum advantage.

There are a few other things, Sir, in relation **to** the crime of breaking and entering that have caused a lot of problems. The **lag** between prosecution and conclusion of cases is a very serious one. Many people from my constituency tell me that they have had their houses broken and entered and that the exhibits in the case have been in the police station for **three** years and they do not understand what is happening. These persons applied to the Commissioner of Police for a return of their property and were told they cannot do so because the case is not on. As a matter of fact, one person, who is not even a Barbadian, tells me that the flat he was in was broken and entered 4 years ago. Up to now, he has been to court on at least 8 occasions, but, for some reason or the other, the case has not gone on, and by now he does not know where his clothes are.

10.40 a.m.

If you go into the police yard, you will see vehicles. Certainly, in the area that I live, which is very near the police station, I see vehicles, and when I ask about them I hear they were stolen vehicles and they are exhibits waiting for the case to be tried. I believe the Police Act could do with some amendments because with modern photography and video these techniques ought to be utilised.

Only recently, I was reading in the Commonwealth Reports that New Zealand has run an experiment in many districts which has had a very beneficial effect, not only on the public, but on the police. From the time a person comes into the station whatever happens between the police and that person is on the video tape. As a matter of fact, it has led to an increase in convictions in New Zealand because people are more ready to confess under the camera than otherwise. People volunteer information. Police forces all

over the world are conducting these experiments, and modern electronic equipment and modern procedures are used. I do not agree with Members on the other side that they are softened up before they get in. I have practised criminal law for many years and I know exactly what happens.

The basic position is that something has to be done if you **need** the cooperation of the public because the lapse is far too long. We need to do something about it because people **are** not going to report incidents if they feel that it is going to result in a long and complicated process. I was one of those who long ago advocated and agreed to the changes that took place in the law permitting housebreaking and a number of other offences to take place in the Magistrate's Courts in order to get a speedy trial.

Sometimes, by the very manner of the breaking and entering, the police can get a clue as to who is the person who committed the crime. There are some people who are specialists. I well remember there was a certain gentleman who would only break and enter in the day, and he had a standard approach. Once he was tried before Mr. Justice Hanschell and very early Mr. Justice Hanschell made it clear that he knew that it was not he because that was not his style. So that is another area that we must deal with.

The last area that I want to speak on, Sir, is the question of the response **time**. I live on Enterprise Coast Road, near the police station. Sometimes people ring and tell me that they cannot get a response. I have to explain to them that the problem, as I understand it, is a problem of vehicles. Therefore, I am very glad to see that some money has been put in here for vehicles. What people really want at night, **particularly** tourists and people who have **breakings** and enterings in these areas, is a quick response. Read the newspapers and you will see the comments. The criticism that you get is, not how the police treat the people when they are investigating, but how long they took to get there.

I remember that a suggestion was put forward that some of these investigations do not necessarily need a car but that motor cycles and things of that kind could be used in some cases. I remember an increase in the number of these smaller vehicles was given to the Force to do that. It may be that, in today's climate, the police may have taken the decision that it is better to go with a car and a number of other policemen rather than respond alone. Perhaps, an initial response carried out by an individual who goes with one of these vehicles may be helpful. The point is that the criticism is of the response time. I do hope that is an area that can be improved as a result of the appropriations here.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When I sat down after the first intervention, Sir, the Honourable Minister replied. One of the things he said was that he would get a statement soon from the Commissioner of Police or he would reply

to some of the things I said about the manpower deployment. I just want to warn that the responses should be very guarded because the history of prognostications from the Police Department does not engender any confidence.

On April 2, last year, the Commissioner made a statement that he would win the battle against armed robbers and curb indiscipline in a relatively short time. Now, almost a year has gone and we have to acknowledge that the situation has become worse. One of the things that he promised then was an intensification of the deployment of island constables. I wish to hear from the Minister, in a later intervention, to what extent has there been this intensification of deployment of island constables. This is the kind of thing I warn against: a statement from the Commissioner that

"there is nothing in our society which convinces me that the current indiscipline cannot be curbed in a relatively short time."

You cannot go out on a limb because events overtake you and make what you say look – I do not want to say foolish – but they take advantage of your good intentions.

I also feel that the police should pay some attention to things said by Members of the Opposition. I remember, on June 22, 1989, at a public meeting near the Barbados Hardware, on that stretch of the Highway, I had a lot of information about the emergence of gangs or near-groups at least. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy got some dollars out of that. Of course, not from anything that I said but from somebody on our platform, but I warned then about the emergence of gangs. I went so far as to give the public some of the labels some of these gangs had appended to themselves. The Attorney General, within days, denied the existence of gangs. He wanted to make me a liar. The Deputy Commissioner also issued a statement denying it. I remember the Prime Minister at the First Annual Conference of the DLP giving the impression in a statement that drugs were not a matter that we should be too worried about.

10.50 a.m.

I want Honourable Members and the police to be aware that when we make certain statements, we are not making them for the sake of sensationalism. If you have a problem, call and ask if we are really serious. Do we have that information? But do not come out and just try to make me a liar and now events have shown that I was the one who was telling the truth and all these big wigs are the ones, who, perhaps, were the liars.

We told them more than 18 months ago that arms were coming into this country. They would not hear it. It appeared, after we had spoken, on the front page of the

"Sunday Sun" one day under a lady's by-line. It was denied. Now, we know, as a fact that there has been a proliferation of illegal arms in Barbados. I am only warning those who respond and make public statements to be very guarded in what they say. There is nothing wrong when the Press comes to you for a comment to say "the matter is under investigation. We are looking at it." That is neutral.

Now, Sir, in the period leading up to the 1986 elections, there was a widespread perception in Barbados that the hands of the Commissioner were tied. You all forget. So much so that it was hallowed in a very popular calypso. The public of Barbados were given the impression by opposition groups and persons that we on this side and in the Barbados Labour Party had the Commissioner under double wraps, as we say in horse racing.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know the Commissioner said that. I cannot remember the Commissioner saying that. I am not aware that he ever said it. I am saying there was a perception.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member addressing the Chair?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Nothing could be done about crime.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order, please?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The police could not have been effective because we had the police hands tied. Now crime has gone so far in Barbados, it is so widespread and extensive that even the Prime Minister on the Second Reading of this speech... For the first time in my 15 years in Parliament, have I heard a Prime Minister **open** a debate on the Estimates with reference to law and order, noting the level of criminal activity and the death penalty. I have never heard it before. So it is a matter of great significance that is obviously worrying the Prime Minister and he has it up front now in his thoughts as we had it in our Manifesto in 1991.

Whose hands are tied now? The hands have been untied and everybody is doing as they like. There is total old Mas in the country and the criminals are on the rampage. It is foolishness. But that was part of an orchestrated plan to smear the Barbados Labour Party from the former Prime Minister down. He suffered too. From the Prime Minister back down, each one of us was alleged to have been implicated in drugs. They even put out a scandal sheet in this country.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know Tudor and Morgan, all of them had ties with it. I am not dealing with them now. I dealt with them personally. I deal with you one to one. I tell you what my mind is and that is the end of that. If you do not like it, do not speak to me again. My rice cooks at 19 Neils.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But we had the irresponsibility of the former Prime Minister Barrow leaving Barbados. Let us just get this right. We are concerned now, and we are complaining about the Press over-sensationalising crime and the effect it would have on visitors **and** people outside of Barbados. The late **Errol Walton** Barrow went to Canada and published in the "Vancouver Sun" that Tom Adams died from an overdose of cocaine. We have it. He then went on to smear all of us and said that it seemed to him that people in the Government were involved in drugs.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If the story is told about who used to drive him and who drove him during the second St. Peter by-election....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. You all never gave Tom a chance. When we come in here...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Let us now draw a veil....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister of Health – he must not interfere with me – came into this House of Assembly and spread a rumour that there was a cocaine....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. You cannot come into the House of Assembly and spread a rumour. It is an attack on the Speaker. Do not let the Honourable Member go down that road.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He came in here and expressed it as a fact, which was not true, that there was a cocaine factory in operation in the Sandy Lane area, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is saying, as I heard him, that I came in here and said something that was not true. He is

saying categorically that I lied to the House. I ask the Honourable Member to withdraw that and have it struck from the record. Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If that is what the Honourable Member said, then it has to be withdrawn.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will have to withdraw it on your instructions, Sir. It therefore means that it was true.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I have to ask the Honourable Member to withdraw any implication that it was true. I state categorically that I never lied to this House about any cocaine factory. Everything I said the record shows is absolutely correct, that there was a cocaine factory on the East Coast of Barbados. That is what the record said.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I said the East Coast and I said that there was a man in Sandy Lane Hotel that was arrested. I stand by that. I said that I was told on good authority that **there** was a man who was putting cocaine together in Sandy Lane and I stand by that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is no lie. I am not afraid to say it. I said it then and I say it now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point is made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir. I acknowledge it. He gave you a wink and a smile when he sat down, Sir. Leave it. I am going to pull the Hansard today, Sir, and at some appropriate time I will confront him with his actual words. But he said that he talked about the cocaine factory.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am claiming back all the time, Sir, that which he has just taken from me unfairly.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We know about Tommy Miller. He was put up to spread nasty gossip about...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back to the Police, please.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am glad the Minister read out the Democratic Labour Party's position in relation to complaints. That was part of our programme in the period 1981 - 1985. I had meetings with the Commissioner about introducing a complaints procedure where the public would

be given the opportunity to feel a greater sense of impartiality and fairness from the complaints procedure. We were batting it around and never came to any final conclusion before the Elections.

But I remember this. I made a statement about it in New York and I made a statement **about** it here. The next thing I knew the call-in programmes were inundated with calls criticising me for wanting to set up a complaints authority. Luckily, some of the calls were identified to me as coming from policemen.
11.00 a.m.

I believe that some of them were.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I give you two minutes to conclude.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. But we have to get a separate complaints authority. I said I was bringing a Resolution in here but I was away one week sick and the other week I was away, out of the island so that I have not brought the Resolution yet but I intend to bring it. It is clearly set out in the Schedule to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984 in England how their complaints authority functions. Jamaica has just seen the need to introduce it. I do not think we can resist it any longer. We have the precedents. We have to adapt them and make them suit our own circumstances. But as we are doing that, there is a whole area that needs also to be looked at. The Police Act is now, in some instances, out of date. We need to modernize the Police legislation. We need to do something about the promotion rules and we need to do something about the procedure for disciplinary **proceedings**.

I still maintain - I do not mind that I will get the answer that the Police is a disciplined Force - and I cannot understand how you can charge a policeman for an offence against discipline and he must make a statement. The ordinary criminal, when charged for a crime as serious as murder has the right to remain silent. But you force the policeman to make a statement because it is said to be a disciplined Force. He must make a statement. Those that come to me in advance, I tell them what to write but they do not go back and write what I tell them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What I tell them is like 2 lines.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. I have seen the complaint. I have understood it. I reserve my defence. That is the statement. But they do not do it. They feel they must go into a long set of things. But why should a policeman be disadvantaged? Am I finished, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let me just finish the sentence then, Sir. Why should a policeman be disadvantaged *vis-a-vis* other persons who are charged? I do not feel it is right.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. John caught my eye.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure that all of the anecdotal discussion that takes place about the exchange of charges relating to criminal activity, whether drug involvement or otherwise, is going to assist in this particular debate. My understanding from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is that it is in fact these kinds of allegations that do a lot to demoralize the Police. A responsible reaction to that would be to avoid this continuing saga of anecdotal and other supposedly authoritative positions on the respective approaches of politicians to the question of drugs and so on. I am just putting that caution because I take the injunction of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South seriously, if he believes, as I do, that the concept that the only time politicians are censured for their involvement in criminal activity is in here or on the platforms, but that otherwise we have free rein in this country. There are many of us who, by virtue of wayward members of our family, have suffered and seen suffering in our own personal family as a result of involvement in drugs. I do not trade the charges. I made a grave error when I was a lot younger on a political platform in that regard.

I perhaps realize myself, personally more than anything else, the impact of these silly approaches by individuals in the House towards the issue of drugs. I learn the hard way sometimes. You may be young and giddy headed and there may be older people who make you do stupid things.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But somebody put you up to something in St. John too, not on the platform. I could talk about that now... but I am not exchanging those kinds of blows because that is silly. Somebody put you up to foolishness too.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Somebody has put him up to that kind of thing too because I cannot believe that he would do it himself. I am not going to let it go to the record. It was a blatant untruth that he would not put on the platform for fear that if he did it he may find himself in trouble, so he decided to tell a snowcone vendor or somebody else and it spread throughout St. John. I do not believe in that

approach. What I **have** to say about politicians I will say on the political platform or in this Chamber. What I say in this Chamber I promise my constituents that I will commit either to the written word in public or on a political platform. That is the approach I have decided to take.

I admit that I made an error at one point and the person against whom that error is directed knows the error I made and cannot say to anybody in here that I have been as foolish as not to understand how pervasive the question of drug use and crime and so on are in this society.

The question of trading charges is silly. Let us move on from that stage and recognize, firstly, that, if we do not do something about the ability of the law enforcement agencies to handle crime in this country, the people themselves will take the law into their own hands. That would be devastating, not only for the social fabric but for the entire development of Barbados. If the public of Barbados felt that they could no longer have confidence in the ability of the police and the other institutions that are to deal with crime and decided to take crime into their own hands, we would then have a grave social crisis, because it would impact on us too. They would eventually decide: we could as well come in here and let us not worry with elections and laws, we will come and take over in here.

Let us understand, therefore, that it is true that all Barbadians should have in their hearts, at the very least, the desire to see an improvement in law enforcement in Barbados. But the debate is wideranging. At one stage we are accused on this side of being dictators, when you are debating the Police Force. But when you come to the Police, one gets the impression that you are being accused of being soft on crime. I do not want to reduce it to those very simple statements. That is the impression I have got from this debate, that when you seek to deal with something the debate can range from accusations of dictatorship to accusations of being soft on crime.

There is the issue of how to deal with the question of the Police, whether you need more Police or better trained Police. Apparently that is a fundamental issue which I cannot solve and I leave that to the experts to solve it. I believe that the Honourable Member for St. James South, the Honourable Minister of Justice and Public Safety, must be congratulated for his commitment to a number of reforms, not only in the Police Force. The Court of Appeal has come on stream. It has had difficulties, it is true. I have seen an improvement.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is the person who likes to speak on penal reform. I believe the Prisons come under this Head. I am happy to see that there have been some adjustments in the approach to prisoners in Glendairy Prisons. That is just my view. I know people think I am soft on crime and so on. But I am going to

tell you that I feel strange when I go into **Glendairy** Prisons and have to interview prisoners. I see fellows who were in sixth form with me, Combermere's sixth form, when I pass the gates of Glendairy Prisons, fellows who I know were brighter than I in fifth form and perhaps in fourth form and who I believe could really make a constructive contribution to Barbados but might have become **rastas** and taken the wrong approach in life or whatever. I feel some empathy with them and I appreciate the efforts made by the Honourable Member for St. James South through his Ministry to improve the intellectual and social skills of prisoners while they are in prison. That is something to be commended.

11.10 a.m.

The discussion on the police can be deficient if it focuses simply on numbers, equipment, deployment and so on. I want to pick up a point made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Perhaps if I sound a little political in this I have a reason for it because I am the General Secretary of a political party. He talks about the kinds of overtones that can come from politicising these issues. A search warrant was recently issued to search somebody's house in this country and people, instead of focussing on the issue, start to say that it was politically motivated by the Democratic Labour Party.

I was shocked at the statement of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West in the press because he seemed to me to be giving credence, and maybe I am not a wise reader, but he seemed to me to be giving credence as fact that Barbados was becoming a police state, that there was political intervention in the Police, that the Democratic Labour Party could give instructions for people to issue search warrants. Now, I want to make my position very clear because I have a fundamental problem with it. That whole issue I consider to be a watershed and a statement of how some of the institutions in this country respond to certain people.

I have written as the parliamentary representative of St. John when I was a backbencher because I am not departing from my collective responsibilities or my other responsibilities. I have written as a backbencher to the police department, I don't remember whether it was to an officer or to Commissioner, about people being beaten in the course of the execution of search warrants, not being shown search warrants, all kinds of things. We have had complaints made in here and to the best of my knowledge no investigation has been conducted, and no senior authority of the police department picked up the telephone and called my constituents.

I had one particular case, because I understand it is not my duty to send anybody down to the Commissioner of Police, but on one occasion, because I felt that there should

be some kind of discussion with the person who alleged that he was wronged, I **arranged** for him to **see** the Minister who spoke to him about police procedures and that kind of thing. Here was a young man who had almost been brutally beaten and had his pants ripped off in his village in the course of executing a search warrant.

Now there are other people in Barbados who apparently are not to be searched. Well, I want to speak for me. So long as they produce a search warrant, the police are welcome. Sometimes the fellows from District C do pass around and we may have a chat. They are welcome to my home **as** a politician, welcome. If they are searching they just have to produce the search warrant. Other than that they are welcome in my home. I don't require any special conditions. I do not want anybody to warn me before they are searching me. I do not require, as a politician, and I know my colleagues feel equally the same way, we do not require any special treatment so long as they don't come on the premises and beat people, or come and carry out a search in a vicious manner or do any of the other things which people allege which may very well not be true.

The concept that the police cannot search my home because I was born in **Wanstead** Gardens as distinct from being born in **Chapman** Lane is something that I think is unreasonable. The fact that anybody in any Government department should, on that basis, feel it their duty almost to apologise to that person, is something that I am concerned about because, as I have said, nobody grovelled when I complained for my constituents. Nobody grovelled at my feet and told me; we are so sorry, it was an error. I want to make that point very clear. I don't ask for any concessions in that regard. That kind of thing does more damage to the morale in the Police Force than any of the talk about **drugs**.

I hope that members will remember, because as I say, that to me is a watershed. I consider the way in which that matter was done to be an error of judgment, and it only contributed to the further publicity of a non issue. I have also said to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that I thought his **response**, in my view, in the context of what happened, was shameful. That is my view. I don't know how other people feel...

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ... and he joined, as far as I am concerned, in politicising an issue when there was absolutely no attempt by the Democratic Labour Party and there has never been such, to influence the affairs of the Police Force through those means, or to issue information about people who are presently members or formerly members.

I want it to form part of the record. I owe a duty to the 10 000 people who support the Democratic Labour Party as its members and to the other several thousands who are supporters to make that statement.

Some of the laws are going to be updated shortly. I believe that will answer the problems which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has raised about evidence. I want us to focus our attention now, on the factors that perhaps contribute more to crime than on simple matters like police strength and this kind of thing. I expect and hope the debate, therefore, would address some of these issues, particularly the factors that impact upon young people and create the conditions which would make them turn to a life of crime or be involved in crime. If the debate takes that direction I will have more to say on this matter. Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just let me say there was an earlier indication that the Member for St. Joseph wanted to speak.

Mr. CHELTENHAM: I am grateful, Mr. Chairman, that at long last I caught your eye. This, Mr. Chairman, is an important debate. There can be no question that the issue of crime and lawlessness and the most effective techniques for combatting the high incidence of lawlessness and violence in the society has made this an important national issue in Barbados today. I join with all those in this House who have made the point that this is a matter above partisan politics. I think the way the debates have been conducted since the mid-1980s has been unfortunate and I was aware of the very serious charges that were made by the other side with respect to some of my Cabinet colleagues and members of the Barbados Labour Party being involved in crime and particularly in drugs. I thought that was most unfortunate and I hope we never return to the situation in this country where those charges are lightly made for easy political gain with respect to politicians on either side when in truth and in fact there is no evidence of being involved in drugs or criminal activities.

The issue has 2 dimensions. There is a local dimension and there is an external dimension. At the local level there can be no doubt that a lot of people in this country are living in fear, considerable anxiety. Some are actually living in distress because they themselves are friends or family of victims of crime and violence in recent times.

At the external level there can be no doubt that Barbados has within the last 2 years or so, developed a very ugly name and it has not been at all helpful to our tourism. In fact, Barbados' tourism will not grow, regardless of whatever steps are taken, unless we do something to correct the ugly image which Barbados has

acquired and has rapidly acquired externally with respect to the incidence of crime and violence.

As I understand it, repeat visitors are turned off and those who were thinking of visiting us for the first time, are seriously discouraged.

11.20 a.m.

Now Jamaica went that way, Mr. Chairman, from the mid-1970's when their economy ran into trouble. There was simultaneously an increase in the incidence of crime and violence. Their tourism, too, suffered for a while. Jamaica, because of its large size, and this is an important difference, was able to practise what we call enclave tourism whereby, even though Kingston continued to have a bad name, yet between St. Ann's Bay, which is about 120 miles out, they were able to concentrate their tourism there. So their tourism continued to prosper although they had their setbacks along the way, notwithstanding the large and deep reputation for crime in Jamaica. They were able to sell it abroad that crime was concentrated in Kingston.

I am not too sure that we, as a small country, will be able to practise enclave tourism and sell it abroad by saying that it is only concentrated in a small portion of the island and not spread across the island. In fact, Mr. Chairman, the point that I wish to make is that for many years in Barbados and, in fact, according to the traditional pattern serious crimes of violence against the person and many crimes against property were largely concentrated in urban and suburban Barbados. We have the situation now where all Barbados is the target for the criminals and the people in St. Joseph, St. John, and St. Thomas were not accustomed to having anything but rape incidents and serious crimes of violence either against property or against the person in their areas. Now all of a sudden St. Joseph, St. Thomas, and St. John are very much in the limelight in relation to crime. It is very distressing to the people in these areas who now know of this sort of experience on this scale.

I believe with the tradition relating to the concentration of crime in the country, the police and surveillance resources were largely concentrated, too, in urban and suburban Barbados. I want to be assured that, in this new ball game which we are apparently in, where the incidents are so widespread that the people of St. Joseph and rural Barbados will not be overlooked in terms of getting some increased police resources and increased surveillance, the problem is not helped by the fact that the street lighting is not as good as it should be. We now see exposed the extent to which rural Barbados has been neglected in these basic facilities. As part of the techniques of combating the crime in rural Barbados, we will need some increased street lighting among other things, not to mention, an increase in the police presence. The

incidents at the Flower Forest and in **Bloomsbury**, Horse Hill, Bathsheba and other areas have served to make the point which I make.

Mr. Chairman, the Commissioner of Police's response to the problem in the country, in the sense of answering, has been the consistent position of the Police, a request for more resources and more manpower. I believe this is too simplistic an answer to the problem. The problem has many dimensions. Better deployment of resources, paying more attention to priority areas, and getting more support from the public are important **areas** in this fight against crime.

I am not satisfied that the Police get as much support from the public as they could get and should be getting. Other Members have already addressed this particular problem. But there can be no doubt that, generally speaking, the Police do not have a good reputation with the public. The Police is seen as the pure in heart but there are lots of people in the Force who have not done its reputation any good. There can be no doubt about it that there is a lot of beating out there and, at a time when the Police are under pressure to come up with answers, there are a lot of excesses that go on.

We must put in place at a soon date the machinery for people to develop more faith in the Police Force. We must have the independent body dealing with complaints. The idea of a policeman investigating a policeman is seen as an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. Whether that is true or not does not matter. The point is the perception that you are appealing from Caesar to Caesar. As long as that **perception** persists, you are not going to help the Police Force itself. While there is some resistance in the Police Force, in some sections at least, to this independent mechanism coming into being, I think the Police will be well advised to reflect on and to relax their resistance because it is in their interest that these mechanisms be put in place.

Now everywhere in the world there is this problem, Mr. Chairman. This is nothing peculiar to Barbados. In a big country however, like the United Kingdom, you can get the Police Force in another area to supervise and investigate police activity in another part of the country. Indeed, that was the technique used to expose the enormous injustices resulting from police malpractices at the back of the story of the Birmingham Six and all the other malpractices that have now come to light and have shocked the English society. It is particularly bad in a country like Barbados and indeed in many parts of the world where the establishment, meaning the Courts, perceive the Police Force as itself part of the establishment. It is not easy to bring cases involving police malpractices before the Court and succeed. That is very understandable because an establishment view is taken that you must not accept, in the

face of the most overwhelming evidence, anything to lame the name of the police. It is going to be a very important move with dispatch. He cannot be too busy. It is an important technique in the fight against crime that we try to win the increase confidence of the public in the police.

Now I want to touch on another area. It has got to do with the notice of priority. I am in the Courts **everyday**. There are big issues of crime out there in the society and you still get a lot of the Courts' time taken up with the **youngster** who is riding down the road and not having a light or a bell. But often the police must understand they have a role to talk to that chap. Quite often, none of that goes on but he is charged and scarce time in the Courts is taken up dealing with those issues. I **am** not suggesting that is not an offence too and that it does not endanger other road users. I am concerned with the large number of cases that still continue to occupy the attention of the Courts when in truth and in fact other priority areas should be attracting more attention. It seems to me the first offender in that area by a youngster 16 or 17 years should result in a caution of warning rather than bringing him before the Courts.

Equally too, the environment is being disfigured by too much bad language. At the **same** time, I think there are still too many cases of that being brought before the Courts. The cautionary device we are talking about may be employed for such cases particularly in relation to some of the first offenders.

I think the fact that prisoners have escaped and we have so much difficulty in finding them is also a reflection that the public is not co-operating with the police as they should. There can be no doubt that there must be some people out there...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes to conclude.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:...who know the whereabouts of some of these **criminals**. I get the impression, without having any evidence but just listening to people talk, that some of these men who are at large are in houses being protected when the police are looking for them in gullies, caves and in fields. If we have the right environment in which we are operating, in which the people have faith in the police, that they are there to protect them, that they will themselves very rarely, if at all, do anything wrong and will not indulge in the excesses which regularly we have to charge them with, I think that people will more readily come forward and give the police information. I think it is important in this fight against crime that we try to strengthen the image of the police with the public as a helpful, friendly and supportive Force.
11.30 a.m.

Mr. H. **deB. FORDE**: Mr. Chairman, this debate has ranged over a whole host of matters relating to the organisation and structure of the Police Force, from recruitment to management, to deployment, to interaction between the police and the law courts, interaction between the police and the public; but central to the whole issue is the obvious concern about the state of law and order in Barbados. Even that is not new, because for the past few years this party has certainly been **articulating** most clearly the dangers that were being posed to the society, the solutions to some of the problems that were occurring, and we had issued an early call that the issue of law and order should have been treated on a non-partisan basis.

I am therefore appalled today at some of the sanctimonious statements that have come from the Honourable Member for St. John and his rather late confession of the ignorance which he showed when he was a much younger person in the manner in which he approached these issues. I would like to believe that the Democratic Labour Party had seen the light and had shed itself of the normal partisan approach which it takes to issues of crime in Barbados, but I doubt **it**. I believe that whenever the Democratic Labour Party is out of power it is ruthless enough to use any means, no matter whom it tarnishes, in order to retain power. The Barbados Labour Party has taken, usually, a much higher stand than this and we paid very bitterly and suffered previously for it.

High ranking members of the Democratic Labour Party launched a blistering attack on members of the Barbados Labour Party and associated them in the minds of the public with orchestrating crime and with drugs. The former Honourable Member for St. James North, Mr. Lionel Craig, suffered grievously at their hands. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South and his family suffered at their hands. Mr. **Trotman** suffered grievously at their hands. The former Prime Minister, Tom Adams, suffered grievously at their hands and at the mouth of Mr. **Errol** Barrow and Mr. Peter Morgan. Wives of Members of this side of the House have had to go to court and file actions in **court**...

Hon. P. M. **GREAVES**: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member has been a Member of this House for over 20 years and I presume that he must know, or ought to know, the rules of this Chamber. There is an identifiable person by the name of a Mr. Peter Morgan and the Honourable Member must know that such a name should not have been called here in this debate. I am asking that the matter be withdrawn and **struck** from the record.

Mr. H. **deB. FORDE**: If the Honourable Member wishes me to withdraw Mr. **Morgan's** name, I will, but I

will substitute in its place a former Honourable Member of this House, who lived in Christ Church but lives in St. John now, and who has associated with the Democratic Labour Party.

When it came to the issue of tarnishing politicians, we were tarnished deliberately by the Democratic Labour **Party**. I appeared in a case called Craig v. Thomas Washington Miller, leading for the plaintiff. The defendant gave evidence in the case, Mr. Chairman, to say that daily he received instructions from a former honourable Member of the Democratic Labour Party, who carries a knighthood and who was one time aspiring to the highest office in this land, to go into the constituency of the present Prime Minister and to tell people in their houses how Members of the Barbados Labour Party, and particularly Mr. Craig, were engaged in drugs. The then defendant apologised to the court for what he had done and said it was a lie, so the Democratic Labour Party has no ground on which anybody can believe them about asking now for the high moral ground to be taken. The point is that the Democratic Labour Party has been the most scandalous party and vicious in the manner in which they have used the **issue** of crime in this country. They have done the same with some members of the Police Force too. I make no apologies for anything I say. The problem is that the police have to learn to get above that sort of thing.

Aside.

Mr. H. **deB. FORDE**: Sir, the Honourable Member says it cuts both ways. I started the modernisation of 'the Police Force in Barbados.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: I have already cautioned Members not to introduce anything they think they hear as Asides in the debate. It is not fair, because such Asides are not recorded.

Mr. H. **deB. FORDE**: Sir, we have suffered from what the Honourable Member for St. John called anecdotal manners of looking at this matter, but in the process, whilst they have gained power from their ruthlessness, they have destroyed the credibility of politicians, including themselves, and they have dragged the Police Force to the position that they have destroyed sometimes our confidence in the Police Force and the general public's confidence in the Police Force. That is what they have done. The politicians in the Democratic Labour Party must take some of the blame for this atmosphere, and I am not making any apologies in this House. I have been in public life for too long now and have tried always to take a high road, but I have recognised that because we take the high road the Democratic Labour Party would take our good nature and use it to our disadvantage. They must therefore be told in no uncertain terms that I have no misgivings about them when it comes to dealing with the issue of crime.

Sir, almost 18 months ago I asked for the establishment of a national task force on crime and I said then that the **party** was prepared to look at this issue in a non-partisan way, to put our heads jointly together with all persons in the country to deal with the various facets of crime that have manifested themselves in the community. I have never had a response from the Democratic Labour Party on this issue. The newspapers wrote about it, commentators wrote about it, but I still believe that we need a very wide ranging national task force to look at all facets of the crime issue as they show themselves up in our community. In fact, Mr. **Chairman**, we considered the issue of crime and law and order to be so fundamental that it was the first issue that we addressed on page 1 of our Manifesto. We wrote then: "Immediate steps will be taken to strengthen the law enforcement agencies to enable them to deal effectively with the present wave of violent crime, and a National Task Force on Crime will be established to probe the causes and propose solutions in the medium and long term to the problems of escalating crime." At the time, we took a stand that those issues be raised to that level. We tried to get it to that level.

11.40 a.m.

If there is now a renewed and genuine commitment by the Democratic Labour Party to take the issue of law and order on to that level, then, let us see them show their good faith in that **way** for the future. History must never record that they took some high road and the Barbados Labour Party took the lower road. It is the other way. I have no apologies for that whatsoever.

Let me **say** that in 1976, after 15 years of Democratic Labour Party rule, we did not find a police force that was modernised. **We** found the Police Force full of problems from the lack of physical conditions. I came in and found policemen who were doing 80 and 88 hours a week, both on call and actually on active duty, who had to sleep on the floor at Central Police Station. That is after 15 years of Democratic Labour Party rule. I came in and found the Police Force lacking in physical wherewithal throughout the country in the stations in which they remained. I came in and found the Police Force had just about 800 men and only 28 walkie-talkies to respond all over the island, and a **sad** lack of other aids for proper policing. Within 2 years, I had a very substantial report prepared and one of the issues that was urgent for us to address was the lack of proper training in the Police Force of Barbados.

You can look at the police reports between 1978 and afterwards at the time when I had responsibility and you will see the tremendous increase that took place both in local and overseas training.

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

Mr. H. **deB.** FORDE: In fact, Sir, we laid then the foundation for moving the Force from 800 men – at one stage there were 886 to 1200 and I laid the foundation as well for improving training and establishing a modern Police Training College. We started the planning for that as well as taking away certain duties in order to reduce the man .hours at the time. To compensate them for the time they were spending beyond the 40-hour week, I got introduced the duty allowance for the police. All that is history, Sir. I do not get in here and blow my trumpet, as I need to do. Sometimes I have to remind Honourable Members that no matter how much they talk they must recognise that I set out to modernise the Police Force and put it on the road where it would be an efficient and effective force to deal with the issues that come before the country today.

I set out also to look at the other problems. I set out to look at the problems concerning the interaction between the police and the public. The first time that the police had a proper public relations section set up – the Commissioner could tell you – was when I set it up and sent a very distinguished policeman, Mr. Long, who has subsequently died, for his **first** training in public relations. Whether it was in the scientific aspect of policing, whether it was in public relations, or whether it was management within the Force, we started to address all aspects of the problems that had accumulated in a force that had now to interact in a modern and growing Barbados.

I believe that there are some things that have to be done to the Force and done very urgently. My friend, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, has addressed most of those matters already and will speak later. I do not want to go over the ground that he has touched on. I just want to make one point on **surveillance** and the aid to proper policing. I do not believe that the grant of \$900 000 in these Estimates is adequate at all. The needs of the Police Force in terms of aids, whether in vehicles or anything else, are too great to be answered by \$900 000. I believe we need a proper 5-year development plan for the Police Force. We need to reduce some of the physical and outdated plants that they have and relocate police stations in smaller areas where they are **effective**.

Mr. CHAIRMAN Your time has expired.

Mr. H. **deB.** FORDE: We need to put in place, as well, a proper system of ensuring that they have all of the aids, including helicopter services. I am sorry my time has run out. I must come back.

Mr. **DeL.** O. BRADSHAW: It is heartening to hear during this debate a call for moving the debate on police and law and order to higher ground. Before we can get to higher ground, I feel that we will have to start looking at the lower ground first. What I am going to say in

here today might startle some people but it has to be said. A number of years have passed. I have sat, in here and outside, and listened to a lot of things being said about the police. I have heard Members on the other side say a lot of things. I am hearing things about moving things from the political domain. Earlier this week and last week, I heard a Member from that side **talk** about interference; about the members of the Barbados Labour **Party** being involved with something with the police to **prevent** them from **carrying** out their duties. What I want to state here today is that in 1978 a constituent of mine, Victor 'Pele' **Parris**, died. This country was in complete disarray. All kinds of views were expressed. Everybody was a fireside lawyer. They knew everything, and yours truly, Mr. Chairman, and my family, had to undergo insults, abuse, threats and all sorts of things. I have had to seek an injunction from the Court or take action to prevent one **person** from spreading such dangerous rumours against a Member of this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Chairman, in 1986, during the election campaign, Members of the Democratic Labour Party, including the Member for St. Michael West... I was present at a meeting when I heard him say that **DeLisle** Bradshaw was a suspect. I heard him say that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member must not mislead the Committee. The Honourable Member should give the full information. I read from a newspaper..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let's have some order, please.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: That is why I am raising the matter. I want to see the men from the mice. I was at a public meeting in my constituency and I heard the Honourable Member refer to DeLisle Bradshaw as a suspect, and my opponent then, of the Democratic Labour Party, was a witness.

Mr. Chairman, it did not end there. One would have thought that all was well.
11.50 a.m.

During the election campaign Members of the Democratic Labour Party were campaigning. They took Pele's father around campaigning house to house, telling him and the people in St. Michael South East that if they voted for the Democratic Labour Party it would be an opportunity for them to have me arrested. The people of St. Michael South East voted against me and the seat was won by the Democratic Labour Party candidate. It did not end there.

In the last Election, 1991, I heard 2 Senators from the Other Place, at Golden Rock stating that they wanted the Pele case reopened. I am calling today to have the Pele

case reopened. **The** public of Barbados wants it. It must all hang out once and for all. I have suffered enough. I think the public of Barbados, above all, needs to be treated properly and decently by this Government.

I will go as far as to say this. I have never disclosed this to the House. During the Commission of Enquiry I volunteered **fingerprints**. It was agreed then by the **Malone** Commission that those fingerprints should be destroyed in my presence. I never went to the Police Station to destroy them. They are in the custody of the police at the moment.

I say all this, Mr. Chairman, because I want those who are in authority to recognise now what I am saying. You have fingerprints and, as I understand it, they are very vital to any case. I volunteered them. You have all the files that were held by the Barbados Labour Party and its Cabinet. You have a Commissioner of Police and some of the police that **took** part are still in their posts. I do not want one iota of information to be hidden now. I want it all. The time has passed, from 1978 to now. You cannot go into an election campaign and tell people that you are going to reopen a matter that was on the lips of all Barbadians and now you say you cannot have an enquiry. I am calling on the Government, the Attorney General or the Minister of Public Safety, to make a public statement. You can have all the files and whatever information there is. Let it all hang out. I am prepared to give evidence if they want me again. **My** name should be cleared. The public of Barbados must **know** the truth otherwise the Democratic Labour Party must and should be condemned on this matter. I **ask** no quarter and I give none.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: My name is not clear with anything. It is all right for people to talk about the integrity of **politicians**. Five of my relatives passed away and it is alleged that a Member of this Honourable Chamber was in my constituency saying that because of the death it is a matter of retribution. Mr. Chairman, this is no laughing matter.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I have spoken to the Honourable Member. I was man enough to tell him what I heard. I am saying this is a dangerous thing. When you hear people **talk** about interference and the nasty insinuations of politicians, we have to understand what they are **talking** about. It is all right having fancy speeches and the pretty language about raising the debate on higher ground but, at the same time, you could hear during the course of this debate talk about the Leader of the Opposition and what took place.

What I am going to say for the Leader of the Opposition now is that at least he never sought to

interfere with the Commission of Enquiry. That is what I can say for him and that should be on record. Despite what the Prime Minister said, pointing at him, thinking that would embarrass him, I can stand up and say today that it did not embarrass him because the enquiry was held and he did not interfere. Those who said they had information were asked to come and give it. I want them to either speak up now or forever hold their peace. Sir, I call on the Government today to carry out a full probe and open up the enquiry. Let us have the enquiry as they promised the people of Barbados.

'I have heard it said all that time that somebody is going to take care of me. Who is going to take care of me? I can take care of myself. It was just a matter at that time and if I had returned to this House after 1986 I would have made the same speech as I have made here today. The name of my family is at stake. Members of Parliament must understand that, as a fraternity, they too are plagued with this. It must live to haunt them. People are saying a lot of things about our families. We must stop this once and for all and stop involving the police.

Some people will say they are getting information from the police. It is dangerous for politicians to say that they are getting information. I have heard these remarks in here. I have heard it from "big-up" people, people with sources. There are some policemen engaged in that sort of activity. I was standing and I heard an Inspector of Police saying - he did not even know me - that if he put his hand on me what he would do. I was standing there and he did not know who was ~~Delisle~~ Bradshaw. This was 1979. It is serious. I am saying within the Police Force there are some people whose mouths are too big. They say things that should not be said and embarrass the Police Force and the Commissioner of Police sometimes. This is what must be said. Some irresponsible members of the Force at the highest level are doing that and then feel by going to a politician and talking this son of thing that it is doing them good.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes more.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I said I had to get up and voice my opinion on this because Pele lived in St. Michael South East. His father lives there. I am calling for the enquiry and I want to have the matter fully ventilated. Let all the facts hang out so that Pele's father and family would know who was telling the truth and who was telling the lies. Honourable Members from that side must understand that I am not going to rest from here in calling for a full disclosure of all the facts, files, as whatever they know about the matter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, coming as I do after the Honourable Member who has just spoken, I would

merely say that I have no position one way or the other, on whether they have the enquiry now. There are a number of people on hearing the Honourable Member call for the enquiry who would wonder profoundly why, during the period between 1976 and 1986, the Government did not have the enquiry that he is calling for.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is not correct. I did say that there was the Malone Commission of Enquiry but...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have made the point.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: No, No. The Honourable Members on that side made the call. They said they would reopen the enquiry and I am calling on them to do just that. That is all I am saying.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Senators called for it? I have no doubt the Senators will see that it is reopened if it wants reopening. All I would say on that in passing is that the Honourable Member, in the course of his speech, indicated that I said that he was a suspect. The Honourable Member did not say that he was not a suspect,

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do not tell me that. You cannot get up and say that I said you were a suspect as though I said something about him. The Honourable Member is my friend. The Honourable Member did not say that I was speaking at a public meeting in which he was in a house at the public meeting. What I said about the Honourable Member - the Honourable Member does not wish me to carry on this - is that it was being said. That is what I said, Sir. I was on a platform. Is there anyone among us who is going to pretend that that issue was not a political issue? The Honourable Member has raised it.
12.00 noon

Asides.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am saying, in the presence of the Honourable Member, in this House the Honourable Member looked in an accusatory way and he mentioned the Member for St. Michael West, after complaining that he has been villified and to the uninitiated it would seem by the fact that he named the Member for St. Michael West that the Member for St. Michael West was involved in the perpetration of the heinous activity which the Honourable Member describes. The Honourable Member heard every single word that I said that night. He was trapped in a house. I spoke at length on the Honourable Member. I am not going to repeat all the things I said on the platform. But the Honourable Member knows that if I had

said **anything** about him that could not be said, he would have dealt with me. He spoke to me the next day and explained the dilemma in which he found himself when I was speaking from the platform which is not the business of this House at the moment.

I want to come back to the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition is very good at what he attempted to do when he spoke. **Anyone** who listens to the Leader of the Opposition will believe that those darling angels over there, the Honourable Members from the Barbados Labour Party, have been like Caesar's wife was supposed to be. They have never said anything on a political **platform** that could even remotely be considered to have dragged anybody's name into anything. But he gazed upon the Members of the Democratic Labour Party. And to hear the Honourable Member tell it. We **took** a substantial amount of time villifying **the** poor, defenceless, innocent, virginal Barbados Labour Party.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well we did not have Tom Adams on our side so we did not make suing a profession. We did not make suing a profession. Tom **Adams** himself made suing a profession. The Honourable Member knows that on many occasions... The Honourable Leader of the Opposition will tell you that on one occasion when I would have successfully sued him we agreed that I should not sue him. I am not getting involved with that.

Mr. Chairman, I just wish to ensure that when this Honourable Member who talked about confidence in the Police Force, the Leader of the Opposition, tried to give the impression that the Democratic Labour Party was instrumental in causing a drop in the confidence of the Police Force. I want to remind the Honourable Member that **three** Attorneys-General, not one, the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for St. **Thomas** and the Honourable Member for St. George South went to the population of this country and masticated the Commissioner of Police.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You did not? They ate him without salt. How can you expect that the people of a community who, on hearing any three Attorneys-General who called for the resignation of the Commissioner of Police, and they stated why in terms, that stopped just short of accusing him of dereliction of duty... They accused him of all kinds of things. And then the three of them come in here and are now holier than thou in the most mealy-mouthed fashion I have heard...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I would ask the Honourable Member to withdraw that, Sir.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: He must understand that whenever I have cause to criticize..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member cannot now make a speech. You asked him to withdraw and he has withdrawn the remark.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I withdraw the remark, Sir. I go further. The **Commissioner** of Police – not a private, not a sergeant – found it necessary to put a leading Member of the Barbados Labour **Party** in court for blackguarding.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I opened it? I opened It? The Honourable Members over there are saying that we have brought the Police into disrepute. The Commissioner of Police had to put them in court for blackguarding.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the blackguarding did not occur one night when the Commissioner was passing around a corner and saw the other gentleman. It was on a political platform opposite Government Headquarters and the words which were spoken are words which are well known. I feel so badly about the words that I would not repeat them, even in here, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think I should have to remind Honourable Members again about shouting across the table.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am saying, Sir, that before Honourable Members are going to come in the House and **try** to give the impression that a political party called the Democratic Labour Party is responsible for what has happened to the Police, I wish them to take the big beam from out of their own eyes.

If the Commissioner of Police who, after all, Sir, determines whether a case should be brought or not, and if the Commissioner of Police even though perhaps on a technicality – I do not know the details... The case was lost but the Commissioner felt bound in the interest of the Force to bring that case.

The Honourable Members come in here and the Leader of the Opposition is now trying to give the impression that we have villified the Police, we have caused the Police to be **brought** into disrepute.

The other thing I find of interest is that the Honourable Member now claims the credit for introducing the 40-hour week.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition never said so.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I am on a point of order. I said I was on a point of order and I also said that you are misleading the House. I want to state the point of order, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not care. I am defending him now. I am known as a defence lawyer.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot have this. The Honourable Member rose on a point of order and he is entitled to be heard on that point of order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The point of order I was making, Sir, is that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke about 80 hours and 88 hours. He never said he reduced it to 40. The Honourable Member for St. George South on **Friday** night said that the hours came down to 40 on the unilateral decision of the Commissioner.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay, the point is made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition said he gave duty allowances to compensate. Do not mislead the House.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I heard him myself listing his achievements and he listed...

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

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member must not mislead the Committee, Sir. I repeat what I said. When I became Attorney-General the Police were working about 86 to 88 hours a week both on call and on active duty. We set about to reduce the hours with a view to getting them to a 40-hour week. In the meantime we could not – and I said we instituted a duty allowance and took away various

duties from them in addition to increasing the numbers in the Force. That is exactly what I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay, the point is made.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, if the Honourable Member is now not saying that he did not...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, more than one of us oh this side were under the impression...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In that regard, I think we can move on.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In that regard I think we can move on. You said he has, he said he has not.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I was only telling you what I heard. I was not saying what he said, Sir. Let us not dwell on that.
12.10 p.m.

All Honourable Members over there are fully seized of what we said and why we said it. They had the same tongues and they went out and they defended themselves. Honourable Members can't come in here and give any impression that we misled the whole population about them.

The Honourable Member talked about a public relations officer, The public relations officer that he created, called Alan Longe, went to St. George and spoke about the Honourable Member for St. George South. It was not a member of the Democratic Labour Party that discussed the Honourable Member for St. George South at the meeting when the Sugar Producers and all the big white people were there. Is that correct?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Thank you very much. It is the Democratic Labour Party that lambasted the Honourable Member for St. George South. I am not going to get involved in sitting down in here and having them attacking the Democratic Labour Party and giving the impression that we said things about them that were not true. What we said about them were things that were current and I am not going to resile from any position I took then. Any positions I took then would have been based on the information I had and unless I am given information ...

Aside

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, that is what I **was** told. I was told that a shipment came. The Honourable Member thinks I am joking. I was told **from** a reliable source that there was a shipment of windows that came in here in a container and that in between the windows had been packed. That is no idle talk. A container of windows came in here and I got that from reliable sources. I am not a common informer.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not know.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We cannot have a conversation between two Honourable Members.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Honourable Members will not shake me. As I have said, when I come into this House and I speak, I speak on information that comes from reasonably reliable sources.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Not a common one' though. Sir, the question of the police will always be one of controversy when it comes to how many men are required or how many people are required to function.

For the last 30 years in New **York** City there has been a raging controversy between the Mayor's office and the Commissioner of Police as to the number of people which is required for the carrying out of duties in New **York** City. In many of the cities of the United States **the** question of more men, better equipment, all of these things form part of the debate within the administration. Whenever one finds oneself, as a community, where one has to choose priorities because of an absence of funds these issues are going to raise their heads. The signal which this Government has sent is to the extent that it has funds available. It is prepared to put the question of crime on a priority basis. That is the message which these Estimates and which this Head demonstrates.

The Leader of the Opposition is saying that \$900 000 will not be enough. That is probably **true**, but \$900 000 in the context of the overall situation in the Estimates indicates that an attempt is being made to demonstrate that the resources of the country will be **skewed** in the direction of bringing the crime situation under control.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I would just like to say, Sir, that between 1977 ... I am not saying this to do a comparative analysis. I am just pointing out that when you are in Opposition the positions which you will take, and perhaps

correctly, are positions which seek to drive the Government to do even better than it has been doing.

We were able to say, for example between 1977 and 1980 that compared with the situation in 1976 that rape had increased by 28 per cent, that housebreaking had increased by 122 per cent and robbery by 455 per cent.

Now, Sir, we were able to say that in 1980 and 1981. That was based on the information which was available and the statistical information demonstrated that these things had risen to that extent. We were able to make categorical statements about that. That is not in any way to negate the information concerning the present situation or to compare it with what might have been 3 or 4 years ago. The real fact is that the criminals have become more sophisticated and the issue of drugs has become even more pervasive as the shift in pattern of movement from South America to North America has occurred. Barbados which used to be **outside** the pattern found itself being one of the ports of call in the last few years because the drug cartel of Columbia and elsewhere in South America realised that they had to make certain changes. When those changes occur in a system where the police force is after all a small police force in a country that, up until 25 years ago, was a colony, to expect us to have, in Barbados, the same capacity to shift to the high quality surveillance techniques that would be available in New York City and other places might be expecting too much of us. It therefore behoves us to examine the situation to see whether, in fact, the police have not been responding as best they could in the circumstances and for us to recognise that tactics have to be changed and those tactics are in fact in the process now of being changed. That is my understanding of what has happened. I am grateful to you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am grateful to the Honourable Member who just spoke. I had hoped not to **talk** about the case of Commissioner of Police and **Craig** and he brought it in. That case never had a chance. It was ill conceived, even ill-conceived by whoever decided to prosecute. So much so that when it got to the Court of Appeal, the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions was moved to say to the Court, that having reviewed the case he realised that it was totally without merit and he was asking leave to withdraw. That is the end of that. I am not dwelling on that. I don't know how you can blackguard somebody who is out of an island or blackguard somebody who is not present. It is a simple point. Anyhow that is not important, Sir.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke of an idyllic situation and as an ideal crime ...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The point I made ... The Honourable Member seems to have missed the point. I was not discussing the pros and cons of the case per se. I

was discussing the fact that the Commissioner of Police must have felt drawn to bring this case when, in fact, this information had occurred at a political meeting. I was discussing it in the context of the impact it had on the society. That is all I was doing, Sir.

12.20 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Head 28.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is not fundamental. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph would wish **that crime** be diminished of any political flavour. That is an ideal. As other Honourable Members have said, you have to face it that in a limited society like Barbados it is difficult to escape the infiltration of politics into the Police Force. The Commissioner of Police has told me himself to my certain recall on two occasions that he is the Commissioner of Police for Barbados and he will have a difficulty policing Barbados in terms of partisan political position. He cannot be the Commissioner of Police for the Dems and he cannot be the Commissioner of Police for the Bees. He is the Commissioner of Police for the whole Force. That I appreciate. Sadly, that attitude and perspective does not **permeate** throughout the Force. There are very senior people who adopt very partisan positions to the extent that they do not even speak to you. They do not even say "good **morning**" because they are so strongly partisan.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not calling any names in here. I mentioned on Friday one who took leave to go to the DLP dance in New York. I make it clear where he was. I know as a fact the night of the 1986 election – you **talk** about champagne pocket and mauby taste! – champagne was drunk in the police yard there at Central and there was much cheering at the result of the election.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Because when his by-election was finished, champagne flowed too. The Honourable Member does not remember that.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Neither at the campaign headquarters at Skeetes Bay nor at the Barbados Labour Party's Headquarters...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I ruled that was not a point of order.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am saying, Sir, the Commissioner could have difficulty unless politicians try to restrain **them** in terms of their political **partisanship** and try to get it through to constituents and so on. But it is a real fact that there is politics in the Police Force. I am not going to go any further, Sir, because I think we have other things to do.

Sir, on several occasions I have called in here, and this is picking up a thread from the speech of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South earlier, for an amendment to the Evidence Act. Government is preparing a new Evidence Bill. I know that. I had left a draft up there. That has been worked on again and there is a committee with Dr. Fiadjoe and others working on a new Evidence Act. If it is going to take years to bring that, as an interim measure we can do a small amendment that will allow us to take photographs of things which are going to be used as exhibits and samples in relation to drugs. I have said this before. You take a sample of the drug in the presence of the accused **and/or** his legal advisors and have it weighed, signed and certified, do all the necessary paraphernalia that is required and weigh the sample as against the bulk, send the sample for testing. Once the analyst certifies that it is cocaine or cannabis, you destroy the bulk. Because to leave the bulk around is to place temptation in the way of others.

In relation to vehicles and so on, as the Honourable Member has said, all we need is an **amendment** of the Evidence Act to provide for the taking of photographs and the production of the photographs in evidence. You do not have to keep the man's vehicle. Give him back the vehicle.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, video is better, but it is going to be more expensive. We have to look at the simplest way of doing it. Reproduce photographs as a matter of course in virtually every Assize matter and Coroner's Inquiry. That is all we need. I hope that Government will address these matters quickly.

I want to turn to the Prisons, Sir. The way that the Superintendent of the Prison behaved in the last 18 months in relation to attempts at rehabilitation of prisoners gave the impression that all of a sudden something very novel had taken place in Barbados. I am disappointed with the public relations of my party because we neglected to respond. He used to be on the programme "Fish-cakes and Bakes" and all kinds of photographs were published in the Press and so on. He gave the impression that the prisoners are studying and making furniture for the first time and all of that.

Sir, that is far from the reality. During the tenure of both of my predecessors, the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, prisoners have always been engaged in building furniture and baking bread. When I was Attorney General, we extended the facilities up there. The area for the civil debt prisoners was built out of the prison labour when I was Attorney General. The area where they have the stores and freezers was extended when I was there, but more importantly, you would not believe that, since a certain doctor has got involved in a programme of education up here, they are learning for the first time. I know one prisoner, I cannot call his name, who got 5 "0" Levels in prison during the time that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was the Attorney General.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Honourable Members must remember when the prisoners used to have exhibitions at Queens Park of the things they were doing up there. We must remember their exhibits took part in international exhibitions in Canada when the Member for Christ Church West was Attorney General. All that is happening there is not new. It is a continuation and, of course, one welcomes it although I have a personal *skepticism* about the extent to which we can achieve the ideal of rehabilitation in the setting at Glendairy Prison. Indeed, the whole concept of rehabilitation had been questioned even before Sir Rupert Cross died. It is being questioned by Norville Moms in the Chicago scheme where it is felt that it is difficult to achieve rehabilitation in a prison when there are so many other influences coming together. We have to try and do something for them while they are in there.

I deeply regret that we are in this financial bind because I would have thought that we have a golden opportunity now, recognising the state of crime, recognising the overcrowding of the prison and, recognising that overcrowding is caused partly by persons going there on remand as well as by persons committed there, to develop a multi-dimensional penal system, but we have not got the money. I do not know what we are going to do. We need an intermediary type of custodial institution similar in concept to the borstal type of institution in England to deal with that hard core who are giving all of these problems, that group between 18 and 25. Prison is the only solution, it appears, at the moment. That is the only place we can send them to, but we have given consideration to doing something about Dodds and Summervale. Can we re-use, extend or in any way turn some of the buildings at Harrisons, St. Lucy into institutions for some of these youth; who should not be sent to Glendairy, but who should be sent to a custodial institution for discipline and training? I mean tough discipline and training. I have always said that, in these programmes, I would have no

quarrel at all if members of the Defence Force were used to instill the precepts of discipline and give them something useful to do.

12.30 p.m.

I do not know the numbers at Dodds. I tried to get them last week, but I did not. I know they have been coming down.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The fact that the number of girls is increasing is a new phenomenon. The number of boys is 45. I do not know then if we need all that space at Dodds when, if you look over the last 10 to 12 years the numbers have been coming down and have been hovering between 40 and probably 60 at the most. There certainly is more space there than you need for them, but we have to do something seriously about community service orders and punishing young people within the community. We have to try and get it ingrained in the Magistracy of this country...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let me just finish this point, Sir. We must try and get the Magistracy to tack on to some of the orders which they make in respect of young people orders which will impact on the offender in his leisure time. If you catch a fellow with a marijuana cigarette or something, rather than send him up for 6 months, he should be made to do useful work for the community in those hours when he would be going to the Globe Cinema or to the Stadium to watch football or whatever. It should be made a condition of his punishment to do community work for 6 months instead, or in addition to any little fine you give him, or whatever. I think we have to hold them up as examples to the public. Internationally this is the trend that is current in penology, because you cannot build enough prisons. In any event, you are liable to be misusing imprisonment as a form of punishment, when perhaps you ought to be looking at treating the offender and making him operate in a more productive way for the benefit of the total society.

I am obliged, Sir, for the 15 minutes.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want to take this opportunity to respond to some of the concerns of the other Members. It seems as though we are moving away from the police now to the prisons, so this is an opportune moment for me.

The Member for Christ Church South made all relevant points. His concerns are the concerns, I guess, of most of us re the question of the long delay between

prosecution and coming to a conclusion. There are a number of reasons. The lawyers would know, on the one hand, that sometimes the accused persons want the best lawyers as they see it, and the best lawyers are so busy, while sometimes the Police Force is so busy with other things. You must remember we have a very small CID and they cover most of the big investigations, and sometimes we are in 3 or 4 different courts at the same time or investigating other crime, or in the Supreme Court and that causes delay. Sometimes, if it involves drugs they are waiting on the analysts, and there are only one or 2 for that. Sometimes there is no Magistrate. We have that problem now because we have not got the qualified people to be Magistrates and it is creating a serious problem for us as well. There are a number of reasons for the delays.

As far as the exhibits are concerned, this too is something we really have to look at. I believe the Member for St. Thomas explained it quite fully, I do not think I have to go into it **as** **fa.** **as** the Evidence Act is concerned. We do not have to exhibit dead bodies in court, but you have to keep a cow. Sometimes an animal moves from a calf to a cow, it has a calf itself and you are still waiting. We have at **the** Prisons now bulls and heifers, and you never know what happens when they are there. They do not keep them at District A or at the out stations any more, we bring them to the Prisons, because the police have not got **the** time to feed them, but we understand that.

Response time is something, too, which people have to think of. There are people complaining that the police come the day after they are called. It is a question of the numbers. I would like to say, too, that the police are now taken up **with** a lot of domestic matters. Whereas before a lot of domestic matters were solved in the family circle, the police are being called out now to a lot of domestic matters. I believe the Commissioner of Police has just instituted at the training school a course dealing with domestic disputes, because we were getting so many of those complaints.

The Member for St. Thomas wanted to know about the patrols, I believe, by the island constables along with the police, the identification of the patrols. There are a number of areas in which the island constables work with the police, but we prefer not to make it public for the safety of the island constables themselves. They are a bit concerned about it. **A** lot of them work, especially at night, in some of the more troubled areas and I would not like to go too far with that, but they work alongside the police in combating crime.

The Member for St. John made a most valid point when he said that, unless we do something to help the law enforcement agencies do something about crime, people will take matters into their own hands. At this point I want

to say as well, although I have said that the Commissioner of Police can answer for himself, that I do not like the constant attacks on the Commissioner of Police as such, quite frankly. We live in a small society and it has a profound effect on the Force.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Minister must not be sensitive about these things. It is not an attack on the Commissioner of Police personally, but if the Commissioner of Police is Head of the Department and he makes statements for public consumption, he must expect public comment if they go wrong. It is not our party that has ever wanted to send the Commissioner of Police overseas in a diplomatic posting or to the DPP's office. I want to make that clear.
12.40 p.m.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: When politicians say that as soon as they get into power they will dismiss the Commissioner of Police, what does it say to the rank and file? We live in a very small community. It is all right for England, America and Canada to behave that way. It is my opinion that we should refrain from that.

I agree with the Member for Christ Church West regarding the physical conditions of the police stations. That is something that both Governments are guilty of. When we came into office in 1986, we had District D at Hometown, which was the pits. I believe as well that some of the police stations are located away from the population. A lot of them have good views and a lot of money could be made if the sites were sold – District C, District D. The station at St. Lawrence could be moved to the Pine or Fort George.

Asides.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: We have to locate our police stations in areas where the population is growing.

The Member for Christ Church West mentioned a problem about beds. Because policemen now are more mobile, we may find that we buy a lot of beds and then they are not used. So, we have to be very careful. Fellows are working 8 hours. They come in at 5 minutes to 8 and leave after an 8-hour shift. We still have to have a small number of beds for emergencies. So I do not want you to think that the reason why there are not 1250 beds for 1250 policemen is because we do not want them. The fact of the matter is that very few policemen sleep in. As soon as they pass out from the training school, they get a car and can go backwards and forwards.

I do not know if I should comment on the Pele issue, except to say that the file is open. We never close the files on these matters, as far as I understand.

The question of drugs has also been aired a lot in here and we do have an information system which could supply us with much more information on those who are importing or using drugs in this country than many people might think. That is the most I will say about that.

The Members for St. John and St. Thomas mentioned the prisons and rehabilitation. It is very difficult to expect to rehabilitate all of the prisoners. Indeed, however great the efforts are, we must understand that most of them return to the environment which created the problem in the first place. That does not mean that efforts to rehabilitate must not continue.

I should like to say as well that more effort, money and time should be spent in trying to prevent people from getting into prison. The Member for St. Thomas mentioned another facility for first offenders and young offenders. My view is that we should try to do something about the youngsters who are at risk in the first place. I say this because, once a fellow has been convicted, then you have to do more to get him back on track. The stigma is there. It seems to me that a lot of crime which is being committed at this present time is planned in those little groups that you see at the street corners. There is drug taking. We have to do something about them. I do not want to discuss now how to go about it but, unless we can do something to get them off the drugs and out of crime, we will find that, however big we build the Police Force or how many prisons we build, we will never be able to reduce it. We must start with prevention because it is still better than cure.

The other thing is that we have two problems as far as that is concerned. I think most drug users want to get off the drugs, especially when they become addicted. Therefore when, as they see it, society allows them to become involved in crime, then you have a drug addict with a criminal record and he is twice as dangerous as a criminal who has not been on drugs. It is a very serious problem and I believe we should tackle the problem as a matter of prevention rather than cure.

The programmes of the Prisons. The educational programme has been going on for a long time. What we are trying to do is to intensify it. I believe, as the Members for St. Thomas and St. John have said, a lot of educated fellows are in prison. What we are doing as part of our prison programme is to use some of them to teach the other prisoners. That, we hope, will build their self esteem and make them much more responsible when they leave prison. I do not think we should introduce those prisoners who can hardly read and write to that type of programme, but we should use them to help the youngsters to read and write and count.

We have introduced a values education programme because we felt that one of the problems facing our young

people was that they have no concept of values. I want at this point in time to thank the churches for devising a programme. That Committee was headed by the Reverend **Gerry Seale**, Father Taylor from the Roman Catholic Church, Pastor Daniel and other people. It came up with a values education programme which has 9 core subjects and 16 one and one-half hour lessons. The subjects include **Human Development and Growth**, **Self Esteem**, **Family Life**, **Communication**, **Interpersonal Relationships**, **Human Sexuality**, **Responsibility as a Citizen**, **Morals and Ethics** and **Spirituality**.

The first course has just been completed and the idea is that when the inmates leave prison, they will be followed through as far as possible. It is usually for people just about to leave prison who have 4 or 5 months to go. It is difficult to say how successful that is but, hopefully, all prisoners will have an opportunity to benefit from that course.

Recently, we have started a farm project using lands at the Belle and at Lower Estate. The Minister of Agriculture and in particular the Chief Agricultural Officer have drawn up the programme. Those who pass Waterford Bottom would see the trees there. Like all other farming projects though, we are suffering, not from praedial larceny, but from cows. One morning I think we collected 8 or 9 cows from out of the plot. We are having that problem.

12.50 p.m.

The Lower Estate part of the project of at least 22 acres would be for animal husbandry. They are in the process of fencing the whole area and then separating it into corrals for sheep and cows. Hopefully, by the beginning of next month the sheep and cows will be up there. Those are 2 new programmes which we have introduced in an effort to make sure that, when the inmates leave Prison, they would be better citizens and might be able to get some gainful employment.

Mr. Chairman, I think at this point I have covered the areas I want to cover.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour, the SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, Sir, that the sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: 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.
12.55 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Resumed)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, we have had a long debate on this Head beginning from last Friday night. I know that Members are getting a little tired of it and want to move on to another Head. I do not intend to delay the Committee much longer. The Honourable Prime Minister wishes to speak on this Head and I wish to give him an opportunity also. There are a couple of matters, by way of winding up, that I wish to mention.

An important service such as the Fire Service has been given no money for capital development. There is no 623 - Structures, in relation to the Fire Fighting Services. I think that is something to be deprecated. I suppose it is trite for me to say that all of us appreciate the tremendous work the Fire Department does for the country of Barbados.

What concerns me is that, even though we do not have any money assigned for capital development, and one understands the constraints under which these Estimates have been prepared, I would have welcomed - and I want to throw this out to Government generally - that in these days of tight fiscal management and constraints, we ought now to be planning for the days when we have money for the take-off, development and modernisation of the various departments. I am not saying to spend money. I am saying use the period of restraint as a period in which we can plan for the future. To that extent, therefore, I would have hoped that, even if we had put in a token of \$100 000 under Structures for the Fire Department, it would have given Government an opportunity to look at the planning of stations and depots for the Fire Service.

The Minister will find on his files that, when I was Attorney General, I met with the Fire Service Association and invited them to submit their ideas. I had mine and I said to them that I did not want to foist anything on them.

I wanted them to tell me what they envisaged by way of capital development and the location of new stations throughout Barbados. They came up with a plan which was, as far as my memory serves, approved in principle, and there should be something there. It went briefly like this, that we needed more coverage in the north. **Weston** was not enough. You had all of the **development** in the St. James area since **Weston** had been established. You had the developments in St. Peter, St. Lucy and St. Andrew. We needed an additional outpost of the Fire Department somewhere in the north. I am not going to say where. That is a matter of judgement, looking at the demographics and so on and deciding where you would put this additional fire station. But, surely, having regard to changes in the demography of the North, we needed to have an additional outpost there to give better response to the Northern parishes, including St. Andrew.

In addition to that, there was no fire station in St. Joseph or in St. Thomas. We envisaged a fire station at the Cane Garden area where they are building the Venezuelan houses. We wanted to make that into one holistic unit with houses for sale, houses for rent, house spots, a fire station and court which would have then improved the coverage to St. Thomas, St. **Andrew** and St. Joseph. You could leave the one at Four Roads in St. John.

Then on the South and South-Eastern part we needed a station somewhere in the Six Roads **area** because, do not forget, and I think it is something Government must bear in mind, we have the oil fields in the **Woodbourne** area and then back into parts of St. **Philip** there along that main road below Brereton, Edgumbe and so on. If there is a fire in that area at one of the oil fields any day, we are in trouble because we have to rely on the units from the Airport which, in any event, have a commitment to be at the Airport for aircraft coming or going. The development of the oil fields plus the housing development **that** has taken on apace in St. **Philip** which is perhaps the fastest growing housing area, if you like, or parish for housing development, all of that demanded an additional fire depot in that area to provide coverage.

2.10 p.m.

What we had hoped was that if we had gone to the Glebe for the court and police station, we would have used the old Boarded Hall station as a fire outpost. I may be entirely wrong in how I envisage this whole business of providing additional fire department coverage but I throw it out to Government for its consideration. I hope that, as I say, even though we have no money not even a token vote for capital that notwithstanding that the Minister can have, from time to time, ongoing discussions with the department and come up with some plans which can remain there. If you cannot implement them prior to 1996, I will make sure **that** they are implemented sometime after 1993 when that side is obliged to demit office.

Finally you would have had 10 years too many. Right now the country would be glad for you to go. I will tell you about it in the Budget next week before the 6th April. The debate on this Head has tended to concentrate...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I offered the Prime Minister a bet on Friday night, Sir, that he would have the Budget before the 6th April. He would not take the bet. He said to me I am not betting you this time. The bet was very cheap \$5 less 8%. He is so conscious of financial constraints that he would not not even risk \$5 less 8% with me.

The debate on this Head has tended to concentrate on the Police Force, how we can probably improve it, problems of crime, the escalation of crime and so on. But you know that we have not dealt with the other angle. We are looking at immediate responses to the problems of criminality, short-term responses. I just wish to say that as it has become necessary to use the Defence Force for joint patrols as an emergency step until April 15. That is an emotional response. We have to look for long-term solutions and certainly medium-term solutions.

I have said in here several times and I know Members accept it, that there is no single explanation for criminality. The Prime Minister was saying it recently in a statement attributed to him last week or late the week before. It is not unemployment alone. Criminological evidence will not support that kind of conclusion or inference. It is not a one parent family alone. It is not a broken home. It is not bad company alone. It is certainly not television alone that will explain why somebody acts out deviant behaviour. It is a cohobblot if you like. It is not just Durkheim's theory. It is not that alone. But there are a set of things that are inherent in an offender's personality and then are acted out in criminality.

But what it behoves us to do is to try in a scientific way to establish why the youth of Barbados are behaving as they are. I am very gratified – and I have been saying this for years now – the Roman Catholic Bishop made a call two weeks ago. Last week in a column former Senator Prescod said the same thing. While we do all these temporary things we have to try and come to grips. We have to know why the fellows are behaving like this so that we can target by programmes and strategies those areas that are showing themselves up as being prominent in the personalities or the behaviour of the criminal element. This is the only way to do it. You have to do it on a scientific basis. I am sorry. We cannot guess at it. If we guess at it, it is going to be purely judgemental and it is going to be your value judgement against mine and against anybody else's. I say let us try and tackle it.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West has suggested and the Labour Party Manifesto had recommended it a Task Force to deal with it properly. We can get Sociologists. We can get Criminologists, somebody from England or someone who really has experience. Do some surveys and samples.

Finally, Sir, most importantly, immediately if not sooner we need to tackle the social and economic conditions that are underlying the behaviour of young people in Barbados. It was a mistake for the Government to put the money of the training fund into the general Consolidated Fund. It got mixed up with other things and was spent for all kinds of reasons, probably some spent on Sherbourne. We have properly to capitalize the National Training Board. We have to put programmes in place aimed at capturing the young people and directing them or diverting them, if you like, into productive and wholesome activities..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes left.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ... in which they are interested, activities from which they can get some stipend that would help them maintain their dignity as human beings. But to just send home people, leave the 4 000 there who come out of school this summer, if they can find a job they can find one, is not good enough. That cannot be the attitude. We as politicians and the Government more particularly have a responsibility to create conditions to help save the youth otherwise this country is going to be in serious, serious trouble. We see the evidence of social dislocation already to the extent that the Prime Minister has been obliged to make his own comments on it in the Second Reading. We are all aware of it. We all agree that it is unacceptably high. But we have got to do something. We cannot throw our hands up. If we can get any funding from international agencies, let us go and get it. Whatever we can do. But we have to show the human face also. It is all well and good to say lock them up or however people respond. That is not the answer. We have to get hold of them, show the young people that we are interested because they are very, very cynical. In fact they are turned off of politicians. Have you seen any in here in the last week or since 1991? No!

2.20 p.m.

They are disappointed in all of us. They don't believe anything we say. We have made them promises and broken them. We now have to do some self-examination and pull back and apply our minds to providing solutions and programmes for these young people. We have to let them know that we are interested, we genuinely care about them and we want to do something, otherwise, the crime figures will go up. You will bring in the 'cat', you

will bring in hanging, you will bring in all the things and you will still have the problem.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Thank you, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I really do not wish to detain the House on this matter for very long. I wanted to clarify one or two points which have been made by some Honourable Members.

First of all the Member for St. Thomas who has just taken his seat after a balanced presentation on the issue before us although I do not necessarily come to the same conclusion, that he has come to, in respect of failures by Members of Parliament accounting for the lack of interest shown by young people in politics. I do not come to that conclusion.

The two points I wanted to respond to related –

- (1) to the question of the significance of developments in the drug culture and to clarify some impression which the Honourable Member seems to have got that I was not taking the matter seriously in 1987, and
- (2) I wish to say a few words about the establishment of a complaints committee, to hear complaints about the Royal Barbados Police Force. I think it is important to clarify the record.

First of all, in 1987, I made a speech to the Annual Conference of the dominant political party in Barbados. I am sorry the Member for St. Thomas lost his moorings if not he would have been hearing that particular address in his own right.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, I was moored to the Barbados Labour Party from 1957 before the Honourable Prime Minister ever thought of joining the Democratic Labour Party which was formed two years before.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir. This is what I said on that occasion and I am giving an extract from that address in 1987 which I made to the Annual Conference of the Democratic Labour Party. These are my words and you can judge them. I hide nothing back, I will say exactly what I said:

"Drug trafficking and abuse are seen as a global problem. Barbados, like other Caribbean countries, is slowly moving into the drug subculture; and while the situation is not yet as serious as some would have us

believe, it is a matter for national concern. It demands of each Barbadian his or her full co-operation with all Government and non-Governmental agencies in ensuring that all preventive measures are taken.

I myself do not have to wait until there is a public outcry to identify problems or seek to do something about them. There is some information available that persons near some of our schools carry on the business of preparing some of these substances in the hope that they may entice persons from some of the schools to use these mind-bending and soul destroying drugs.

We will seek with every means at our disposal to ensure that the preparation of substances for ingestion into the minds of unsuspecting or suspecting young persons and persons not so young are stamped out as early as possible."

And I went on to say –

"I wish very early to re-emphasise this Party's commitment to ridding our country of the scourge of drugs and drug related problems..."

The point is, I was making a balanced statement on the matter and the statistics at the time corroborated what I was saying. There was a problem, it was an incipient problem, it was growing. It was not a problem that one had to magnify out of proportions at that time but recognise that if it continued unchecked that it would develop into a very major problem. That is the point that I was making.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation. All of what the Prime Minister said was not on the telecast the night. As he would appreciate, it was an excerpt. What lingered with me is that part where he said it wasn't as serious as some people would make out. I think I understand what he is saying now, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The other point I wish to clarify related to the Royal Barbados Police Force. This is what I said in connection with the establishment of a complaints committee:

"Barbadians are a law-abiding people. They are known for their respect for law and order. There is nothing known to me which would lead me to conclude that there has been any change in this Barbadian attitude. Those persons who are entrusted with the task of law enforcement are drawn from the 'wider' society. As in any vocation, there will be those persons who by their conduct may bring discredit to the Force. I should like to feel that the Royal Barbados Police Force does not harbour such persons.

I note with some concern calls for increased powers for the police to deal with the drug problem on the one hand, and on the other, the call by some residents for some independent body to hear their complaints against the police regarding mainly, brutality, oppressive conduct and harassment."

And I continued:

"Again perhaps memories are short, or perhaps people do not listen and observe very attentively. This is now a point at issue."

Now remember I am speaking of 1987. But I recall myself **speaking**, I believe it was during an Estimates Debate some years ago – not last year and not the year before – but when the previous government was in office, I spoke and I said that I believed that there should be an independent body set up in this country to hear complaints relating to the Barbados Police Force. I still hold that particular view.

I am not seeking to influence the direction of the discussion or debate in any way.

And I continued:

"I believe that just as we have set an Ombudsman to hear complaints relating to mal-administration in the public service in **areas** that are not as stressful or that are not as highly intense in relation to the immediate violation of personal and human rights, I believe that we need to set up similar provisions in relation to the Royal Barbados Police Force,"

so that there can be no question at all that through fraternal or other associations **complaints** against the Royal Barbados Police Force are not given the fullest possible hearing or investigation. I was calling clearly for the establishment of an independent body, not within the Force but outside of the Force. It related not to matters of promotion and that kind of thing but to the kinds of complaints the public may have against certain kinds of conduct within the Force. I think that would have been, and still I believe so, to the advantage of the Force itself and to those who may be making complaints. These are my views.

2.30 p.m.

Sir, at the time I believe there were some opposing views on that from certain quarters within the Police Force itself. That was not taken as a position with which the country should go. But I can state this because I spoke to the Commissioner of Police recently on these matters and he indicated that it is a line which we can go with. As a Government, we can go ahead with that particular approach and I think that is a sensible and broadminded approach to this particular problem.

I do not wish to **prolong** the matter much longer. If we wish to take positions, we take those positions. As to the Member for St. Joseph, I believe this is about the second or third time during this debate that I have seen this kind of attack on his positions, not coming from over here but from over there. I really do not understand it. He gets up and makes a point and then his own members turn against him for the positions that he has taken. I see nothing wrong in the Member expressing his views in that particular regard. Why should there be this attack on the Honourable Member for St. Joseph by those who believe that he may be expressing a viewpoint that they themselves may not be able to rise to? I believe that is what it is all about.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir. I really do not wish to detain the House any longer in this particular regard. But I thought that I needed to clarify that point. Finally, I would say that, if members of the Barbados Labour Party have called publicly for the resignation of the Commissioner of Police, there is no need to come and backpeddle now.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not saying any same thing, Sir. I do not **know**. I do not think anybody can accuse me of saying any same thing. I do not know. I am saying that, if they have done it and they have done it publicly, I **would** like to caution Members and persons in leadership positions. I am not only talking about the politicians now or **Members** of Parliament, but I am talking about in all positions. If they seek by the types and levels of their comments about persons who hold leadership positions, the comments are not balance comments. Those comments may tend not only to denigrate but to pull down respect for the **very** institutions that we **would** wish to be strong, particularly at a time when there are so many **challenges** to our values and to our positions in society. I think as leaders we must be very careful about these particular positions. By all means make the comments, but not in a way that would tend to pull down those institutions which we **all** should be seeking to buttress and to support. Thank you.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, in winding up, I would just like to comment on 2 matters raised by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. The first is to do with the Fire Service and the coverage for the North and East. I, too, have had discussions with the management of the Fire Service and the Fire Service Association and their view is that there is no need for another station in the North but that the station which is now situated at Weston should go somewhere on the Duncan O'Neal Highway near to the Fàrrs Children's Home. It will be on a hill and

it will be easy to get down to St. **Andrew** or go across the Highway 2 when it is completed and go into St. **Thomas** without having to climb too many hills. The demand for the service is not that great to necessitate 2 fire stations or an additional fire station in the North.

It is our intention during this financial year to upgrade St. John if only for the simple reason that St. John has a very expensive tender which sleeps out in the open. It is about \$1 million in equipment and we believe it should be housed. Our priorities are the upgrading of St. John and, if possible, moving **Weston**, St. James to higher heights. We recognise there is a need for a station in St. **Philip** but our finances might not allow that at this present time.

If I might conclude in looking at crime again, over the last week the Barbados Labour Party had, I believe, a Press Conference in which this idea of a task force to look into crime was raised. I believe they have forgotten that there is a committee headed by Dr. Farley Brathwaite out of the **Ministry** of Community Development and Welfare looking at problems affecting youth. The terms of reference include an investigation of the following:

- (1) The socio-demographic profile of youth in Barbados noting changes in patterns over time. This item would provide a breakdown in terms of age, sex, educational levels, entertainment, employment, family life, economic circumstances and other relevant descriptive information on our young population, i.e. 15 to 25 years old.
- (2) The major needs of youth and the problems they face. The areas of investigation here could be employment, housing, health, education, family life, recreational activities and vocational training among other things.

2.40 p.m.

Efforts will also be made to discover attitudes, values, expectations and beliefs of the young person.

- (3) The personal, social, cultural and institutional factors which contribute to or create the problems uncovered by the investigations at (2) above. The role of the family, church, peer groups, economic, legal or political institutions will be among the factors examined.

That is even broader than what I understand the Vice President of the Young Socialists was calling for. Indeed, Bishop Dickson said, about 2 weeks ago, that the Roman Catholic Church had intended doing a similar thing, but then they realised that the Government had set up a Committee, although he was concerned by the fact that the

Committee had not yet reported, he was hoping that very soon it would. I asked the Chairman of that Committee how he was progressing. Like everything else, you begin on a course hoping that you will report within 3 or 4 months and then you realise it is much more involved than you believed at first. My understanding is that he is hoping that by June they would have, completed their investigations.

I just want to clear the air on that point where people might have forgotten or might choose to forget **that** the Government is doing something about the problem facing the youth.

I want to reiterate my position that we need to spend more money preventing young people from becoming involved in the first place because any other choice would be much more expensive and less productive.

I want to thank Honourable Members for their contributions to this debate on the Estimates and I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that Head 28, as amended, stand part.

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

HEAD 25 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES – (AS AMENDED) – \$27 143 567

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$27 143 567 under Head 25 – Ministry of Agriculture, **Food** and Fisheries, as amended, stand part.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, we have come to a very important area of these Estimates which deals with the productive sector and, contrary to the position taken by the other side, we feel that there is an intimate and interdependent connection between efforts at stabilising the economy in Barbados and the effort to increase productive capacity in Barbados. We do not believe that it is possible to compartmentalise the total governmental effort in this direction. We are amazed at the measures that we see introduced and envisaged in the Estimates.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am talking under the Head of Agriculture, Sir, and under the appropriations in this respect. I am amazed that the Estimates do not make provision either specifically nor did I hear the Honourable Minister of Finance in introducing the Estimates as a whole give the provisions generally that would help to increase production in this area. I am going to get more specific

and deal with a number of areas, but I want to start off with one or two matters that affect the area that I represent.

I believe there is provision in relation to Fisheries Management and Development and Marketing Facilities, pages 37 and 38. I feel that there has been neglect in these areas, and I would hope, in this financial year, to see some remedial measures. As recently as yesterday, when I went to buy my fish in that area, repeated complaints that I have heard now almost daily were made. Nobody could imagine that there could be such a deterioration in the conditions of the markets and, particularly, the fishmarket at Oistins.

It is impossible to understand how it is that the Government has failed to this day to make sure that adequate provision for ice is made for iceboats, and more importantly – I want the Honourable Minister of Health to understand this – that an adequate supply of ice is made for the vendors at the Oistin's Fish Market. Today, one has the situation in which, when an ice boat comes in at Oistin and unloads, the vendors themselves do not have enough ice available that they can purchase. They remove iced fish to the retail counter and are dependent to a large extent on the ice that they get from the boats themselves in the unloading.

I know that the Government has no money, but this is a great opportunity for private enterprise to install an ice machine at Oistin. What is more, I distinctly recall an advertisement in one of the newspapers for tenders to supply ice at Oistin. It is only the way the Government operates that has prevented the people there from having ice available. No one can tell me that there is no interest in the utilisation of the opportunity to provide ice for both the boats and the vendors. I would like an answer to that. I feel it is a public health danger. I see all of this talk about cholera. On the advertisements daily from the Ministry of Health one of the areas of great concern is that fish must be handled properly.
2.50 p.m.

Now, I am not saying that we have problems in that respect because I must say that the people in Oistins are very clean. They have really revolutionised the handling of fish in Barbados. They were the pioneers. But the Government is denying them the facilities by not having adequate ice available. You cannot bring iced fish out of a fish hole and then have to put the fish in containers where there is not an adequate amount of ice. Once the fish have started to be iced they should be kept on ice right through and this is a very serious thing. I would expect an answer on this because it is now some 5 to 6 years that complaints have taken place in respect of this.

I go further, Sir. We still also have the problem of having to take a boat from Oistins to Bridgetown to get ice. When you go to Bridgetown you then have to wait at least

a week before you can get in the queue. Now, surely, Sir, the demand for ice is far greater than was originally anticipated. Sufficient time has passed that the Government now, since the opening of the 2 fish terminals, is in a much better position to assess the great demand.

This is an area in which international money can be obtained. I am very disappointed that the importance of this area has not been appreciated enough to be greeted with a matter of urgency. Now, I know it is felt that they are not to do anything for Oistins. What Honourable Members must understand is that the Oistins Complex not only caters to the people in Oistins. A large number of the people from Silver Sands, St. Philip and other areas also use the area. Even people from Lodge Road use the area. Fishing has become so attractive now that the land lubbers from Lodge Road and St. George are now using that area.

It is amazing, Sir, if you go into Oistins on any afternoon you will see people from Weston in St. James going there. They have boats. The industry is dominated, to a large extent, by women who are entrepreneurs. They are boat owners. The position is that from all over the South of Barbados people use that terminal. Some of them who never formerly spoke to me are now speaking to me and asking me to press urgently on their Government. That is what they are telling me. It is a matter of great urgency. I do hope that something is done about it. I really want to know why a tender has not been awarded.

The other area that I want to deal with is the question of sewage. I know that until the sewerage scheme is introduced there will always be a problem in that area because there are no public conveniences in Barbados as a rule. But the public conveniences at the market form part of the public conveniences used by a large number of people. There are even some of the homeless who use them. It is urgent and of necessity. Some work was done but, given the problems that we have there, given the public health implications, I just want it to be clearly understood that the market there is a focal point and matters have to be dealt with as a matter of total urgency.

Sometime? people complain that there are not enough cleaning materials available because of lack of appropriations. Now, if you are going to run the markets, you are going to run them properly or you are going to say that the Government is unable to carry on this burden of running it. I would like to hear about that.

The lights and water – again, you have problems with the lights. I really cannot understand why it is not underscored that that facility is situated on the seaside. As a matter of fact, whether you like it or not, regularly you are going to get problems with respect to the contact point between the bulbs and the sockets. A set of stores has to

be kept there continuously if you are not going to run into trouble.

The truth is that when you have a facility as large and as utilised as that, you need people with a multiplicity of skills who are going to look after the maintenance there. Maintenance is a problem. I want to warn the Government. You are going to get the same problems in another year or so right down here in Bridgetown because unless you have adequate maintenance...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If somebody is not interested, put it back out. In the ice business today, people understand. Fishermen are prepared to pay. The IMF will soon dictate that you do a review of all of these organisations and see whether you **are** subsidising them or not. You soon will get that dictation. They have not got around to that yet. You will soon have to move the price of ice nearer to the price that the competitors charge. You know that will happen too. Everybody knows that will happen. If they are telling you that you have to increase hospital fees and the price of schools do you think they are going to **leave** out ice? Do you seriously believe that? They do not have to tell you. They will just do it behind your back.

The next thing that we have is under Fisheries, Sir. I would like to have a clear statement on what is happening in Trinidad. People around here are telling you that Barbadian fishermen are arrested in Trinidad. What is **the** position with respect to this mythical fishing agreement? I would **lik** to know because I read recently that people have been fined. The High Commissioner in Trinidad would have already told the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be aware of the fact that somebody was **allegedly** fined and they have some other boats – I am not sure if they are held up or not. I would like to know.

There has been, for a long period of time, a great degree of dissatisfaction with the relationship between the countries with respect to a fishing agreement because the last one did not work. Only a few ventured from St. Philip, I believe, to accept the terms and conditions of the last one. The point is, there is, up to yesterday, a persistent clamour among people who fish about the situation with their brethren in Trinidad.
3.00 p.m.

As I understand it, at the present moment, there is no agreement. That is my understanding. But I am not sure whether negotiations are going on. Obviously one would expect a statement. You must give the people guidance in this respect because when there was an agreement there

were a lot of statements about it. Now that the agreement has expired one would therefore expect from the Government a bulletin of some kind or the other, at least warning them that information has been received because I do not believe that these activities would have taken place without some kind of warning. Usually, in my **understanding**, in the diplomatic world, if they intend to prosecute the people that they would send a warning to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs saying, "Look, inform the people that the Government intends to ..."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in one minute.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I am going to come back, Sir. I am still at Fisheries. I have to come back.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am myself disappointed that the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in the course of his Second Reading presentation on the Appropriation Bill did not address any remarks on sugar. Sugar agriculture is still an important part of the productive sectors of Barbados and it is a fact that the industry is in severe crisis. But the industry continues to trade and operate only because the creditors have not called halt. The sugar industry is in bankruptcy to the tune of \$200 million and more and there are some very serious decisions which the industry itself has got to make. But the industry operates in a situation where, to a large extent, those decisions have got to be made with the support of and in partnership with Government, because, even though Government is not a major grower of sugar, Government has in the last 10, 15 years been a supporter of the industry in many respects. Government guarantees its loans, provides support in terms of its tax policy in relation to the inputs and is concerned **too** with marketing since it is more than a private sector activity.

We would want to hear something of Government's position in relation to the **Booker** Tate study. The sugar industry has in the last 30 years been the subject of several major studies starting with the **Farley** Commission Report in the sixties, and then the **McGregor** Report in the seventies while more recently we have had the **Landell** Mills Report and now there is the **Booker** Tate study. It is clear, Mr. Chairman, that the industry is at desperate crossroads and that certain decisions have got to be taken with respect to the future tonnage of sugar that we will be producing in this country. How many acres of land will you be devoting to sugar? What factories will be closed down and what will remain in operation? What of the **financing** of the sugar industry over the next few years and what is Government's policy with respect both to taxation of the inputs and with respect to any form of support.

I think it is very important to hear from the Minister of Agriculture, and since he is not here, from the **Prime Minister** himself, because many of these have financial implications as to what is the Government's position with respect to the **Booker Tate** study, the options now facing the industry and the important decisions which it has got to take.

I do not think that we have ~~got to~~ make any case for the importance of sugar still in our economy. It is still employing some **6 000** people, the agricultural sector and the sugar industry at the point of reaping. It **is** still contributing some \$60 million to our foreign exchange which means, as far as agriculture is concerned, that two-thirds of the foreign exchange earning from the agricultural sector are attributable to sugar.

It is still, Mr. Chairman, responsible for covering some **30 000** to **32 000** acres of our soil. We have not yet arrived at an alternative crop. So that Barbados will become a waste land if we are not growing sugar in the absence of an alternative crop that will cover some **32 000** acres of our soil and more. Even though the small farmer's position in the industry has declined quite drastically there was a time up to **10** years ago when he was contributing some **15%** of the total output of sugar in this country and we had some **8 000** or **9 000** small farmers. The small farmer's contribution has gone down now to **about 6%** and there are no more **than 2 000** small farmers involved in sugar cultivation. But for those small farmers it is still important. One gets the impression that the sugar industry is being run down at an enormous pace. It is **being** allowed to drift and very little is being done either at the **level of BSIL** or of Government to ensure that the decline is halted and that the industry is given some positive direction.

One of the major problems in the industry has been the consistent decline in the yield per acre. There was 2 time in Barbados when we used to get 4 tonnes of sugar per acre. We have long past those days and though there is still a plantation like The Mount that is giving you something like **3.6** tonnes per acre, that is an exception. The national average has gone down to something like **2.4** tonnes of sugar per acre. There have been many factors responsible for this decline. We have had bad cultivation practices. We have had an abandonment of the hedgerow practices which we knew when we were boys. The fertilizer practices with the heavy concentration of chemical fertilizer have contributed. The mechanization of the industry with the resultant problem of compaction has also contributed, and in cane breeding – and I think that line **212** deals with cane breeding, operating expenses for cane breeding – and research into varieties in which Barbados led the world for virtually **100** years, we have fallen down very badly there too. That is because, in recent years – I am **talking** about the last **15** to **20** years – we have been concerned to have varieties resistant to smut disease and

more recently to provide varieties that grow erect and are amenable to mechanical cultivation. What we have neglected is concentrating on varieties to get an increase sucrose content. This is one of the areas in which the industry has become very depressed in recent years. I want to know what is the Government doing with respect to bringing new energy and new dynamic to cane breeding in Barbados. It seems to me that one of the major things we must do to the sugar industry is to get varieties where we have an increase in the sucrose content.

3.10 p.m.

I want to return, Mr. Chairman, to one of the recommendations that seems implicit to the **Booker Tate** study and it is that we aim for a target of some **75 000** tonnes of sugar. Not **too** long ago, Mr. Chairman, a little before my time as Minister, we were still thinking of a target of **120 000** tonnes of sugar. Then we had settled for **100 000** tonnes and in **6** years, **1986** to **1991/92** we are down to **75 000**. In those days we used to be talking, when we were talking about **120 000** tonnes. There seems to have been a premise implicit in the whole production target, that is, that **there** was a target figure below which sugar operations would not be viable. There was a minimum target, which, if you fell below that, even with reduced overheads, it would not make economic sense, the so called critical mass: concept which we used to talk about here on both sides.

Though we **considered** that the critical mass target would fall in relation to your overheads and that if you closed certain factories and had a reduced acreage you would have a low critical mass. They tell me that even if you are talking about two or three factories in operation you would still have a critical mass. Some of the experts in the field tell that our critical mass in Barbados is **75 000** plus **8**. We are talking about **83 000** tonnes as the critical mass. It is that **level** below which you must not fall, that **75 000** tonnes. I would like to know whether Government has accepted and embraced the **75 000** tonnes figure in the **Booker Tate** study or whether the Government is itself **thinking** of a figure over and beyond that.

I would **say** this Mr. Chairman, that we are fortunate in Barbados that we have rainfall statistics going back 200 years. One **thing** is clear when you study the rainfall map of Barbados and the rainfall figures, that we are subject to swings of upwards of **30** per cent here in Barbados, sometimes for sustained periods.

The point I am making, Mr. **Chairman**, is that in targeting **75 000** tonnes, because of the rainfall factor, you could easily fall short by **25** to **30** per cent in any one year or for sustained periods. It seems to me, therefore, that if we are not to be importing sugar now as the norm, if we are in the future to be satisfying our own domestic markets of **15 000** tonnes and satisfying our European markets

too of 55 000 to 75 000 tonnes and not falling short there while at the same time having a **minimum** of 5 000 tonnes for the American market, we have got to be targeting in excess of 75 000 tonnes for it would be wrong and cutting it too neat to be targeting only 75 000 tonnes.

They tell me that they still have about 32 000 acres available for sugar and that, under a rotational system, where 20 per cent in any one year is not under sugar cultivation that it means that you have 25 000 acres available.

The point I was making in leading off on the sucrose content of the yield per acre is that if we could get our yield up in excess of 3 tonnes of sugar per acre under cultivation we could realise the 84 000 tonnes without necessarily putting more than 34 000 acres under sugar cultivation.

It seems that Government has got to do something about its own plantations and that, in order for us to realise that target of 80 000+ tonnes, we will have to decide to do something about them, the 7 or so plantations under Government's control.

Now, in 1985/86 they were producing in excess of 40 000 tonnes of cane. I believe they have Wlen into such decline that they are now not even producing $\frac{1}{4}$ of that. That is sad indeed because Government should have been leading the way in the cultivation. Whatever crops they are involved in they should have been doing it the model way. The ADC plantations have fallen from 47 000 tonnes of cane, I believe it was. I speak subject to correction. To be precise, t be down to less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of that is a very serious situation **indeed**.

If the industry is to make any revival, River, Spencers, Dodds, the Belle, to mention a few, and clearly the effort there of taking the Belle out of sugar has not been successful ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has two minutes.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: ... we need to have a policy with respect to them. It is clear that the cotton effort has not been successful and even though some proportion of those plantations can be put into cotton under a rotation pattern it seems that in the main they must return to sugar under the best cultivation practices.

I will return, Mr. Chairman, but for now as you have signalled I will give way.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I would like, first of all, to enjoin in the remarks made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. In the period between 1986 and 1991 when I was the representative for the area

that Oistins then was part of, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, the former Member for Christ Church East at the time, **Edgar** Bourne, and I must, I think, have spoken on every Estimate and every Budget on the issue of the Oistins Fish market. We got more calls than we could have dealt with from Baby Doots and other fishing people of the area. We had a pumber of visits to the site, including one by the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

I remember looking at a number of issues, including questions relating to lighting, which seems to be a perennial problem. At the Oistins fish market I am not satisfied that there is a certain element that does not want to see good lighting at Oistins. I am concerned that, every time the lighting was improved, for some reason or other it used to disappear and I was wondering if there were certain nocturnal activities that were preferably done by moonlight rather than having the artificial lighting. That was a major concern.

There was a concern also in maintaining physical facilities. Some people congregating in the area, I understand, used to take away some of the PVC from the areas of the washrooms etc. for uses that would not be quite related to plumbing. That again was a continuing problem. It had nothing to do with the maintenance area or the responsibility of those who were in control. Apparently it was a young group of people who found PVC to be very useful tool in whatever activities they were furthering.

There was a major concern relating to things like the ice machine. This is a very serious thing in relation to the furtherance of the activities of professional fish people to ensure that they have the ice for the boats and so on. I understand, even now, they are still having to come to town to get the ice. That has been a perennial problem. My understanding is that the difficulty was a mechanical one. It has something to do with the actual machine, the maintenance. The person who had the contract for maintenance for a number of years apparently was not doing all that should be done.

The long and short of it is that I think these problems have been extremely protracted. I am glad to see that the present Estimates have some sums included in them and I hope that these will go to some extent in repairing the situation so that at least some pressure can be removed from that particular area. I do not think that we need to stress the importance of Oistins to the entire Barbadian fishing community. It is a very important fishing area. It caters not only to the people in Christ Church South and Christ Church East Central but also Christ Church East. The people at Silver Sands have a very great stake in that. We are glad that some money is being provided and we hope that will go to correct the situation.

3.20 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to address the question of sugar because I believe, unfortunately, Barbados is still into sugar mono-culture. I think this is the most distressful thing about agriculture in our country. It seems to me there is a definite choice in perception that you either have sugar or you do not have agriculture. There are certain groups that are totally committed to sugar and anything else is seen as a challenge. If there is any other attempt to diversify, it is seen as a very big challenge to them.

The sugar elite or sugar barons in Barbados, call it what you like, are a group which is extremely **powerful** in this country. It uses its own resources. It corrupts others. I have always been amazed at the ability to corrupt former bureaucrats' and so on to speak in support of the sugar barons. In fact, I recall when the late Sir **Granley Adams** went to **run** as a candidate in St. **Philip** in **1926**. He was asked, "What are you doing in St. **Philip**? You do not even have a handkerchief or a saw that you can claim you have any interest up here." Because normally the battle would be between the Skeetes and the **Hoppins** and so on, the big sugar barons. He went up, as those of us recognised, to cut **Hilton** Vaughan's vote at the time. But he could not speak for the sugar people. He did not have a handkerchief of land. We have the same situation in Barbados today where the people who speak for the sugar interests are people who do not own a handkerchief of soil, former bureaucrats whether in the Agricultural Credit Bank or in the Central Bank of Barbados who are now holding forth for the sugar barons. I do not know where the convergence of interest is between the barons and **these** persons. But it is passing strange to me that in a country like Barbados, with the history we have had in sugar, people are almost afraid to debate sugar in an open way and to tackle the real problems.

I agree with my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, that you have to examine sugar in terms of things like tillage patterns, cultivation patterns, and **all** of those things. Those are now minuscule considerations when we come to look at the sugar industry. I agree with you, Sir, those are things that have to be looked at. But the question is: Are we going to have a sugar industry, as we have known it before, after 1992? That is a very, very serious question as far as I am concerned. I hope we get the level of debate not only in this Parliament but throughout our country. The opportunity **will** be provided for these debates. We should look very **honestly** at a very important industry in our country. I believe the **critical** issue of ownership...

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Honourable Member for St. George South said that he will be adding to the debate and he will be speaking clearly in terms of that particular issue.

But the issue of ownership of the sugar industry has to be debated very clearly.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: That is true. But if the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said that the BLP handed it to the BNB and now they are into a love-hate relationship...

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: ...I have to be very, very clear. It seems to me that the Barbados Labour Party took over the sugar industry's debts which they had with **Barclays** under Mr. **Adams** and turned them over to the National Bank. That debt has expanded so massively in the last **10** years in a very **frightening** way that there is now a relationship between sugar and the National Bank that **bodes** no good to the latter institution and should be a matter of concern...

Sir, we are talking about the premier private sector concern in this country where we are moving away from state ownership and control of anything to privatisation. The premier private sector in this country has shown to me over the last 10 years either an incapacity to manage or to control its own business. **But** I do not believe that. I think they have shown the ability to use others effectively to get what they want and to cast their problems off their own shoulders onto others. They are past masters of that skill. They have done that efficiently over the years. Our question is to what extent can we afford to allow them to continue doing that? One of the major problems in dealing with sugar is the lack of transparency in their operations. It is extremely difficult to persuade Barbadians that the sugar industry has done as badly as the debt figure that one gets would lead us to believe. Even within that global debt figure, we will have to understand that covers a mass of things that we cannot get into. All of those would want us to believe that, because there is **\$268** million debt or some figure of that nature, it means that agriculture is really in **all** of that debt. That is one thing I cannot believe. Secondly, if all those who wish us to believe that all sugar **producers** out there and all plantation owners are indebted up to their necks, that again is not true either. There are estates that do not owe anybody anything and provide their owners with a very good living. You have an opaque picture about sugar production, debt and so on.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It is like a veil that you can lift and you cannot see through. That is what you are dealing with. But impressions are given to the general public and the **man** in the street who has to make a decision might

end up in sympathy for the same sugar producers who are the perpetrators of their own problems. In fact, a strange situation is developing in the country that shows that Government or the workers are more responsible for the problems of sugar than the people who own and who have always owned sugar. You can be such a good puppeteer to stage manage a situation where you can put up your puppets and they take all the blame and you sit back and laugh. Then people will be able to come forward and put a proposal to the whole of Barbados that you forgive all of their debts or their interests or whatever because they are some special group. They can build up any amount of interests and debts and we will forgive, but John Public cannot be considered in that way. Do you see the kind of situation into which we have led ourselves? They are going to get **from** among the people of Barbados strong advocates in support of that. I would not be surprised if the Barbados Labour Party would take up their case and put it strongly for them. They might pressure them so much that they might want to in the same way they got them to relieve the debt by putting it on the National Bank. They can put the big stranglehold on all of us. I do not believe that some of the people sitting down there are responsible for that, to tell the **truth**, although the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was Minister of Agriculture during the time the Sugar Act and Sugar Support Price Act were put on the statute book. On reflection, he would tell me now that those are not good Acts.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But the Acts were stage-managed and controlled by the sugar barons who got people to write what they wanted to be written into those Acts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in two minutes.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I will come back on this. The fact is that you are dealing with sugar when you should be looking at **agriculture** all the time. I hope we are able to pull away from this mono-cultural position. I see in the Estimates there is some provision now to look at the areas of cotton research and development and flower crop research and development in a minimal way. As I said, as long **as** sugar is there and it is represented in the way that it is represented, all of these things are going to be seen as peripheral. Those of us who know what is happening in the **real** world out there and the amount of money that is being made by flower crops and by cotton and other areas recognise that we have to take a close look at agriculture. I will come back.
3.30 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I was trying to deal with constituency matters before I got into these other matters,

but the Honourable Member has now set the stage for a real debate. I agree with him that the sugar producers in Barbados mismanaged themselves because, if they had looked at **their** balance sheets, they would have found that this country, Barbados, with the Barbadian dollar as it is was still able to pay wages negotiated by the Honourable Member and his organisation far higher than any other place in the Caribbean and, with the possible exception of Australia, any other sugar producing country in the Commonwealth. That is even **so** up to today. So **that when** you also take into account the fact that wages are somewhere in the vicinity of 45% to 55% of the cost of production, the beneficiaries of any policy in **the** Barbados Labour Party have not only been the producers, but also the wage earners.

We have now reached the stage where this Government has to make up its mind. The Barbados Labour Party has always made up its mind. When I was in charge of the Ministry of Finance my mind was clear. One of the prices that you pay for the value of the Barbadian dollar **vis-a-vis** the U.S. dollar, is that you have to make provision for the ramifications of the sugar **industry**. **The** Minister of Finance cannot escape that. All of the talk that falls from the mouth of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central cannot deal with, or obfuscate, **or** get away from the fact that the fundamental problem you have is a cost problem. If you study the **Booker Tate** study you will see that they tell you **so**.

So, you cannot get away from that problem. You only have to look at it like this. Guyana receives the same price in ECUs as Barbados and the Guyanese wage **ate** is less than **US\$2** a day. Jamaica receives the same price in **ECUs** as Barbados and Jamaica's wage rate is **J\$22**. **The** other **day** there was a big agreement between the workers' union in Jamaica and the Jamaican sugar industry. I believe that when it worked out it was about **US\$7** a **day**. There was an argument here – I don't call it an agreement because an agreement to disagree is not an agreement – a little **fireside** chat, between the sugar producers and the workers' union here and they were arguing over wage **rates** and wage scales if you put them down. For cutting one ton of cane in Barbados you get more than the Jamaicans get for a whole day's work. You see when you are talking about the problem of the sugar industry, you are talking about problems that have to be faced. One of **the** problems that we have to face is that of units of production and the cost of production.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: When you are talking about this matter, I am talking about the unit of production. In Barbados, what you are dealing with is the cost of production which links back to your unit of production.

The **Booker** Tate Study skirts the problem too. Sugar is now being produced in cane growing areas to a large extent by very large units of production. One owner owns 20 000 to 30 000 acres. In Barbados, I believe, the largest owner in active production is probably the Government, ADC, with 3 000 or 4 000 acres. The next is Barbados Farms Limited, 3 000 or 4 000, the next after that is Plantations Limited, the Foursquare Group about 1 200 and now we have Clico with probably about 1 100 acres. Those are small units of production. If you look at how sugar is produced in Africa, in Asia and in the Caribbean, in Caroni in Trinidad - 90 000 acres with probably 60 to 70 000 producers of sugar.

We have to look and see how we are going to deal with that problem. Barbados either brings its cost down by some miraculous means... What is the miraculous means? I hear talk about increasing yields. Even if you increased yields, if you have your traditional costs and your cultivation cost, you will still be down. We have a fundamental problem that we have to face. I have always believed and I have always said that, if the community wishes to retain the value of the Barbados dollar *vis-a-vis* the United States dollar, the community must understand that in agriculture and sugar some element of subsidy **has** to be given. I make no apologies for it. I have seen **and** listened for ten years to people arguing over the price of sugar and over agricultural products.

The agricultural marketing mechanism in the European Economic Community is the most heavily subsidised **area** of economic operations you could find. In the United States of America, it is the same thing. In many other countries of the world, it is the same thing. If you wish your agricultural people to have a standard of living comparable to the rest of the community something must give. That is the position. We have serious problems in relation to sugar, and we want the Government to say **what** is its position. The **Booker** Tate Study talks about an agricultural management company, not an agricultural ownership company.

3.40 p.m.

It is vitally important that when, perhaps, we have a little more say in who owns, who controls and who manages then perhaps we would not be too unhappy when we come in here disbursing people's funds that it will go to certain sectors. That is the matter that we have to discuss in this country.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Subsidy, yes. But subsidize whom and what? You may understand why. But we have to discuss these matters very clearly. It is not going to be only a Government position. Sugar is too big in Barbados.

It has to be the **country's** position. **While** it is true that the Government of the day has to have a policy, it is not the sort of thing that we should venture into in terms of the type of social engineering that is going to be necessary, if we are going to tackle sugar problems that we should go along partisan lines.

There needs to be a clear understanding in terms of where this country is going, as far as such an **industry** is concerned. I would really hope the day would come when the Democratic **Labour Party** and the Barbados Labour Party will be able to sit down and discuss sugar outside of the adversarial position, as well as the Barbados Workers' Union as the organization that has to deal with sugar and that it will be removed from this **adversarial** position and that we will look at it as a people in terms of where we have to go in the future.

Because there is a lot of emotion about sugar. There is no **question** about that. There is a lot of sentiment about sugar because things have been so hidden, there has been a veil over sugar for such a long time that people are not sure what they are **talking** about. You **are** never too **sure** when you are looking at the forest if you **are** really seeing the trees inside there. There is too much camouflage. They do not really know what they are **talking** about with this very important **industry**. I have a difficulty for instance...

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Small farmers will not exist again in Barbados as long as there is a Barbados. As far as I am concerned, as much as I do not like it coming from that kind of **tradition** myself, that is a thing of the past, as far as I am concerned. The sugar people manoeuvred around that and wiped it out in the 1980s. **Part** of the cost of moving forward, they would call it. The sugar people had no difficulty in taking \$30 million in setting up **Portvale** Factory and a few years down the line now you are hearing that that has to be disbanded \$30 million. They disbanded all of those funds that were set up. The cost of **Portvale** was between \$28 million and \$30 million. That is not even 10 years old yet. They expanded **Carrington** and came back and shut it down. Searles one of the most modern **factories** built and one of the most productive was knocked out in 1975. One of the best factories ever built. Because **when** it was **being** constructed in 1914 or thereabouts ...

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Searles was put up as a co-operative. It is one of the ventures of the sugar people **when** they are moving away from private limited liability companies. That was an experiment. But if they had the foresight, Searles should not have been built. So you have to come back a few years down the line and leave it up there **now** a monstrosity. That is one of the problems

in sugar. You cannot afford to put down \$30 million in a sugar building and not be sure what you are doing. Because you cannot **transfer** a sugar building to anything else. You cannot put a hospital in there now or you cannot put a data processing industry. When you shut down \$30 million in sugar, that is **scrap** iron.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Her family is heavy on livestock when it comes to the cow industry and so on she can talk about that. We get all kinds of suggestions from the Millers on the livestock business. I am sure the Honourable Member for the City will deal with that. We are talking now about factories.

It seems to me that we have not been critical enough of the managers of sugar. When BSIL came to the Barbados Labour Party in the 1980s after the McGregor Report and were given **carte blanche** to put down Portvale somebody should have been able to tell them that you were wrong at that time, that you cannot take \$30 million and put it into a building that is going to lead to all the problems that are coming up now.

But the sugar producers have reached the position where they do not have to take advice from anybody. **People** like Hagelburg their own advisers. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph knows. When Hagelburg give them advice they do not want to get rid of them out of Barbados. Even when they are their own experts and they do not tell them what they want to hear – if they do not **treat** Barbadian politicians like **anything** you do not have to be too **concerned** about that because they do not even treat their own people well the ones they bring in. Once you tell them something they do not want to hear, get your walking ticket and go. If you are brilliant like Dr. Hudson they might not give you the kind of notice that you should get either. And when it comes to the Barbadian agriculturalists, some of the experts in here are going to sit down and talk until the cows come home. The BSIL will listen to them and will not follow any of the things that they say to them because they believe that they have been around, they and their families for a very long time, they believe they have the people of Barbados in their thrall and that they will do what they want to do. Evenwally one Government or another will put their hands up and give them what they want. If they string them out long enough and talk about how the workers depend on us... Do you imagine people putting up that kind of arguments. This is what I find so difficult. If money came out of sugar and it went into the Deep Water Harbour, what can you expect of us now, that we should have money now? What nonsense is that. Those kind of justifications and those kinds of twists and turns and logic...

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Listen there is nothing in the spending of more money in the infrastructure of Barbados. The sugar people get the most. When you put down roads they destroy them. When you spend money from Lodge Road to Foursquare, as it was then, the tractor trailers going to Carrington and Foursquare were destroying the roads, not the cars that we drive in or ~~the~~ children walking along the roads and so on. When you put the Deep Water Harbour down there, they were using it. At one time it was transport of sugar cane and so on and then not only sugar but they also had Plantations Ltd. They were the big distributive trade people. So when you built the harbour you were building it for them. Anybody else was only benefitting sort of peripherally when the money was spent on infrastructure and they **are** getting on as though somebody raped them of money and used it to spend on something else that did not have anything to do with them, who are they trying to use those kinds of arguments with?

I am not really on a tirade against the sugar producers or anything like that. What I am saying is that we, as the people of Barbados, are at a turning point and we have to come to a very clear understanding of where sugar is and where it has to go. I agree. There is a question on some management company. That apparently is being pushed. But we have to answer questions. If there is one to be set up, who will manage it?

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Booker Tate said me? Why not? They put in their qualifications and they say we feel that we are competent to do it. I am not making any argument for Booker Tate. I am not getting into any **argument** about what is colonialism and neocolonialism and that sort of thing. We have to look at a lot of that rhetoric again very, very carefully. If **Booker** Tate put their case the people of Barbados would have to assess it. If they do not put it, who will put it? The same group of sugar people who are running the thing right through the earth? The ones who have been faulty? Are they the ones to say, we will continue to do it? Or is there some new group of people out there who will run an agricultural management company? Who are they? Who are the CJs, the CMAs, the financiers, the Barbadian people, the people we have trained at Mona, the people we have trained at St. Augustine?

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Austin is still the same old ... That is Austin. That is the Honourable Member for Christ Church South person. That is Austin from Oistin. The same people. His family is the same people that Oistin is named after.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Not at all. I am just recognizing a coincidence. That is all.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But he is one. If I were they I would put that forward too because, here it is, you are going to provide services and managing, you are going to get a guaranteed wage, but you are not going to **bear** any risks in relation to ownership or anything like that. I am asking myself the question all along, what is the unit of ownership that they are saying they need? Sometimes I see it is 20 000 acres, sometimes 12 000. They say they are going to start with the ADC estates. That is 3 000 acres. 4.00 p.m.

Now, I do not see the mechanism or any suggestions put forward whereby they can get control of a larger area of land so that the true economies of scale can operate. When I analyse the accounts of Barbados Farms Ltd. which is the largest...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ...I have looked at the ADC ones. We understand that they have \$2 million in subsidy. When I look at that, I do not see that they are doing any better either and they have some of the better lands. I **must** ask the question whether 3 000 acres is a sufficiently good unit. I know from my discussions long ago with Tate and Lyle and others, that they have always said 20 000 to 30 000 acres is the minimum amount it would pay **them** to operate in a sugar industry.

What we want to know is, what is the Government's policy? The Minister of Agriculture has recently said that he is not aware of any ADC lands being part of any company. That is the conflicting signal that we get. We know there are hard decisions but we cannot have in the Development Plan the statement that 90 000 to 100 000 tonnes of sugar should be the norm. We cannot have the Prime Minister and others saying 75 000 to 80 000, sometimes 75 000 to 90 000, and the Chief Agricultural Officer saying between 60 000 and 75 000. Where are we? Who is running this show? Whoever is **running** the show, make up in your minds what you want. It is important. It is critical. You must decide what are the remedial measures you are going to take.

I know, Sir, that sugar has to be looked at in the context of total agriculture in Barbados. I just want to make it clear that sugar is only part and parcel of all agriculture in Barbados. It has been proven and demonstrated repeatedly that if you took all of the lands out of sugar cane in Barbados and you replaced it with vegetables, cotton or by whatever else, that you would run into a

problem of soil erosion, weeds and the control of pests and things of that kind.

When people talk about the need to continue the sugar industry I do not think that today anybody is saying that should be the only type of agriculture one should pursue in Barbados. Since the 1960s Barbados has been pursuing a policy of agricultural diversification. You had livestock, and we are going to deal with the livestock because the agreement agreed to between the World Bank and the Government of Barbados is going to kill the livestock industry in Barbados. We will come to that in a minute.

The development of dairying – in the 1960s so many debates took place in here about that. Then there is the development of the beef industry. The Prime Minister and this Government have come late to the concept of increasing grasslands. In 1986 in the last Budget that was delivered in here by the Barbados Labour Party, we put \$3 million in the Estimates to help develop **grasslands**.

There was a project with the European Economic Community to develop **grasslands** in Barbados. I well recall going and seeing a pilot grassland scheme in St. Andrew where they were attempting to deal with the problem of stray animals. At Turners Hall they were going to have a large area full of grass, **corral** all of the stray animals and put them in there to prevent that problem. That was our way of tackling the problem of stray animals in St. Andrew.

A tremendous amount of research has been done for 15 years in Barbados about the utilisation of those areas of land which are unsuitable for sugar production and which are suitable for livestock rearing. The development of the cattle industry, dairying, in particular, beef growing and those other areas have been going on for some period of time. You still have to get back to the **point** that **there are** some 25 000 to 35 000 acres of land that nobody has yet come up with a suggestion what to do with other than grow **sugar**.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude in 2 minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: When you take that into account and you also take into account the fact that you have, for certain, \$60 million in foreign earning capacity in the industry, you ask yourself the question, why are we going to give up in this area when we really need it? I am coming back, Sir, on that.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I believe that all the political parties would agree that **those** 25 000 or 30 000 'acres will be in sugar for some time. I do not

think that anybody surveying political opinion in Barbados could come to any doubts that the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party, and any other party that might exist, would accept that, unless we want to go against the grain of good, solid and scientific thought, we are stuck with sugar. We have to deal with it.

The situation as set out by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, in terms of the economics of sugar, that it will depend on some kind of a subsidy, is again, something that we would hardly dispute. I must say that I have a little difference with him when he suggests that in any benefit that went to the sugar industry the workers got their share, as though that should not be so.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It sounded *like* that to me. We accept that the workers have a very important role in that as in any other area of economic activity in Barbados. When he quotes the wages of Barbadian workers, *vis-a-vis* their Jamaican counterpart, or their Guyanese, I am sure if he did the same thing for the hotel workers or whatever else, the wages would be better in Barbados than they are in those other countries. There is no difficulty.

When the Honourable Member talks about the parity there is no doubt about that at all. He is saying that they are getting the same **money** coming from the **Lome** Agreement, the same **ECUs**, but when it is converted to the local currencies, because the dollar is tied to the US dollar, perhaps we are not as well off as other countries. It sounds like an argument for a devaluation which might be suitable in certain **sectors**. He is not making that argument, I am sure. I am sure you will hear it from **Booker** Tate and, perhaps, the sugar people. They will never use it in Barbados either because they can get other people to say it for them. You will, **therefore**, get the impression that devaluation would be very suitable for Barbados because 1 or 2 sectors might see certain benefits for them alone.

Some people are purblind and powerful. They might be able to get people to come around to expressing their point of view and making it seem as though it is a global point of view. Some people have that ability. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South would not be involved in that at all. I am sure about that. He would not engage in that kind of a discussion.

I accept that we need to look at sugar. Sugar is a very special case in Barbados. I have no doubt about that. The question of the high unit cost is a factor that one has to look at. It certainly is not going to be addressed strictly by looking at the question of labour or wishing away labour levels from what they are because, as you said, it is a matter of economies of scale. We are dealing with a minuscule sugar industry when we are looking at Barbados.

The fact that we have been able to do **so** well over the years really had more to do with market considerations and the fact that at one time, when we were productive or not sugar was selling at a good price. In recent times we have not been blessed with that. Therefore, we really have now to be managers of the resources that we have.

My concern is that we have to put the managers under scrutiny. We have to put the owners under scrutiny because, if we are going to be subsidising the industry, we have to ask, whom are we subsidising? Yes, we do not mind some of the money going to the workers but where else is the public's money ending up? The same group of people, except that one was distinguishing himself in marketing or something like that behind the scenes and is now coming forward. It is the same group of people. Nobody can convince me that Austin and any group that he can put together will be different from the other group that is put up by the Skeetes and other people. They are the same people.
3.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in one minute.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: My question is, who are the alternatives? If you don't deal with them and you don't deal with **Booker** Tate, who are the Barbadians that will come forward and do it?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Just one point that I wanted to make because the Honourable Member made a statement. I think we must discuss this against the background of accuracy. The Honourable Member made a statement that the Labour Party had taken the obligations of the industry from **Barclays** Bank and handed over the industry to the BNB. That is not factually accurate. As a matter of fact - we are in Parliament **so** we have to use Parliamentary language - **Barclays Bank** and the other commercial banks in Bridgetown played a relatively insignificant role in the financing of agriculture in Barbados.

Before there was a Barbados **National** Bank there was a Barbados Sugar Industry Bank and there also was a Peasants' Loan Bank, **so** that both the landowners of larger areas in Barbados and the peasant farmers in Barbados were in truth and in fact financed to a very large extent outside of the banking system when the Barbados National Bank was formed. I am proud of the fact that the Barbados National Bank had the courage to challenge commercial banking in Barbados. My only regret is that that noble institution has been perverted to a very large extent. I say that it has been perverted to a very large extent.

It is just another example of problems that the politicians get. You have good concepts and you have

good ideas but you are not allowed to execute them yourself. You have to depend on others to execute them and along the way the others pervert it. Don't let us fool ourselves. The creation of the Barbados National Bank was a lofty idea to ensure that savings and banking in Barbados were tailored towards the needs, as perceived by the Government of Barbados, and not as perceived by commercial interests. Don't let us fool ourselves about that. I know about those things.

The truth of the matter is that, between 1981 and 1991, the position with the sugar industry in Barbados deteriorated. There is no question about it. I want to draw to the attention of Honourable Members that in the whole of the Caribbean there have been efforts at restructuring the sugar industry. I am not talking about restructuring agriculture. I am talking about restructuring the sugar industry. The Government of the day, faced with the position of the strength of the United States dollar between 1980 and 1985 vis-a-vis the European Currency Units and the resulting impact of that upon the receipts of sugar in Barbados, took the decision that it would establish a self-supporting mechanism. To provide support, the mechanism would give a series of loans to the sugar industry which would be written off against targets of production and targets of diversification so as to have, as a former Honourable Member in here would say, "a holistic view of agriculture".

Now, Sir, what I want to know is, what is this Government's policy, because this Government is the one that has changed that? You are perfectly entitled to change it but you have destroyed the mechanisms that were built in to ensure that at least the interest be repaid on loans. An integral part of the payment of interest on those loans was the fact that sugar would be dealt with through the sugar producers, through the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited. You have transferred that to the Barbados Marketing Corporation and millions of dollars are going to be made this year. Millions of dollars are going to be made between the difference of the imported cost of sugar and the difference the consumers pay.

The Honourable former Minister of Trade, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is familiar with this, with rice and all of those things where you have your domestic cost being higher than your imported cost. In the old days a self-balancing thing called a cess used to be applied and the consumers used to get the average price by taking one and transferring it. What is happening now is that it is not a cess. An intermediary has been brought in to collect the differential.

The last Minister of Trade will understand that this intermediary is the best subsidy the BMC has ever got. I want to know, what is the policy in relation to that? How

is the Government going to hijack that? This is a very serious thing. Is the Government going to use ... First of all, I don't understand the accounting mechanisms, because the BMC don't make profits so you can't even tax them. How is the Government going to get it out of the coffers of the BMC? Are they going to charge it in licence fees? The last time we had a fee charged for a licence was at one stage for importing cement into Barbados.

How are you going to get the money from the importer? I am very interested in this novel legalistic thing. I would like to know whom you are going to get it from. Are you going to issue a directive to the BMC to hand it over and put in the Treasury? I don't like these private directives coming between the Government and its agencies. I like everything open. The Government is doing itself a disservice when the Government is not frank with the public business and in letting the public know exactly how it contemplates the importation of sugar and the profits made or being derived therefrom for the benefit of the Treasury. The position is that the consumers are still paying a price. I am enquiring today. I am in an enquiring mood. I am not making any accusations. I am listening to the facts.

I would like to know what the information is. I find it strange that the Government could have allowed the industry to be in position in which it had to go abegging to Barclays Bank to raise money to finance the preparation of the machinery for this crop. I regard that as an indictment on the Barbados National Bank. They should feel insulted. I feel insulted that this institution which we spent so much time thinking about and creating is so badly managed that they could not think of a scheme to finance the industry without the industry having to go and beg Barclays Bank. Talk about colonialism in reverse, I regard that as an insult to the intelligence of Barbadians. The Barbados National Bank has its international connections with Lloyds Bank in England. If there was a foreign exchange matter, they should have been able to deal with that because they have a lien on everything in the industry probably 5 or 6 estates in Barbados. The rest of the estates are financed through the Barbados National Bank. In any event, the total financing of the processing angle of the industry is through the Barbados National Bank.

4.10 p.m.

The Barbados National Bank had within its power the ability to dictate. What did they do? They meekly gave up their priority over the receipts from the first shipment of sugar to the lords in Barclays Bank. After 10 years of the DLP rule, look at what we have come to. I am sorry the Minister of Finance is not in here. If I were Minister of Finance and that happened, I would feel: ashamed, ashamed, ashamed that I am in charge of a monetary, fiscal or whatever kind of policy and cannot manoeuvre myself in such a way as to make sure that an industry which

earns \$60 million in foreign exchange is not denied credit to the extent of \$8 million. What is the figure? I cannot even remember the insignificant figure. We **are** back in the position with the second **tranche**. This is very clear. It is very clear that, due to the constraints of some dictates of the IMF...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in two minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir...that we do not even know where we are. I am just going to wind up by saying, Sir, that my basic position is this. I know that something has to be done. I want to hear what the Government has to say. I have studied **all the** rescue acts for the sugar industry right throughout the Caribbean. None that I have seen were put forward in the manner which is **being** put forward in Barbados. In every one of them, there is a direct integrative approach between production and processing. This one seeks to hold on to processing and leave out production and I do not understand how it is going to work. It will not work because the radical change that you need is a total change.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am responding to the debate because I think there are a number of things which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said which need to **be** examined in a little more detail. The first one has to do with this question which I have noticed creeping into the newspapers **from** time to time and which, if one **reads** the **Booker** Tate Study, one can understand how people become confused on this whole question of devaluation being of assistance to the sugar industry.

Mr. Chairman, the question of devaluation as it affects Barbados had better be understood by all the sectors in the economy in Barbados. A devaluation does not operate **as** if all bets are on and the circumstances are **normal**. If one examines devaluations in the developing countries around the world over the last 20 years, one will discover that nothing useful has come of any devaluation in any developing **country** in any part of the world in the last 45 years. It has to be understood because there are some people in the industry or on the periphery of the sugar industry who write and do not understand what they are saying. They wish to **urge** a devaluation on Barbados. It would have to be for very personal gain. I doubt there is anyone in Barbados who can systematically put forward a proposal for devaluation and can even identify a benefit that he personally would be able to get from a devaluation. The people in the sugar industry might get increased numbers. But please understand, Mr. Chairman, that **when** you are in the sugar industry you still have to live in the society. Even if you got some numerical gains by a

devaluation, in the final analysis, you are guaranteed to have a diminution of the quality of your life.

A devaluation in Barbados must result in a quantitative reduction in the quality of life. I am not going to be taken by that facile suggestion that you have had it in another way. If one takes that argument, that is a non-economic argument. There is a devaluation in Barbados every time the United States dollar moves in a certain direction. Once you are tied to the U.S. dollar, it is almost ignorant for anyone to say that you have already had a devaluation. Once the American dollar is moving up or down, the Barbados dollar moves up or down *vis-a-vis* other currencies because it is on par with the U.S. dollar.

Let us not talk about what can be called technical devaluations. We are talking about a real, genuine devaluation coming about in the exchange rate of the currency. If that is what is being called for in order for us to get what appears to be an advantage of the sugar price, then we are discussing complete nonsense that will see the quality of life in Barbados reduced to nothingness. What is worse, Mr. Chairman, is that once there is one devaluation, because of the nature of this economy without any extractive industries and without any renewable energy to speak of, you can be certain devaluation will follow devaluation until we come to nothingness. Even in Guyana where they have reached rock-bottom, because they have extractive industries and the possibility that with the new change in the international economic situation where there is only one super power, they will now be regarded as a non-threat. It is **possible** they may see in the next 15 years an increase in the amount of investment that will go into Guyana. Even Guyana has a chance to come back from where they are because they have vast resources. They have the resources of land which can be transformed. Their agriculture is genuine agriculture. They have forestry. They have gold. They have all the possibilities that in a very short time the Guyanese economy can be transformed if the countries of the United States and Canada decide that they are going to lift whatever needs to be lifted. In 18 months, you can see a complete transformation of the Guyanese economy. But if Barbados should suffer that kind of devaluation, we have nothing at the bottom that can be seen as a safety-net in economic terms.

Therefore, this country will begin to go to the dogs on a very fast sleigh. At least, we can look out the window and see where we are going. It has to be understood because I see a lot of facile foolishness in the newspaper where people are offering devaluation **as** an option. It is not an option for Barbados. It is a suicidal pact. Let us come to an understanding not with the 30,000 tonnes of sugar or 50,000 tonnes of sugar. That is not anything you want to put down as a plank that you are going to stand on to say we can devalue and we will have that to come back on.

I want to make a point. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South knows about sugar, Sir. There are a few people in the political system who understand the economic situation in the international community as it applies to sugar because we had necessarily to learn it. 4.20 p.m.

If you were involved with the transformation which occurred, not as a result of anything Barbados did, but as the result of something which the British Government did. The British Government decided that, in its own interest, it would join the European Economic Community. Once it had made that decision, countries like Barbados that had been brought up for 300 years as mono-crop societies were required, not that we made any decision, to run very fast like the boys who are trying to hop a last bus leaving the station. We had to run and jump on. Whether it was because of bananas in the Windward Islands or sugar, in the case of Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana, the African and Pacific countries and ourselves had to run and jump on the bus that was moving swiftly out of the bus station. We had to learn about sugar very fast.

In 1975, there came a bonanza for a number of reasons. If you check international economics, you will see approximately every 7 years up until recently there were certain movements. Approximately every 7 years there was a cycle. You can look at sugar in Barbados and you will see approximately every 7 years there was what was called a cycle of plenty. That stopped happening when the United States and Britain changed the pattern of economics in this world by going to the supply side of economics. Most of what is happening in the world now is a direct result of that decision. It was recognised that the supply side of economics would guarantee that the socialist economies, which were beginning to show certain weaknesses, would take the slide which they took. They made economic decisions to cause political decisions which we have now seen come to its conclusion.

On another occasion when we have time, Sir, we must have an economic debate in which we discuss the different approaches to economics for developing countries.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, we are not going to spend time discussing that, but the supply siders took the opportunity to help the socialist countries go down the drain. For us, in the Caribbean, we had no choice but to get on board, but, in 1975, a bonanza came, and for the first time in the Caribbean, we the Governments, made the decision that we would get involved in marketing of the product. Up until then, no one in Barbados did any marketing of sugar as such. What happened is that every year the Barbados Workers' Union was invited to participate in a delegation from the Sugar Producers

Federation. They went up to London to hear from Tate & Lyle what was the decisions concerning the so-called Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. The decision was made as to how much they would pay countries like Barbados, after they had listened for two or three days and they had put forward a few views. The price was fixed in London by the sugar people in London. We had no particular input in what the price would be. After the question of getting into the guaranteed market of Europe, that is, making sure that we had cane sugar supplied to Tate & Lyle factories which could not exist without guaranteed sugar coming from cane.

It has to be understood that this EEC agreement was the formalising of arrangements between Barbados and the other Caribbean countries, the African and the Pacific countries and Tate & Lyle. Tate & Lyle was looking after its own interests, guaranteeing that they would have a sufficient supply of sugar to have a throughput to keep their factories going and for the British Government to guarantee that 40,000 of their workers would continue working. That is what it was all about.

As a matter of fact, although the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph will sometimes make fun and talk about the Agreement which we made in Brussels when Barbados agreed on 57,000 tonnes, the sugar producers in Barbados felt that we had sold them out, that we had agreed to too much sugar going into the EEC. In retrospect, if we had not agreed on that guaranteed market - it was not a guaranteed price so much as a guaranteed market because in those days what was important for us was a market. In those days, we talked in terms of producing 130 000 tonnes and we secured 57 000 as a guaranteed market. Incidentally, we discussed a guaranteed price. That is because the Europeans were not really interested in giving us any guaranteed market. The French were not interested in our getting into the market at all, neither were the Dutch because it is no benefit to them for us to continue to sell sugar which is at a higher production.

In 1974, we had a lot of difficulty in getting the sugar producers here to give us information as to what is the true cost of production. To this day, no one knows what is the true cost of production of sugar in Barbados. Do you know what used to happen, Mr. Chairman? They used to give us one kind of price when we were discussing the domestic price of sugar, The cost of production in Barbados was one thing and when we came to discuss sugar in Brussels they offered a different level of the cost of production. Eventually, we had to put them under heavy manners. Booker Tate has now said that they included all kinds of costs as part of the cost of production of sugar. In those days, the overseer, his ox, his ass and everything else used to be included as part of the cost of sugar production. They used to include the cost of the other crops on the

plantation as part of the cost of sugar. In fact, they still do that occasionally, as I understand. We extracted the cost and it was agreed to because what applied in Barbados applied everywhere else, except Guyana. We agreed on an average price which we would put forward because the higher cost of production worked to our advantage when we negotiated the price.

Having done the negotiations, the price started to go sky-high on the world market for the first time in about 14 years. The Government of the day made the decision that, since we had gone out and determined that we would sell the surplus sugar on the world market in selected markets and that got them a bonanza, rather than take taxes from people it would hive off a portion of the bonanza that had been received from the sale of the sugar on the international market and put it, as they say in the literature, "for the use of the Island".

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes left.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Ever since then, Mr. Chairman, there has been a bellyaching from a lot of long-faced people talking about how the Government took their money out of sugar. Let me say to you, Mr. Chairman, it was no more their money than it was the workers' money. It was no more their money than it was your money. It was the money which was earned as a result of the efforts of the Government of Barbados. The Government of Barbados, therefore, made the funds available for use by the entire community. I will discuss that in great detail as necessary elsewhere.

I want to answer the cess question. The cess is not a problem. In Barbados we should never have to import sugar from Guatemala or elsewhere. Let me say in passing to all of those people who believe that sugar has to be boiled before they can eat it, you cannot get cholera from sugar because it comes from Guatemala. Cholera does not come like a centipede wrapped up in a bag. Cholera comes in a different form – maybe with raw fish or some raw food. Sugar is processed food. So, don't let us have any problem with people putting out about cholera.

Since we have to import sugar and the price in the world market is much lower than the price in Barbados a bonanza was there to be had. What the Government has decided is that we are going to leave the price of sugar where it is because the price goes up and down. We will take the cess from that and put it into the sugar sinking fund.

4.30 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We said so. The Minister of Agriculture has said so a number of times. It did not get

carried because when he said it to people who heard him they did not understand what he was saying. He said it but it does not get carried in the newspapers because it was not understood like how the Honourable Member and you understand it. All that is happening here is that we are taking the money, putting it into the sinking fund and the BMC would be allowed a small margin of 1% or 2%.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Barbados Marketing Corporation now has acquired as much expertise in placing orders overseas as anybody else in Barbados. Once upon a time they used to make that seem as though it was an expertise. But usually all it meant was that the Honourable Member as Minister of Trade knows that you used to say, repeat the order.

My time is out, Sir. Thank you.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: We are not surprised, Sir, that the last Honourable Member who spoke for a considerable portion of time had been dealing with the whole question of the wisdom of the decision which was made in 1974 as we entered the European Economic Community Sugar Agreement and spent a lot of time as to what would be the quota of Barbados. Indeed, for almost 18 years he was trying to justify that, Sir.

I think, Mr. Chairman, we ought not to go back too much. We have come a long way in this Chamber, even in your own time, we can cite debates on sugar. There was a time when they were characterised by all forms of black and white divides and too much historical overlay for the most part. I think we have come a far way in the sense that we have now abandoned the historical overlays. I think that there is only one other thing that we need to do before we take some very serious decisions. We must not allow factual inaccuracies deliberately to creep into this debate.

My good and learned friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, has already corrected one. The Barbados Labour Party did not, through the National Bank, take over the debts of the sugar industry. The predecessor institutions to the Agricultural Division of the Barbados National Bank had, by the time the National Bank was created, been responsible for the financing of about 80% of the sugar because Barclay's Bank and the other commercial banks had been very careful only to finance the profitable estates. It was almost automatic that when the Agricultural Division of the Barbados National Bank came into being that it would have inherited the financing of the 80% of the industry, much of which was not sufficiently profitable. That is the position.

The second thing that I want to say by way of correcting the factual inaccuracies has to do with

Portvale. When Portvale was created, all sides were agreed that Portvale was necessary and desirable. Portvale was not forced on the Barbados Labour Party by the sugar industry, as has been suggested. It was agreed that Portvale was necessary and that it was important that we built Portvale at the time, notwithstanding that Booker Tate is saying that Portvale should be closed down in the medium or long run. I am not sure that we need to go with Booker Tate on that.

I am still satisfied that there is a place for Portvale, in the long future, for the north of the island. The road system of Barbados will not allow us to concentrate our sugar processing activity at Andrews in St. Joseph. Apart from the fact that there is no adequate water supply, Andrews is not big enough and the road system of Barbados will not allow us to concentrate our processing of canes there,

Mr. Chairman, we must be very careful not to allow the records to be marred with deliberate inaccuracies of fact. Once we have got our inaccuracies out of the way and we have abandoned our historical overlay, I think we can speak very objectively about the problems of the sugar industry.

I started off with the problem of yield, Mr. Chairman, because I was not too sure that the Chair might not have asked me to justify introducing the debate on sugar. I would like to focus on item 12 dealing with the Cane Breeding Station. You have been understandably and sensibly liberal in your interpretation of the Rules and we have had a discussion on sugar. The owners of the sugar industry traditionally were part of a quiet crowd and an arrogant class in the history of Barbados. But we do not have to be concerned with their pride and arrogance any longer. The point is that they no longer own their industry. They have so mismanaged it that it is overidden with debt.

The other point is, Mr. Chairman, that the sugar industry is so bound up with the natural interest of Barbados that, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South East was making the point about staking them out, we do not have to stake them out there anymore. They are on their knees. But, as they are on their knees, the economy of Barbados is also on its knees. We have to stop worrying about that formerly proud and arrogant class that has badly mismanaged their affairs and deal now with taking decisions that will allow us to come out of the mess we are in and give the sugar industry some opportunity to grow and be profitable once again.

Important decisions have to be made purely about ownership. We have to make decisions about the degree of integration between the production side and the processing side. We have to ask ourselves whether we are going to involve ourselves with bulk purchasing or we are going to allow Bridgetown to dictate to Warrens anymore, or

whether things like pesticides and fertilisers and so on will be bought in a bulk manner on a co-operative basis. We have to concern ourselves with what is the correct target figure as far as cutting is concerned. We have to concern ourselves with a proper land use policy that will protect the future of all agriculture in Barbados. We have to concern ourselves with what number of factories and where they will be located in the future. These are some of the macro issues we have to address.

Now, one thing that I blame our administration for and myself, looking back as Minister of Agriculture, is that we did not insist enough on the conditionalities being met from year to year when we gave price support. The position now is that the Government is controlling. The Government has all the leverage in its hands, it ought not to worry about the sugar industry for the future in the sense of non-cooperation with them because they have no choice. The Government is in a position, simply with them, to devise a sensible policy and take the lead and dictate at every stage. They have no choice but to cooperate with the Government. The Government has got to make up its mind. What is worrying me, Mr. Chairman, is that we are getting no signal from the Government that the Government has made up its mind with respect to the many issues that I have identified relative to the future sugar industry.

4.40 p.m.

Clearly there are organizational and management weaknesses in the industry. We do not have to spend a long time on that. But the management of the agricultural sector, particularly the sugar industry is a major challenge in this country. And yet the industry has consistently chosen retired people lacking in healthy imagination to manage its affairs. The people who can do that are not serious people. They have abandoned the merit principle in the selection of the staff in the promotion and placement of the staff. If in Barbados any sector abandons the merit principle, people not getting jobs, promotions and appointments on the basis of merit but on the basis of all sorts of astrictive criteria that has ever since been abandoned they will forever run themselves in trouble. But the Government must in the future give all sorts of support to the industry, financial and non financial and insist that those bad management practices of the past come to an end and that the jobs in the sugar industry must be advertised, as they are advertised everywhere else and that people get them on the basis of merit and not on the basis of any connections and other astrictive criteria. We do not have to spend too much time on that because it is clear now that that is a pat on the backs.

What I want to emphasize is the very fundamental point which was made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and it is this, that once we agree that we are going to maintain the parity of the Barbados dollar vis-a-vis the US, it has certain implications for

certain sectors of the Barbadian economy. One of the sectors that it has a very serious implication for is the sugar sector. That was demonstrated very clearly in the early 1980s when overnight we lost as the European Currency Unit basket \$43 million. That is a situation which those of us in here ought not to forget. Because the Honourable Member for St. Philip South said that the lost of \$43 million was no big thing, a statement which very few of us will ever forget.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In this debate?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Pardon?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In this debate?

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: No. That was at that time. But I take the point that you are making, Mr. Chairman. You are trying to ensure that I am always relevant and that I am current and not dealing too much in the past.

But the point is that once we accept as a matter of policy that we are going to defend the parity of the dollar vis-a-vis the US dollar, it means that some measure of support must be given by way of compensation to the sugar industry. And it is for the Government of the day to determine what is vital and the shape of that support. We gave it in the form of price support which was not, as some people seem to think, a gift. We gave the support in the form of the price support mechanism. There has not been any consistent policy towards that ever since we left office in 1986.

The industry has an enormous debt. The reform measures begin to be in the region of \$400 million. The reform measures believed to be in the region of \$400 million. The reform measures called for will need more financing. The Government has got to make up its mind whether there is going to be any form of debt rescheduling, whether there is going to be any form of writing off of debt or an interest forbearance. All of these are issues which the Government will have to make up its mind about. The important thing is that it cannot wait, because the whole future of the sugar industry is tied up with the whole future of the national development effort. So that it makes no sense saying string them out. When you string them out, you string out Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That is why, Mr. Chairman, we cannot leave this debate or we ought not to leave it. We should get some indication from the Government as to what exactly is its response to the Booker Tate Report and how it stands in relation to some

if not all of the issues which we have identified in calling for resolution in the sugar industry at this time.

I just want to make one final point, Mr. Chairman, and it is this. It is wrong to believe that when you talk about sugar you are not also talking about non-sugar. The history in Barbados has been that when we are doing well in sugar, we do equally well in non-sugar. When we abandon sugar equally non-sugar is abandoned. In 1963-67 when we were producing 180 000 to 189 000 tonnes we were devoting some 6 000 to 7 000 acres to non-sugar agriculture. As soon as you come down to reducing it to 50 000 to 60 000 tonnes you are down to 3 000 to 3 500 acres in non-sugar agriculture. The better you do – because of the rotational pattern – in sugar the better you do in non-sugar agriculture.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, at page 30 of the Estimates for 1992-93, Head 25 subprogram 02, code number 250202 in relation to extension services, crop research, *et cetera*, you will notice that there is a significant reduction of the allocation from \$1.8 million to \$1.1 million.

Even as he concluded, my colleague the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was indicating that there is a role for non-sugar agriculture in the Barbados economy. And notwithstanding all that has transpired in recent times, if ever there was a response to Government's call in a situation of austerity, it has come now. Sir, as you are aware in recent times with the downswing in economic activity in this country there has been a suggestion to the population at large that people ought to help themselves. And of great importance a large number of small farmers in addition to a large number of subsistence farmers have taken up the challenge and have decided to do their utmost by way of increasing non-sugar agricultural production.

The natural question becomes if in view of the fact that there is a new marked enthusiasm on the part of small people to engage in non-sugar agricultural production, how can Government justify the reduction in the allocation to a sector which is obviously vibrant and ready to take off in circumstances where what they had last year is going to be reduced in the current financial year?

Sir, one of the reasons why I rise is this, that in the country areas – and I come from a country area like the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Honourable Member for St. George South, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and a lot of other Honourable Members – over the years a number of agricultural substations and outposts in rural areas have closed

down. They have closed down in such a way that it seems to a lot of farmers that a situation has now emerged where the support services that small farmers would ordinarily get from Government are rather centralized.

Sir, I need hardly remind you that Jerusalem, in St. Peter is no more, certainly not as an agricultural station. **Bullens** in St. James is **no** more, certainly not as an agricultural station. What has happened in the interim is that over the years these substations, these agricultural stations used to do a lot by way of extension, by way of advice, by way of technical support...

We have a situation today in this country where small farmers are very much left to themselves and to their own devices in a situation where by implication Government is encouraging them to produce more food and in a situation where too the time is still at hand where they do obviously need some support. I will give you one example, Sir, to clarify the point I am attempting to make. There is a small farmer in my constituency who tells me that in the month of October last, he went to the Ministry of Agriculture and paid in for ploughing services and to this day, up to this morning no plough has come to help him. This farmer is 23 years old. The significance of this is that in times when a lot of youth seem wayward and seem bent on all forms of non conventional activity, a 23 year old boy called Jones from my constituency decides that he wants to be a farmer, decides to pay in money for ploughing and rotation services. Having paid this money in October, to this day March, 1992 Jones has not got the ploughing services and the rotation services that he wants.
4.50 p.m.

The reason for this, Sir, and this is that there are two ploughs only in this entire country to serve the whole of Barbados. So if a person called Mr. D. Simmons, for example, from Porey Spring, St. Thomas wanted to farm a $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of land, could not afford his own tractor and plough, Mr. D. Simmons would readily be accepted and his money would be taken for the plough but he would have to wait the better part of six months, and in circumstances where clearly Government is asking the population to diversify the range of economic activity, this is thoroughly untenable and undesirable.

There is another situation as well, Sir, which requires Governmental attention. It is this. When people go farming they are subject to whole host of vagaries, such as weather, fluctuations in demand and a whole host of things can affect a small farmer. At this point in Barbados' history there is a marked glut of vegetable production in this country and the first and most obvious thing arising out of the glut is that prices will fall. Now, from consumers there will be no objection to price fall but to a farmer whose income and profit should come from the price he offers to

the community this can be a powerful disincentive. I am asking the Government what plans does the Government have in place, either to compensate, reward, or find some mechanism by which the small farmer who falls victim to glut and to marked increases in prices, will get from the Government.

In addition to all I am saying, Sir, there is another area of concern for Honourable Members on this side: You know, Sir, that later in the Estimates the allocation for veterinary services has been reduced. Again, Sir, part of farming is not just the production of onions and seasonings and beets and carrots. Part of farming is livestock farming. What small farmer in Proute, St. Thomas or in Rock Dundo, St. James or Sea View, St. James can readily afford to retain and hire his own full time Vet? I am saying, Sir, that if Government is to be taken as the guardian of the society and as the principal benefactor of Barbados I am suggesting that Government may very well be advised to monitor the situation out there among small farmers, closely first, before embarking on any budgetary cuts.

In situations of hard times a Government which is under the influence of an external force like the IMF is going to have to tow the line, but at the same time I am speaking under a Head that relates to the protective sectors of the economy. I am speaking under a Head that has historically been established as one of the more important sectors in Barbados. I am urging the Government to rethink its position on the small farmers in relation to the reduction relative to extension services, crop research etc., and also in relation to veterinary services.

Sir the point I am making is this. Somebody who is misadvised about things may get up one morning, water a piece of ground, dig it up and plant and then reap, but in a situation where the soil can be used over and over again, and in a situation where a farmer may mean well but may not have the technical expertise and feel that the time has come for Government to look at the areas in which the technical support services and advice is extended to the small farmers in rural Barbados.

Sir, the reason for this is clear that if you had the opportunity to go through rural Barbados you will notice that that zest and that enthusiasm that Government used to produce in relation to providing extension services in agriculture years ago seems to have contracted somewhat. A lot of small farmers are left on their own with just their enterprise to offer and very little more than that to put into their farming activities.

Sir, under this Head, I would like the Honourable Member on the other side who has responsibility for Head 25, to consider those concerns and if of course he has any direct answers to give us here this evening to do so, so

that we may be able to understand what the true and exact policy of the **administration** is at this time.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we may have the little break but before we do that, Sir, I have spoken so much on agriculture before that I will take a break this year, Sir.

In relation to the point made by the Honourable Member for St. James North I **just** want to say that the D. Simmons who represents Porey Spring if he had come within the last few weeks he would have seen that the land is ploughed up and the piping is ready to be installed. I want to **try** ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you saying that is the relationship between the D. Simmons and you.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I don't know, Sir, I am talking about me, I don't know about the other one. I mean on behalf of the one from Porey Spring, Sir, I want to try some onions with a drip system so I am getting ready to do the onions with a drip system but I did not use the plough of the Ministry of Agriculture, I had to get a private plough.

Sir, in relation to page 33 Resource Development and Protection Subprogram 01: Scotland District Development, I feel very concerned at what appears from Code 602 to **626**. I see in the Estimates under the Column Estimates **1992-93** a set of zeroes under Other Personal Emoluments zero and **all** of the other things. The implication of that, to me, is that Government does not intend, certainly in this financial year to do any work in the Scotland District area, does not intend to employ anybody on a temporary basis. There are personal emoluments at the top but there is no capital work that is being planned for. Structures \$225 000 but where is the provision for staff to deal with these capital **projects**? The implication as I said is that Government intends to wind down the Scotland District Development. Now that is a very serious thing.

Can we break now, Sir, I will take it up later on.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, 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 5.30 p.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.
5.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply is resumed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, when we broke for the adjournment, I was trying to make the point that on both sides we have to accept that the Scotland District of St. Andrew, St. Joseph, parts of St. John, St. Thomas and St. Peter have been neglected for many years. Let me put it another way. They have not been the beneficiaries of an equitable proportion of Government's finances as other parts of Barbados.

In the Labour Party in preparing for the last general election, we gave a lot of thought and discussion to **rural** modernization and, indeed, devoted page 40 of our manifesto to the broad plans and policy objectives that we had in mind for rural modernization. It is important there must not be perceived to be 2 Barbadoses that in the central districts of Christ Church and so on and the west coast which is more developed than the people who live particularly in the north. The northern areas suffer particularly from a lack of adequate infrastructure such as roads, water, and light. But at the same time the north makes a telling contribution to agricultural production in this country. We feel that the people of the north deserve to have their communities modernized.

In addition to that, at least I believe for 2 decades, particular attention was paid to the development of the Scotland area through the Soil Conservation Scheme which was deemed to be of such importance that it carried its own legislation. The Scotland District **is** one to which we have to pay particular attention because of land slippage and the problems associated with soil erosion. Both Governments have **tried** to find over the years ways of conserving that part of Barbados by embarking on fruit orchard projects and so on.

The Soil Conservation Department was one which also provided job opportunities for large numbers of persons particularly from the northern area. So that it is particularly distressing to us on this side that the item to which I drew attention before the break, Scotland District Development on page 25, seems to imply because no money is voted in this year's Estimates that either

people will be sent home or that people have gone and no more will be employed, or that there is no capital development programme envisaged for the Scotland District. Therefore, there is no need to make provision for staff to carry out the work associated with capital development in that area. I say that because that is the only implication that can be drawn because there are a series of zeroes – Transport Levy – Zero, Travel – Zero, and Rental of Property – Zero. You do not anticipate that anybody will be working on the capital side of the Scotland District area.

I would be grateful for an explanation from the Minister because I cannot believe that we are voting \$225 000 under Object No. 623 – Capital. When I read the note, this is what you intend to provide with \$225 000: Provide for Subsurface draining, paving of nursery extension, rural engineering work at Isolation Road, water courses, river course stabilisation, and initiation of reshaping works at Turners Hall. I want to suggest to this House that \$225 000 cannot do all of that work. It is a joke or it is a deliberate attempt to confuse and mislead people. This is foolishness. I want a proper answer of how this \$225 000 is to be spent and what are the implications of the zeroes.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. James North said that it was his observation that there is quite some development going on in non-sugar agriculture. I think he was referring particularly to vegetable production. I can speak of Trinidad under the IMF Programme because it became very clear after Trinidad went into the IMF Programme that their agricultural production in terms of vegetable production and so on mushroomed. There is a tremendous amount of agricultural production in Trinidad. You can get all kinds of things and lovely vegetables. Only 2 or 3 weeks ago when I was down there, I was amazed again at the quality of vegetables and fruit being produced in Trinidad and there has been a resurgence in agriculture since they went into the IMF Programme.

I have a suspicion that our involvement with the IMF will, in due course, see a return to the land because people are going to have to find some means especially with this very caring Government sending home thousands of people willy-nilly and with 4,000 school children coming out in the summer. They are going to have to fend for themselves and the initial response, I believe, is going to be a return to agriculture and market and kitchen gardening springing up. I have no doubt that we will be pleased with the level of agricultural production. I am talking of non-sugar agricultural production.

If that is so, it requires that we plan for the marketing of this produce. As I said, I am not going to speak on agriculture. I have done that several times, Sir. But I know the Honourable Member for Christ Church South wants to ask about the agro-processing plant. I have always felt that

we have approached, and I mean both Governments, this question of a marketing corporation and so on in the wrong way. I keep saying that we need to do more if we are going to be involved in niche marketing of agricultural produce and the export of exotic vegetables. We have to identify the types of things we are going to grow. We have to identify the markets overseas and get the assurances that if we produce they will be taken. It is critical that we have air transportation to get this exotic produce from here to North America or wherever we are going to be doing business. We have to assure the farmer that when we say we need, for example, 2 tonnes of okras every other day that we can deliver. When I am assured of that, I will plant. When I am assured that I can get a market and that I am not going to have to dump or plough back in, I will plant. That is so for all of the planters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Mrs. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. I think there has to be careful planning starting with the identification of markets. This is where the Export Promotion Corporation and the missions overseas should be vying to identify and report to Government, that there is a market for okra, hot peppers, or whatever. Let that information be distributed in the farming community and build the necessary infrastructure by way of cold storage or whatever to make sure that we have the necessities to reduce spoilage. Let it be known that we are able to meet the demand and delivery dates. But it is a whole question of planning.

As I said in relation to crime and the penal system earlier, if we do not have the money to spend now on the development of cold storage facilities or whatever, at least let us do the planning properly so that when we go to the World Bank and the IADB we have projects to get some money, hopefully, without the conditionality of devaluation. But I do not believe the last part that I said. I know they are going to insist on it.

5.40 p.m.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to answer a few questions. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South, in some housekeeping matters, asked a few questions about some markets at Oistins. The first one was the provision of ice for the vendors. The information I have is that presently there is a production of about 1 000 kilos of ice per day and this is mainly used by the fish sellers. A contract is being negotiated with private sector ice producers to provide ice for Oistins. Certain provisions are being reviewed, especially in relation to the price of the ice, *et cetera*.

The other question about the sewage, Oistins has always had a problem with that. At first there was a design problem in that both the sewage from the toilets and the fish' waste went to one septic tank and that created

a problem. During the time I was Minister of Agriculture we put down a second septic tank and separated the fish waste and the sewage. The problem at Oistins is that because of the high water table the septic tanks get filled very quickly and therefore a certain amount of very rapid pumping has to be done. I will say that as soon as the scheme is available on the south coast, that will have to be taken out.

Oistins is an area that has been, and I believe there still is, some **type** of vandalism. Before I left the Ministry I know there was a provision made for completely enclosing Oistins in order to try to keep away some of the undesirables from the area and to cut out some of the vandalism, particularly from the toilet facilities. I know during my time we repaired those toilets on numerous occasions and as soon as they were repaired we came back and found the copper pulled out of the wall and set aside, but it is an ongoing problem.

With regard to the lights, at first the wires went through galvanised iron and because of erosion they broke down fairly often. A move was made to go to PVC piping as well, but as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said, it does not only affect the piping that holds the light but the actual contacts of the light and therefore it calls for maintenance almost weekly as far as that Oistins complex is concerned.

During 1991, Mr. **Chairman**, only four licences were taken up by the Barbadian fishermen out of a total of 40. My understanding is that early in the 1992 season, despite very many warnings issued to the fishermen, one boat was arrested.

The other one about the boats going down to the Bridgetown complex, there is one ice machine providing approximately 12 tonnes of ice per day. The fish vendors use approximately 2 tonnes per day, but this is restricted to ensure priority being given to the boats. They are currently examining proposals to increase the price of ice, but the boats apparently prefer to use the ice from the Bridgetown Fishing Complex because of the type of ice. Those boats like that kind of ice. It lasts longer and therefore they usually shy away from buying flaked ice from the present producers. Hence most of the boats seem to prefer to wait rather than get ice from the private sector because of the better quality of the ice.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph then got on to sugar and he raised a number of points. For many years, Mr. Chairman, the persons who had been looking at sugar have admitted that the biggest problem with sugar in Barbados is the uncertainty of the ECUs with which the sugar is paid for against the U.S. dollar. If you examine the sugar industry's debt, it was relatively small in 1982 – if my memory serves me well it was about \$32 million or

thereabouts – and from 1982 up until now it has been rising at a fairly astronomical rate.

The Barbados Labour Party's policy to this was to introduce a subsidy to the sugar industry. That subsidy was usually arrived at when the total receipts for sugar had been in normally around the month of December, when it is known what the industry's receipt is, as against the cost the industry purported it cost them. The Barbados Labour Party then introduced a subsidy to help in those years where it was necessary. This went on for quite a few years and **there** was one year when a subsidy was not given. I believe that was 1986, but it was given up to 1988 and then the Ministry, under the Democratic Labour Party, started to examine the matter closely and came up with a policy on the minimum guaranteed price for sugar and a few other commodities.

The rationale was that in the subsidy situation the planters did not know up until the subsidy was granted what it was going to be, and therefore there was a problem in planning for the industry early in the year. We figured that if the Government undertook the exchange risk, which was the biggest problem, it would remove one of the main problems the industry was facing. The Government did that by stating it would give the industry a minimum guaranteed price per tonne, which was made known early. The problem of dispute then, and I believe still is, was what level the minimum guaranteed price should be. That has been going on for a long time and the Ministry, after fairly exhaustive analysis, fixed the minimum guaranteed price in 1989 or 1990 at about \$975 per tonne. This was fixed at the price at which our analysis showed that a relatively good sugar planter would be able to produce **sup-** It was pitched at that point to encourage efficiency. Our policy was that we had examined all the available information and in our opinion a competent sugar planter could exist on the minimum guaranteed price and it removed the risk of the exchange control. In that way a price for sugar was guaranteed the **farmer** even before he started to plant it and in our opinion it was a price on which a good, competent farmer could survive. Therefore we moved away from the subsidy to the minimum guaranteed price as a policy. The difference was that we decided to take the risk and they knew earlier than the month of December what the price would be.

As I said earlier, Mr. Chairman, there has always been a problem in determining the cost of production of a tonne of sugar. Let me give you a typical example of the last time I examined it. In 1990, I had exhaustive discussions with Mr. Deane when we were trying to fix the minimum guaranteed price. I asked Mr. Deane to provide the figures on what it is costing us. We had a surprising scenario. The first figures produced by the Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. was \$1 834 per tonne. Our technocrats looked at it and we said there were certain things

included which were not allowable. They came back and they said it was now **\$1 634**. The technocrats in the Planning Unit went through it again and told Mr. Deane that there were still items included that we could not accept. They came back within a week at **\$1 334**. The last figure produced was **\$1 134**.

5.50 p.m.

Now, you would understand that any Ministry would have difficulty when an industry within a matter of three weeks moved their production cost from **\$1 834** to **\$1 134**. Therefore, there was always some little dispute between the industry and the Ministry as to what is their production cost that would make a relatively comfortable farmer break even. This year, I am told, the Ministry has fixed that at **\$1 025** per tonne.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party has always made it known that its policy is to diversify around sugar. It has been the policy of the Democratic Labour Party and it still is. All of the points raised by the Opposition in support of sugar are well accepted and acknowledged by this side. First of all, it lends to the environment of the country. It protects the topsoil. No alternative crop has been found for those acreages at the moment. It brings in foreign exchange. The Government has always said that its policy would diversify around sugar. Therefore, the Democratic Labour Party's policy, as enunciated, is to return the sugar industry to a target between **90 000** to **100 000** tonnes of sugar, over the long run.

If you examine it, you will see that we still have about **57 000** tonnes in the EEC. Up until the last time I heard we still had about **5 000** tonnes we can put into the United States of America. The domestic supply is **15 000** which will give you **77 000**. You cannot plant **77 000** tonnes if you want **77 000** because of the movement of the production due to rainfall. Therefore you target it at **90 000** so that in times of bad rainfall you will still be able to pick up **77 000** tonnes. That has been the programme.

Some questions have been asked about the difficulties in returning the industry to that level of production.

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

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: There are numerous reasons given but the biggest is the yield. We are now down to **2.4%**. A lot of this is because the variety presently used is over **25** years old and most plantations are now going into **6th** and **7th** crops. It is unusual, and unless you have in at least **20%** cane plants every year and go to about **4th** crop you would not be able to return a yield under the present system. Therefore, the Ministry is trying to evolve an incentive scheme to encourage the planting of plant crops,

about **20%** every year and over a period of about three to four years you bring back the plant crop and reduce it back to **4th** crop at the most.

One of the fundamentals is that a decision has to be made on the debt of the sugar industry. I am aware that discussions have been going on at the industry, the Bank, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture for some while and proposals will be put to deal with this problem because it is fundamental and has to be dealt with before the industry can return to its viability.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I want to make one intervention in this matter to say that I am absolutely opposed to the vote for the Ministry of Agriculture. We do not ordinarily divide the House in Committee, but I believe that the vote for agriculture this year, in an absolute and a relevant sense, is a reflection of a bankrupt economic policy.

Between **1982** and **1983**, the Barbados Labour Party faced a situation, where we had to make an adjustment to recession, where we had to implement a stabilisation programme and endure the strictures of an IMF programme. Government's total current expenditure was reduced between **1982** and **1983**, but even in the context of reduced spending by Government, the Barbados Labour Party found it desirable and necessary to increase current expenditure on agriculture. Our current budget was reduced from **\$528** million in **1982-83** to **\$518** million in **1983-84**. Even though we reduced the budget, we increased our spending on agriculture. The benefits of that policy which was supplemented by bringing to the House in **1982** a number of incentives to agriculture were reflected in the fact that between **1982** and **1987** the food import bill of Barbados was reduced every year. This year, Mr. Chairman, we are confronted with a situation where this country has to undergo serious structural adjustments. I truly believe that one of the important adjustments that had to be made in Barbados is that we have to take agriculture out of the realm of the endangered species. Today, agriculture is in a situation where it can be regarded as an emergency, and I cannot support at the level of committee subventions to agriculture in which incentives and other subsidies to farmers are reduced from **\$2.6** million to **\$454 000**. It clearly has to be a bankrupt economic policy that at a time when there is idle land in Barbados, when there is a high level of unemployment, when the food import bill in **1991** for the first **10** months was higher than the food import bill for the first **10** months of **1990** that the Government of Barbados is proposing through these Estimates to reduce incentives and other subsidies to farmers to stimulate agricultural production from **\$2.6** million to **\$454 000**. I cannot support these subventions on a dollar by dollar basis where the vote to stimulate output of crops is to be cut by **\$1.2** million. The opposite policy should obtain this year.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that when we take the votes for agriculture head by head it reflects a false economy. This is the one sector in the economy where one can stimulate the economy in the knowledge that there is not a lot of import intensity. The Government of Barbados, in my submission to this committee, is on the wrong path. I believe that we should be looking as a committee not to cut incentives to agriculture, but to expand them. I will not have the opportunity to register my vote against it by way of division but I want to say that this series of votes and the sub-programmes as projected in these Estimates reflect a policy that makes no sense in context of the situation.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: You have cut all the subsidies and all the incentives. We have reached a situation where Barbados is importing sugar and molasses, where the poultry industry within itself is under a state of siege, where the livestock industry is being wiped out, where the cotton industry, the cherry producing industry or any industry that you name in agriculture have excess capacities. They had hope for expansion but activity in the sector is being frustrated by the lack of resources. If the Government has a plan for agriculture that would enable agriculture to be a leading sector to help pull Barbados out of the recession as it can do, then I am saying that plan is not reflected in these Estimates.
6.00 p.m.

I believe that we have to challenge the Minister of Finance on his statement to the effect that there will be growth in Barbados because there cannot be growth in the immediate future in Barbados unless there is growth in the agricultural sector. Therefore, I really cannot find it within me to support these Estimates as they stand. If the Government intends to support agriculture in a larger measure through the block vote that is within the Ministry of Finance that is intended to finance the structural adjustment programme, then I think that the time has come for the Government to be specific as to the amount of that structural adjustment block vote within the Ministry of Finance that is designed to be spent on agricultural production.

As the situation stands, Sir, this House, I think, would be failing in its responsibility to the country if we were to sit back, as Members of this Parliament, at this time when this country requires from agriculture a serious push forward, and agree in a committee to cutting back incentives and other subsidies to agriculture, in some instances, by 25% and in the case of incentives to farmers, from \$2.6 million to \$450 000. In fact, the whole sector is being emasculated.

I really believe we need to hear more clearly from Government what are those aspects of the structural

adjustment hope that it intends to bring to the benefit of the agricultural sector. There are particular problems in agriculture which are of great concern to me. It is a matter of great concern to me that, during the course of the last financial year the Government has had to pay money out of the Consolidated Fund of this country to help redeem their sugar bonds. For 4 years, Mr. Chairman, we have been pressing the Government of Barbados to put in place...

Aside.

Mf. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I go back to Page 27 - Direction and Policy Formulation, Sub-programme 1. I am very concerned, Sir, that the Government has had, in the course of the last financial year, to provide funds from the Consolidated Fund of Government in order to help redeem the sugar price support. I am told it is \$5 million. This matter came to this House in 1986, 1988 and 1990. We, on this side, brought to the attention of Government that it did not have in place a policy, or a series of measures, to make sure that the sugar industry would have been able to repay the price support bonds when they fell due. The then Minister of Agriculture gave us the assurance that the matter was under study and that the House would have been told in due course of the measures that Government would have taken to make sure that the price support sinking fund was put in such a condition that the redemption of those bonds would not put a claim on the public purse.

We have now come to the stage, Mr. Chairman, where the Government has not only had to help repay one series of sugar price support bonds but the likelihood is that in the absence of a clear policy by the Government it might well become the norm that the Government may have to redeem all of the sugar price support bonds. Given the stringencies of Government's finances, I do not believe that the Government can afford to carry another liability on its books. I would therefore want to hear from the Minister of Agriculture, as clearly as he can state, what are the Government's policies to make sure that the repayment of the redemption of the sugar price support bonds do not become a charge on the public purse any time in the future.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am speaking, Sir, under this Head, page 39, in which I see Sub-programme 4 - Incentives and Other Subsidies, Item 713 - Subsidies is \$0. When one looks at the appropriation in 1991 it was \$5 102 045. In the Approved Estimates of 1991-92 it was \$2 million and now it is \$0. This involves a radical change of policy. The Government is saying clearly to all of those areas of agriculture which formally were the beneficiaries of a stated Government policy as recently as 1991 of \$5 million that today for 1992-93 it will be \$0. When I contrast that, Sir, with the total contribution to ADC,

page 41, which **will** still be \$3.5 million, I ask myself the question, how in any evaluation that has taken place one could come to the conclusion that you would give in agriculture to **ADC** \$3.5 million and to the totality of the rest of agricultural production, excluding ADC and the sugar industry \$0? That **is** what I cannot follow, Sir.

What one must also take into account is that when \$5 million was appropriated in that area, **the** Government also had a definite policy in relation to two important things: (1) protection for the agricultural industry via licences from the protection extended to production within CARICOM as well as outside CARICOM: (2) you also had the policy that inputs, as far as taxes in the form of duties, consumption taxes and **stamp** duties, that the Government would rebate them. So your cost of inputs was reduced to the extent of your taxes.

6.10 p.m.

This Government has a record of having introduced additional consumption **taxes**, at least by **100%** since it has been into office. And what is more is that the Government has now declared its policy that it is no longer giving those rebates to the agricultural industry or if it is giving **them**, it is giving them on a case by case basis.

I would like to know how the small farmers in Gibbons, the small farmers in **Rices** and all of those people who, over the years, through deliberate policy decisions of the **Government** to introduce **irrigation** schemes in order to increase the production are going to get these rebates when they have to apply now not even to the Ministry of Agriculture, because my understanding is that you have to apply to the Ministry of Finance on a case by case basis.

If you want to talk about craziness in economic policy, talk about the craziness embodied in these Estimates. They are diametrically contrary to everything that takes place in any civilized society. I am sorry that the Minister of Finance and the architect of the policy in relation to these Estimates are not here. I also **am** not going to give up, in these Estimates, until I get a clear answer to the fact that there is a Report that has already been laid on the Floor of the House, that this Government, this Minister of Finance, as a matter of policy indicated very clearly to the World Bank, through the Central Bank of Barbados in a letter of the 8th March 1990. The Barbadian authorities have reconfirmed their Agreement as indicated in the Central Bank of Barbados (CBB) letter of March 8, 1990 to the World Bank on the elimination. This has been made a document of the House repeatedly. We had even passed a copy to the Honourable Members on the other side so that they can see what their Government has done, although they disclaim any knowledge of it. I am going to repeat it. It must be repeated.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before you repeat it can I understand what the title of the document is.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The title of the document is the "Barbados Proposed Export Development Project **Pre-appraisal** Mission Aide Memoir". That is what it says. The World Bank, Sir.

The Barbadian authorities have **reconfirmed** their agreement indicated in the Central Bank of Barbados letter of **March 8, 1990** to the World Bank on the elimination of non tariff barriers and their replacement by temporary surcharges.

I want to know very clearly, is it the policy of the Government that all of those instruments and mechanisms relating to the issuance of licences with respect to the importation of vegetables from CARICOM are to be removed? I want to know. I want to know what your policy is. The Honourable Members and the Government are the people – you must understand that you must know what is the impact of your policy, as evidenced by the fact that you have **eliminated** between 1990, 1991 and today \$5 million in subsidies. You have taken off the duties on the inputs and now you are saying that the world is going to have full access to the Barbadian market. Because you have committed yourself **to** a policy that you are going to be competitive with all of the world including the exports subsidized agriculture from Europe, from the US, from Latin America, from wherever it is. The only thing you will be able to do then is to say they are going to have some disease and **you** are going to stop them at the airport or you are going to use some other fictitious **type** of protective **mechanism**. I want to know Sir. I **am** frying to get an answer. Because this House **and** this country is not being told the **truth** about the full implications of that so-called structural adjustment programme.

Sir, the implications of that policy in relation to livestock **particularly** in relation to the chicken industry – Oh yes, chicken. They have livestock production – is very clear because it is known. It is a known fact that the chicken industry in Barbados survives and the the pork industry survives because of its ability to sell to the Barbadian **market** under conditions of protection.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am very glad to hear the Honourable Member is twenty years ahead of that. If the Honourable Members' policy is that they had it for 20 years, so be it. That is a remarkable reversal of policy because the policy of the Democratic Labour Party between 1986 and today has been to increase the protection, increase the licences, increase the consumption taxes, increase the stamp duties, increase everything to provide more domestic protection. And now in one fell swoop you are going to take it all away. No more subsidies. No more licences. None of that. You are going to take it away.

I would like to know if the Honourable Member thinks that Barbadian farmers can produce as cheaply as the Guyanese farmers. Or if the Honourable Member feels that the Barbadian chicken farmers or pork farmers can produce as cheaply as the heavily subsidized **Trinidadian** farmers. Let him talk about that, the heavily subsidized **Trinidadian** farmers. This has been going on for so long. What is the policy? I only want to know what the policy is. We cannot say what your policy is. The members on the other side must say what their policy is. You must be man enough to stand up in here...

Hon. B. M. **TAITT**: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member must be misleading this House. The Letter of Intent was laid in this House. The Letter of Intent was laid and the supplementary Letter of Intent was laid. You cannot come in here now and give the impression that you do not know what the policy is. The policy is clear. It is in the Letter of Intent.

Hon. H. B. St. **JOHN**: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very glad because the Honourable Prime Minister has said in here last **week** that he has worked out no structural adjustment programme with the World Bank or any of them. There is nowhere in the Letter of Intent, as far as I **can see**, that calls for a removal of this protective mechanism **vis-a-vis** agriculture. I find this strange, Sir, and I will **tell** you why. I **find** this very strange because in my opinion Barbados has been sold down the river in its negotiations with the multilateral institutions. Because the multilateral institutions whose governors and whose bosses are citizens of the larger countries, whose agricultural policies are diametrically opposed to the policies that they are trying to put on us. There has been no agreement in the GATT on agriculture because of disagreement between the developed world and this question of protection for agriculture and the level of subsidization.
6.20 p.m.

The nincompoops in this part of the world must agree to change to a different policy from other people. I regard it as the interest of Barbadians being sold down the river. That is my view. Let the Honourable Members get up and state that is the policy of the Government, to sell the **people** down the river. That is what I want to know.

The other thing is this, this is going to lead to a very fundamental point. There is going to be **tremendous** pressure on the Government to allow agricultural land to go out of production. There can't be any **doubt** about this. Big farmers, small farmers, everybody. The Labour Party never had any. There is a big policy difference. The Labour Party believes it is in the national interest to reserve a proportion of Barbados land to agriculture. The Labour Party has **committed** itself to a policy.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: Can I find a dollar amount for the subsidies?

Hon. H. B. St. **JOHN**: No, Sir, I can't give you.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: I am talking about the agricultural land that the Honourable Member is **talking** about. You are generalising at this point.

Hon. H. B. St. **JOHN**: You see, Sir, under ADC the Agricultural Development Corporation has access to some 3 000 or 4 000 acres of land and the Government finds it necessary to give that institution a subsidy of \$3.357 million to farm that 3 000 acres of land. I am saying, Sir, that if you find it necessary to give them a subsidy of \$3 million to farm those 3 000 acres, that the other people whom you are denying anything to are going to ask for permission to sell the land. That is what I am saying. They are going to ask for permission because nobody is giving them anything now to keep them in production. That is what I am saying. I am saying that the overall effect of that policy is going to mean that we are going to have a reduction in land use for agriculture. I am saying that is a bad thing for Barbados.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: Let us get back to **specifics** now.

Hon. H. B. St. **JOHN**: We have to be specific. That is most specific, Sir, because we would not be debating agriculture next year if all of the rest of the land in Barbados goes out of production. So it is a very, very serious thing. We are talking about gluts. The implications of this policy is what I am worried about because this idea of drawing a pen ... This mathematical exercise 'bringing revenue within expenditure is a dangerous thing unless you understand what the impact is.

Sir, it is still an important point in relation to saving the industry. Now this Government boasted that it was going to help solve the problem of gluts by having what is called a multi-purpose processing plant. A multi-purpose processing plant, as I understand it, was built on BADC land at Fairy Valley.

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

Hon. H. B. St. **JOHN**: Yes, Sir. I don't even need two **minutes** for this, because that was an unmitigated disaster, because the plant as I understand it was ill-equipped, badly designed, plenty of cost **overruns** and it has not enough money now to pay. It has a high bank overdraft. It has not got enough money to purchase. Some effort has to be made at a recapitalisation of that plant, otherwise it will not be able to fulfil its purpose to purchase excess supplies of vegetables to keep them off the market. All of the effort that we talk about, the self-help, is going to go to

nought. These are serious questions that I hope you get some answers to. I happen to live very near to Gibbons, very near to Ealing Grove, very near to all of those people around and they besiege me with questions in relation to what are the implications of structural adjustment. I want to answer them truthfully. I want to tell them how the Government sees it and how I see it.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the last Honourable Member who spoke made many important points relating to the abandonment of subsidies by the Government and to the fact that it has not been made clear to the small farming communities of Barbados, whose existence has been dependent, over many years, on the Government subsidy to the agricultural activity.

Now, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West in a loud *sotto voce* did make the point that the Government cannot give any subsidies under an IMF Programme. That ought to be made clear...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, Sir, it is contrary to the rules for anybody to import another Honourable Member into a debate by saying "in a loud aside". I made no loud asides otherwise Your Honour would have heard them. I said what I had to say on a point of order. The Honourable Member must not import me into the debate. When my time comes I will speak but he cannot import me.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, the point stands on its own, without having to import. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is obviously embarrassed over the importation but...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do I look embarrassed to you, Sir. The Honourable Member cannot make these statements about me in front of my face.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: The point I am making is this. These stabilisation measures to be followed later, as I understand it, by structural adjustment measures, will not command the support of the people of Barbados if the Government will not be frank with the people and let them know in the clearest possible language what is to be expected. They must be told the burdens that they have to bear and if indeed there are going to be any benefits, tell them too what benefits they can expect and when. I made that point last year and I make it again this year.

The removal of these subsidies is a very important matter and the small farming community and the entire Barbadian farming community who have relied on these subsidies, particularly in the non-sugar area ought to be told that they can no longer plan their agricultural activity on the expectation of any continued policy of subsidy. In so far it is the result of Barbados' involvement with an IMF Programme the Government needs to alert the small

farming community and the entire farming community to the implications of the stabilisation policy in relation to agricultural land.

Mr. Chairman, in a sense these Estimates only represent an exercise in public relations in several respects. Take the whole question of activity at Consett Bay of which the Prime Minister spoke and the activities in the Scotland District with respect to orchard development.

Now ever since the Barbados Labour Party administration completed Oistins and Bridgetown we were devoting attention to Tent Bay, Consett Bay and Skeete Bay. I do not mention Speightstown at this point because we know that programme has been abandoned. The development of a fisheries complex there has been abandoned. We have been talking of devoting resources to Skeete's Bay and Consett Bay for a long time.

Our programme at Tent Bay was not only seriously mismanaged but it has also been abandoned. I notice that in these Estimates there is some mention made under Structures for some continuing activity at Tent Bay. Everything at Tent Bay, and this is no fault of the politicians, but the fault of the engineers and technicians, everything at Tent Bay has been done wrong. What has been projected for Tent Bay in terms of a changing facility, in terms of a market, nothing so has been achieved. The slip-away at Tent Bay, from all reports is not workable because it has been done wrong. I am making the point, I want the Minister who is responding to the questions on Agriculture to answer what exactly are we doing at Skeete's Bay?

With respect to the Abattoir, before I left the Ministry of Agriculture, FAO had given us a design for the Abattoir. Immediately I left they had identified a site in St. Thomas for the Abattoir. Six years after, we are still speaking about that Abattoir. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West, knowing that there is no money available and that we can only be treated to talk, he is saying that we will continue, Mr. Chairman, to be talking about that Abattoir. 6.30 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the Honourable Member is aware that you have not spoken.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am really very serious about this, Mr. Chairman. I really would like the Honourable Minister who is responding to help us. When the Barbados Labour Party left office in 1986, we had some developed orchard activity in the Scotland District, particularly in cherries, mangoes and guavas. We had experiments in these. I do not know how successful they were in the growing of pineapples and also in the growing of limes. We had got varieties from Martinique, Antigua and elsewhere with respect to the pineapples and we had gone very far in our trials on limes. It is to my

certain knowledge that in subsequent years the orchard activity in the Scotland District fell into serious disrepair. The orchards were unattended. They ran into ruin and we were not able to get anything from the fruit there. We used to export at one point cherries mostly from the Scotland District and very soon after 1986 everything went into decline, disrepair, and we were not able to export any **cherries** at a **time** when the price was extremely high. The few workers around helped themselves but there was no sustained activity.

All of this orchard development that we are hearing about was part of the European Economic Community EDF Programme which was carefully considered and which was supposed to be very far advanced by now. What happened since **1986**? I ask you, Mr. Chairman, knowing in truth and in fact I direct my question to the Honourable Minister who will be responding. Why is it that in 1992 we are talking? I say it is merely a public relations exercise about what, in truth and in fact, was carefully planned and there was money actually there for the funding. The trials had been carried out back in 1984, 1985, and 1986. We are only going around in a circle deluding the public and a few Members in here who may not know the background to these matters. I think it is about time that we bring the delusion to an end.

I think the Minister should tell the House, quite frankly, why is it that we are retracing the steps which we have already walked, as it were, and why is it that we are still talking about an abattoir, a fruit orchard development programme, and still talking about developments at Tent Bay and **Consett** Bay, when in truth and in fact, what is to be done **there** had long ago been identified and work had started some 6 years ago.

We need to **talk** a little more about cotton. This is not a matter the Honourable Minister who will be responding may feel particularly happy about and no one is making any attempt to embarrass him. But I really want to know where we are with respect to the cotton. It is a matter of record that ever since the scandal of CARSICOT the farming community has felt so dispirited and very few farmers have come forward from last year to express any willingness to continue to participate in the cotton effort. How many acres will be devoted between the Government plantations, farms, and the private sector to cotton? What exactly is the price? Where do we stand in relation to all of **this** misplaced **talk** about a cotton mill here in Barbados, putting the cart before the horse? I would like, Mr. Chairman, for the Minister who is responding to help us on those questions. They are important questions and I think both Parliament and the country would like to know where we stand in relation to those matters.

I just want to say something generally about the Scotland District. It is an important part of Barbados. A lot of Barbadians do not know where it is, where it begins or

where it ends. It represents some 116 of our land space and it is always at risk of slipping off from the rest of Barbados, as it were. Both engineering and agronomic techniques must be employed in order to conserve it. That must be a continuing effort which we must not relax. Apart from the engineering and agronomic aspects of the Scotland District, it must not be **forgotten** too that communities of people actually live in the Scotland District and they enjoy a level of living much below that of the rest of Barbados. As the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has rightly pointed out, the people there suffer from soil erosion **and** slippage. There are serious problems there affecting the level of living of the people. In many parts of St. Joseph, not to forget to mention St. Andrew, we had large communities **resited**. Isolation Village is an area mentioned here in these Estimates where there is an acute problem of slippage. There is one, too, in both Lower and Upper Parks to mention just one or two areas in St. Joseph.

I think it is important that the Minister indicate to the House what alternative sites are going to be provided in the Scotland District for the location of people who are suffering these acute problems of soil slippage. I particularly want to know that in relation to the people of St. Joseph. Perhaps when the Minister responds he will be good enough to give us some insight into how they are thinking, if indeed, there is any thinking going on in relation to these particular matters.

Hon. W. O. **FRANKLIN**: Mr. Chairman, I want to come from the back and come forward. The Scotland District matter has been drawn to my attention that there is no money under Code 20541. The response is that the IDB project in the Scotland District has ended and the staff involved in that project and other expenditures which were **itemized separately** on previous occasions have now been amalgamated into the Soil Conservation Unit and maintenance work will continue under the Scotland Unit.

Aside.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: I think it is only fair the Minister be allowed to speak without **interruption**.

Hon. W. O. **FRANKLIN**: **Regarding** the question posed on the work to be done at Skeetes Bay and **Consett** Bay, Government is seeking to utilize the resources from EDF for the construction of improved facilities at **Consett** Bay and Skeetes Bay. The project is estimated to cost \$6.15 million of which \$5.5 million is being sought from the EDF. After studying the recommendation of our feasibility study which was completed some months ago, Government is in agreement with the inclusion of the following components for the project at **Consett** Bay: demarcation of rock heads at the entrance of the harbour, construction of a terminal, construction of a paved parking area for boats, improvement of the access road and related drainage, repairs to the existing jetty, and establishment of a system for launching boats.

Aside.

Hon. W. O. **FRANKLIN**: At Skeetes Bay, these are the following components requested: **construction** of a paved area for boats, improvement of the access road, establishment of a system for loading and offloading boats and establishment of a system for launching boats.

At the request of the European Delegation, additional studies are being undertaken to formulate proposals for dealing with the following aspect of the project:

- (1) loading and offloading boats at Skeetes Bay,
- (2) rendering the **entrance** to the harbour at **Consett** Bay safer, especially in relation to boats which may be returning late in the evening,
- (3) environmental impact **of the** project at the two sites.

It is envisaged the negotiation process should be completed during the year. Mr. Chairman, on the abattoir, our efforts will continue to finalize plans for the construction of a new abattoir, packing house, and rendering plant.

The European Investment Bank from which funds are being sought to assist in the establishment of the facility has indicated its reluctance to expend more than \$5 million ECU for the purpose. The Bank has also objected to the proposed location of the project at Vacluse in St. Thomas. Government is seeking to have the project redesigned to bring it within a more acceptable cost structure not exceeding **Bds.\$12** million and efforts are also being made to find an alternate location to Vacluse. Negotiations with the European Investment Bank will continue. Our objective is to **construct** a central facility for the slaughter of pigs, sheep, and cattle to be operated jointly by Government and the private sector.

6.45 p.m.

Mr. **Chairman**, I am hoping to have the information available shortly on the planting and the price of cotton. I am advised that the acreage of cotton planted in **1991-92** was about 700 acres. Plantings were done by CCI, ADC and about eight plantations and the price is \$3.20 per pound to growers.

On the situation at Tent Bay, there have been a series of problems there, particularly with the slipway. After it had been put in place there had been a series of movements in currents and tides and the consensus is that the slipway was not properly designed and located. Therefore it has caused the project almost to grind to a halt until the technocrats can solve the problem. This is purely a matter of the technocrats designing a system that has not proven to be the correct system for Tent Bay and the fishermen,

after being **consulted**, have asked that the slipway be removed. I do not know where we will go on that one, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier a question was asked by the Honourable Member for St. **Joseph** about the breeding station and the improvement of **the** cane variety. The information I have on that one is that the West **Indies** Cane Sugar Breeding Station is charged with the responsibility of breeding sugar cane varieties and has been doing so for decades. Their work in collaboration with the Variety Testing Station is ongoing. It is being suggested now that the Variety Testing Station is working with new varieties each year, which have not been getting out to farmers for a number of reasons. The Variety Testing Station has had some problems with the new varieties that have been tested and are believed to be ready for commercial planting.

6.50 p.m.

They have not been getting out to the farmers for a number of reasons - poor management, lack of farmers' interest and improperly tested varieties, as was done in past years. A proposal is now on **the table** at the Sugar Industry Research and Development Committee to **turn** the Variety Testing Station over to the **BSIL** where it can work in close cooperation with the West **Indies** Cane Breeding Station. We hope to be more efficient in getting new varieties out to the farmers. There are many pros and cons to this.

Mr. Chairman, there have been many varieties that have been passed out for planting. Some new varieties have given good results during the testing at the stations, but there has been a **reluctance** by the farmers to move away from the old variety which is now over 25 years old. There are a few plantations that have been planting the new ones. Up to about 2 years ago 70% of the crop was still the old variety. It has started to attract a lot of root borers and problems with pests. Therefore we now have to move away as soon as possible from the old variety.

Asides.

Hon. W. O. **FRANKLIN**: Work is continuing with the provision of new varieties of sugar cane.

A question was asked about agricultural stations. These stations were closed down during the **1976-86** period because the whole area of research was moving away to **on-farm** research and, therefore, it was thought not necessary to have all of those stations. Since then, however, I understand that **Bullens** has been brought back as a station and is being used now for the flower industry, propagation of flowers, experimenting with varieties of ginger lilies etc. The Ministry is looking to see if it will serve any purpose.

Asides.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: The Home Agricultural Station has now been converted to a tissue culture station. This tissue culture station is for the flower industry. The Ministry will consider whether or not the other stations will be needed.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, it is necessary for me during this debate to restate a couple of positions relative to the agricultural development of a particular area of the constituency I represent. I think it is important for me to address quite clearly the scenario that faces the Caribbean economies in the very short term. Over the last 20-30 years, we have seen the countries within the Caribbean secure independence from the mother country and having, to some extent, to depend on sugar and many of the Windward Islands on banana crops etc.

Mr. Chairman, the historical facts...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let's have some order.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: ...are simply that over the years the owners of the sugar lands have accumulated debts to the tune of \$200 million or \$300 million. I asked the question last year during the mini-budget presentation whether this Government or any government should be considering writing off these debts and leaving the land in the same people's hands. That question was raised on the Floor of the House today over and over again. Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether they should remain in the same people's hands or not. I would like some of the land to go into the hands of some of my constituents.

If we, the people in the Caribbean islands do not understand that in the short term agriculture will be one of the saviours of these islands, and redress our attitudes, and understand that we are indeed independent, we will have a severe problem. Very shortly, Mr. Chairman, the Windward Islands will find their economies in very serious problems when the European countries come together and have one common agreement for the purchase of bananas. They will be competing with the South American countries which are producing bananas at a third of the cost they are now guaranteed in the European markets.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to drift, but I have to make the point that if we clearly understand where we are as a people, we cannot remain protected when that European market comes together at the end of this year. Whether we like it or not, we have got to understand that we have to produce within our own system.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, this Island has been affected by crime. One of the main contributors, in my opinion, for the escalation of crime is a lack of opportunity for people. I genuinely believe that under the circumstances we should

try to use this scenario to redress the imbalances that have taken place over the years in denying people to function and own land in our own system. I am taking this opportunity to appeal for the opportunity with the assistance of the Government in some form. I have worked with the extension officers from the ADC and I am happy with the work that they have been doing. They have been meeting my constituents. They have been talking to them. I would like them to progress because it does not make sense talking when you have a whole group of people sensitised to move into an agricultural force and then they do not get the opportunity to do so.

The time is now ripe for us to seize this opportunity. So far, even the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who is one of my constituents has taken the lead. He understands that he also has to plant his own backyard. The churches in my constituency have also taken a lead in that. They are involving the youth in the district in farming.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let there be no across-the-table interruptions.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister is also one of my constituents and he has planted some cabbages too.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member just hold a minute.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the Committee. What happened is that the Prime Minister was wearing Reebok shoes outside and the Minister of Tourism came up to give him a hand, but the NCC had done the planting.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, the point must be made...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: So far as I am aware I am close to the constituency of the Honourable Member but not in or of. The Minister of Education ought to be my representative. I do not see him.
7.00 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, to qualify the point I was trying to make, I applaud the effort of the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety for the way they are setting about their programme for prisoners. I believe that programme, with respect, should be done before

people go to prison. I genuinely feel if there is any assistance to be given to farmers, let us give it to them rather than in a penal situation where they are under guard.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: So the programme is an agricultural programme.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I am talking about the agricultural programme. I am saying rather than making criminals out of people by not creating the opportunity for them to **earn** a living, let us give them some form of subsidy and technical assistance, make lands available to them that are affordable and reasonable so they **can** have that opportunity.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will address the Chair. I will not have Honourable Members shouting across the Table for any reason.

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: The people I am talking about are not **worried** about praedial larceny. They will secure their own crops. Give them the opportunity and you would see there would be no praedial larceny. There will be praedial larceny when no opportunity is created for them. We have to be practical.

Mr. Chairman, I simply wanted to make and reinforce the point that I have been severely affected by the measures where there have been a lot of lay-offs in my area. I would like to see my constituents who have been affected given the opportunity. They are willing to work with us because they understand they all have to produce. If we want to **survive** and be independent, we have to develop the right attitudes. I am satisfied that they are ready to work. Let us give them the proper opportunities.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I just wish to clarify one point at this stage. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has given to this House the impression that I am party to some letter to the World Bank which indicates that Barbados has 'agreed to a programme with the World Bank of structural adjustment including the removal of non tariff barriers and other policy areas.

I thought, Mr. Chairman, I had indicated earlier in this debate that the Government of Barbados had not arrived at any conclusions with the World Bank on those matters. I wish to reiterate. No matter with what force and deep concern with some physical swaying from side to side the Honourable Member for Christ Church South may speak, he cannot pin on me and the Government what a middle level mission, a very preliminary mission, may have discussed with a variety of people, including firms, some

officials and myself **about** matters which have not been addressed with the World Bank at the highest possible level in Barbados, including myself.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is referring to something that is designated as a **preappraisal** mission. It is not an appraisal mission. It is not a programming mission. It is a low level mission or medium level mission that visited Barbados to consider the possibility of thinking about some kind of programme or something like that. No agreement has been reached between Barbados and the World Bank on these matters. I think we have enough to talk about without trying to impose on Members or on myself, because this seems to be the pasttime, something that has not taken place. I am saying that up to a couple of weeks ago I spoke with officials of the World Bank. We have made no agreement to date, on these matters. I hope this would put this particular matter to rest. It is wrong of the Honourable Member to make those kinds of allegations. I think that is all I wish to say on this particular matter. You will get an opportunity when we address these matters on some future occasion. We are ready any time you are ready to discuss agriculture or any aspect of Government business.

The main objective and purpose of what we are seeking to do is to ensure that we produce enough food to reduce our import bill and have vegetables and other agricultural produce for export. We will be ready to set the policies to address these matters in due course, whether April 6, before, after, or whenever the Honourable Member for St. Thomas may feel inclined to indicate.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
7.10 p.m.

The bell was rung.

The question that Head 25, as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing itself 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. H. A. BLACKMAN, Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, Hon. W. W. HALL, Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. J. O. TUDOR, His Honour T. C. ESTWICK – 12.

NOES: Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. L. R. TULL, Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. G. W. PAYNE, Mr. R. C. EASTMOND – 10.

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, Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 10.00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the sitting accordingly at 7.15 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is now resumed.

HEAD 29 – MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY
GENERAL – \$606 949

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of \$606 949 under Head 29 – Ministry of the Attorney General stand part of the Schedule.

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

The question that the sum of \$606 949 under Head 29 – Ministry of the Attorney General stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 35 – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
– \$11 049 136

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the sum of \$11 049 136 under Head 35 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stand part.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I will give way to the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am trying to catch my breath. Mr. Chairman, I have been looking at the Head, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a number of things remain unsaid in these Estimates. I notice that over the last few weeks, a number of decisions have been taken by the Government in relation to the reorganisation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and more particularly its overseas offices, if what I read in the press is to be believed, because this Government does not vouchsafe any of this important information to the House.

If what I read is correct, I understand, Sir, that the Government proposes to close the Mission in Trinidad and

Tobago and has seriously cut back on the locally recruited staff in a number of Missions particularly, I understand, in Ottawa, in New York and Washington.

The Estimates tell me, Sir, that the cut for other personal emoluments is something in the region of \$1½ million. That is a lot of money. I understand, Sir, that in carrying out these cuts the Government seemed to decide that some money had to be cut. There was no rationalisation. For instance, Sir, I understand that no support staff has been left in the Mission in Ottawa. They have a High Commissioner, a Counsellor and a Secretary. That is all that is left of the Mission in Ottawa. If I am wrong, put me right but the Government does not tell us these things so we have to glean them from whatever source we can.

I understand also, Sir, that there is a plan afoot to move the High Commission in Ottawa to the residence of the High Commissioner. Now there is so much wrong with that, that I really cannot believe Government has seriously been contemplating it. The main things wrong with a decision such as that, if indeed that is a decision, I will not venture to suggest on the Floor at this particular time. I really would not bother with that. When you have High Commissioner Tudor, who obviously does not seem to pretend that he should even work hard these days.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I have not said anything that is ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will caution you to stay with the matter.

Mr. L. R. TULL: When we look at the other people who are working there you wonder if there is any reason in light of the cuts that the Government has proposed for there even to be a continuation of a Mission. The Mission in Ottawa has been totally emasculated. I know that, perhaps, people might wonder how you can emasculate that particular Mission. People may wonder about that, but I am speaking figuratively, Sir. You just cannot run a Mission of that kind in a major country with whom we have had long relations on that kind of shoe suing operation. It is almost embarrassing for the people who have to work there if they have any sense of shame. Certainly the people who work at headquarters in Barbados in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must feel uncomfortable with that kind of arrangement.

I understand too, Sir, again from press statements from the Right Honourable Prime Minister, who speaks as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, because for every 10 statements I hear on Foreign Affairs issued by the Government of Barbados, 9¾ are issued by the Prime Minister himself. They are not usually statements of any major significance or substance. They are the usual frills that come with the kind of operation that we see in today's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We have heard the Prime Minister say something that has been said from the beginning of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs that there is going to be more emphasis on the economic aspect of the overseas offices and indeed as I said, Sir, this is nothing new. We have heard this over and over and over again.

The difference, however, Sir, is that in the past one could say these things and do nothing because things were flowing, but in these days when things are tight, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a special responsibility not just to feed us a lot of words but to do something about it. I understand, Sir, that there was a post at the Embassy in Washington – an officer was trained recently in *Trinidad* at the Institute there to be the commercial officer – in economic and trade matters. I don't know if that is the right name, but it is to deal with that aspect of the Mission's business in *Washington*. No sooner had that officer been trained than the heavy hand of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Prime Minister, because he is responsible for appointments and assignments and postings and the like, gave a directive that that officer be brought home. Now, you can't be *talking* seriously about giving the Missions that new kind of role and then make that *kind* of decision immediately after the previous decision had been taken.

I want to hear too about this peripatetic roving Trade Commissioner. A job for the boys, Sir. I understand, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs could advise us whether it is true or not, that the Government has appointed or propose shortly to appoint a new Trade Commissioner to be attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who will be a roving *Ambassador* who will go around – these are my words, Sir, that is not what they are appointing him for – and get in everybody's way. That is how I see it, a man who clearly will be responsible to nobody, because he is going to cross over a number of Ministries. We are not sure whether he is going to be accountable to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to whom he should be if that is his post.

10.10 a.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is precisely the point at issue. You are not sure he is going to be attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, yet you are discussing it under the Head of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, Sir, but I have a right to ask.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand you said it is an understanding. If you want to ask a *question* about it, I have no problem with that, but I *certainly* cannot permit you to build...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not need any help at this point.

Mr. L. R. TLJLL: 'Mr. Chairman, I understand what you are trying to tell me, but I have a right to ask questions. This is the whole Estimates exercise. The whole purpose of this exercise is to ask questions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But I am saying to the Honourable Member that he may ask a question but he cannot develop a speech on something that is an understanding of his.

Mr. L. R. TLJLL: Mr. Chairman, you know I *am* not going to give you any trouble, but there are several ways of asking questions. I *am* asking, in whatever form you want me to put the question, what is the role of this new Trade Commissioner? To *whom* is he going to be responsible? Indeed, does the Government consider it in the best interest of the organisation, the structure and the morale of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have someone operating in that way? There are other questions that obviously spring to mind and I am going to be talking about a number of areas in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will have to play a more important role in the new order of things.

Mr. Chairman, the Attorney General can also tell us if the problems in Canada, which I have raised before, *have* been straightened out, those in relation to the Honorary Consul in Montreal. He could also tell us whether the Ministry continues to pay Honorary Consuls. That information was vouchsafed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs about a year ago, *that* some people were honorary but were still being paid – a double honorary and consultancy, something of that nature – and we are wondering whether that situation still obtains.

We also want to know about the Heads of some of these Missions overseas. I understand that some of them do not have enough time to give full time service. I will put it that way. I am talking about the Head of the Mission in London. I think he is all over the place. I wonder whether we are getting value for money. We want to know also whether the Government is satisfied that we are getting value for money from the Head of Mission in Ottawa. I see the Honourable Minister of Health is looking at me with a question in his eyes. I do not know what it is.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: We also want to know whether the Government is getting value for money from the Consulate in Toronto. I am going to raise a number of other problems in relation to this Ministry of a more general and philosophical nature when I come around again, but I do have also a number of other specific questions to raise and I hope the Minister of Foreign Affairs will be good enough on *this* occasion to *give* us some answers.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, during the course of this debate Honourable Members on the other side have seen *fit* to call for the return of a number of what they

call political Heads of Mission – London, Ottawa and Washington – and seem to be indicting the concept of political Heads of Missions. I do not understand it.

Mr. L. R. **TULL**: On a point of order, Sir. I have not said a word about political appointees in the 14 and a half minutes during which I spoke.

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: In the context of the statement the Attorney General made, I do not think he said that you said it. He said during the course of the debate.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: Mr. Chairman, I did make that allegation against the Honourable Member for St. George South, but the comment was made not earlier in the course of debate on this Head but on a previous date. I would just like at the outset to draw to the attention of this Honourable House that the concept of political appointments in the Foreign Service as Heads of Missions did not begin nor end with the Democratic Labour Party. Certainly in the Labour Party's administration there was a political Head of Mission in Ottawa, there was a political Head of Mission in the United Kingdom...

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: Can we have some order, please?

Hon. M. A. **KING**: Mr. Chairman, I am going to make the point and proceed, that there was a political Head of Mission in the Labour Party administration in Ottawa, one in London and one at the UN. In fact, there was a time when they had two political appointees at the UN, and there was also a political Head of Mission in Venezuela. I think we can dismiss any argument in relation to political Heads of Mission.

Having got that out of the way, let me deal specifically with the questions which have been addressed by the Honourable Member for St. George South. He talked about emasculating the Mission in Ottawa and about there being no support staff, stating that there were only a High Commissioner, Counsellor and Secretary there. There is presently in the Mission a High Commissioner and a Counsellor. A First Secretary is still there for the time being-but will be moved shortly to Toronto. There is a secretary and a chauffeur at the Mission in Ottawa.
10.20 a.m.

Mr. Chairman, the changes which have taken place in the foreign missions are part of a long-term strategy to reorganise entirely and restructure the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to make it more effective in the work of promoting Barbados' economic and commercial interests abroad. The changes which have been made now should not be seen as an end in themselves but as part of a process of a long-term programme of restructuring and nationalising the foreign missions.

The Honourable Member for St. George South made the point about an officer in Washington who he said was

trained in economic matters in Trinidad and was being brought home.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: The position is that the officer of whom the Honourable Member spoke-is in fact returning to Barbados but this has to be seen in the context of rationalising the position of the missions abroad and at the same time ensuring that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is so structured and has within it the expertise to assist in the new thrust which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is embarking upon. The fact that one of the officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently been exposed to training in economic matters overseas and is returning to home base is no loss to the Ministry. In the context in which the Honourable Member speaks it should really be an asset in that that officer can assist effectively in the promotion work at home base, recognising that a lot of the activity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is going to be organised and structured from here.

One has to recognise, Mr. Chairman, that the foreign ministry like every other ministry in Government, has had to bear its share of the cutbacks in government expenditure under the stabilisation and structural adjustment programme which is being embarked upon with the IMF and with the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. In fact, the Ministry has had to reduce its proposed expenditure from \$15 451 308 which is the figure shown in the 1991-92 Approved Estimates to \$13 121 373 which is the figure being proposed for the 1992-93 Estimates.

All efforts were made to meet the new target by cutting estimated expenditure on items such as utilities, travel, Supplies, materials, maintenance of property and operating expenses. We found that, if we were to accomplish the target which was set for us by the Ministry of Finance, significant reductions would have to be made on personnel and rental of property overseas. In this process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has had, regrettably, to terminate the employment of 26 of the administrative support staff who were recruited in the cities of posting. This is the total number of administrative staff which has been terminated. In addition to that of the foreign service officers in the diplomatic service there are 11 who are being transferred back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As part of the cost-cutting exercise, the Mission in Trinidad and Tobago is being closed. This follows on consultations which in fact took place between the Prime Minister of Barbados and the Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago in December last year. That was followed by further consultations between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the two countries in February this year. The decision has been taken to close the High Commission in Port of Spain with effect from the end of March 1992.

That does not mean that Barbados is terminating diplomatic relations with Trinidad & Tobago. We will still have a High Commissioner accredited to Trinidad & Tobago with residence in Barbados. A non-resident High Commissioner will be the order of the day. At the same time, we are examining the **modalities** for representation of Barbados in other CARICOM countries. We feel, Mr. Chairman, with the move to intensify integration and with the ease of contact which exists **today, between** CARICOM countries, that the need for resident High Commissioners can be obviated to a large extent in the interests of saving costs. If the Prime Minister of Barbados has a concern in relation to Trinidad it is easy for him to pick up the telephone, call Trinidad or fly down to Trinidad. Communications are so relatively easy in this day and age that the cost of having regular...

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: It is not expected that the decision to have a non-resident High Commissioner in Trinidad & Tobago will in any way affect the excellent relations which exist between the two countries.

The Honourable Member for St. George South enquired about the High Commissioner of Barbados in Trinidad & Tobago. In fact, he made a statement about him, saying that he is getting into everybody's way and is accountable to no one. I think the Honourable Member is being a little ungracious to the High Commissioner in Port of Spain. The High Commissioner will be assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with effect from **April 1, 1992** as a Trade Commissioner. He will be charged with responsibility to assist in the Foreign Ministry's work in coordinating Barbados' promotional activities abroad.
10.30 a.m.

The High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago, as Trade Commissioner, is not going to be at large. He is accountable to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He will play an integral part and will be operating from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He will be entirely accountable to that Ministry.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, it is obvious from the **reply** of the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs that the Government, as a matter of policy, has determined that there will be a reduced role for Foreign Affairs in the promotion, not only of Barbados' image abroad, but of Barbados' economic and trading interests. This is much to be regretted. The Government, obviously, has the wrong conception of the role which Foreign Affairs has to play in the economic development of this country. This is very carefully shown by the direction in which the Government has pointed the Ministry in the last 2 years.

It is even more clearly manifested by the ridiculous decision to close, in *1010*, the Trinidad Mission. It is a

wrong decision. It is **wrong** for various reasons. It is wrong in terms of the signal which it is sending to our CARICOM partners that, despite the rhetoric which we hear from time to time from the leader of the country on CARICOM affairs, CARICOM is considered the back water and the **backyard** insofar as we manifest up front our intention to increase and double our relationship with the countries of the **CARICOM** region.

It is wrong for a second reason, Mr. Chairman. It is wrong because Trinidad and Tobago, in a very dismal trading situation which still continues, is the only bright spot for CARICOM for the trading patterns of Barbados. Despite the economic problems that have confronted us within the CARICOM region, it still probably offers the fastest growing market for the region.

I suggest very strongly to this Committee that, if **Government** is serious about reorienting the direction in which ~~we~~ must go, there must be greater emphasis on the trading and economic aspects of Foreign Affairs. The first place to begin is right here within the Caribbean. There can be no closer association between Barbados and its foreign relations whether multilaterally or bilaterally than within the CARICOM region. I regret very much to state that those relationships are not being pursued with the seriousness that we would expect at this time.

The Government must be realistic and recognise that its chances for increase in trading either within the European Economic Community or, indeed, Latin America or elsewhere in North America, are not as rosy as the opportunity which will present itself within CARICOM. If we are serious about deepening the CARICOM relationship, then we must have our people out there doing business and being serious about how they see the CARICOM region developing.

I say to the Government that it is wrong to **close that Mission**. It should have been scaled down, if it had to, by removing the High Commissioner but having the more effective and professional Foreign Service Officers and trade people from Export Promotion who know more about these matters to handle the position. The Government could have made savings, too, in London. There is no need, at this stage, for both a High Commissioner and a Deputy High Commissioner in London. There is no need particularly other than, of course, the role which the Deputy High Commissioner played in helping the Democratic Labour Party maintain an image abroad. If that is how the Government can feel of its foreign relations, then I say that it is spending the country's money badly in that respect. The Government should have looked at removing the Deputy and, if necessary, sending a professional with the necessary trade qualifications to handle the Foreign Affairs Mission at this time. I must make these points, Sir, because the Minister is saying that there is **a** need now for scaling down the missions. What

you need is not decorative High Commissioners. You really need people who know what trade is about and who are prepared to get together and push the trading position of the Caribbean.

Sir, we have noticed that in the last few years Barbados' former high profile and effective way of doing business had slid to the back burner. Barbados in its foreign relations is now more of a reactive force than a pro-active agent as we were formerly. We really are not leading as we did before in the Caribbean. I have not heard one new initiative or idea coming out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the last few years. I have not seen the Ministry looking to see where we are going with the changes that are taking place both globally and regionally. I have not heard the Ministry's voice and the Government's policy in relation to the free trade area being planned between Mexico, Canada and the United States, and the role which we would be promoting by being in on the ground floor. Rather, what I see more often than not is that the running of these matters is now being left to **Jamaica**. Jamaica, with all respect, although it has a CARICOM rhetoric, normally finds its first task is to look after Jamaica's interest first, quite understandably. I am not criticising them for it.

I want to know where the Government is representing Barbados' vital interests in this regard. Where are we looking in the future? How do we see our trading pattern evolving, not only within CARICOM but outside CARICOM towards the other countries in the Caribbean region with whom we should now be exchanging more **information** and also doing more business? Where do we see Barbados fitting in the North Atlantic Free Trade Area which is becoming a reality and which must impact. If we are not careful, it **will** impact negatively on how we do business with our main trading partners in North America.

Our main trading interest remains in North America and in the Caribbean itself. I believe that, rather than having a decorative foreign High Commissioner who remains in **Canada** without being able to make any sensible contribution to what is going on at this stage, Government should retire the man and send a vibrant and young officer who would understand what is to be done and can get on with the job.

The Government has paid its political debts now to these people. Let us put back the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a professional basis. While I understand that political parties have from time to time to pay political debts, it does not mean that we must go on forever and ever paying those debts. Ceylon, as it was then, now Sri Lanka, lost its role at one stage and so did India when it did not see that professionalism was the main criteria for selection of people to diplomatic roles.

The Prime Minister took the opportunity over the weekend to announce that he is doing a tour of Europe because 1992 is upon us. How late he is in so many things! 10.40 a.m.

When we were attending conferences both in Europe and here in the Caribbean and talking about the implications of 1992 for the Caribbean **and** ourselves, what was the Prime Minister doing? What tour is he now doing? Prime Minister **Manley** has done tours and has had the beneficial effect of those percolating into the Jamaican **economy**, **either** by way of forgiveness of debt or by other trading relationships. The OECS have done tours. Prime Minister Dame **Eugenia** Charles has been at the highest level out there talking hard on behalf of the banana interest in the Caribbean and defining their interest. Our Prime Minister is waiting until 1992 is already upon us to recognize that the EEC in its new form has the opportunity for services and for other trade impacts. I do not believe that anybody is going to take the Prime Minister seriously on any tour of the countries of the European Economic Community. This is not the time...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back to Head 35, please.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I will come back, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to come back there now.

Aside.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I **am** talking, Sir, for the benefit of the Chair, about our foreign relations **within** Europe. Unless the Prime Minister is going to make spore I expect he is going to try to promote bilateral and other relations. That is why I am saying I am on the Head. But it is obvious to me, **Sir** that the changes within Europe have tremendous significance for the future development of our relationships, with what is going to happen and particularly in the **area** of services. There have been numerous conferences held on this subject. Let me say that the Opposition has been strongly represented at most of those conferences both within Brussels, in England – I think it is in England 3 or 4 years ago that I attended a conference and made our voices felt then – and also within the Caribbean itself. If the Government were serious of operating at the high level in these matters, one would have expected the Prime Minister to set the pattern a long time ago. He sent one of the low level Ministers to one of the conferences, Sir. I do not think he made much of a contribution.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Not any Member of this House, Sir. The Honourable Member should know that. Not of this House, of the **Upper** House. But the position is that I am making the charge – and I think with strong justification –

that, once again, in relation to our position *vis-a-vis* the EEC we are late.

Let me say this, Barbados must rethink the importance of its Mission at Brussels and its Mission in the United Kingdom. We have tended to keep the United Kingdom **as** the primary Mission where we spend more. We have more people there and we spend more on the **mission**. Less and less is that mission important now for us. Those new generations of Caribbean peoples **are** no longer looking to the High Commission in London. I am saying that less and less are we being called upon to render services to nationals in the United Kingdom. The **Minister**, like myself, must be aware that the new generation of Caribbean descendants are no longer looking for support at the level of consulate or other services from the various High Commissions in London. In fact, some of them are very clear in stating their position by a clear statement that they are not Barbadians or Jamaicans or Vincentians but they are British of Barbadian descent or of Jamaican descent.

So the nature of the services which we have to provide in future in Britain will change drastically and has changed drastically. Rather, we should see **our** thrust into Europe now springing more and more out of Brussels as the centre of an interesting and developing experience in regionalism. Brussels has a lot of lessons to teach us, **Sir**, including to teach us here within CARICOM.

What I am suggesting to the Minister **is that**, if he wants really to get an effective presence in the **European** context today, that presence must be with the Mission in Brussels rather than with the Mission in the United Kingdom. The emphasis should now be pointed in that direction. We should be looking at the opportunities for selling our services as well **as** for selling our products. There are growing opportunities for us to sell our services. One of the areas that is completely unexplored so far is the whole area of consultancy. When I look through these Estimates millions of dollars are being placed in the Estimates for buying consultancy services from overseas.

I say that we also have here, within Barbados, the potential for selling consultancy services to other countries abroad...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute to conclude.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: ...including too the countries of Africa. I said the other day in a comment to the BBC that the Caribbean has a unique opportunity to help its black brethren in Southern Africa in particular by, at this time, using the human resources which would appear to be **extra** here, to be in abundance here and underutilized within the Caribbean, by making those resources available within the context of Africa, not only to offer moral support but to offer **as** well, Mr. Chairman, the opportunity for us to render assistance for our brothers in Africa and at the same

time to **earn** needed **hard currency** for Barbados. I believe that, unless the Government orientates its thinking and points us in the direction that I have outlined, we will be making a sad error in thinking that we are performing our role in foreign affairs **as** it should be performed at this time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy. But just before he proceeds I should like **to make** a point and it is that I recognize some Honourable Members are clearly showing some kind of disrespect to the Chair, even if they do it while they are in their seats. I will ask all Honourable Members to observe the Standing Orders of this Committee. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I venture into this debate particularly because the Honourable Member for Christ Church West intervened and pontificated in such a matter as if to suggest that this Government has gone to sleep **and** is totally oblivious of what is happening in the world and of the changes which are taking place in the world. If one were to hear the Honourable Member speak on the changes **which....**

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I draw Honourable Members attention to Standing Order 33(6)? I am not going to tolerate this kind of situation.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: ...are taking place in the whole economic structure of the world, one would get the impression that we in this Party are not aware of these changes.

Indeed, Sir, I think that the mere fact that the Government has taken a conscious decision to redirect the approach of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is an indication that the Government recognizes that that Ministry **has** to play a vital role in the promotion particular of Barbados' economic interest.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West paid a lot of attention to the whole question of the development of services. It is an area which, obviously, we all recognize as one which is going to provide a variety of opportunities for countries like Barbados. Indeed the human resources which we have in this country can take advantage through, of course, governmental efforts and directions of the many opportunities which would arise. I would want to make the point that, certainly during the LOME 4 negotiations, the whole question of services and the way in which these services can be provided and can be accessed played a very important part. I am sure that, in this particular direction, the Government is very well focussed and will continue to provide the kind of efforts which are needed in this particular area. I could mention, for example - the Honourable Member for Christ Church West talked about

the kind of efforts which we can put forward in Southern Africa – that just recently the Government of Botswana approached this Administration to find out whether or not teachers could be made available in that particular area and certainly this has been facilitated. There are a number of other areas of which one could make mention.

10.50 a.m.

I think, from the point of view of this Administration, we have attended conferences and some conferences have been arranged here in Barbados, particularly with the idea of promoting the whole question of services. I want to make the point very clearly that one cannot expect, for example, if you talk about legal services, accounting services or engineering services, that Government will be in a position or, indeed, should be promoting it in the sense of the kind of attitude which one finds here. Rather than taking advantage only of the opportunities which are created by the Government, we would want to see the private sector taking that kind of initiative in the opportunities which are created. It is a fact that opportunities are there.

I remember when we arranged a seminar sometime in 1990 and invited the private sector to participate, it was specifically to point out to them the opportunities which would exist under the LOME IV Convention. When you look at the people who **turned up**, there were only about 2 people from the private sector after we sensitized them and invited them. Only 2 found it necessary to turn up. What I am saying is, yes, Government can create the opportunity. The Government can create the climate but, in truth and in fact, we have to get people who are ready to take on the role of going into the areas where these opportunities exist. I think that point has to be made very clearly and I would not want anybody to create the impression that we in Government are doing nothing about that.

I am sure that the learned Attorney General, when he speaks, will make reference to the fact that the Government of Barbados recently concluded an agreement with the Government of the United Kingdom so that the retired Barbadians who are living in the United Kingdom can now return to Barbados and draw their pensions with increases in the same way as if they were living in England. I think this is a very significant development and one which, I think, Jamaica is probably the only other country to have been able to negotiate so far in the Caribbean. But we were able to conclude that and it is now in operation.

Whereas one would take the point that one ought to have a second look at the United Kingdom, especially in the changing pattern of emphasis one, however, cannot forget there are still very important aspects relating to Barbados that we must pay some attention to. I thought that I would just make those few points, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney General.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West uses a very effective technique of debate. He sets up the point which he wishes to knock down and then proceeds to deal with it. I am told he says the most obvious things and he makes it appear as though they are something novel. He begins with a statement that the Government of Barbados is reducing the role of Foreign Affairs and this is to be regretted. In essence, Mr. Chairman, the converse is true because the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not by any means being diminished but the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially in these difficult economic times, is being improved considerably.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: How? The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, in recent times, taken on the roles of coordinating all the promotional activities of the Government of Barbados abroad. What in essence we have done is set up what we call a Foreign Exchange Committee, Mr. Chairman, which is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where we meet at regular intervals. The Committee consists of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Tourism, Trade, and Agriculture. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs will be in that Committee shortly, Mr. Chairman. These Ministers meet at regular intervals with a view to coordinating the promotional activities of the Board of Tourism, Industrial Development Corporation, Barbados Marketing Corporation and Export Promotion Corporation promoting the work of all these agencies abroad. Not only are we doing that, but we have also structured regular meetings with the private sector interests which operate in these same areas so that we meet with the tourism sector, manufacturing sector, industrial sector, financial services sector and agricultural sector in private industry. We meet at regular intervals to try and understand the nature of the problems which they face locally with a view to removing any domestic constraints in the country and also, Mr. Chairman, with a view to getting the input of these various agencies in the promotional effort of the country overseas.

The role which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has to play will become increasingly important as the months go by and the Ministry will clearly need to be strengthened in that regard. That is why we have taken initial steps of appointing a Trade Commissioner to participate in that kind of work and of having the Foreign Service Officers who are returning from overseas as a result of the adjustments that we are making participate in this overall effort.

The business of marketing Barbados internationally will be one of the major thrusts which the Government will be embarking on from the foreign policy point of view. While marketing of Barbados' interests which include the promotion of goods and services which are produced for export, we want to ensure that Barbados' name is known

n the overseas markets and that it has a particular identity when it comes to the problem of promoting tourism, investment in the country and encouraging the buyers of goods and services to participate in the development process in Barbados.

Essentially what we have embarked on in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a multi-dimensional strategy. This will be based on economic and political strategies and certain aspects of cultural activity which will give us a fairly effective competitive advantage.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the effective point to be made is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in essence, recognising the changes in Europe and the rest of the world and the affect that it will have on the economies of these countries, will be pursuing its efforts in carefully reviewing Barbados' interests in the world. What we will be doing, clearly, is looking at the location of our diplomatic and consular Missions to ensure that best results are got out of the location of these Missions. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West mentioned what he perceived to be the declining importance of London and the growing importance of Brussels. I think one may also argue that Brussels may itself be of declining importance. From the point of view that Europe is going through changes Brussels might not necessarily be the most effective location in Europe from which to promote Barbados' interests. Germany is a **terribly** important focal point in Europe and one may have to consider that having a focus in, Germany is as effective, perhaps as one in Brussels or could be more so.

11.00 a.m.

The other important thing is that one cannot discount the importance of London as a centre. London is an important commercial centre. London is an important centre of activity. London is an important hub from which the interests of the Caribbean can radiate into the rest of Europe and I don't think one can discount the importance which London can play in a new Europe. What will have to be done, of course, and what will have to be considered, is restructuring the London Mission to the extent that it can **more effectively** be used to extend our tentacles into the wider European market. We have certain basic interests in London which we can exploit and which can be effective in achieving that result. What we have to do with the new dispensation, Mr. Chairman is to ensure that every single Mission has a clear focus of what is required of it and what is intended. In the process of time, certainly as the economic situation improves in Barbados, we will be able to restructure and reorganise those Missions so that they can effectively deal with the problems which they have to cope with.

I am sure, Mr. **Speaker**, that with the right orientation the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should play a tremendously effective role in coordinating Barbados' interests overseas and ensuring that the promotional aspect of the work is effectively done to the best advantage of us all.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been listening with interest here to see the Democratic Labour Party Government has, at long last, forced no doubt by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, rediscovered an essential link between Ministries of Trade and Foreign Affairs in small independent countries. Listening to the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs it appears as though the pendulum has swung so greatly that there is a great danger there is redundancy arising in at least one Ministry, namely the Ministry of Trade. It is going to take a long period of time for Barbados to recover from the blows that have been administered to our interests in Europe by the activities of the Honourable Minister of Health when he was the Minister of Tourism. It was only by a stroke of luck that the devastating impact of his decision to close the Tourism Office in Germany was not carried into effect. The removal of him from the **Ministry** of Tourism, thank God, prevented us from having to suffer that fate. The Honourable Member took the decision to close the office in Germany. I heard the Honourable Member say that on the radio in his lucid style. He took the decision to close the office in Germany. As a matter of fact he has so emasculated it that he left it with one person ... It is still open, thanks to the fact that the Honourable Prime Minister was wise enough to remove the Honourable Member from being Minister of Tourism.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, I am not going to advise the Honourable Member to stick to what he is good at.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order. My interjection is purely to indicate that the decision of the Honourable Member to close or to reduce the size of the office in Germany was a good decision. Operating cost in that market is now less and the results have improved.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member need not go any further because that is not a point of order.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If we, Sir, can return to seriousness, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael East has now spoken, if we can return to seriousness, Sir, the basic position is that, in the 10 years I was concerned with Trade and Industry, tremendous efforts were taken, which were not singular because we were trying for a long period of time to carry out the policy which is well enunciated, that in small independent countries the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must serve primarily the economic interests of the country which very often lie in trying

to expand trading opportunities and investments and in trying to get aid for your country.

Now, as a matter of policy, steps were taken to ensure that officers from various ministries were interchanged between the Ministry of Trade and the **Ministry** of Foreign Affairs. I want to make it abundantly clear, that the Honourable Minister must not think that he is going to have an easy task because there is going to be resistance from within the bureaucracy. I well recall that **an** officer of Foreign Affairs was sent to Germany as our Honorary Consul and at the same time was charged with the responsibility of promoting tourism. He was not there as **an** Honorary Consul only, he was head of the Tourist Board. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has made a unique contribution, I will grant him this. He has made a unique contribution to this concept of how you integrate trade with foreign affairs representation. They tell me that the Honourable Member, when he was Consul General, at that time before Barbados became independent, was somewhat of an Ambassador, a Trade Commissioner, everything in New York. The Honourable Member can take credit for it deservedly. As I understand it, he crisscrossed all boundaries.

11.10 a.m.

My understanding is that the complaints that the Honourable Prime Minister makes about what goes on in New York and the lack of understanding of the real role there in New York is really a legacy of what occurred prior to Independence. Nobody has yet **been** attuned to the fact that you cannot possibly use how the Honourable Member operated when he was Counsel General as a role model. You cannot use that because now you have the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and things of that kind.

Therefore, you must understand that your role there has to be under the overall general direction of the Ministry. This attempt to coordinate the efforts of the domestic end, so to speak, is a very difficult one. In our time, we had a coordinating committee. It was active. I will tell the Honourable Minister this. You have to take an active part in it. You just cannot leave it to the civil servants because they will quarrel every time they meet as to who is to be chairman next and whose Ministry is more important **than** the other. You have to take an active interest in it. I know that is going to be very difficult for the Honourable Member having regard to the nature of his duties.

The basic position is that the coordination of this thing must take place at the political level. That is a fact. You must have clear directions. Now it is a great pity that between 1986 and this year the obvious signals sent out by the Democratic Labour Party were that they were not interested at all in external trade. The figures indicate that very clearly. The Industrial Development Corporation and Export Promotion Corporation were active instruments in

the promotion of trade hitherto. I have been at a loss to understand what they have been doing. It is true they have a great difficulty because there was a conflict in policy with the Government as to whether they wished to have export promotion or not.

Now let us look at the situation in relation to Brussels. Let us not forget that Brussels was created for the primary purpose of trying to cut across all traditional methods of organising a new Foreign Affairs Ministry. From the very beginning, we made it abundantly **clear** that we saw the mission as being **an** integrated mission which would have **an** holistic approach to the development of Barbados' trade interest. The IDC had a representative in there from the very beginning. That is a positive fact.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That was the position. It was the focal point. At that time, Caribbean Airways used to operate out of Brussels and they had a wholly integrated approach to it. We were trying to get it established in the minds of everyone that that was the new way new Missions would operate and we could not afford to have a duplication of what you had in London, New York and other areas.

Sir, the Government abolished that. This Government reduced the role of Brussels in relation to trade promotion. I do not understand what you are telling me. What we are seeing now about this grand tour to Europe by the Prime Minister is a deliberate policy of the Government between 1986 and early 1992 to run down all of the efforts that were carried out hitherto to emphasize the importance of Europe as a potential area for trade and industry for Barbados. You ran it down and now you are going to recreate it. I do not mind that. You must destroy. Your name is "D" and you must destroy. I understand that, but you must not **try** to give the impression that you are re-inventing the wheel and you have a new direction. The truth is that you have gone astray, you lost your way, and the IMF and others are now telling you that you have to change your ways. Obviously, we wish the Honourable Members good luck. If the Honourable-Members had not gone astray, I believe personally that we would have begun to see more than official effects from this effort.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in two minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I firmly believe that good work was done in Germany when we had the officer **who** had experience in foreign affairs as well as tourism. As a matter of fact, that officer had come from Venezuela because at that time we had a particularly thorny problem to crack, namely of Germany and aviation. The ability of that officer to liaise with Bonn proved very beneficial. I do hope the Honourable Member will understand that, in

trying to effect this method of operating, he will have difficulties and he will have to be persistent because it is in the interest of Barbados.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the few times that Foreign Affairs get debated in this House always manage to bring out some very astounding statements from various people on both sides of the House. I sometimes try to avoid getting involved, having myself for a fairly long time worked as the first person for Barbados in the United States and abroad even before we were independent.

The Honourable Member spoke, however, about the situation in Germany when I became Minister responsible for Tourism. I will merely say that, if I had to make the decision again which I made at that time based on the information available, I would make the same decision. We were able to demonstrate that we could get a better response from Europe and we did and, as the record will show, without his spending of outlandish money as it was being spent at that time. There was a slush-fund mentality which was operating in that office and I make no apology for that fact. Whether I have been functioning as Minister of Trade in 1971-76 or Minister of Tourism in 1986 or as Minister of Health now, whenever I find that the operatives in a particular agency for which I have responsibility are not functioning in the manner and way as was intended, I will take steps to do something about it. The story of Caribbean Airways between London and Germany at that time is one which would take a lot more time than we have now, Sir, and you would not allow it. They used to spend money as if it were going out of style and not all of it could be accounted for in the manner in which Government's money is to be accounted for. I do not mind if the Honourable Member has a little fun at my expense from time to time. But I will say that, if I had to make those decisions now, I would make them again.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, as a Member of the Board of Tourism, was fully seized of the directives which came from the Ministry, and they were able to have what the Minister calls the radiation effect from London. The point I want to make is this. It does not matter what framework you establish. In the final analysis you could set up the best framework, recommended by the most experienced consultants. It is the personnel that you put in the respective slots that will determine how well a country the size of Barbados can do in the international community. The Honourable Member who just spoke knows that. Even at the political level, unless the politicians from the Caribbean who are on the international scene are prepared not to behave as if they are country buckies who are afraid to face those people from Europe and America eye to eye and discuss issues with them frankly and to put the case of the Caribbean, then they are all a waste of time. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South knows what I speak, because he did as I and some other Caribbean Ministers did, and as those who had to go to

Brussels to negotiate with the Europeans on the various Lomé Treaties can appreciate. He really ought to take some time to instruct some of his colleagues in these matters, as to how you are to behave when you are dealing on the international scene, when you are in the international community. So it does not matter what structure you have in some respects, you must have basic structures where the lines of communication are clear. But in the final analysis it is the attitude of the individuals in the respective positions that will determine what benefit Barbados gets from its Foreign Affairs and international agencies.
11.20 a.m.

The fact is that this country has never been able to afford, nor can it now afford, the kind of staffing that would be necessary to have a full Mission in any of the capitals where we have decided to locate. We will never have enough capital to be able to deal effectively with all of the necessary agencies that crop up in the respective capitals. What has to happen is that, in those persons whom we send, we have to either ensure that we recruit those who have expertise and experience, or that they become trained so that they become what the Honourable Member described me as earlier, *generalisimo* and Jack of all trades. The Jamaicans demonstrated this most effectively during their first ten years of independence, and Barbados has done it too, but Barbados was extremely lucky in its early years to have been able to call on a number of nationals who, through no fault of the country, had received considerable experience and expertise working in international or quasi-international agencies. The spirit which those early persons had left was a legacy which the new individuals coming into the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, *et cetera* could follow, but it cannot be gainsaid that in all of our overseas offices we have suffered and we are going to suffer the difficulties of personality conflicts. There will always be personality conflicts where you have a small country having agencies in large capitals where the lifestyles can sometimes cause the persons who go there to lose touch with the reality of their sources, and more particularly the reality of the source of the funding which is Barbados and the taxpayers of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, when the Honourable Members speak of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and talk about the image of Barbados overseas, it must not be forgotten that that image is forged not only by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but by other Ministries. The Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce as presently constituted constitute the substantial economic thrusts which this country makes in the international arena. It is no point expecting a Mission under the umbrella of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be performing at the same level as the IDC or the Board of Tourism. Their specific job is to get economic activity going and have a flow coming toward Barbados that is going to be beneficial to the country.

I am surprised to hear the Honourable Member for Christ Church South saying that there is difficulty in understanding that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is an overall charge. There can be no difficulty about that, because the relations between the countries dictate that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be in overall charge, but overall charge must be understood within certain parameters. If you have an Ambassador who is so concerned with his own personal concept of power that he does not allow officers in the IDC or the Board of Tourism to function and fulfil their potential, then the Ambassador is a waste of time. If you have officers in the IDC or on the Board of Tourism who do not understand that they must pay proper respect to the institutions of Ambassador or Consul General or what have you, but that they should get on with their work and invoke the Ambassador or High Commissioner as necessary, then they too are a waste.

The real problem is that after 25 years of independence we still have people who start from scratch every time. We still have persons who on appointment to these various posts wish to go back the 25 years and begin from scratch. They are not fired with the interest of the country as much as they are fired with the interest of themselves. That is not the majority. The vast majority of people who work for Barbados fit into the mould of people who are committed, but we do have misfits from time to time. The Barbados Labour Party would be in a better position to describe some of their misfits than I would be, but we have had misfits put into important positions overseas by politicians who do not, or did not, understand what was necessary. The Labour Party is in no position to come here being holier than thou to discuss these matters.

I have spoken before about a person who was employed, albeit at a low level, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Consulate in New York. This person was supposed to be a Security Officer/Driver and had no driver's licence at all. Here in Barbados he had a record and never had a driver's licence and yet was on the staff as a Security Officer/Driver. It happened! I have no doubt that the Labour Party would be able to look at some infelicity with regard to an appointment and raise questions about it, so let us not spend any time trying to give the impression that the Labour Party took Foreign Affairs and International Relations and dealt with them in an effective way.

We have to stop thinking of our foreign affairs in terms of the DLP and the BLP. We have to recognise that from the time you cross the borders and go to work as an officer for Barbados, you have first and foremost to put Barbados up at the top of your list and understand that all Barbadians who come within your jurisdiction should have and must have the same quality services, no matter who they were, what they are and what you hope they will be. That is not a difficulty beyond the political parties, because the political parties understand that very well, but sometimes the people who are appointed in the respective

positions behave as though they have been sent with a mission, and one of the things that has happened with our Foreign Affairs is when it became politicised. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West will know exactly what I am talking about. At the time when he decided that he did not wish a particular person to function, and the Prime Minister of the day decided that he wanted that person to function, when in New York it was mistakenly understood that what was necessary was a political arm of the political party in office at the time, that was the beginning of a polarisation of Barbadians living overseas' which came as a direct result of a misunderstanding of roles by the office that was representing Barbados.

That started a whole new ball game. The Honourable Member for St. George South cannot now approbate and reprobate, we will leave that where it is. I do not wish in this debate to digress into something else. The point is that the effort which is being made now is not an attempt to start from scratch. It is an attempt to refine our foreign affairs – foreign affairs is here used in the wider sense – to take account of our needs at the moment. I wish the Minister for Foreign Affairs success. I have no doubt that there will be some difficulties, but those can be overcome as long as all of the parties concerned are made to understand, at the very beginning, that, first and foremost, their responsibility is the growth and development of Barbados and Barbadians.

11.30 a.m.

I am grateful to you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I am glad to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael West expound on his newfound wisdom and morality in relation to the bipartisan approach to matters involving Barbados. I am not going to spend a lot of time on this matter except to point out to this Chamber that there were times when this side was the Government that senior members of the then Opposition would go overseas and make statements that were derogatory of the Government of the country and, by implication, of the country itself. I have in my possession 2 tapes of an interview of a senior member of the Democratic Labour Party in Opposition who went to Ontario and gave a radio interview that said the most outrageous things about this country. Reference has already been made in this debate to someone of an even higher level who went out to Western Canada and gave interviews that did no good to this country. So I am glad to hear that, finally, the Democratic Labour Party has a new morality, which we also embrace. It is a bit late but we will accept it.

I want to make reference to 2 or 3 matters raised during the debate so far. One relates to the coordination of external affairs domestically. I am going to point out that it is a highly desirable thing to do, but it is not new.

When the Minister of Foreign Affairs makes reference to what he calls a Foreign Exchange Committee, it is nothing new. It is cold soup warmed up because for many years efforts have been made to coordinate the Ministries that have an external activity. These efforts have always been bedevilled, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said, by petty bickering and fighting for turf.

I remember you heard in New York about coordination of services there. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West knows that I have known about the activities in New York from its inception. I will give him a little credit. The Honourable Member was appointed around 1965 as the Representative of the Barbados Development Board and some of the things he did did credit to himself and Barbados. I would not mention the other things because I do not think they are necessary in the context of this debate. The problem in New York has been for many years a lack of coordination between the Permanent Mission at the United Nations, the Consulate General, the Tourist Board and the Industrial Development Corporation. They occupy 2 floors in the same building and sometimes one would believe that they operate as 4 separate independent republics.

In good times you could ignore this, but these are more difficult times and the level of cuts we see in these Estimates reflects what the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister said about wanting a leaner, stronger economy. If you want a leaner, cleaner and stronger operation, you have to do something about the duplication and multiplication of services in places like New York. The mere sending home of support staff is not the answer. It is a question of setting priorities. This Government has a weakness in thinking that leaner and stronger means sending home people, and it always leads to the people that can least afford to go home. It does not matter that there are Heads of Missions who do practically nothing, who already have fairly large tax-free, Government pensions. Now, you give them additional perks and positions where they do practically nothing and when times get hard the people at the bottom, the clerks and the typists, the messengers, the maids and the drivers are sent home while these people continue to work and live like grantees.

I want to mention the question of Barbados' relations with CARICOM. Let's not fool ourselves, Sir. During the incumbency of the Barbados Labour Party between 1982 to 1986, Barbados enjoyed a high standing in the Caribbean Community for a number of reasons. It is not only because it was a creative Government which had a great vision of what the Caribbean wanted. It is nothing to do with this present Administration which can talk glibly and almost fatuously about an assembly of Caribbean parliamentarians, whereas the strong bilateral relationships were built between Barbados and Trinidad & Tobago in the late 1970's and early 1980's when the Government of Barbados was able to meet with the late Dr. Eric Williams,

Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, and his Government and sign a Memorandum of Understanding to deal with important areas of activity – insurance, civil aviation, education, finance and energy – and all the concrete agreements and achievements made during that era have been squandered by a certain insensitivity and lack of imagination that characterise this present Government. That was a high-water mark in the relations between Barbados and other partners in CARICOM.

In these Estimates debates the question was raised about the fishing agreement with Trinidad & Tobago and nobody could give any clear answers. Nationals of Barbados are being arrested in Trinidad & Tobago waters and the same Mission they closed in Trinidad is not in a position, either through contempt or unconcern for Barbados and the interest of its nationals, to give us any clear indication as what is going on. The fishing agreement has flopped. We did a lot of work in the area of civil aviation. Endless meetings were held in Trinidad and Tobago and a number of important decisions were made, including the designation of BWIA as the carrier for Barbados.

11.40 a.m.

We had 4 gateways in the United States outside the established ones of Miami and New York. We agreed with the Government of the United States to allow BWIA to be designated the carrier for Barbados. Those were the good days when Barbados' foreign relations inside CARICOM were at a level which allowed Barbadians to hold their chests up high. None of that is happening anymore. It seems to me, Sir, that the relationship between Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago was with the NAR...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: If I am talking foolishness get up and say so. The Government tied its diplomacy to individuals rather than to a country. That is how I see it. I am not going any further because my time is limited.

I want to mention also relations with Grenada. Barbados had a High Commissioner shortly after the October, 1981 intervention. The High Commissioner was placed there because of the high regard the interim Government of Grenada at the time held for the experience, expertise, good-will and skills of this country. We were able to play an important role in the initial stages of helping Grenada settle down and start again the process of reconstruction. It is important to note that the current Prime Minister of Grenada was also the leader of the interim Government. Therefore, he well knows and appreciates the importance of the contribution Barbados made at that time. Yet, one hears now that the relationship has soured and things are not like they used to be. Barbados used to be the natural leader in the Eastern Caribbean. All the Eastern Caribbean States would, from time to time, call on

Barbados for assistance in one area or another. But those days seem to have gone.

We remember well the conference at **Heywoods** on the resolution of the Haitian problem of the time. I made a statement at the time that was carried in the media. I felt as someone who had some dealing with these matters in the past that Barbados was, as the Americans would say, snookered, that Barbados got a rotten notice that we were not coming out of that conference in the way we came out of those things in CARICOM in the past.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member must conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I want to say, remaining in the Caribbean, that at the moment, there is a West Indian Commission set up by the Heads of Government in CARICOM which over the past year or year and a half, has been doing a number of public hearings throughout the region in all the constituent Member States of CARICOM and also in other areas where Barbadian nationals live, in North America and Britain.

A number of recommendations have been made by the Commission set up by the Heads of Government. I have the list of them here, Sir, but time does not allow me to read them. Nobody can find out why it is that the Government of Barbados remains so silent on those recommendationseven though the Government of Barbados is one of the fathers of that particular child. A number of useful recommendations were made. I am not calling on the Government to adopt any or all of them. What I am calling on the Government to do is to state its position on each one. We do not want to be the Government from this side but these recommendations have been made after a lot of thought and dialogue. We are asking the Government, having fathered the Commission, to tell the people of Barbados exactly what is its position on each and every one of those recommendations.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. M. A. KING: When one hears the Honourable Member for St. George South speaking on CARICOM, one would believe that during their term of office the relations between Barbados and its CARICOM partners were at their best, particularly the relationships between Trinidad and Tobago. It was so far down, I do not want to mention incidents involving High Commissioner Pitt and things of that kind. I am always reminded about the shirt jac incident involving the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. M. A. KING: I understand that shirt jac incident involving the Honourable Member for Christ Church South created some difficulty in the relations between Barbados and Trinidad. I do not know too much about it so I would not get into it.

One has to remember, Mr. **Chairman**, certainly, in the relationships between Barbados and other CARICOM countries, that there were no Heads of Government meetings between the late 1970s and the middle 1980s. When Honourable Members on the other side talk about...

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: There were no Heads of Government meetings for a long time in your time of office. Rather than Barbados pulling its weight in CARICOM in those years, the Honourable Members cannot speak of good relations between Barbados and CARICOM neighbours in those years.

The Honourable Member for St. George South has also made the point, and others on that side have made it that the efforts of the Foreign Exchange Committee to coordinate Barbados' promotional activities abroad are going to be what they call **bedeviled** by petty bickering and fighting for turf. I think all of us know that traditionally the agencies and the departments overseas have always been involved in this problem of fighting for turf and having their own independence recognised.

We are under no illusion whatsoever that it is going to be the easiest of jobs to coordinate effectively the work of all the agencies abroad. We recognise that the political dimension is going to be important. That is why we have so structured the Foreign Exchange Committee that the political heads of the departments are the persons who will give the Committee its direction.

11.50 a.m.

It is not a Committee which is chaired by public servants and where public servants play the dominant role. It is a Committee which is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and in which the Ministers of Agriculture, Trade, and Tourism meet at regular intervals and give the appropriate political direction which is needed. We recognize that it is important that the work of this committee succeeds in the critical times which we are going through with **stabilization** and with structural adjustment. I am sure that the necessary impetus will have to be given to the work of that Committee to ensure that it is not just being cold soup warmed over, as the Honourable Member for St. George South has said. The work of this Committee, as distinct from former occasions, has to be successful on this occasion.

The Honourable Member for St. George South persists in calling for the removal of political heads of

Missions. I do not know what is the proposal he is putting forward. There has to be a head of Mission. I think what we need to ensure – and the point has been made – is that the Missions are staffed by persons who understand what the business of promotion is and that sort of routine foreign service diplomatic work. Purely diplomatic representational work is not the type of direction we want to see the Missions solely involved in. The efforts of promotion of the country's interest in terms of economics and finance and development generally are going to be paramount and have to be the consideration which must take the highest possible priority.

The Honourable Member for St. George South in seeking, to discredit is probably too strong a word, one of the heads of Missions wondered whether heads of Mission had time to do full-time service. Presumably he is talking about one head of mission who is on the board of ILO who attends ILO meetings from time to time. The head of mission in London is a former Chief Justice of Barbados. Whilst he was Chief Justice, he was on the panel of experts of ILO. He attended ILO meetings at regular intervals and participated in the work of ILO when he was Chief Justice. He is doing no more now than he was doing in that position. One would have thought that having a Barbados representative participate as an expert in the work of ILO would be a credit to the country rather than that anyone find some negative comment to make in that regard.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Has the Honourable Member concluded? That is the problem I have with **interruptions** which spark responses. I have cautioned Members on that before and I do not think I need to do that again.

Hon. M. A. KING: Just to refer to another point raised by the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member made reference to the absence of information about the fishing agreement with Trinidad. This issue was raised yesterday during the debate on agriculture. The fact is that there is presently no fishing agreement. The agreement which had existed was for one year. That time has passed. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago asked that we roll over the agreement that existed but from the Barbados point of view we wanted to renegotiate a new agreement. We could not agree on renegotiating a new agreement. The position is, at this time, no agreement presently exists. One of the problems with the old agreement was that it was not entirely acceptable to the fishing industry and, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North pointed out yesterday, I believe that there were only some 4 or 6 fishermen who actually took up the licences. Forty licences had been negotiated with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago but only 4 or 6 fishermen in Barbados actually took up licences. The fishing industry in Barbados more or less did not accept the agreement which had been negotiated so it was a little

pointless rolling over an agreement which was unacceptable to the fishing industry in Barbados. We are still continuing with approaches to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago with a view to negotiating a new agreement and that is where that matter stands at this time. The Honourable Member for St. George South talks about the Mission in Trinidad not being able or being unwilling to give information about what happened in relation to the fishermen who were arrested. Mr. Chairman, that is not correct. That is not true. The Mission in Trinidad reported what took place and gave the Foreign Ministry information and the Minister of Agriculture information on what transpired in relation to the fishermen in Trinidad and Tobago.

One other point made by the Honourable Member for St. George South, I think it was, in relation to Honorary Consuls abroad about Honorary Consuls being paid and things of that kind. Our position is quite clear. Honorary Consuls are not paid for the honorary consular work they do. But where they undertake promotional work on behalf of the Government of Barbados, where they undertake specific promotional activities then funds are provided for payment of specific promotional work which has been done by Honorary Consuls. That, Mr. Chairman, is the response to a number of issues raised.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask a couple of questions that will not take more than 5 minutes. What is the relationship of Barbados with Guatemala now? There was a period of time, I think during the time that we were in office, when I would not say Guatemala was persona non grata but we did not have any formal relationship with Guatemala for a variety of reasons which I do not propose to go into now. But I know from reports, and presumably the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its new thrust in terms of the development of trade and economic relations has started to do business, that the Government has started to do business with Guatemala to help us out of the problems occasioned by a depletion of our reserves of sugar. I also understand that there are international considerations about this arrangement because there is a company operating established in Miami which is an intermediary between Barbados operating through the Barbados Marketing Corporation and the suppliers of sugar in Guatemala. I think that having regard to this change of arrangement, under which formerly...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. I understand that it has as the late, great Joe Tudor would have said, animal and vegetable connection with Barbados.
12.00 noon

I have heard it has Barbadian participants, so I would like to know the details of the arrangement between Barbados and Guatemala in respect to the supply of sugar. If there is a broker acting on behalf of the Barbados Marketing Corporation, I would like to know who that person is and what are the terms of the brokerage.

I am very concerned about the importation of sugar from Guatemala. There is a bond, I believe, in Country Road that holds about 12 000 tons. I don't know if the Government intends to use that bond for the Guatemala sugar.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is aware that the subject of sugar came up under a different Head.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, but I am dealing with the ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You asked a question but you are broadening now.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not need any help.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We understand, Sir, that you are well able to understand these points. I am not going outside the bond, Sir, but I am sure that the Government has issued a statement recently that, now that the economy is leaner and we have to cut back, its thrust is going to be more geared towards the development of trade links. I presume that when I was not here that was said by the Minister. It is only in that spirit, Sir, that I am asking these questions about the relationship with Guatemala. It is relevant because, if we are not using that bond, I think there is another bond somewhere in St. Philip that might be used, the IDC building. I wonder if the conditions for the storage of the Guatemala sugar in that building would be satisfactory because I believe there has to be a certain humidity.

I am also concerned, Sir, that the quality of the Guatemalan sugar is less than we are accustomed to. I am going to make this a document of the House, because it looks awful.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member certainly is not going to discuss the implications of sugar under this Head that we are discussing.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I want to make it a document of the House, to show all the dirt in it. I want you all to see, including you, Sir. This is a matter of health too. I want you to have a look at it because I understand that there is cholera in that general area. The Minister of Health has assured us that we need not bother, but I want

all of you to look at this Guatemalan sugar I have here. I make it a document of the House and thank you very much. Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Before the Honourable Member winds up, just in the interest of historical accuracy, because when you are discussing foreign affairs, I think one should try to have the record as accurate as possible, in that light. I am trying to correct the record in view of something said by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I would have him to know that such were the relations between Barbados and Trinidad in 1986 that the Barbados Government had the pleasure of a visit by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago to Barbados at the end of which a communique was issued, which was signed by both Governments and in which both Governments committed themselves to the continuance of the most cordial relations in existence. As to the outstanding matters in relation to aviation, a specific agreement was reached for a joint committee to pursue those matters and, in relation to fishing similarly, in 1986 it was agreed that a committee of both Governments would work on that. All outstanding matters were dealt with.

It does not matter what Honourable Members on the other side and particularly novitiates say but, whether they are ministerial or otherwise, they must understand that you must look at the hard data.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I rise to respond to the query made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, so far as it relates to Foreign Affairs. Your Honour did allow him some latitude in dealing with the issue of Guatemalan sugar which, as I understand it, is now part of this debate. He raised the question as to the relationship between Barbados and Guatemala. The position is, Mr. Chairman, that the coldness in relations between Barbados and Guatemala which used to exist in the past was the result of the difficulties which Belize was having with Guatemala. Caricom from the position of solidarity took cause with Belize. You will remember Guatemala was claiming substantial portions of the older Belize and Caricom had adopted a position of solidarity with Belize on this issue.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am not debating sugar. In recent years, Mr. Chairman, relationships between Belize and Guatemala have improved considerably to the extent that the Prime Minister of Belize has requested the support of Caricom Colleagues in moving ahead with relationships with Guatemala. So, at the instance and the urgings of the Prime Minister of Belize, we have moved to cement relationships with Guatemala and in effect, in February this year, we established diplomatic relations with Guatemala. So that the position with Barbados, as of today, is that

Barbados and Guatemala presently have diplomatic relations.
12.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, first of all let me say that, in respect to the **territorial dispute** between Belize and Guatemala which has been going on for many years, the Leader of the Opposition was the first Commonwealth **Chairman** of the Committee to look into and deal with Belize and Guatemala on behalf of the Commonwealth. It is nothing new. The Government cannot volunteer anything to us. Indeed, as it speaks, it gives us an alarming **area** of ignorance.

I want to mention quickly something else, Sir, to deal with **3** or **4** points they have raised. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, has talked about the absence of meetings of CARICOM Heads, as he said, from the middle 1970's until the mid-1980's. There are **2** things that we have to consider, Sir. One is, Sir, that the CARICOM Heads stopped meeting when the Democratic Labour Party was the Government of Barbados and it arose out of a dispute between the late **Errol Barrow**, Prime Minister of Barbados, and the late **Eric Williams**, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

One will recall that in 1970 there was an insurrection in Trinidad and the late Prime Minister Barrow, in his own inimitable style, volunteered that there were some Caribbean Prime Ministers who could not afford to **leave** their countries because they may not be able to get back in. The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago equally volunteered that, unlike certain people who can talk so much when they wanted to recharge their batteries, he used to go into his library and write a book and not to Miami to knock about with undergraduates. At that time, Sir, there was also the quarreling between the Governments of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago about the smelting plant and they stopped having Heads of Government Meetings. In fact, when the Barbados Labour Party became...

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

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir. I **attended** a Heads of Government Meeting in St. Kitts in 1975 and up until then there had been meetings continuously with Heads of Governments. We went to a Heads of Government Meeting in 1975 in St. Kitts. We went to a Heads of Government Meeting in 1974 after the **treaty** was signed in Trinidad.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, therefore, I am submitting that the statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs is not true. When the Barbados Labour Party was in Government, there was a Heads of Government Meeting in Montego Bay. There were meetings also in Port-of-Spain, Nassau and Barbados. He must not say that, Sir.

I am going on because my time is short, Sir. I want to ask a few other questions. There was a lot of talk on the part of the Government; but as in most things, they have expressed no clear picture of what this Ministry of Foreign Affairs intends to do in the years to come apart from a few **trite** statements about emphasis or focus on the commercial side of their diplomacy, nothing else.
12.15 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I do not know why the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is bothering himself, because it is the Prime Minister who has been behaving as if he is the Minister of Foreign Affairs, so why do you not let me deal with him?

A lot of things have happened in the world, Sir, and we do not hear anything. They do not vouchsafe anything to us, as I keep saying. The whole geo-political situation in the world has been changed dramatically, by the collapse of the Soviet Empire, the changes in Eastern Europe, the new economic strategies of the United States in particular which they are seeking through, in my view, an uncomfortable **trade** liberalisation policy to inflict on small developing countries like Barbados, and which will do nothing other than to pauperise these countries even more. I know they do not want to hear anything about these things.

We see that the United States has made a trade agreement with Canada, they have got into one with Mexico and we are hearing now about an Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. These things keep coming and going. We want to hear the position of the Government on these issues. We went through the whole question of the CBI and all those **things** that were supposed to usher in a new dawn of growth and development for this region but those things have not materialised. We hear now of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. We want to hear the Government speak on these things, not just get and make the kind of feckless comment that we keep hearing all the time.

When the Barbados Labour Party was the Government of this country it developed superlative skills in the areas of lobbying and negotiating in the financial and economic sphere. We went and did double taxation negotiations with the United States of America, and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph played the leading part in that. We started the offshore financial regime and

the Government developed a number of outstanding skills for negotiation in that area which are being squandered, because the people who have developed that expertise are not being recognised for their worth by the Government of this country.

I want, Sir, to hear something about the position of the Government on South Africa. Tell me something. I do not know what is going on. The referendum in South Africa last week represented an historic change in the position of the old regime in South Africa but, as I heard on my radio, the Prime Minister said it was business as usual, we were glad that happened but sanctions would remain. We understand that. I do not think anybody could expect anything else, but there is a Test Match being played in Barbados shortly against South Africa and I want the Government to understand a few things. South Africa itself is using the opportunity of a South Africa test team playing in Barbados to bolster its own international image. They are using the medium of a cricket match to bolster their image, and I cannot quarrel with them for doing that, because everybody knows the image internationally has been less than wholesome. The Government of Barbados must understand that it must use these opportunities to extract the maximum advantage out of them for the benefit of Barbados, and I want to hear what it is they are trying to extract, what it is they want.

Someone made the comment earlier – I think it was the Minister of Housing, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy – as if it is a big thing, that Botswana or somewhere wants teachers from Barbados. Barbados has been supplying teachers, civil servants, policemen, priests, nurses, judges to many parts of the world for a long time, and a few teachers going to Botswana is not anything new, there is nothing significant about that. What was significant was when the Barbados Labour Party as Government established special relations with Namibia, and not only provided teachers, but provided all kinds of skills and also made available here in Barbados our educational institutions for Namibian students. I am talking of long before Namibia's independence.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I say this, Sir, in the context of South Africa, because the Barbados Government has to look at this South African question closely and make sure that, in the medium term and in the long term, we come out of it smelling good and also extract our advantages out of this new connection. I want to say that the Barbados Government should be looking to a future South Africa, a multi-racial Government, where Barbadians can make a contribution that would redound to the benefit not only of the masses of black South Africans, but to the benefit of Barbados.

The Government has always proceeded in an *ad hoc* way. They have not expressed any grand plan as to what Barbados' relations with a new South Africa will be. What are they seeking? We do not do these things for nothing. They have just established relations with Bulgaria, the very Democratic Labour Party which was critical of the Barbados Labour Party for opening diplomatic relations with some of the countries of Eastern Europe.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, during the course of discussion of this Head the Honourable Member for Christ Church South indicated that the closing of the office in Frankfurt was a decision which created considerable difficulty and was a decision made by me. The fact is, Sir, that we have sent for the files and it is good sometimes to have the record to indicate what has happened.

The fact is, Sir, that the Board of Tourism at a meeting considered a paper on the future of its European office. Inasmuch as it was understood that it was the intention of Caribbean Airways to close its offices as soon as possible after March 31, 1987, Caribbean Airways made the decision to close its offices in Europe and the Board of Tourism used to rent space from Caribbean Airways. The Board of Tourism recommended that its European office should be closed but that it would be to Barbados' advantage to maintain a presence in Germany and therefore an agency representation arrangement was proposed. The Board also recommended

"that the sales representative be transferred to the UK as sales representative and the manager in Europe be transferred to Barbados in a managerial capacity until further notice. For your information, the Board is leasing offices from Caribbean Airways and we have been advised that it is the intention to close the offices as of 30th April, 1987. Approval is therefore being sought for the above proposal so that the officers concerned can be given notice as early as possible."

That was dated 1987-02-24.

The Minister then said, among other things,

"There will have to be a detailed analysis, together with relevant information provided, the information I asked for when I proposed a policy. Please do the necessary in the circumstances."

That is what the Minister wrote when the Board made a recommendation that the office be closed, and in between then and following there was a considerable amount of information submitted by the Board to demonstrate that in fact it would not be in the interest of Barbados to maintain the offices in Germany as they were then constituted

because it would be a considerable waste of money *vis-a-vis* the return which was coming from Germany at the time. The conclusion was reached:

"However, it was not considered that such is necessary as the Board is replacing a structure of representation which presently includes two full time senior Barbadian representatives, a situation which has not made any significant impact on the development of tourist traffic from the market."

Anyone who had heard the Honourable Member talking earlier would have concluded that this Minister had in fact, on a whim and a fancy, decided to close the office in Germany. The fact is that Caribbean Airways, at that time, as I indicated earlier, was allowing money to go through the eddies in large quantities where there was a substantial amount of questionable activity between the Caribbean Airways office in London and the Caribbean Airways offices in Germany, activity which subsequently was examined and proved to be detrimental. The decision was made to close the Caribbean Airways offices. It is in that context the Board of Tourism examined its representation there. Even then the Minister of the day, whom I happened to be, required detailed information and in fact, subsequently, on 23rd November, 1987 the Minister visited Frankfurt and the information which went up said the visit to Frankfurt would afford the Minister the opportunity to assess the impact of the closure of Caribbean Airways and to review the organisational arrangements necessary to give added impetus to the initiatives already being taken to resuscitate the German travel market. Mr. Chairman, you do not resuscitate anything that is vibrant and living. It is when it is dying and gasping and about to give up the ghost that you have to resuscitate it. The figures out of Germany at the time would demonstrate that the tourist market out of Germany was in fact at its lowest ebb.

We implemented a strategy to revive not only the German market but, as I said earlier, the entire European market, and the rest is history. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central went on, when he became the Minister, to formulate a policy that gave us a reduced presence in Germany and it has been successful ever since.

I am grateful that these files exist and I do not wish to take the Committee's time to go into great detail, but I am satisfied from a reading of these files that the matter of our closing of the offices in Germany was to the benefit of the country, that the closing of the Caribbean Airways office, which incidentally was exacerbated by the position which RWIA was taking in its flights out of Frankfurt, when BWIA was seeking to get additional flights out of Frankfurt, but I do not believe it is necessary to go into those details. I just wanted to help put the record straight. I am sorry the Honourable Member is not in his seat, but if he wishes I can give him further and better particulars.

I am grateful to you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the last point made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is that the Member for Christ Church South is not in his place. The Minister took a decision, but with the benefit of hindsight the decision was a bad decision. The decision cannot be isolated from the decision about Caribbean Airways.
12.30 p.m.

I have a very faint recollection of these matters because with the passage of years things begin to fade.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are now referring to a decision by the Board of Tourism or the Minister of Tourism. You made the point earlier. It has been clarified. Therefore, I do not want that to be a major discussion under this Head.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am dealing with Foreign Affairs, Sir, but I am not going to spend the bulk of time in discourse on that. I just want to clarify that the problem of moving Caribbean Airways from Frankfurt cannot be isolated from the closing of the office of the Board of Tourism. The problem with the relationship with BWIA was that there was a requirement for a ramp transfer in London. People travelling from Germany would have to change planes and baggage in London. They did not like that. The advantage of Caribbean Airways was that it provided a non-stop flight to Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would that have been under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?

Mr. L. R. TULL: I only jumped in the "ling". I thought that is what the Honourable Minister spoke about. If he did, so can I, but I accept your ruling.

The question of the stabilisation of the Caribbean. I was dealing with CARICOM earlier but I go to the wider Caribbean now. There can be no real stabilisation in the Caribbean until the question of the status of Cuba in the Caribbean is finally resolved. The kind of hypocrisy practised by certain states in relation to the former Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe before their fall and the attitude of those same countries to Cuba is a bit hard for decent-thinking people to accept. Cuba has a role in the Caribbean and it will not get up some morning and fly away. It will remain in the Caribbean. It is important that Barbados and like-minded states try to assist in a final resolution of the position of Cuba inside the Caribbean.

Barbados – and I give credit to the Government – in 1972, took a very bold decision along with Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica and Guyana to grant diplomatic recognition to Cuba in face of great hostility and pressure from the United States Government. It is a matter that Barbadians can reflect on with a great deal of pride. For

those who say that our policies have to be dictated by other people, that is a glorious example of our making important decisions on our own. We have some more to make.

It is not only a political decision. The whole question of the development of our tourism depends in some measure on what is our position on Cuba. There is a lot of travel between Europe, both Western Europe and Eastern Europe, to Cuba. The whole idea of multi-destinations was considered by governments in the past and, from all reports, it is suggested that a proper accommodation with Cuba at this stage would put Barbados as a beneficiary of a multi-destination package deal between travellers from Europe and the Caribbean. We have to look at that and we have to make some decisions as soon as possible.

I want to mention very briefly the Law of the Sea. We have had international meetings and conferences on the Law of the Sea in the late 1970's and early 1980's accompanied by a great deal of international fanfare. In recent times, one gets the feeling that the momentum has somewhat slowed. A country like Barbados, surrounded by vast stretches of sea, and which by now would know of the tremendous assets that lie both in the sea lanes and on the sea bed should, in my view, be taking a more aggressive role in seeing what advantages and investments we, here in the Caribbean, can get as a result of that new Convention. In fact, I do not even know if Barbados has signed the treaty, but that is not the important point at this stage. We have to see what economic advantages this country can extract from the new Convention on the Law of the Sea.

I want to mention also that the two Administrations of the Government of Barbados have, over a number of years, looked at the possibility of the establishment of joint ventures in manufacturing between this country and Pacific-rim countries. I have heard that the Prime Minister is going on a visit to Europe. I do not know the purpose. I do not recall if he said. I do know that these visits such as the one the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central was just alluding to, in which the Minister went to Brussels to assess the impact of something... I have been a Minister of Government for 10 years, Sir, and no Minister can get on a plane in Barbados and fly into any capital and go and size up the people in an office overseas, talk to a few people at a cocktail party or a dinner and assess anything. That is almost an insult to the functionaries, the technical people who are there and are paid to be there as the eyes, the ears...

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: All right, Sir. I cannot hear.

I want to know in relation to the European visit *vis-a-vis* the Pacific visit, what have we done? We have sent more than one mission into the Far East looking for opportunities for joint ventures in manufacturing and

investment. We held out to countries in that part of the world the potential benefit that could be derived from these joint ventures. They could provide access for them into the United States market under the CBI and also into Europe under Lome. Barbados stood to benefit from a number of managerial and technical skills, modern equipment and the general know-how in doing international business. We have not heard much of that. I must, then, like the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, question what good are these flag-bearing visits, these international courtesy calls, unless you have something of substance to carry and discuss. There have been a lot of discussions, seminars, meetings and lectures in the Caribbean and in Europe on Europe after 1992. The Government may or may not have been paying attention to them. I really do not know, but what I do know is, whether they pay attention or not, they have not come out with any policy statement as to where Barbados would expect to fit in the new arrangement.
12.40 p.m.

There was a time when Barbados held the presidency of the EEC/ACP Group when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was its Chairman and brought to bear a tremendous wealth of knowledge on the discussions and the decisions of that group and knowledge of the most intimate detail of the EEC/ACP and prior LOME Conventions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The result was that Barbados not only benefited in a material way, but made the kind of international impact through the leadership of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that brought a lot of credit to this country.

I want to say one final thing because I have had enough of this. Although the Minister of Foreign Affairs has not said it, I believe that the professional officers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are excellent officers. I have worked with them. I have observed them before I worked with them and since I have worked with them. I know they have an outstanding cadre of first class officers. They are not only good professionals but they are bright professionals.

One of the things the Government can do is give them a little air to breathe and allow them to be creative. I believe if the Government allows them to breathe and be creative they can do a tremendous amount of good for this country. When I say give them a little room to breathe, I am not saying it in any pejorative sense. I am not saying that the Government is suffocating the people. I am saying that, except through the structures and the organisation, in that sense they are being suffocated. But I do not mean, before the Honourable Member gets up in response and suggests it, that the Minister or the Prime Minister or anybody was taking away their liberties. Certainly, in

the context of a country that has been independent for only 26 years, a real baby in the international arena, the officers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through all those 20 odd years, have brought remarkable credit in this country by their professionalism, diligence and the way they perceive their role for this country.

Hon. M. A. KING: I am winding up, Mr. Chairman. One of the areas which I suppose I can agree 100% with the Honourable Member for St. George South on is in relation to the encomium which he has just offered to the officers and the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Certainly, in the relatively short time I have worked with them, I have found them to be a highly professionalised staff, well motivated and a staff with which one can get positive results. I am grateful to the Honourable Member for St. George South for placing compliments to the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in that regard.

There are a couple of matters which I need to clear up in relation to comments by the Honourable Member for St. George South. In relation to the issue on the meetings of Heads of Government of CARICOM countries, on checking the records in the 10 years that the Barbados Labour Party was in office, there have been 6 years in which there were no CARICOM Heads of Government meetings.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation, Sir, if the Honourable Member will give way. I have already put in the record of the House that when the Barbados Labour Party assumed office in 1976, CARICOM was not functioning principally because of the relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. You would remember Prime Minister Manley's speech on the oil money going through as castor oil. In fact the Barbados Labour Party, as the records of the Foreign Office would show, did all in its power to bring the parties back into proper relationship. We tried as well through the bilateral way by extending the bilateral relations into multilateral.

Hon. M. A. KING: The Heads of Government did not meet in 1979, 1980 or 1981. I am just getting the record straight.

The Honourable Member for St. George South spoke of the absence of what he considered to be the grand design. He was talking about the changes in Eastern Europe and the positions in relation to South Africa, the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, CBI and all of that. The Honourable Member is talking in terms of wanting to see this grand design and grand statements of policy. What are we concerned about? Are we to make grand statements of policy on issues which are on-going, or getting practical and pragmatic benefits out of the arrangements in which we are involved?

The fact is that Barbados, in relation to the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, is committed to a pragmatic approach in this issue. We are negotiating with the United States of America through CARICOM. The Heads of Government have taken a decision that the negotiations with the United States in relation to the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative will be conducted on a CARICOM basis.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: You are talking about Heads of Government meetings in CARICOM. Are the Heads of Government meetings important or not? The negotiations are taking place in relation to CARICOM and the United States. We are also negotiating trade pacts and relations with Venezuela.

In relation to Eastern Europe and what is happening in Europe in 1992, lots of speculative statements have been made from time to time as to what Europe 1992 will offer and what the liberalisation of Eastern Europe will mean for the rest of the world. What one has to recognise is that the position in relation to any one of these issues is not static. It is a situation where changes are taking place moment by moment, day after day, week after week, month after month. There is always a new dimension which has to be considered.

CARICOM has been trying to adopt a concerted approach in relation to dealing with the problems of Eastern Europe and in relation to the problems of a united Europe in 1992. A sufficiency of statements have emanated out of CARICOM in relation to what the region perceives to be the position which it would expect for the countries of this CARICOM region arising out of such developments. I do not know whether it makes any sense talking in terms of making grandiose statements of what we want to see because grandiose statements are not going to get us anywhere.

In relation to South Africa, again the Honourable Member wants to know what grand designs we have for benefitting from the South African cricket team coming to Barbados. He makes the point that the South African Government is exploiting a situation...

Aside.

12.50 p.m.

The position is that CARICOM Governments have met and discussed this issue, Commonwealth Heads of Government have met on the South African issue. They have been sensitive to the wishes of the African National Congress in relation to the lifting of sanctions in the area of sports and in what they call people to people sanctions. The CARICOM response has been, to a large extent, in relation to the lifting of what has been considered

the people to people sanctions conditioned by the views of the Commonwealth and by the views of the ANC and disadvantaged interests in South Africa. We are as aware as anyone else that the lifting of people to people sanctions is not going to be the answer to the problems of South Africa. In fact, this is recognized by us because, in concert with the other members of the Commonwealth, we have not lifted sanctions in other areas in our relationship with South Africa. So that sanctions in relation to certain economic and trade matters, in relation to arms and so forth still remain. The only area in which there has been an opening of contact is in what has been termed people to people sanctions.

Obviously, until there has been irreversible change in South Africa, until in South Africa democracy prevails where every person has a right to vote, until that day comes, clearly the full contact and full relationships between us and South Africa will not be on. We see, in this response to the wishes of the ANC, that the cricketing arrangements are part of a process of encouraging the motivation for change and creating an ambience for change in South Africa. This has been the position we have taken in this regard.

One cannot talk in terms of any highfaluting and massive immediate benefits out of these relationships but it all has to be seen as part of a long process which, in the final analysis, we hope will redound to the benefit of the peoples in South Africa and the peoples of the Caribbean.

The question that Head 35 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, 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 until 2.00 p.m. today.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly at 12.57 p.m.
12.57 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply and to that it now reverts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed.

HEAD 34 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – \$120 693 850 (as amended)

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$120 693 850 under Head 34 – Ministry of Education as amended stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, sometime in 1985 it was necessary for there to be a bye-election in the constituency of St. Thomas and one of the issues ...

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, I am laying the foundation for a particular ... Sir, I am not confining what I am saying to any bye-election. I am just leading up to a particular item.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would at least prefer an introduction.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Very well, Sir. Sir, the matter of the St. Thomas Secondary School has been a matter, which for the last 6 or 7 years has been one which the current Government has been actively pursuing as a matter of major policy.

Sir, notwithstanding the very able attacks by this side on that particular policy, the Government persevered and decided to build the school. In last year's Estimates, Mr. Chairman, a sum in excess of \$4.25 million had been allocated to the St. Thomas Secondary School but in this year's Estimates, Mr. Chairman, not one solitary cent is allocated in the particular area provided for at page 61, Subprogram 08 of Head 34. Not a cent has been allocated for the St. Thomas Secondary School. One is left to wonder, Sir, if it is that after having made it quite clear that it is the policy of the Government to have a secondary school in every parish in this country, the St. Thomas school has been abandoned or put on hold. In the absence of any clear guidelines as to the future of this school, we on this side are asking the Honourable Minister to indicate to us in no uncertain terms precisely what is the position with the St. Thomas Secondary School. The allocation has gone down from \$4.259 to SO.

Sir, there are other areas of concern to us on this side as well. We note that there are proposals for increases in fees under the Textbook Loan Scheme. You will note, Sir, that in last year's Estimates, a figure of about \$1.37 million had been allocated to the Textbook Loan Scheme. This figure is down now to just about \$100 000. We are left to wonder if the Government is going to make it a policy to impose higher fees on persons using textbooks in schools, especially, since at page xi under Revenue Notes which

is an interesting page because, on that page, there is some reference to a V.A.T. Some ominous reference to a V.A.T on that page same page. I will not ask for an explanation at this point but no doubt that will come in the future.

In these Revenue Notes, Sir, at xi, we note that Tax Fees from rental of text books is noted along with charges for the school meals service so the two questions obviously **are** these: Is it that the programme in relation to the school meals service will undergo change now where definite fees will be charged for school meals, or is it that **tax** fees will be charged for textbooks in all schools, especially the secondary schools?

I believe earlier in these Estimates there was reference to something called user fees in **relation** to a number of services that the Government ordinarily provides. This is not all, Sir, there was also, in our calculation, marked reduction in personal emoluments. We had calculated that personal emoluments under this Head are cut overall by 9 per cent and in our calculation we are left to glean that some 500 or 600 jobs will be affected.

On reading the Head as a whole it seems as though this could either be in relation to the school meals service or in relation to those non-established posts in the teaching service. We are asking the Government, Mr. Chairman, if indeed the intention is to reduce personal emoluments by 9 per cent, and will this affect 500 or 600 jobs which we over here are speculating it will very well do.

In any **event**, Sir, we think that education, as an important social service must be carefully monitored and watched whenever it comes to budgetary financial allocations. The reason here is this; most of the people in Barbados are poor and successive administrations have made it clear that the major policy of Government would be to provide all persons in Barbados with an opportunity for free primary education and access to free secondary education but because ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member would give way for a minute. You made reference to xi?

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Revenue notes, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And you made reference to VAT.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I see the letters on the page, Sir. Under the Head of Education and Culture. I see it here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Obviously you can't make mention of that under this particular Head because it does not relate to this Head. It is erroneous.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg your pardon, Sir, but I could not help notice its location on that particular page.

Sir, as I was shying, over the years a number of underprivileged children have been admitted to secondary schools. The position is this, that even though these people would ordinarily go to school, some of the services necessary for them to get a proper schooling have had to be heavily subsidised by Government. We are saying that the Estimates here today are indicating that there will be sharp cuts in **subsidies** and support to all students in such a way that the poor students are going to be the **ones** most affected. We are concerned that in an era, when we are **trying** to make university education available, throughout Barbados, to all and sundry, especially poor people, that these cuts can impact so severely on a large number of people as to make a mockery of the whole notion of the availability of free education for them, Sir.

In this regard, Sir, I also must comment on the reduction in the allocation for transport of pupils. Is it that the **total** number of children travelling on the buses has declined? Is it that schools have shut down, thereby reducing the number of children travelling by public transport to school? What is the reason, Sir, for this decline in the allocation to transport for pupils? I don't **think** I have the exact figures here, Sir, but I think last year's allocation was roughly \$2.6 million under this **Subhead**. This year's allocation is \$2 million, meaning that it would have been cut by \$600 000 or thereabouts. I am demanding from Government an explanation as to why this change in policy,

In addition, Sir, there **are** other concerns as well. We notice here that there is a serious cut in the allocation to the Audio Visual Aids Department. Over the years the Audio Visual Aids Department has remained close to the centre of education policy in this country and the reason has been fairly obvious, Mr. **Chairman**. One reason for the use of the Audio Visual Aids Department is that old fashioned teaching by way of **teacher/chalk** did not always help students so you needed a variety of stimuli. **You** had to have what teachers call stimulus variation by which some education could go through the eye and through the ear in a non traditional manner.

2.10 p.m.

Sir, in a situation where Barbados is now on the edge of the precipice of crime, I am submitting that the cut to the Audio Visual Aids Department is unjustified on these grounds. A lot of children in the newer secondary schools, in particular, do not readily cope with traditional means of teaching like teacher questioning and question and answer discussions. Therefore, they need electronic and other stimuli to assist them in learning. Normally, a lot of children who do not achieve much in schools, particularly in the newer secondary schools, are given to behavioral problems and ultimately given to deviant behaviour.

I am suggesting that one cause of the deviant behaviour among some of the youth of Barbados is

under-achievement in school and that under-achievement would have been caused by circumstances where the school system did not readily permit these children to achieve precisely because the methods of teacher talk and teacher chalk did not permit a lot of these children to grapple well with abstraction.

It is a fact from experience, Mr. Chairman, that a large number of children in primary schools and newer secondary schools do not achieve precisely because they are unable to grapple with abstract form. The Audio Visual Aids Department has over the years produced pictures, recordings, and a wide range of teaching materials to better allow people who ordinarily would be considered as slow learners or under-achievers to get a chance to learn. A cut in the size of \$350 000 is not justified at this time, nor can any excuse be given that the Department was under-utilized. I do not want to anticipate anybody but I suspect that I might hear the Department may have been under-utilized at some point. That is not true, Sir. It is that a lot of teachers, especially the newer teachers, were not sensitized to the importance of the Audio Visual Aids Department. Many teachers would have taught for 2 to 4 years and either did not know of the Department or, if they knew, they did not know what it was there for. The result was that not enough use was made of it. Indeed, in these trying times with restlessness among youths and with the same amount of under-achievers in our secondary schools, it is my contention that particular department should be caring and tutored so that it can play its full role in the school system, Sir.

Sir, while I am at it, I want to ask the Honourable Minister a question about the University of the West Indies. I am not being critical about the allocation to the University of the West Indies. I am not being critical at all. But there are signs at UWI, Cave Hill that all is not well financially. Only a few days ago, a senior professor was lamenting the fact that the University is hard hit by financial woes. In a situation where several different CARICOM countries are contributing to the finances of UWI and where traditionally the Barbados Government has never been delinquent, it is still the duty of the Government to make sure that public finances from the Public Treasury are made available to the University, especially since UWI, Cave Hill is based here and the territory of occupation is supposed to take the primary responsibility and ask particular questions of UWI if for no other reason than to ensure that the investment of money by the Barbados Government is not being threatened by a number of factors where other Governments might not be contributing in the same way as we have been overtime.

I am asking the Minister to ensure that, when we in Barbados allocate money to the University of the West Indies, we do so in circumstances where we will not be called on to increase our allocation in the future because of

delinquency on the part of other Governments or because of things like wastage, errors, and other things.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: As the two minutes beckon me to sit, I would like to conclude by asking whether the Government has ever seriously considered the question of a sessionary type of security for schools. Normally, schools are given their security out of the Ministry of Defence and Security. But in these times, especially where we have had ugly incidents at Deacons and Parkinson, has the Government ever considered specialized security suitable for schools to protect these schools by these misguided people and by persons who have no respect for these institutions?

Finally, our contention is that notwithstanding the difficult financial times the cut to Education reflects a situation where not enough thought was given to why to cut and how much to cut in certain areas.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question...The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Member who just spoke mentioned the lawlessness that prevails at the schools. The security leaves a lot to be desired. First of all, I would like to make an appeal to the Minister to consider looking seriously at improving the security at the Parkinson School. There was a time when the school was plagued by acts of vandalism and the security was not up to scratch. During 1976 to 1986, I am pleased to say there was such improvement in those areas that the Headteachers in delivering the reports alluded to the fact that for the first time they were all pleased with the situation. Recently, there has been a deterioration in the security in particular, and as parliamentary representative, I would invite the Minister to pay some very close attention to the problems at the school.

There is also a problem at the Pine Primary School and quite recently about a month ago we all saw the news story as it broke on CBC that parents as well as the PTA were complaining about the discussions at that school. Although some attempts have been made to correct these problems, all is not yet corrected. I know that the PTA is working very hard towards raising funds in order to assist with correcting some of these problems. But I want to say that there is something really wrong with the Administration and Government in its attitude and approach towards this and other schools. What we have seen over the past couple of months and what has been revealed about the school, to mention another one, Ebenezer, shows that the Government lacks the ability to understand that

corrective or ongoing maintenance should be part of its policy. You have to have regular maintenance. The Ministry must have within its planning some committee or officer who would look at these schools on an ongoing basis so that the schools would not deteriorate to that extent. If provision were made within the Ministry to look at these particular areas, we would not have had them highlighted in such a manner. It looks disgraceful and people have been talking about the disgraceful state of the schools. This should never have occurred. I am calling on the Ministry to have a system put in place whereby we can look at the conditions of the schools from time to time in order to nip these problems in the early stages.
2.20 p.m.

I know what it costs Government. I know Government will say that it does not have the money. Do you know why there is not enough money to correct these problems when they occur? It is because we have not paid attention to what should be put in place. We wait until things come to a head and then the Parent Teachers Associations and headmasters complain. This should not happen in education. In education there should be proper planning. It should demonstrate to people what is meant by careful planning.

The children of Barbados suffer as a result. Their classes are disrupted. Those children who are taking exams, especially the Common Entrance Exam, suffer when the schools have to be closed for a couple days or weeks awaiting repairs. It means that those children who are taking exams miss vital classes. This point has to be taken. Those children are operating at a disadvantage. We never hear of this at Erdiston Primary School, but we hear about it at some of the rural schools. We have to understand that all children at all schools ought to be viewed in the same light.

I am not satisfied with the temporary measures that anything further will be done to correct the vast problems. I can understand that in these times when we have to think about a limited budget that there are some areas in which we talk about cutting back. What are you going to cut back on – maintenance? Then the Government may be faced with an action because the roofs in some of these schools will sooner or later collapse. I hope not on the children, but there is every possibility of this happening.

At the same time, some of these schools, Mr. Chairman, are used as hurricane shelters. In times of hurricanes people would expect to be housed in safe surroundings. If you look, for instance, at the Wilkie Cumberbatch School, which is supposed to be registered as a hurricane shelter, almost all the louver windows located at the eastern side of the school are out.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW. I am not interested in who knocked them out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: This should not happen. I am not saying it is a result of vandalism. There is proper security and fencing there. Yet the windows are **knocked** out. Who knocked them out? Perhaps the schoolchildren by accident. If the Minister wants to know I could tell him that they drop out because of insufficient maintenance. It would need just holding a pliers and squeezing the louver blades.

These are the things we have to look at, especially, when we look at schools in terms of providing shelter in times of hurricane. We cannot allow this situation to continue.

My time is limited. I will return to highlight some of the problems and even make some suggestions as to how the Ministry could **correct** some of its problems and give the Minister some insight as to what he could do to correct some of the problems in education, in the short time that he is in the Ministry.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make some comments on a very important Head. One of the things that has **bothered** me in recent times is what I consider to be a bit of confusion in terms of how we are practising our **national** business. There was a time when certain institutions **were** recognised as institutions. I think that education is seen as a paramount sociological institution and the school is associated with that particular classification as one of the major institutions along with the church and the home. It seems to me that alongside these institutions certain pressure groups or associations would have developed in order to assist these institutions in the way how they function.

I have no difficulty with the establishment of non-governmental organisations doing their work. I recognise that their **members** and officers have to organise **means** of intervention in support of any policies or principles that they believe are correct and should be pursued at a particular time. I believe that it is to the confusion of the wider society when sometimes you cannot **make** distinctions between institutions and supporting associations that might in fact be nothing more than pressure groups that would come up from time to time restructured and reorganised to carry out certain interests. Part of the problems in a developing society, one that is relatively young and immature, has to be a problem of sharing responsibilities and understanding responsibilities, understanding who is on what turf and who is the boss of the turf and who is playing a supporting act.

It seems to me that Parent Teachers Associations have a valuable role to play in society. I believe that we have to recognise that the primary institution in that social mix which has to do with things like transferring culture from one generation to another and socialising children, has still to be the school and it has to be within the wider context of education. I believe that Parent Teachers Associations have a role to play too. I am wondering if perhaps there is not a certain amount of confusion of roles in our society, a lack of understanding of institutions and what they are designed to do. If, in fact, that is multiplied across our society we are not going to get a whole lot of problems.

I believe that it is vitally important that we understand that when you want to take a society and stand it on its head you will get multiple problems. If these problems become entrenched, the society is going through a change that will be such a massive change that turning back is going to be much more difficult than if you put a stop up front. It has to do with the way we treat our authority figures.
2.30 p.m.

These mores, customs and values are so transformed with change that you might be thinking you are living in the same country but you would only be in that country in the sense of the geographical definition and location. If you try to change all of your institutions, mores and values, you cannot then be surprised if you get a mix that is not recognisable to most of us who live in the same geographical boundaries. I believe we need to look at these things very carefully.

It is very difficult sometimes if you are courting popularity to say things to people and put positions that can be societal positions. I believe that anyone can have a certain amount of influence out there in terms of political pressure. I believe that institutions must know their roles and limitations. They also have to know very clearly when and how to seek confrontation and in which arena to seek that confrontation. It is entirely possible that institutions will be used for the advancement of individuals' own careers. There must always be a cost benefit analysis in terms of how it affects the wider society, the institutions and Barbadian life.

I want to talk too, Mr. Chairman, about the Textbook Loan Scheme. I notice that the provisions under this programme have been cut. I have always had reservations – I am frank about this – about the Textbook Loan Scheme. As a socialist, I believe that wherever possible Government should try to give an advantage to those who are naturally less advantaged. In other words, a position should not flow simply from a strict criteria, the circumstances of your birth alone and that the odds are so weighed against you sometimes Government has to come in and play a role on your behalf.

The Government has to be very selective in this area. While Government might be giving some financial support in terms of providing text books for students, I think, as an educator, that has never been the best decision. I say this because, quite frankly, I have never been able to live with a situation where a person has books during the term, you have to turn them in at the time you should be reading them during the holidays, and when you leave school these books are not your books. They go somewhere else because you have rented them. That is a false attitude to books.

I believe books should be owned primarily by the persons who use them. Of course, you get to use libraries with references and so on but I think it is still good for us who can go back and look at our 2nd and 3rd Form books who are proud to have them even if we bought them second or third hand at the time because we know that education is continuing. When we go back to these books that we read at 2nd or 3rd Forms, sometimes we are learning things that we might have passed through at that time. The opportunity of revisits sometimes can be very useful.

A culture that is based on people renting books and then turning them back in to an institution is not the best kind of culture. I believe that there is difficulty. Assistance in terms of buying books could still be done in a way to offset the difficulties that poor people have. A mechanism should be used for that. Books should be kept by the persons using them. They should be able to maintain them and have pride in maintaining them, making sure they are not dogeared and things of that sort. For those people who believe in rapid reading, I see no difficulty why people should not underline their books. If you want to read very quickly you make your major points by underlining them and coming back to them. That is not a matter of defiling any book. I think that is a technique of people under pressure having to read a lot who tend to flip through a book, make a note and come back. That should be a right. Certainly, you cannot do that with a book that is owned by the Government of the country. It should not be the thing to do. I have always felt very strongly that students should have their books.

The other difficulty with the Textbook Loan Scheme is one with curricular arrangements and the different attitudes that people might have about which books are best to transfer knowledge. There is nothing esoteric at all or too complex about understanding that at the end of it all, no matter if you read 3 or 20 textbooks, what is going to be very important is not the volume that you read but the principles that you extract from those books.

In our day when we did literature we did maybe 3 or 4 genres, a novel, drama and a mix of poetry, collecting poems and so on. By exposing yourself to these, if you read one novel and understood it and dealt with it as

a genre, then you came up against another novel, it was just a matter of collecting new information and analysing it.

I find in these **days** children are now being subjected to reading so many books as though quantity will ensure that one would understand literature. Quite frankly, literature is the flip side of language. Language is the basic theory in practice and literature, as it were, the applied language. The two of them go together. I hear people who are taught well in language but they cannot understand literature. Something is wrong in that kind of teaching because the two things are so close. It is a matter of teaching. It is not a matter of textbooks.

I think that children are exposed to too many books. I am saying this in a formal setting. All you have to do is give the children the principles. They will read any amount of books they want. They do not have to be pushed into a formal situation. I think that is pampering. It is something we have to look at. If that principle is carried through then you reduce automatically the cost of the Textbook Scheme. What do you need all of these books for all the time? In many cases the children do not get through them. You are only fooling yourself that they get through them anyhow. It is better to have 3 good books and read them 4 and 5 times each. Those persons who know literature would know the first time you might read for a story, the second time for a plot, the third time for character and the fourth time for imagery. Once you read those few books and you do them very well you are prepared to go and read anything else. You do not have to read 20 books. That is a waste of money and children's time.

We have to look at the Scheme. If this is a start by cutting down – and this is not only urged strictly by economics and structural adjustment – then I am glad that we are thinking in the right direction. Even though as a socialist I believe **people** should not have to **carry** the full force of the cost of **their** education, this is a matter that has to be looked at more from a curriculum point of view.

Mr. Chairman, I want to turn to the allocation in the Estimates for Other Institutions. I am **very** glad to see that those allocations have gone up a bit more; I am referring to institutions like the Barbados Workers' Union, and so on.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I wish to take this opportunity to educate the Honourable Member for the City on a number of things. As we speak, Mr. Chairman, we have been putting on courses in computer education at the Labour College for two consecutive weeks. The first one was looking at data basis. The second one is looking at desktop publishing programmes for trade unionists. These are in a series. We have put on about 10 over the last year.

The end result of all that is today we were able to link up the computers with computers throughout the Caribbean. Tomorrow we will be linking up the computers in Birmingham and Canada. The trade union has been able to do this with funds coming from Government partly, but primarily from the funds of its members. It is an advanced education in this country under the cutting edge of where it **should** be. Almost everybody on the staff of the Barbados Workers' Union has been trained in the use of computers. You will see, for instance, that our Public Relations Officer is getting out a lot more articles than he used to before because he can sit down now – he is the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East's friend and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South too – and produce his articles at will.

In addition to that we are moving further. The union is now training its own members. I can speak also for the National Union of Public Workers where they are doing computer training. Having trained the trainers they are now training people from departments of Government in the use of computers. To go further than that, the intention is to set **up** a computer school for the Eastern Caribbean **at** the Barbados Workers' Union Labour College. I just want to make it very clear that when subventions and **grants** come from the people of Barbados through this Parliament to these institutions, this is not a waste of time nor any friendly use of funds. It is a productive use of the funds of our country and if it **can** be done by non-governmental organizations infectively, I believe that that is the area that we have to pursue in our country.
2.40 p.m.

I go further to say, Mr. Chairman, that at this point in time the trade unions are making agreements with the Commonwealth Trade Union Council and the Canadian Labour Congress as well **as** the ILO to institute training in terms of productivity, assessments of productivity, productivity bargaining and those vital areas in the **industrial** relations culture of our country, those areas that are going to become the **norm** in industrial relations in Barbados.

I wish to hope that part of our thinking in terms of education for our country is that we do not always continue to **think** in **terms** of academic education. That has been primary and I want to **say** that we have to shift away from that. I have no problems whatsoever in recognizing that we have to move away from academic education **as** the basis of our educational system. I want that to seep in a little bit.

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

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you very much, Sir. We are still far behind time in terms of moving towards the Twenty-First Century. It is not to **blame** any **individual** or to blame any government. But the point is if we are

to make the advances, if we are to make the leap forward, we are going to have to do some radical changing in our approach to education. We have to move further from the academic into the technical and the technological and what I call into the working areas of knowledge.

I heard recently on the radio going home that there is going to be an experiment in the secondary schools in a changed curriculum. I would certainly like to hear the Minister of Education inform us a bit more about that because I am excited hearing that. I am excited hearing that the secondary schools are going to reform the curriculum in such a way that they are going to be relating more to the world of work and that they will be looking to the business sector, the commercial sector, *et cetera*, the industrial sector in terms of putting in their inputs in terms of advice. But I believe that that is something that should be dealt with not at a bureaucratic level but at the level of the country as a whole. That, in fact, there is need for discussion about moving forward on this. And that it has not to be just narrow discussion within the Ministry of Education and then we receive, at the end this information, that this is what is happening. But I believe that this is vital enough that it has to be discussed here in Parliament and that the people of the country can be sensitized through this Chamber of the thinking in terms of educational changes.

Mr. Chairman, I will come back. Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, first let me start by stating that I think we are fortunate in this Honourable Chamber, other than the two Honourable Members at the end, that all the other Members over there have at some time served in a ministerial capacity. Thus they are very cognizant of the fact that submissions are made by Ministers and we have to accept what comes out in the final document. Let us not gainsay that fact. Therefore what I am saying is that I would be the first to admit that there has been a cut. Indeed you will see that there has been a cut right through just about every set of Estimates.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I am not interested in what you are saying that somebody else said. I am telling you what I know to be a fact. It is there for you to see.

However, Sir, to the specific points. We know that we have moved down to the \$192 million as you see there, in terms of current. But the point which was made by the Honourable Member for St. James North where he mentioned his concerns about the number of dollars. I think he specifically stated that, in his estimation, there was about a 9% cut. What he is saying basically is that where there was \$151 million in 1991-92 for personal emoluments

now the figure is \$130 million. Nine per cent to me seems very close to eight per cent. And if there has been an 8% cut that in itself mathematically will tell you that without any minor changes or any other adjustments that 8% is very close to 9%. He continued and wanted to know if it related to jobs.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The revised figure, as you saw it. But I am dealing with the actual figure.

Mr. Chairman, the question asked about the St. Thomas Secondary School. I will say to you that the St. Thomas Secondary School has been put on hold. That is your answer.

The question on the Textbook Loan Scheme which has been referred to by all Members who have spoken so far. I think if you were to look at page 65 in the document in the notes, the note is very specific in terms of the dollars allocated and it states specifically that that is for assisting secondary schools.

Again if we were to go back and deal with our research and if you could be encouraged and helped, aided and abetted, by the news media who were present at Queen's College Speech Day when at that particular Speech Day I made the point that there have been requests from the Boards of Management that they be given the opportunity to manage the funds for the Textbook Loan Scheme. Therefore you will see that the figure which was \$1.6 million last year now only has the figure relating to as it says, specifically assisted private schools. The figure for the Textbook Scheme is imbedded in the transfers to the individual secondary schools. I am going to say to you that we will have to check further on that. I did not predict that one. That is not embodied in that section. As regards the transfer or transportation of pupils, there has been less. The previous amount was some \$2.6 million. It is now \$2 million. Indeed because of the number of parents who are requesting that their children go to schools closer to home we find, even before the particular cuts, that people are trying to get their children to go to schools closer to home. Therefore the amount of money we have to pay to the Transport Board is less.

The question on the UWI again raised by the Honourable Member for St. James North, I will say to you that, as the figures will show, there has been no increase in allocation and I do not think that they can anticipate an increase in allocation from Barbados for the particular campus. Indeed there is a problem in the allocation of funds to the University right across the Caribbean and indeed to all universities across the world. At the same time we must remember that we know that there has been an increase in the contract negotiated with the union and the professors at the University. There is a cost factor

added to the particular situation that we have. Somehow that difference will have to be made up. That is not my responsibility. That is not the responsibility of the Government. That is specifically the responsibility of the University.

The question of security; **the** Honourable Member said he thought that there were no plans for security. The security officers, as you rightly stated, **are** provided by the Ministry of Defence and Security. The plans in terms of the numbers and the request, I think I made a comment, a few weeks ago, that if we were to provide all of the security **guards** that are being requested for every school we would find ourselves in a debate similar to the one we had in here last week, where we would have more security guards than we have members of the Barbados Police Force.

2.50 p.m.

The Member for St. Michael South East raised the question of Parkinson and Pine Primary and maintenance. Yes, Sir, there is a problem with maintenance at the schools. There is a problem with maintenance at the school which is compounded, not only by vandalism, by stray people moving around or by the children attending the schools but by some of the same parents, whose own children are going to the particular schools, who give the theory about "this belong to we". We are saying to the parents: "You too have to share in the responsibility and accept the responsibility. It is your dollars that you are asking us to spend in repairing and fixing the schools after the vandalism".

Mr. Chairman, I am not concerned what anyone said **before**. I am stating what I know to be a fact. It is not true to say that the Ebenezer students were not in school at all. Yes they were out for a week but they were at school in the Church. Classes 3 and 4, the ones you were concerned were taking an exam.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke about the morals. Yes, I think he is right. We have to watch ourselves as well because if we send the wrong messages to the children, the children will follow and accept these as the guidelines. We cannot be saying that children should not be doing things and we at the same time are out front challenging the law and disobeying the law.

A question was raised about the Textbook Loan Scheme. It takes no magic to figure out that there is a consideration for the increase in the fees of the Textbook Loan Scheme. Let's be honest. Now, we have not **reached** that stage in terms of the school meals. The amount has not been decided upon as yet but it will be in due course.

I think that **covers** just about the points raised so far and I will come back, Mr. Chairman, to reply to any other questions.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Barbados has come to a sad past. All the things which we have seen occur in Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana and other countries where the IMF designed the Estimates as they have **these** Estimates ... This Minister is the **first** honest one to admit that ...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: ... these are IMF designed Estimates. The very thing that we have cautioned against, Mr. Chairman, time and time again. This is the worst possible time to be cutting back on social sectors like education and health and housing. These are the indicators, as soon as you see the cuts in subsidies and the cuts in social services you see the hand of the IMF.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I just want the Honourable Member to be aware that I at no point in my presentation and reply mentioned the IMF.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, I am saying it for him.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, these cuts, particularly in Education are going to be painful in the **extreme**. Don't let us be misled. As I said just now, when you see subsidies being slashed, as we saw in Agriculture, down to zero, when you see the introduction of user fees, it is ironic that the Democratic Labour Party is the party which loves to claim that it was they who introduced free education into Barbados. We are going to live to see now that the Democratic Labour Party is going to have to preside over the dismantling of **free** education in Barbados because this introduction and increase in user fees on the scale that we see, under the Head of Education, is another hallmark, is another piece of writing on the wall, which says IMF.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, these increased user fees, where there **were** user fees before, this introduction of user fees where there was none before comes in addition to taxes, much increased, levies much increased, salary cuts much increased, prices much increased. This is going to put an additional burden now on parents, many of whom find themselves unemployed. What is going to put the burden on them is that they are going to have to pay more now to the Textbook Loan Scheme. What is going to put the burden on them is that they are going to have to pay more for pupil transport. All of this is clearly indicated in these Estimates. What is going to put the burden on them, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is that in due course, as the Minister himself has indicated, maybe as soon as next week, you will find that we will be paying more for school meals.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, the way in which **the** Honourable Member is speaking, she can mislead the House in that way. There are absolutely no plans whatsoever to increase any transportation costs to school children. None whatsoever.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I invite you to look at page **63**. We are looking at **transport** of pupils. Look at the subsidy and look at the size of the cut and I invite Honourable Members to go...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No it is not showing up yet in revenue. Yes it is going to show up next week or whenever the so called Budget or the fireside chat or whatever you chose to call it comes. Don't think you will hide it this week and declare that it is not your present intention this week when you know it is likely to come next week or the week after.

The point I **am** making, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is that these increases in user fees, and not only in Education, they **are** even more savage in Health. These user fees, Mr. Chairman, Sir, **are** coming ...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. There **are** no savage **user** fees in Health, Sir. There is not a single one. We will discuss it in the other Head. The Honourable Member does not understand a single thing she reads.

Miss B. A. MILLER: These disruptive tactics will not stop me.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, there is nothing disruptive.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are not **sneaking** in Health under **Education**. The next Head you can discuss is Health, don't **get** there talking for the Press. It won't **be** that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: 360 per cent increase, Sir, can hardly ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That does not come under the Head of Education.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, with respect, this is still a **free** Chamber and our business in here is to assist within the context of the Rules, the aim is not to hobble debate. I **am being** guided by you, Sir, not by him. I cannot be told by **the** Honourable Member that I cannot mention Health in here.
3.00 p.m.

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, as I have said before in here again today, this now is the critical moment. This is mistaken and false economy. **There** is an attitude that certain areas of government and certain areas of our economy are our social sector and others are our productive sector. That is old-fashion thinking. That is passe. There is nothing more productive than the education sector. The Government fools itself when it cuts back at the very time when it needs to be **re-tooling** and retraining. Imagine, Sir, under the new technologies, there is hardly a Head that has not been cut here. I **am** relieved to **see** that one Head has not been cut dealing with technical training. But Audio Visual Aids has already been cut. This is where a lot of new technology is used and introduced. It is unbelievable this Government that likes to boast about the quality of its education and its rate of literacy would at this time be cutting back.

Mr. Chairman, we are beginning to see the thin edge of the brain drain wedge. We are beginning to see the drift away of professionals. They are drifting away from the private sector and in due course they are going to begin like elsewhere to drift away from institutions of learning and particularly the higher institutions of learning.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Words were spoken about the Textbook Loan Scheme. I heard this coming from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East **Central**. Mr. Chairman, he should know better. Of all the people in the world, he is supposed to be presiding at somewhere called a labour college, an institution of learning. He should be the last person to say what he has said about the Textbook Loan Scheme. This is the time to expand the Textbook Loan Scheme into the primary school system. A lot of Victorian nonsense! I **went** into the Ministry of Education and found that one never got a report card in the primary schools and yet parents were supposed to make educative informed choices about secondary **schools** to which their children might be **directed**.

Aside.

Miss M. A. MILLER: The Honourable Member for St. **George** South could not do everything. He was busy putting 14-year olds back in school. Fourteen year olds were put out of school by a government that was boasting to the world about free education. But this free education was always a myth. You are not going to intimidate him with that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: May I remind Honourable Members of Standing Order No. 33(6).

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. George South can speak for himself and he knows what he did in his time. I do not have to trespass on his **territory**.

Mr. Chairman, the sum total of all of this is adding up to a reality already to be seen with the naked eye in Barbados today. We are now in the process in this country of limiting the access to education to **our** young people. Already the truancy rate is up. That is another indicator which often reads IMF. Mr. Chairman, at the time when welfare services are down, not only are the children not going to school every day but you have to look behind that and ask several questions, What about all of those mothers who depended on the Welfare Service to help them with school uniforms who cannot now depend on that service? What is happening to mothers who depended on national assistance and other forms of assistance coming from the direction of welfare services to help them on a daily basis with items such as food to eat and a roof over the heads of their children so that they could be in a fit state to attend a school? All of those services, Sir, have already been cut back.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir. I will speak again. In this financial year, in which we find ourselves, these **votés** have been busted since the last calendar year 1991. Mothers already find themselves, and fathers too, in a situation where services upon which they depended to supplement either their lack of income or very meager means of income are now becoming non-existent. On top of all of that now, there is the introduction of user fees. This is a very serious matter, Mr. Chairman. You cannot look at it in isolation. I am going to revisit this at a later point during this debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the challenge of education in these times really is to prepare a society for change. Things are happening rapidly. Things are moving at almost the speed of light. Inside the education system **there** is a growing and increasing crisis as to how to adapt to the changes that are taking place. We are in a period, Sir, where the teachers are at constant war with the Government and as a result the morale is low. The Estimates really deal with figures in a particular sense but transcending the figures is the conflict inherent in the teacher-Government relationship. In other words, Sir, the teachers do not seem to be heading in the same direction as **the** Government. It does not seem to be a new phenomenon, Sir. I am not saying that. But the phenomenon is becoming more glaring as the weeks, months, and the years go by. In all of this, the whole country is now paying the price.

I agree with the honourable Member for the City when she says that this artificial distinction between productive areas of government activity and the non-productive areas is a red-herring over the whole thing. Everybody accepts now that the education of a nation is vital in the productive areas. If you do not educate your people, they cannot produce. They cannot be suited and adapted for the kinds of developments that are taking place in the world or in the community whether it is in the work place or even in general living in the community. At the heart of any true development in the society, it must be education. That artificial distinction means absolutely nothing. A lot of things are happening which are causing those of us who do not know much about education but who are intelligent observers to query. There are so many areas that need to be adjusted that one could talk for the rest of the afternoon. I will deal with a few.
3.10 p.m.

I go into the Law Courts on an almost daily basis and I am startled at the number of **people** in their teens who cannot read the oath. The oath is written up in big, bold letters on the **witness** stand, and you find children of 13 to 20 years who cannot read the oath. I depart from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central who at a professional level in education is far more competent to speak than I am. I am an amateur.

I see in the Estimates here that the Government is making provision for \$100 000 for textbooks for primary school children. I do not know if I am right in saying that there must be about 110 primary schools in Barbados and if you put \$100 000 for textbooks for primary school children you are talking about \$900 per school. There are schools with 600-700 children. We are talking about \$1.50. Whatever the arithmetic, it is a bit troublesome that the Government is in a situation where everybody who knows about these things are commenting on the high level of illiteracy among young people.

I want the Minister to tell us the reason because the advisors in the Ministry of Education would be more *au fait* with these things. It is an alarming phenomenon. How is it that every child is required to go to school up to the age of 16, yet children go through the primary system and the **secondary** system and cannot read? A lot of studies have been done in the Ministry of Education on the question of literacy. I would like the Minister when he gets around to replying to tell us about this. This is not a criticism that is directed too harshly at the Government. It will get lashes in other areas. It is a general concern of any right-thinking member of this society about where we are going.

We believe that we, on this side, have a certain experience that can be brought to bear on these things if the Government wants to collaborate. I do not share the view of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East

Central in relation to the abundance of books. I understand that he was perhaps talking about the study of English literature in a particular syllabus. Education, as he says, is a continuing thing intended to widen the horizons of the people who are being educated to acquire knowledge and to use that knowledge for their own personal development and the development of the community. There cannot be enough books. Maybe I missed something in what the Honourable Member was saying. I do not quite understand his points.

I also want to raise the question of absenteeism and truancy. About 2 years ago, I made a public statement about the high absenteeism among children in the schools and I was rewarded for my observation by a press statement issued out of the Ministry of Education saying that there was no significant increase in absenteeism among the children in the primary and secondary schools. I took my place and kept quiet. Now, I feel vindicated when I see what is going on. The Chief Education Officer has been moved to leave the cloister of his rooms at Jemmotts Lane and play policeman and run down children who are not going to school. I do not quite understand where we are going. These things are troublesome. They have not developed overnight. They have been happening a long time. I do not know why the Government felt at one stage that it was necessary to bury its head in the sand. Absenteeism has increased significantly.

I have no scientific studies and, therefore, I cannot give any figures. Moving around Barbados and, particularly, in my own constituency I can tell the Government that a lot of children are not going to school simply because their parents cannot afford to send them to school. I see a number of parents who do not have the money to buy uniforms and school lunches for their children now. Times are hard and one of the things I would have thought necessary at this particular juncture is that the Government would put more money instead of less in the national assistance programmes and the Welfare Departments to give some kind of assistance to the people at the lowest level of the economic ladder who are struggling to eat at this particular time. It is necessary that those people be given some kind of assistance. In other words, the quarrel with the Estimates is not so much that there are cuts but that the Government has not come up with any creative and intelligent cutting. It cannot cut welfare services and have 60 000 people out there struggling to go to school and when they get to schools, struggling to get something to eat. I want to hear something about these things. As I said these things are troubling me.

The Textbook Loan Scheme. As I mentioned, the Government is going to raise the revenue from \$350 000 in the last financial year to \$1 450 000, which means that it is increasing the revenue from the Textbook Loan Scheme by 400%. I would like the Minister not to be coy and play cute and hold back the information. One of the

problems is that the people of Barbados during this past year have not been told a lot of things. There are intelligent people in this country and if you prepare them with information they will be able to make personal adjustments to get ready for what is coming. Why is it that the Minister on March 24 hinted to us that the Textbook Loan Scheme fees will go up and cannot tell us? It really amazes me. I am sure that the Ministry of Education has those figures already.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member as I stated in my last presentation is totally aware of the procedure. There has not been a decision taken as yet.

Mr. L. R. TULL: What are the fees now - \$30? The suggestion to me if these figures are correct is that they will go to about \$80 for the rental of textbooks. A lot of children will just not get textbooks. They cannot afford them. I do not see anywhere else in the Estimates - I know that we are just dealing with Education but these things are interlocking - any provision for the people who will suffer as a result of these new measures. These things are troubling.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has 2 minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I want to mention very quickly 1 or 2 other things that we cannot allow to pass without comment. I am worried about the St. George Secondary School. The St. George Secondary School has been a cauldron of disorder, discontent and bitterness and it now has erupted into violence. The St. George Secondary School, with which I am very familiar, is not a school in the classic sense of the word. It is the closest thing to a blackboard jungle that I have seen in Barbados. I am not saying that just to knock it. Things are bad there. We keep hearing of the problems in relation to pornography, sexual encounters...
3.20 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am not talking about the pornography case. I am talking about all the sex cases that end up in the Magistrates Court at Boarded Hall. I am talking about the guns, knives and collins that are almost daily in use at St. George's Secondary School. I am talking about the hostility between the parents and the staff. I am talking about the hostility between the parents and the Board. I am talking about the hostility of the support staff with the teaching staff of the school. Things are bad. I am not saying this to chronicle all the ills of St. George Secondary School.

Many of the children that go to St. George Secondary School are the children of constituents. Therefore, I am concerned about it. I have not seen any signs that the

Ministry of Education has taken that school in hand and held it by the scruff of the neck and said they are going to do something about it. As a matter of fact, we have reached the stage where the St. George Secondary School should, in my view, be closed and started fresh. I believe something **as** radical **as** that should be done. When I say "closed" I do not mean closed for a month or a term. Start the school **all** over **after** a period of time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I really find a little difficulty in **understanding** the line which is being taken by some of the Honourable Members on the other side in light of the position which the Minister has outlined. The Minister has **stated** **very** clearly that there have been cuts. He has indicated what everybody knows, since it is no secret. It is not something that happened suddenly that people were not expecting. There have been cuts in the programmes.

If we look at page 13, so we will not have this repetition again, where the statement is of current expenditure for the 10-year period, 1981-1991, for any one of the Honourable Members who have spoken, this would assist them in recognising that in 1981-82, 1982-83 when they had the same difficulty of a lack of foreign exchange **among** other things, they **took** the steps that were necessary to curtail expenditure in those areas that could withstand it. **One** does not have to be a Solomon to be able to foil what that. When I hear the Honourable Members saying that persons could not go to school because they did not have any funding, one **could** see in one of the votes that would provide the welfare for school children that the Honourable Member is talking about shows that between 1981 and 1984/85 the figures read \$29 million, \$21 million, \$11 million and \$14 million. That is the progression. It started at \$29 million and went down to \$21 million. Then it **was** cut in half to \$11 million. Then it goes to \$14 million. Sir, one does not wish to be invidious in these matters but that is the nature of the beast. **When** you have to make these adjustments, you have to find ways in which to make them.

I really rose to put on the record something that disturbs me as a **person** in this society. I looked in the newspapers this morning and saw some school children in uniform with placards. Sir, some time ago, Your Honour may remember that I had to speak about the sick-out and I said that it was immoral in a society for people to be **sicking** out. I spoke then. I know there were a lot of people who were critical because I said what I had to say. It is morally wrong for any agency in Barbados that is headed by right-thinking people to use school children for the particular purpose of argument between adults. If the PTA, or any PTA in Barbados, has a problem with the Principal or the School Board, it is for the PTAs, either nationally or locally, to iron out their problems with the school Board.

I wonder if there is not a **case** for the Director of Public Prosecutions to put these people before the Courts for corrupting the morals of minors. When you take minors and give them **placards** and teach them **to** be out there...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: At Ebenezer School, the children did not have any placards.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I **am** not cussing the people. If that is cussing the people, I **am** cussing the people. If I have to cuss the people to tell them what is moral in this country let me cuss them in peace. It is about time somebody cussed the people if that is what it is. You would tell me now because I am a politician every time I see something that is wrong I have to bow and say "Yes, Sir, No, Sir, three bags full." Can I not have a moral position in this country? Put it in the paper that I cussed the people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: **When** the Honourable Members on that side want to play holier than **thou**, I am not discussing the cuts. We can discuss the cuts **anytime**. In the next Head you have an opportunity to discuss the cuts in my Ministry. I have no problem with that. I am discussing the school children in this country being used by adults for their own purposes.

You think the school children walk and find dope in the streets? It is adults that give them dope. It is adults that keep using the school children. They go around the schools and corrupt the morals of the minors. We, the big people, continue to look the other way. We would not lock up people that want locking up for interfering with children. We have people who abuse school children in this country and we look the other way. This society has been doing that for years and you are telling me that I am cussing the people? I want to cuss all of them, every single one of those miscreants that misuse the children in this country, I want to cuss them.

You have no idea when you look around and see what is happening to **our** children, it is the big people who are corrupting them. The children are not born corrupt. If you take placards and put them in the hands of the children you could bring the whole of St. George against me now. I have some in my constituency that go there, so find out who they are, go and tell the parents that the Minister of Health got in the House of Assembly and cursed them. Tell them I say so. I am going to say it because it is morally wrong for us to have school children who should be in school with placards. The newspapers..

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: How do you mean what it has to do with the Head? It has to do with the children not going to school. They cannot be out picketing and in school **too**. We **are talking** about **truancy**. That is organised truancy by a **PTA**. What **kind** of PTA organises truancy? They want locking up. I know the Honourable Member. On these matters we do not have any divide. It is only certain people...
3.30 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot keep talking about role models and the politicians not taking any lead in these matters. We cannot do it, constantly talk about role model this and role model that. What is it the priest said the other day? That the leaders are failing the people. I read in the newspapers, Sir, where the priest said that the leaders are failing the people.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We know that the priests are failing the people, if not we would not have this problem. **You** can say that I **am** "cussing" the priests too. I do not mind what you all say. Not the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas understands. I am saying, Sir, that in this question of school children with placards it is not the first **time**. I was going on to say that the press... I am not going to say that the press is irresponsible to print the story because in a sense the people who work in the press do their job, and if children are picketing, that is a story.

But I think the editor, the person who is editing should perhaps give some consideration to whether they are going to give that story prominence with the children and the placards, the children who are smiling. Because the children do not know and are not expected to understand that something is happening to them. Now subsequently those children get into secondary school and they decide that they do not want to do something they are told to do and they decide that they are going to picket, how can you say of those same children that they are wrong? They are being taught now by the – hear the name of it, Sir – Parent Teacher Association. Parent and teacher, that combination is the combination that is supposed to take the child from its birth all the way through to its maturity. And if the Parent Teacher Association because they have some row with a headmaster is going to be leading in that direction then I say they should rethink their position. That is without prejudice to the issue which they have **between** them and the headmaster.

Headmasters and headmistresses must learn how to get along with the Parent Teacher Associations. There should be as little confrontation as possible. They have to **learn** to work out the skills that are necessary for living and

the two organizations must learn to work together. The Ministry of Education no doubt must have some mechanism in place to assist headmasters and headmistresses in training to allow them to understand that public relations form part of being the manager of a school. And that it is not the same as it used to be when the respect for a headmaster inhered in the **post** of headmaster. These days you have to **earn** it. Sometimes you have to go out of your way to get it. I **am** not discussing more of that because these are matters which form part of the issues of the day for us, as adults.

I am dealing with those small infelicities which one can see coming into the society as they affect various institutions. The sick-out is my favourite example. But the children on the picket line is something which we cannot afford. This society cannot afford to have school children on the picket line. The concept of saying, "Yes please, ma'am", "No please, Sir" are concepts that are not now known as much as they used to be when we were children. They are concepts which need to be re-introduced into the schools, into the system. There is **no** reason why – my colleagues know that I feel very strongly that school boards should come from the neighbourhoods where the schools are located. As much as it is possible for that to be a principle, that is something I believe in because areas like vandalism, pride in the school and the way people behave in the environment around the school are **matters** in which I believe the people who belong to the neighbourhood will take a greater interest than someone who comes to the neighbourhood and moves away.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I think that a judicious application of the tamarind rod to the tenderest aspects of the person can assist toward the proper...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ... as the Honourable Member's father did at Wesley Hall "College". But the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and I will have to agree as well that we also know some people who used to glory in the title of **teacher** who took the opportunity to beat out their difficulties on somebody's tail. We know that those persons used to abuse **children** also. We did not know it as abuse then. We knew that there was something inherently wrong with some of those bad beat men who were also teachers. Some of them may have contributed to the change which came about in the society generally about not flogging. Because if you had to choose between not flogging at all and some of those onslaughts that we witnessed...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in two minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: W. A. Farmer, the Headmaster at Lodge School, Sir, a week before he died he beat the whole 3B including me for the midpoint **theorem**. The next week he died from a heart attack.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the moral of that story is if you have a theorem that the boys cannot understand, leave it alone.

Anyhow, Sir, I felt that it was necessary - the Minister will defend his Head - to put on the record my very personal view about this matter of child or children abuse. I hope that it is taken in the spirit in which it is offered. But if it is not, even so, that is how I feel, Sir, and I wanted to put it on the record.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am not at all surprised to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael West speaking in the way he did. I have come to understand that, where there is no proper defence to proper argument, fulmination in that form is a substitute. It is a very reactionary position that **has** been taken and I am a little sorry that it had to come at this time. Nobody on this side or any right thinking **person** in Barbados can be happy about the chaos that is St. George Secondary. But equally nobody can think that the answer to **the** question at St. George Secondary is to make a lot of emotive and inflammatory statements and to promote adversarial positions.

I suspect that the wrong in relation to St. George Secondary School lies in more than one corporate breast. That it is not the teachers only or the children only or the **parents** only or any particular group. Therefore it is very fatuous to say that the answer is simply that children had no right being out there with posters, berate them and the Parent Teacher Association and that is the end of the **day**.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, if the Honourable Member would give way, Sir. I never said it was the answer to anything. I never berated anybody, neither the children nor the parents. I said that it is morally wrong - those are my words - for the parents to have the children on the picket line.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I do not know why the Honourable Member interrupted. Anybody who heard the Honourable Member carrying on can be in no doubt as to how strongly he held a position against the Parent Teacher Association. He used some very strong language and he invited all and sundry to hearken to his word. I do not see what is the problem. I am sorry if I misrepresented you but my attention was really piqued by what was said. I am going to move on from there, Sir.

I want to leavd word with the Minister of Education who is the parliamentary representative for the constituency in which the school falls. He has a double responsibility to advise people like the Honourable Member for St. Michael West that the persons who form the Board of the St. George Secondary are people from the area.

I believe that, apart from the Education Officer in the Ministry, the other persons, and if pushed I will **call** their names, are people from St. George and the surrounding area who have an **interest** in the integrity of that school. If we are going to get things straight, we must get them straight. But the problem at St. George's Secondary has its origins in something more than happened last year or the year before. I do not want to get into all that at this point, time does not allow it. But I can only say, in one last final statement in relation to St. George Secondary, that the situation is very, very bad.

3.40 p.m.

I will move on, Sir. The School Meals Department. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central will get up and help us with the School Meals **Department**. People have been sent home from the School Meals Department as recently as last Friday and people are going home all the time. I see under Other Personal Emoluments, a considerable cut. I see, one under the School Meals Department and I want to mention it, Sir, because the Government gave the **'impression** that the layoffs had almost concluded, that when they had put a programme in place, this programme with the IMF and so on, that after that was done and people were made to feel some relief, the worst was over, the job layoffs had come to an end. Now we have seen that the provision in the Estimates under Education ...

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order, Sir. I was not aware if the Honourable Member had consulted the changes because the original figure was \$15 253 900 and is now \$15 160 137, as per changes in amendment No. 5, circulated by the Clerk of the House.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am grateful to the Minister, Mr. Chairman. They are confusing me with these regular bits of paper they are passing around. I looked at the Estimates here' as printed and I have not really seen any new **amendments** in relation to the Ministry of Education. My contention is based only on the Estimates which are before me. If it means that the Minister is giving an undertaking that the layoffs in the Ministry of Education have now ended I would like him to state it in **clear** and unequivocal terms. That is all I am talking about.

We know that several **other** teachers have been sidelined. We know that a number of school meals workers and other support staff in the schools have been sidelined. If the Minister will give the undertaking now that that reign of terror is over I will be glad to take my seat. All of

these things tie in. The people who are being sent home are the same ones who have children to send to school. That is one of the problems. They are the ones who have children to send to school and when their employment is unceremoniously ended in the way that the Government has been dealing with it, it ripples right through the school system and then it ripples right through the society.

Everybody in Barbados, Sir, is concerned about the amount of havoc being wrought on this society by children of school age. Since a lot of the havoc is being wrought during the day, they are obviously not going to school. The country is in a state of fear because school age offenders, children of school age, are the ones who are holding this country in a state of fear. It is in the interest of all of us to make sure that those children are brought and kept within the school system in terms of the Education Act which makes provision for their compulsory attendance at school.

Of all the talk and bluster that I have heard, I have not heard the Ministry put one single parent before the Law Courts for keeping those children out of school. It makes you think they are only playing a game. They are getting good shots on video shown on TV at night but nothing more. I have not seen a single parent put before the courts.

I remember when I was in the Ministry of Education, but that is a decade ago, so you can update me because I don't remember much, there were probably 4 School Attendance Officers for 65 000 children, spread over 138 schools. Now that is playing at the problem. I understand it is no better now that there are only 3. At a time when children have stopped going to school they only have 3. Certainly some of those 400 teachers who were laid off, few of them, without any major cost on the revenue, could help in what is a very serious problem. The investment in those other school attendance officers can represent a tremendous saving to Barbados, because if they can contain the riot going on out there they are saving a lot of money.

I don't want to see the education system, simply in terms of the chaos at one school, of the hostility between various sectors of society in the education system and of the policing of school children. I want to bring us right back to what our education system at the moment portends. I also want to understand from the Government what plans they have. The Estimates are too bald a document to give us any clear pointers as to how the educational system is going to move this country in tandem with the structural changes that are being put in place by the Government. They cannot operate as two separate entities.

I have often said that one of the problems with the educators is that while their jobs are to prepare the society for change, to educate people for change, they themselves are hostile to change in the educational system. They are the greatest reactionaries. It is difficult to get people

engaged in the education industry to understand that changes have to be made and made often.

I have been listening to one of my friends recently, harping back to the days when he was going to school and what a teacher did then just as I am hearing the Honourable Member for St. Michael West talking about what happened when he went to Wesley Hall. He is talking about light years away. A head teacher could put a strap on the Honourable Member well knowing that the Honourable Member would not have pulled a knife on him. We are talking about a different education ethos. Things are different in the class room. The relationship between teachers and pupils cannot be compared with something 30 and 40 years ago ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member has 2 minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: ... and those persons who, in their ignorance of what is happening, get up and glibly make these facile statements about 'it happened in my time, therefore it can happen now' are showing a tremendous lack of understanding and appreciation of what has gone on since then. It is a different situation altogether. I will stop at this stage, Mr. Chairman.
3.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry the Honourable Member ended on that note because it is a cause of concern for me. Describing a situation of change but then leaving one to presume or assume that change is irreversible or cannot be controlled is a very serious thing. To say that the *status quo* today is different from what it was 20 years, that is a fact. That is describing situation. But we need to ask ourselves if this *status quo* today has to remain as it is, whether or not it can be changed and reverted to some other time that it was in the past, and whether effort should be taken to ensure that this change is brought about. I think this is what the discussion has to be. Yes, we recognise that children today are a bit different from how we were in our days. We recognise that there are several inferences that led there. But if we do not believe in social engineering and we do not believe that these things can be changed, then I am saying that we are surrendering to forces that should not be considered so major that we cannot deal with them. That is critical.

A society has to have a vision for itself and it has to be able to control that vision to some extent. I am saying that the provision for schooling is eventually going to be the vision for the entire country. We have to be very clear about that. There is no way that you can look at what is happening in the schools today and not see the work force of tomorrow for instance. If you allow children to come to school at anytime of the day, those will be workers who

will be doing the same thing down the road. If you believe that children can stay away from school as they like and then when they get into the work force they are going to come out and work, you are wrong. If you believe that children think that the problems between the teachers and their parents can be handled by their marching with placards and do not expect that they are going into a work force that is so militant that they are going to strike first and then ask questions afterwards, you are wrong again. One of the major problems that will be facing us in the future is the problem of productivity and we have to be thinking about it in the schools. That is the first thing we have to look at.

I want to make this point very clearly. Because when I talk about the Textbook Scheme and getting back to my friend, Honourable Member for St. George South, I make a complete distinction between a textbook and a book. A text is that marvellous fabrication that has brainwashed us and made us what we are. But you went to school and they gave you something called a textbook, Chapter 1 to 12, and whatever was found in Chapter 1 to 12 determined what knowledge meant. This was a package that we used – one in English, one in history, and one in geography. That to some extent made us creatures that are slaves of a textbook and, as one gets older, one realises the tyranny of that. First of all, you have very little control over the relevance of the textbook you were using and therefore the information therein. Secondly, knowledge changes so rapidly that a textbook can be dated in a very short period of time. When we thought some textbooks that we used at school in chemistry, physics, and so on contained immutable laws, the new textbooks will tell you that most of that is foolishness. So you cannot even educate your children now. Because what we thought were the laws of physics and chemistry that would not be changed, in a short period of time of 10 years a new textbook will give you something else. In economics, a lot of the textbooks are being scrapped. Again, textbooks were coming from a particular school of thought. If you came up under a textbook that was pushed by the monetarist, it would be different from one that was Keynesian. But the point is, if you were trapped into that textbook, there-on-after you were trapped into a particular mode of thinking and so on.

I am saying that we have to be careful about spending money on text. I am not talking about general reading because people should read. They have the libraries. They should be up to date. The library should be catholic, that once you have a text that gives you some kind of basic understanding, you should go and read whatever you like. But I am talking about Government's responsibility in terms of widening that basic education of how much money it can really productively spend on buying up other people's literature and information. Remember, these texts are not produced largely by Caribbean people or with Caribbean people in mind. We are moving in that direction now. Basically, we are talking about an industry where

Barbadians will buy as much of that literature as possible. Sell it to them. If you have somebody in the purchasing area of Government who likes buying books, some person out there will be willing to sell to you and some agent from some book store will sell you as much as you want. That is their livelihood.

I am saying that we have a responsibility in terms of how we spend money to make sure that we get the best out of it. But I will not disagree with my colleague and friend from St. George South: Yes, a lot of reading should be done. I am just looking at the Textbook Scheme and to express the view again that I think school children should be encouraged about ownership of books. If that is a burden on the parents, then Government should look at a different scheme of easing that burden. But the question of availability of books, I will stand on that. I believe that it was a bad scheme when it was conceptualized and I believe it is time for changing it.

Now the Honourable Member for St. Michael West made the point about value systems and so on as vital in the school system from pre-primary right through. I believe strongly that the social values have been neglected and that we need to get back into putting modules of certain things in the education system and a module that looks at values and attitudes whether it comes out of religious knowledge or whatever. Put them together so that they can go right through the school system. It is vitally important that part of our education not be neglected. Barbadians have always prided themselves on the cognitive area of human development. A Bajan would say that he knows a lot and that is supposed to make you a good person. If you have a memory and you can recite facts from left, right, and centre, you are supposed to be bright in Barbados. The questions of attitudes and values or even analysis is considered to be secondary. This emphasis on cognitive accumulation of information and so on. If this person has 10 subjects, so the person must be bright as anybody who has five. In fact, he is twice or three times as bright. He has 10 subjects and someone else has five. We know that does not work out. We know students who went to school and did not get subjects, but at 16 they went into apprenticeship at their parents' place and ended up taking over the shop and doing extremely well. We have to revise our attitudes and values and this has to do with education. It cannot be done by any other institution but the educational institutions.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I am not talking about any cuts in this Estimates debate at all, I cannot afford to talk about cuts in this Estimates debate. But what I am saying to you is that if you cut in terms of volume money, you have to make up in terms of quality product. I am not talking cuts because that is the order of the day throughout.

Let me just go back to attitudes and values. When the Honourable Member for St. Michael West was talking about those people who were marching with the school children and so on, somebody asked if we were cussing the people. We have sacred cows in Barbados. One is the voter. You cannot tell the voter anything. So "*Gutterperk*" can talk nonsense but, if you feel that programme is not relevant to a country like ours, that will make you unpopular with the voter. That is one of the sacred cows. A sacred cow is a priest that can get on a platform and talk about people wearing two hats if you are a trade unionist. But the same priest will wear 3 halos, he will wear the horns of the Minotaur, and the serpentine locks of Medusa. We recognise there are certain values.

Mr. Chairman, I will come back to the topic that we are discussing and the topic is the importance of certain modules to be injected into education. One of the modules I want to see injected is the module that relates to productivity. I hope that some of the money which has been increased by \$163 000 and granted to other institutions will be put aside for BIMAP, the BWU Labour College, the Training Centre and the NUPW Academy to institute training on productivity in this country, starting at the level of round tables and symposiums to sensitise the people at the top, the business people who really need some attitudinal changes, the technocrats in Government and the trade unionists. We have to get this money and put them together at round tables. We can get expert assistance from outside because we have to defer to the fact that in Barbados we cannot do everything. I am not one of those persons who believes that you cannot bring in outside help in areas of expertise where we might be lacking.
4.00 p.m.

I believe we have to get together in a tripartite forum and discuss productivity at different levels. One level is that of sensitising. There is a need for it throughout the country. The second level is the technical level of measuring productivity and the third is the level of implementation in terms of what we have to do to make a turn around in this country. If that extra money is being put for that purpose I can only extend the wish and the hope that the social partners will get together and that they will move forward in Barbados right away.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I note that the vote under this Head has gone up by \$163 000. I do not know where it is going.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I am saying that if the money is there that that is a good way to use it. We will continue to

do what we have been doing, but this is a national effort now and there should be national funding.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Right. We want a piece more of the grant, if it is available, but not to use it in any particular normal programme. This national programme of productivity has to be started. There is a programme in Oslo this year where a productivity round table is being conducted. Barbadians have to understand that if the first world is moving ahead in these areas in terms of total quality and management, we cannot stand back. We are moving into Europe in 1992-93 and all sorts of changes in the world market. We are not going to be led in, held by the hand and taken into this new situation. We have to use education as an area that will prepare us for tomorrow. It is going to be central to whatever we do.

Let us remember that the majority of the people who lead Barbados are in their 50s and are of the generation that received education in the 1950's. People of the chronological age of 50 are leading Barbados into the 21st century. Most of us graduated in the 1950's and 1960's. We have to make that leap and understand that even at our level of leadership we have to make a quantum change otherwise we will not be able to translate it to the younger generation. We need not be mired down in the disciplines of law and economics. Do not let them be a drag on where we have to go in the future. We have to be able to make radical and rapid changes if we are to move forward. That can come by introducing modules of productivity in our schools. Otherwise, only those who specialise in economics and accounts will be exposed to these things. Every school child has to be exposed to that kind of module.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I never cease to marvel at the facility of the Honourable Member who just sat down and his colleague who is not with us this week, at their ability to philosophise and make platitudinous statements with the greatest aplomb and equanimity in this Honourable Chamber, and at a time when we need to get down into the nitty-gritty and brass tacks and deal with the fundamentals of these Estimates in relation to education.

My heart bleeds for the Honourable Minister of Education, a decent gentleman, affable, committed but treated very badly by the Minister of Finance in these Estimates, cut up, "licked-up" and cut back. Can you believe that at a time when we should be planning the expansion of the Polytechnic to provide training facilities for all these people whom you are now uncaringly sending home and the 4 000 students that are coming out in the summer, there is for capital development at the Polytechnic \$50 000? Fifty thousand dollars under 623, Structures, page 59, for development at the Polytechnic. I sit here today and hear the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central begging...

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order. Under the Polytechnic, 623, Structures, that amount has to do with the repair and the maintenance of buildings.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMOYS: You have just let me down by your intervention. Keep your mouth shut. I am on your side.

Fifty thousand dollars for capital and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East **Central** is boasting that the Prime Minister can give his union and ~~the~~ other unions and organisations \$1 163 000. To wear what? Three different types of hats, according to Rev. Fenty? As you cut the Polytechnic and reduce educational facilities you are giving the unionists and their cohorts \$1 million.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am on the workers' side. In the context of these Estimates and in the context of current conditions in Barbados where the members of the unions are thoroughly dissatisfied with the performance of the unionists, the Prime Minister, for your behaviour last October, rewards you with an increase from \$1 million last year to \$1 163 000.

Look at what is happening at the Polytechnic:

In 1985, the number of applicants - 1 400, the number accepted - 392.

In 1986, the number of applicants - 2 641, the number accepted - 366.

In 1987, the number of applicants - 2 754, the number accepted - 379.

In 1988, the number of applicants - 2 061, the number accepted - 348.

Now, on those figures, the case for the expansion of the Polytechnic facilities is beyond argument. You can only find places for 350 on the average in a year and there is a demand for 2 500 places on the average.

For the sake of completeness, my friends are giving me 1990.

In 1990, the number of applicants - 1 838. Do you know what happened then? Do you know why they came down from 2 061 to 1 838? They got fed up with the Democratic Labour Party. They are applying for places and cannot get in so the numbers start to drop. In 1991 they were fed up with people like Taitt.
4.10 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The differential between the 2 500

and 300 that were accepted in 1985 was much larger in 1985 when the Labour Party was in power than it is in 1990.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Answer this. In 1991, 1 644 applied, 367 found places. We started with 1 400 in 1985. It is clear from these figures over a period of 6 years...

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order, Sir. Since the Honourable Member seems to be in possession of information I would like him to say to us how many of those people were eligible to apply in the first place or just submitted an application?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: These are the Estimates of Expenditure. The role and function of the Opposition is to scrutinise Government's expenditure. The role and function of the Front Bench is to answer the details of that expenditure.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not in government. You are in government. I tell you do not get into it. I am easing you. I am dealing with the Minister of Finance who is doling out this money and keeps giving the Union. He gave the Union \$1 million last year, this year it is \$1 163 000 and is only giving you \$50 000 this year. To do what?

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of elucidation, Sir, if the Honourable Member will give way. The \$1 163 000 goes to the Barbados Employers' Confederation but it is all right with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. I heard you. It goes to **BIMAP**. That is all right with him. It goes to the Girls' Industrial Union. It is still all right with him. It goes to the Extra Mural Department. It is all right with him. It goes to the Astronomical Society. The only problem he has is when it goes to the Barbados Workers' Union or the National Union of Public Workers. That is his problem.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You all will never hear. You walk straight into a **trap** that I set for you because I knew ~~tha'~~ you were going to say that. Mr. Chairman, I want ~~the~~ Honourable Minister of Education to tell this Honourable Committee how much money is going to be given out of the \$1 163 000 to the BWU Labour College, the Extra-Mural Department, the Astronomical Society - this is an astronomical amount of money you are giving - the Girls' Industrial Union, NUPW and all the other organisations mentioned opposite page 62. I want to know the breakdown? Look at page 62 carefully, Sir. You will see that there were adjustments made during the year 1991-92 throughout the spectrum of government departments except these special institutions. Now, Sir, I ask the Minister for that information. I know he will give me.

I also wish to deal with another matter. Other Honourable Members can take up the theme that I have started with, if they feel like, and develop it. On page 63 I see under Sub-programme 2, \$2 million – Transport of Pupils. Who is going to transport these pupils?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was not here if the Honourable Minister answered it. He did not answer what I am going to put to him now. He cannot anticipate me. I come different from the others. I understand the Transport Board is to be privatised. The numbers at the Transport Board are to be reduced from 1 400 to 800 under the dictation of the IMF. I am telling the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. One thousand eight hundred went home on March 18. Another 410 are to go. In pursuance of that decision to send home the 410 who will not be able to drive these buses and transport these children, on March 20, 1992, the Personnel Officer at the Transport Board sent out this letter to the employees.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am dealing with the Transport of Pupils. It is Subhead 2. The letter reads:-

"Dear Employees:

As you are aware, the current economic and financial situation has necessitated..."

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order. There is a substantive Head dealing with Transportation. He is dealing with transport generally. He is not dealing with the transportation of any child or school child, or old person. This is inappropriate, Sir, because there is a Head dealing with this particular matter. There is a Head there. If you want it, stop this and let us get on to that. It is not proper to deal with that under this Head, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir. I made a submission for your ruling.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My ruling obviously is that the Honourable Member will not be able to proceed under the head of general transportation. I did hear an introduction of transport of school children. My position was to wait and see how it would have been developed. The Honourable Member obviously knows he cannot go down that road.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understood the Honourable Member to have made a point on transport of pupils but in

terms of the general transport system you cannot go down that road.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If you recall, I was asking the question how these pupils are to be transported if it is correct that there will be a privatisation of the Transport Board and that so many conductors and drivers will not be available to transport the pupils?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Having asked that question, you cannot go on to develop a speech out of the general transport.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. You have to allow me a little time to develop the speech.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I honestly think that you have related to the point. If the Minister would respond...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I was trying by hard documentary evidence to support my...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of privilege. Why is the Opposition having 11 seats over there? This is serious.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, all I am reading is the documentary evidence to support my contention to show that there will be a reduced capacity in the Transport Board to transport these pupils.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You may read it, but if I consider it not related I am not going to accept it.
4.20 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, what I was saying is that there is now a reduced capacity in the Transport Board to transport the students...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member would give way. The position is that I cannot speak here and hear what I am saying. I can hear you very clearly from out there. If Honourable Members are having a problem then it has to be with the operator.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: As you are aware, Sir, the current economic and financial situation has necessitated the restructuring of the Board.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member has something which he wants to read into the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He is not going to read anything that is not relevant into the record. We cannot understand what the Chairman is saying. Having seen the document I deem it not relevant to the Head on Education.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Alright, Sir, you deem it not relevant. Now, Sir,...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me say that I am going to give you about 2 minutes for injury time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I never flout your authority, Sir. You have to give me more than that. They have taken up 5 minutes of my time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. You have sprung over time at the moment.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I want to say something about Coleridge-Parry, Sir. They want to hear about Coleridge-Parry. I have been very restrained, in the last year, not to embarrass the educational system in a general way in this country. My patience is running out though because the Ministry of Education, I said the Ministry, has been - Sir, would you allow the word pussyfooting? -

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...pussyfooting over the necessity to do something to stop the impasse that there is at Coleridge and Parry. I only warn the Ministry that there is something called the Administrative Justice Act that enables ...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: - I do not have any interest because I am not in court with anything - ...a citizen to challenge both the statutory as well as the non-statutory exercise of discretion or duties. I only warn them. I have spoken to the Minister today and I have his assurances confidentially that something will be done. I trust him. I trust the Minister to honour the commitment that we exchanged today. I am not saying anything more on that. I am going to give that a month to sort itself out if not we are going to do battle.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member will know that if I give him confidential information and he repeats it, it cannot be confidential now. But I did give him some assurances.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I respect that confidence and I am not disclosing it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I heard that but your time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I expect that as we exchange certain ideas the Honourable Minister would act. That is how he has behaved towards me in the past and I have no quarrel.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On me, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have had injury time already. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, there are a few points I want to raise and most of them relate to contributions made by some Honourable Members during the course of this debate. I want to state my position abundantly clearly. I am not and I do not want to be accused of associating myself with remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. Earlier he spoke in critical terms about the role or the position taken by school children who were protesting and parents. I understand fully what the Honourable Member said.

But I want to state quite clearly that Government must not be so insensitive and must understand that whenever and wherever there are protests people have reasons for protesting. It is Government's duty to investigate because...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, my point was not that there must not be protests. I did not in any way suggest that there should not be protests. My only concern was the fact that they were using the children as a vehicle for their protests. That is all.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I take the point. That is why I am very careful to put my position. Because the children who attend the St. George Secondary School are all over the ages of 12. They are at secondary level and they should be able to think for themselves. I do not think that if they have a grouse that they should be discouraged so long as they do not behave in what we call a very disorderly manner.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member make his contribution uninterrupted, please.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: There is no proof that parents have encouraged children into protesting. What I want this Government to understand quite clearly is that all is not well in the field of education. You had, earlier, protests occurring up at Ebenezer, St. Philip. They were juniors. They were children of primary age and they were protesting as well. The priest protested. The parents protested.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, if the Honourable Member would give way. I was careful to point out that at Ebenezer it was the parents who protested. I have no quarrel with that. If I had opened the paper and seen the parents at the St. George School protesting, I would have had no quarrel with that. That is their democratic right. I want the Honourable Member to understand where I stand which was that they must not use the children with placards. That is all. Nothing more.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Honourable Member is misleading this House because I know of the situation where there were children and parents standing outside Ebenezer School, both the children and the parents. Do not say it was the parents alone. The children were outside, and that is what has happened on that occasion.

I want the Ministry of Education to understand that this country has seen a lot of protests against a number of things. That tells us that something is really wrong.

I want to turn to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central who said that he was happy to see the vote for Other Institutions. It comes under subprogram 4. It provides for subscriptions or subventions to, among other institutions, the Barbados Labour College and the NUPW. I am surprised to hear this statement coming from the Honourable Member because it is clear to me looking at the Estimates between 1990 and 1991, there was a figure of \$1.7 million, \$1.722804 million that was allocated to this particular Head. Now we see actual expenditure. It means that during that financial year a sum of \$1.7 million was spent. What I am saying is that I am aware that in 1991 there was \$1 million allocated. You will see, that if there is \$1.1 million allocated in the financial year 1992-93 that there is a substantial drop. I think the Honourable Member...

4.30 p.m.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Sir, on a point of order, the Honourable Member was a head teacher. He knows how to deal with figures. He knows that when you get into one year sometimes you have to overlap. The Honourable Member served as a Minister so he knows that if, in one year, you have to pay something which was a carry over from the previous year then the figure is going to be higher.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member cannot teach me anything. It was money which was actually spent during that year whether it came over or not. If he took some from last year and put it in this year and he took some from this year and carried over to next year the actual expenditure remains the same.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am sure the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was happy to see that, as it appears from these Estimates, additional funds will be made available to the Barbados Workers Union. I have no quarrel with that because it is consistent with the policy that the Barbados Labour Party and I believe in.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I never said that any additional money was going to the Barbados Workers Union. An additional \$163 000 is going to those institutions, I don't know how it is going to be distributed. That is all I am saying.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Sir, the impression given is that they will get some money. I am saying that, at a time like this, when we are talking about a structural adjustment programme, lots of people have been laid off – a lot of people who are members of the Barbados Workers Union. The Barbados Workers Union, like the NUPW and other unions, should be asking Government for a substantial increase so that they could provide some of the training to retool and retrain people who have been severed. That is the point I want to make. It is not sufficient to look at this.

The National Union of Public Workers has embarked on a programme of retraining people. I feel strongly that they should be encouraged with this programme and more money should be provided structurally for the grants to be given to them to carry out this exercise. I feel very strongly about this. We are talking about a structural adjustment programme and we are talking about education. What we should be concentrating on at this point in time is how best we can educate our people to tackle a structural adjustment programme. I will say that one of the areas which we have to look at in order to accomplish this is to make funds available for training and since the Trade Union movement, as well as the Employers Confederation, have expressed interest they should be given grants which would allow them to carry out the training programme that would assist in training people to adjust and to fit in with the structural adjustment programme.

If we do not have this money reflected in this training vote and there is at the same time a projected drop in allocations in training then we, from this side, must be concerned. As far as I am concerned, I do not look at it that funds are made available to the Barbados Workers Union or any other union. We should not encourage

that attitude. After all, it would be rather irresponsible for anyone from this side to say that the Barbados Workers Union should not have money to carry out a programme.

I will also tell you that we are very wary about what is being delivered as representation to those workers and we want to make sure that the money is put to the best use. They should not find themselves paying people who have not represented them ably in the past. I am totally in agreement with additional money being provided in the Estimates for training.

There is one other problem that concerns me, Mr. Chairman, the situation as obtains presently with a number of school children driving in Z vans and other modes of transportation.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: This is very serious. The Honourable Member has not got the point that I am making. He must go out there and see. I have witnessed time and time again where about 20 children are crammed into a Z van. I am talking about a Suzuki van. That is dangerous. It is a question of whether insurance covers those children. The protection of our children belongs to us. We have to be responsible for it. I am saying that as a parent.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would not want an expansion of that under this Head.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am not expanding on that. We are dealing with transportation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are not dealing with transportation, we are dealing with education.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Transportation of children and the Ministry of Education ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is it your understanding that the Ministry of Education is providing transportation in the Z vans?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I know that the Headmaster at the Foundation School has warned his pupils against travelling on the Z vans. That is a matter of policy. I want to know if that policy stands with or is supported by the Ministry of Education. I agree with the Headmaster who is concerned with that because a lot of things happen. One of the things which I am saying is very dangerous is that I have seen about 20 children getting off a Z van that is supposed to carry 5 or 6 persons.

We have got a situation where children were playing truant and the Government has sent out the police and other officers into the bus stand - the Chief Education

Officer and officers from the Ministry - to try to scout out these children, or as the young people would say, to "scope" out these children. I am asking the Ministry of Education to look and see what is going on in these vehicles because they only have to have one accident causing hurt to about 20 of them and then we will have a real serious situation on our hands.

If Honourable Members feel this is something that we should dismiss lightly or treat lightly it is a matter for them. I am going to warn Government that should they fail to take action to deal this matter and something happens the blame will be laid fairly and squarely at their doors. It is no laughing matter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is no laughing matter but I would like the Honourable Member to understand what I am saying. The discipline of the public transport system does not fall under the Head of Education. I think the matter he is alluding to must to some extent, relate to the operation of the public transport system.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: All I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that I am interested in the safety of all school children on their way to and from school because the process starts from home and the children have to be transported to school. Some of them walk to school, some of them ride to school, some of them drive to school. I am interested in all modes of transportation and that is why I felt that I should raise the one that is causing a lot of concern and could pose a very serious danger to the lives of children.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister wants to make a response.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to deal very shortly with the point raised by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas which indicates very clearly a very serious position with our educational system in that we have a demand for certain types of education which the society needs and we seem to lack capacity to satisfy it. The Honourable Member read the statistics in relation to applications for the Polytechnic from 1985 right up to today. I know for a fact that this caused concern in 1985 and it was for this reason that the National Training Levy was utilized not only to help the workers unions and others but also to expand the skills training programmes and change those skills training programmes into genuine pre-orientation courses up to one year in a number of disciplines. In addition to that, I was informed and I believe that it is correct, that the Polytechnic was built to house 2 600 students on a two-shift system.
4.40 p.m.

Therefore, who would have thought what, with all of that activity taking place and, in addition, to that the Wotton Secondary School was going to be used as a

special pilot project to ensure that children who wanted to have this type of education, instead of having to wait until a post-secondary level so to speak or a tertiary level, could have it from the time they were 12 or 13 years old, who would think now what has happened to derail these well thought out plans?

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, let me deal with last things first. I would just like to state for the Honourable Member who just took his seat that in 1990-91 there were 1,723 regular students in the SJPP, that is full-time day students in a 2-year programme in 1991. There was also a part-time day student programme for mainly one day per week with a duration of one to 2 years. There are also the other evening students 2 evenings per week from 5 to 7 o'clock for one or 2 years. Then there are special ad *hoc* courses for other institutions. I will give the 2-year courses as follows: auto mechanics, welding, carpentry, cabinet-making, machine shop, engineering, *et cetera*.

During the time that is left before the break, I should like to make a few replies here. The Honourable Member for the City is concerned about user fees. I would like to assure the Honourable Member that we are all concerned about her comments on user fees being an additional burden. No one really enjoys an additional burden being placed on them, especially those of us who happen to be from areas where we see students in need. As for her point about adjusting these fees, particularly in areas where provision could be made in other welfare areas, I can appreciate that point. As the Honourable Member would know having served in the Ministry of Education herself, there are several students for whom letters are written by various organisations asking that certain services be provided for them and it is quite possible that number may be adjusted on the positive or upward trend. I do appreciate your point.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member for St. George South referred to the teacher morale being low and to the number of teachers not at work. I should just like to state that, when we had discussions late last year about the number of teachers who were not returning at the beginning of the school term either in September or January, these were people whom we called years ago and still continue to call them today "temporary" or "substitute". They are there for people who are on sick leave, holiday, a term's leave and what have you. That is an ongoing process. Indeed, many of those people who were referred in that time frame have been back at work because other people have gone off on term leave, vacation and so on.

I will only state in total numbers that of people who have requested term's leave, let us say for April to July

coming up, there are 59 teachers who, we anticipate, will go off on term's leave. In September to December, it is anticipated that 123 teachers will be off in that term because that is the law of the land.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the other point. The Honourable Member for St. George South said that he was concerned about the people who cannot read the oath when they appear in Court. We are all concerned that we spend the taxpayers money from primary school right through secondary school. They come out of secondary school and you mean my God they go into a courtroom and cannot read the oath? Which one of us could be satisfied or be happy with that? I certainly could not.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St. George South about the truants. He wanted to know why has the Government stopped paying attention to truants. I do not think the Government ever stopped paying attention to truants. I think, as the same Honourable Member stated, the youths of today are reacting completely differently from the youths of 15 or 20 years ago.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West made the point about the school boards and again I will repeat that, we have started, and I am willing wherever possible to suggest and to accede to any recommendations, to place members of PTAs or old scholars associations on school boards. We have started that process.

Regarding the conditions of the St. George Secondary, yes, it happens to be in my constituency. I took note today when I saw the story that someone made the comment that I would promise to make some statement about the "porno" issue. I do not know what I am expected to say. When it was going to Court, I said that I had nothing to say. It came out of Court and it was settled. What do they expect me to say? Am I going to make a statement now? It is over as far as I am concerned because the Court ruled.

The other point is this, Mr. Chairman. In the last term, I have not done a specific analysis of the number of children who attend that school from outside of what I would call the general catchment area of the parish of St. George. I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church West will recall my making a statement in here already when I said that only 348 of those children attending the school at the time were from the St. George area. It tells us something. It also opens up a whole new ball game in terms of the various things we have to look at in this society. If you are going to get parents converging on that parochial area surrounding, as it is, the bastion of St. George's Parish Church and behaving in that manner,

anyone passing by, or anyone seeing it on television if it was on there, would assume that these are the people from the community who are behaving like that. I have a concern about that.

4.50 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know if the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was anticipating, or guessing, when he was complimentary about the dollars for the various agencies. I would only like to state at this point, for the assurance of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East who also raised the question, that to the best of my knowledge the amount proposed is the same amount as last year, and no increase.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is concerned about protests at schools. I believe that people have rights, and I think you do. We all believe that people have rights, but I think there comes a time when one has to display a sense of maturity, respect and honour, especially when there are toddlers or children involved. Somehow we have to set an example and I believe that it behoves the parents to think before they demonstrate. I am not saying that they cannot demonstrate individually, collectively or in any way they want to, but from what I have been hearing and what I have seen, bringing the students as part of that demonstration is not proper for this or any other society. That is my belief on that.

There was also a comment about rules and reference to the headteacher. I would expect that the headteacher could make some rules to govern certain things within the school. What we find, ironically, is that having said that and with the Honourable Member's reference to the one in Christ Church, the same thing apparently is developing as one of the problems at St. George, where a rule is made and then there is the audacity of questioning the manner in which Services Commissions, or whoever else, appointed the Headmaster.

Mr. Chairman, the last point had to do with technical education and there was also a comment made, in passing, by the Honourable Member for the City. Yes, the amount that we have now for computers is not as great as it was, but we have set out over a period of time – and this is the third year we are going into it – we have set out to ensure that all of the schools have a basic system. I am not saying it is the end all. I would hope that the same PTA's would garner some of their energy, courage and dollars and, like a few Members, including the Member for Christ Church West, who assist, give their assistance in that area, because you will find, Mr. Chairman, as all Members in here agree, that we are in a different era. We are in a contact era in terms of dealing with information and with the passing of information in all of its many facets.

What is known today in the technical field, we here have not been exposed to and we are already 5 years

behind what is **happening** around the corner on a daily basis. Unless we are really interested in maintaining that knowledge about what is going on, we will all then fall behind. We cannot afford that.

Mr. Chairman, I will come back after the other Members have made their contributions. I am much obliged to you, 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 this sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.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.
4.58 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman there are just one or 2 concerns that I have relative to certain statements which were made in this debate under this Head. I had not intended to make a contribution seeing that my colleagues on this side have dealt very well with the topic.

I am concerned with the failure of this Government to recognise and understand the concerns of parents, especially in this area of protest. I say this because in my own constituency sometime last year we had serious problems with one of the primary schools. I notice under sub-programme 02, 211: Primary and Composite Schools, in the explanatory note it is stated that this item includes provision for maintenance and general minor repairs to buildings, replacement of and repairs to furniture, upkeep of grounds, cost of termite treatment etc. I remember the response of the Honourable Minister of Education to certain concerns which were raised at the time when we were debating this Head last year. Like the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister who said at another time when I first came to this Chamber that he was very good at observing

members on both sides when they are sitting, when they are standing and even when they are not speaking, I was very careful to observe the demeanour of the Minister of Education. He seems to be giving the same response to some of the concerns which were raised.

I remember at that time last year we had a situation at Turners Hall Primary School where it was almost impossible for the teachers to teach and for the students to learn in an atmosphere which was not conducive to their making an impact on this society or being able to understand exactly what was being taught to them. I remember the Minister of Education at that time stated that these concerns were being addressed by the Ministry of Education and there were some remarks made relative to my involvement in the protest demonstration at that time.

What concerns me, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that the Ministry of Education sent some workmen to Turners Hall Primary School and they came to Turners Hall, they sharpened their tools for about 2 or 3 days, and they went back to wherever they came from. Subsequently, I was concerned by the fact that the repairs were not done and the response of the Minister of Education was that a school was being constructed at Farmers, Hillaby Primary School and these children would be relocated. It so happened that work started on that school. The parents, the teachers and the students kept quiet and, in the same way as the teachers and the parents were tricked into believing that something would be done about the repairs to the school, they were again tricked in that work was started on Hillaby and then stopped.

It is all well and good for the Honourable Minister to speak about people exercising a certain amount of maturity, honour and respect when it comes to demonstrations in relation to Ebenezer Primary School, but I find that this Government is totally insensitive to the concerns of not just the parents and students in situations like these but in all areas. This is just another example, rather than looking at the reasons for the demonstration. It is fairly obvious that, if a parent has a child at a school and there is no one at home to take care of that child and the parent has to demonstrate for a cause, the child might be caught in the whole exercise of the demonstration.

I must say that the parents, if I may take the example at Turners Hall, have exercised a certain degree of calm and moderation. It would be totally irresponsible for any Minister of Education to come in about 2 or 3 weeks' time, if it so happens that the parents at Turners Hall decide to take the same action as was taken at the other school, to say that children should not be involved in a demonstration. Sometimes pictures do not necessarily give us a true explanation or record of what actually transpired. I noticed the frown on the face of the Honourable Member for St. James South when somebody said 12 year olds were

involved in a demonstration. These are people who can think for themselves and who know what is going on.

I would like to hear from the Minister of Education, relative to the Turners Hall Primary School, how soon repairs will be restarted. I say restarted because he can no longer come and tell us about the school at Hillaby being built any more. I understand that everything is rusting in that area. You can see so much bush that it does not look as though a school was started. He should come and let us know now when the repairs at Turners Hall will start. I would hope that when the parents and the children and teachers at Turners Hall start to demonstrate we will not have the same response from him and we will not have the same frowns from the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Another area of concern is that recently there has been the amalgamation of certain primary schools, especially in the country areas. It seems as though the country areas are normally signalled out for this kind of treatment. You do not hear of schools like Wcsley Hall, St. Jude's and St. Giles Boys being dealt with in the same manner, no disrespect to people who went to those schools. Quite recently we have had an amalgamation of St. Silas School which is in my own constituency, for whatever reason, I do not know. The Honourable Minister has never given – certainly not in this House – a reason why we no longer have St. Silas Junior School and St. Silas Mixed School.

My concern is the existing use of the building which formerly housed the St. Silas Primary School. It would seem as though the Minister of Education gets up one morning, whether ill-advised or otherwise, and decides he is not going to have any more schools at a particular school building. No plans are being made for the buildings which house these former schools.

5.40 p.m.

The St. Silas Junior School is a case in point. It is now like a white elephant. I would like to know if the Honourable Minister could tell us whether he has any plans – and I only use the St. Silas Junior School as one example – but there are a number of them mainly in the rural areas – for any of these schools in the rural areas that have been abandoned and turned into white elephants.

My other area of concern relates to the St. Thomas School. A point which I wanted to make has already been made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. It would seem to me, from looking at this school that here, again, is another venture of the Democratic Labour Party which was very ill-advised. I would like to know whether funds are being allocated to the St. Thomas Secondary School, not because of the present economic situation because, from what I can see of that school, it is almost completed. I would like to know whether or not the Minister

of Education and the Prime Minister suddenly realise, taking into consideration all the cuts they have had, that with a full school they would not have any money to pay the staff at the St. Thomas Secondary School.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: We would like to know how much money it would take to complete the St. Thomas Secondary School. We would like to know how much money it would cost the Government, in the long run, to complete it as a result of not doing the few things that are now left to be done. There is a tremendous amount of wear and tear to a building when it is just left there, unoccupied and nothing is being done. We would like to know these figures, how much money it would take to complete the school and how much money it is going to cost the Government as a result of leaving it there as it is. We would also like to know how much money it would have cost this Government to employ a complete staff if the St. Thomas Secondary School had been allowed to run its natural course. We would hope that it does not become another Sherbourne.

Thank you.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I did not want to interrupt the Honourable Member so I allowed him to finish because he made a few points which I think should be put in the proper perspective before they are allowed to be recorded.

First of all, this question on the Turner Hall School is valid. Yes. Whatever I said to you then that a new school was being built, that is factual. Work had ceased in the last few months on that school. If you would look in the same Estimates you will see that School will be completed within these Estimates. That is a fact. The point you were making in terms of the repairs. Because of some misunderstanding between civil servants in terms of timing of the repairs we are dealing with now, the particular galvanise involved, this was strictly a matter of personal involvement of individuals working within a ministry who could not properly coordinate their time.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: You cannot do repairs when children are in school. An arrangement has been made that when the children go off from school the section which is to be completed will be completed. The parents know that. It is a matter of timing. You cannot, in an area like that, protest and every time you say you want something done in a week or two close the school.

The other point. There is no approach to amalgamate only country schools. As a matter of fact, the amalgamation

which you refer to was started by your own Government. We have said so before as with the amalgamations at St. Matthias, St. Stephen's, St. Mary's, since those schools are not in the country. There is no particular approach by the Democratic Labour Party or by this Government to amalgamate only country schools. The numbers went down to something like 37 so we closed the Senior School.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: You said I gave the assurance. In the Estimates it is provided that the merger will be completed. It is part of the plan which was devised by the previous Government and is being carried through by this Government. There is nothing sinister about that.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Honourable Member for St. Andrew for taking an interest in my constituency and asking some questions about the St. Thomas Secondary School. I know the Minister, when I was out of the House earlier, gave some information about the St. Thomas Secondary School. I want to ask him some questions which, if he has not addressed them in his previous contributions, I should be grateful for his attention to them in a subsequent intervention. There are these. Nothing can be done on the St. Thomas Secondary School in this financial year, as I understand it. What provision by way of security is the Ministry making?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, ask them to be quiet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am in a very restrained mood now. I would like to know, Sir, what provision the Ministry is making during this coming year of inactivity at the St. Thomas Secondary School, to ensure that what is there is properly secured; at what cost. Why I am concerned is I know that there are windows installed, for example, at various parts of the building. These half finished buildings are allurements to persons who have desires to take other people's property and appropriate it to themselves.

There must be security. What cost is the Ministry estimating for the provision of security services for the St. Thomas Secondary, quarter completed school in this financial year? It was never a school, as I understand it, financed out of World Bank or other funds. I have always been concerned about that aspect of the school. I was never one who criticised it. I believe the figures in the 1983, 1984, 1985 period suggested to build that school might have been an exercise in superfluity.

When the Government had it as a project they were committed to, I could not quarrel with their decision, **as** they saw it. That was a matter of their discretion. They wanted the school. They thought it was justified. The circumstances may have changed but you went ahead and gave the school. I therefore welcomed the establishment of the school when we turned the sod 2 years ago. I have always been concerned about the country's ability to pay for that school in so far as there was no foreign financing which underpinned the project. It reminded me of a man who is going to build a bungalow. Take me, an average, poor person...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am going to personalise it. I am going to dramatise it as a poor person.
5.50 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Make the Honourable Member for St. Peter withdraw that, Sir. I **am** not misleading the House. I am poor. Not only poor. The Honourable Minister of Finance has made sure that I am now poverty stricken. It is like my wanting to build a bungalow for \$200 000 and out of my current revenue of \$5 000 a month, I **am** going to try to build a house for \$200 000. That is madness. Government could never have built that school or Highway **2A** out of current revenues and still expect

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sherbourne? That is madness. That **is part** of the reason for our situation today. When you have big projects you go and borrow money. Do you not see what all the people in Barbados who have **money** go and do? There are banks out there that must be used. We should have done that.

In relation to the St. Thomas Secondary School I want to charge the Government and its advisers in the Ministry responsible for being very misguided – I am going to **be** restrained in my language as I would put it differently on a platform – in believing and indeed encouraging the Minister of Finance who knows nothing at all about public financing to believe that **these** projects could be built out of current revenue. Foolishness.

The result now is that we are seeing the start by Government of a project while being unable to complete it. God knows what your start-up cost will be, whenever we get back to it. The same thing in relation to Sherbourne. I have to express my sympathy in this regard to the Honourable Minister of Education. In respect of both of those projects I do not charge him with any culpability at all because I believe they were foisted on this Minister of

Education by the absent Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. He is **the** one who had Sherbourne in his head, before some of us came in this House. He is the one who wanted the St. Thomas Secondary School. He is the one, as Minister of Finance, that decided to dole out the money and start those projects and start the **Holetown** station and then cannot complete them. It is as a **former** member who is no longer in here would have described it, Sir, and has described it – I am using similar language – **as** crass and criminal financial negligence. He should be charged for it, Sir.

These are very serious things. All of that kind of financial mismanagement has brought us to this **sorry** pass today. I would like to know also from the Minister when he intends to finish the Farmer's School which is not in the same category. That is the recipient of overseas funding. I want a final date for that.

And finally, to return to the St. Thomas Secondary School, I would like to hear from the Minister what the plans in the Ministry, and what the assessments of the need for the secondary school, are showing now. Is the secondary school population declining or is it expanding? Do we have enough secondary school plant or do we need additional school plant to take account of any burgeoning secondary school population? Those are questions that have to be answered in the Ministry. I believe the Ministry has the information because if there is no longer the need for the St. Thomas Secondary School as a secondary school, **per se**, and if the figures which I disclosed here today about the number of applications for places in the polytechnic as against availability of space are accurate, there is a clear demand for an additional **polytechnic** facility. If we cannot continue the development at the SJPP, would Government not give some consideration that the St. Thomas Secondary School, I want to be clearly understood, assuming there is no pressing need for an additional secondary school and on the hypothesis that the figures in relation to SJPP are right, would the Government not consider **altering** that project and redeveloping and redirecting...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: reformulating – thank you for the word – but redoing the St. Thomas Secondary School project as a polytechnic catering principally to persons from the North? What I am saying is, if there is a need for expanded polytechnic services...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...it is in a very central location with the Highway **2A** due to come on stream when completed and so on in that general **Sharon**, Shop Hill area. It is a nice focal point and is well serviced by

minibuses and Transport Board buses. By the time it is completed you would not have any Transport Board because they are getting rid of that.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Where you would get students from as a secondary school. As a polytechnic, trade school, whatever you call it, the figures are showing the demand. I am no expert in education. But I am just trying to think how best we can use the resources, assuming the various hypotheses that I have put. I just want the Government to look at it and see if there is the possibility of using it as an additional polytechnic. I know what the Minister is going to get up and tell me. He is going to get up and tell me...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I can anticipate him. I can look into his head and tell him what the officers out there are going to write down and send to him on yellow paper. They are going to tell him that the cost of capitalizing it in terms of putting in the necessary **equipment** would be heavy.

I want to give the Government early warning, if there is **any** merit in the suggestion that I have made, to look for funding overseas.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know it would be costly to put in all the various bits and pieces of equipment that are necessary for a polytechnic. But I want the Government to look at it in the light of the figures. Is that my time you said, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am much obliged, Sir,

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will be very brief on this occasion. I want to know whether the Ministry of Education or the Government is giving any thought to the starting of "A" Level education being examined by the Caribbean Examinations Council. The whole rationale for having a Caribbean Examinations Council is to indigenize Caribbean education. A lot has been said, a lot has been written; a lot of work has been done by Caribbean educators. They have been working over 15 years. They have now refined their skills in testing. Although there was talk years ago about moving from the "O" Levels, the

current CXC **examinations** are intended to cover general and basic. Yet I have heard nothing in recent times about a move towards eliminating the "A" level examination.

6.00 p.m.

I want to make one other point in relation to it. Certainly we must begin to question now whether there is a need for the form and structure of "A" level examinations. We did "O" levels and A levels in this country when most of our students went overseas and studied in the United Kingdom. The evidence now is that the vast majority of our students who pursue university or college education outside of the University of West Indies go to North America, United States and Canada. Rather than hang on to the relic of an "A" level it might be useful for us to begin looking at something in between "O" level and "A" level of a more general nature, instead of this specialisation we have become accustomed to over these many years.

I think to hold our children back for 2 years after fifth form, before going into college, is a little bit outdated. You can leave in fifth form and go into an American college and be way ahead of the pack. I am just wondering whether we should not be looking at these things.

I also want to know, in relation to the Caribbean Examinations Council, the cost of examinations. I understand that the bureaucracy of CXC has been building up fairly steadily and the manner of marking and testing of students involves the movement of hundreds of people throughout the region. It may be one of the bad practices they have developed from the University because the University of the West Indies seems to spend more money on people traipsing around the region for an endless amount of meetings than they do spend in development of curriculum facilities for the students. That is not what I am dealing with now. I just want to know whether the Caribbean Examinations Council has reached a stage of pricing itself out of existence.

The other question, Sir, I would like to raise relates to the kind of courses being offered at Cave Hill. The last I **heard** there were over 200 graduates of the University of the West Indies who were unemployed in Barbados. They are even trying to get clerical jobs now and can't get them. Things are bad. University of the West Indies graduates cannot get work at a time when there is a certain demand for skills at that level in other areas. I have been wondering for a while, Mr. Chairman, whether the Government, as the paymaster, spending some \$22 million a year at the university should not be exerting more pressure on the university to deliver the kind of courses at university that are more relevant to the needs of Barbados today. That is very important because we cannot, for instance, be training a surplus of graduates in social sciences when only 10 per cent of those who get degrees in that area get jobs commensurate with the level of their training.

There is one final thing I want to ask in relation to University Education. The Government of Barbados has quite rightly over the years paid the economic cost of students attending the University of the West Indies. That was not always the case because the DLP administration, in the **period** prior to **1976**, refused to pay the economic cost for students in the Law Faculty. That was put right. Ever since then the Government has been paying the economic cost of all Barbadian students in the University of the West Indies.

I am just wondering, about where Barbadian students are studying in Universities outside the University of the West Indies simply because there is no faculty of the University of the West Indies that prepares them for the particular discipline... Sir, take architecture. A Barbadian can't study architecture at the University of the West Indies because there is not such a faculty.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I have never heard of it. Is it fair, Sir, for the Government of Barbados to pay the economic cost for a Barbadian student to study history at Cave Hill where there seems to be no national demand for history graduates but does not pay the economic cost of a student to study architecture outside the University of the West Indies? I like the answer I am hearing, Sir. On the face of it, the Government of Barbados should pay the economic cost for students who are studying in disciplines that are not offered by the University of the West Indies and for which there is a national need.

I am not saying that if somebody wants to go and study **Arabic** outside the University of the West Indies they should pay for that, but where we have fairly identified national needs and it is not provided locally, I think the Government should at least pay part, if not all of the economic costs.

I would like the Minister of Education, if he can, to help us in that area.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I would like to make one quick point before the Minister replies, taking up from where the Honourable Member for St. George South left off. We had a Resolution in here in the last session on the need to honour Charles Duncan O'Neal's memory by the erection of a statue. I made a call then and got some support from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central for the teaching staff at the University to publish more.

I want to say that I am well satisfied with the output from the Law Faculty. I think they are doing a fantastic job given the constraints of finance and so on. I don't want to be invidious in any comments that I make but I regret that the University does not appear to me, from what I see, to

be publishing as much as the essence of a teaching job at the University as required. I am not personalising anything about it. I know there are people who publish profusely. You don't have to agree with their views but at least they publish and show themselves to be doing work in fulfilment of one of the requirements of university teaching.

In other areas we **look** around in vain to find publications of any substance. I am not talking about little monographs, I am talking about substantial documents from people. I know, from the time I was teaching at the University between **1970** and **1975**, people who have had leave to write books and the books have not come yet.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On all kinds of things, transport, economics, the lot. I will not go into it. I just want the point made that we have to mature a bit more. Part of our maturity will be in elevating - Sparrow said it - elevating the mind. It is to the professors at the University that we must look for the production of worthwhile material so that the whole society can be exposed to sound thought and reasoning and the values of research. I feel that we are being short changed in that area. I am just making a general appeal because, as I said, I do not see a lot. When I checked, I cannot find a nice book especially by some of our own Barbadian people in the University who need to do a lot more publishing. I am not to be taken as smearing the people in the Law Faculty because I know what they are doing and in them I am well pleased. That is the only point I wanted to make, Sir.

6.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, a few weeks ago it was announced from the Ministry of Education that a programme would have been introduced by way of offering assistance to students for the development of healthy attitudes and healthy values. Because of this stated policy on the part of the Ministry, I would like to raise a number of questions. First of all, would it really be necessary to allocate any actual money for that programme and, secondly, is the thrust of the programme going to be building good citizens and with it stressing the true role of education?

Mr. Chairman, I am of the view that, in recent years, under the influence of adulterous materialism which has swept the world and under the influence too of some people, that the sole purpose of education is to provide for the market place and that a lot of what should have been in education has been left out. In other words, what I am saying is this. Some people have given students the impression that learning is only relevant for the

market place, whereas years ago there used to be a tradition in Barbados where teachers were conscious to let children know that learning in itself is useful. I believe that, if we could get back to those days along with building healthy attitudes and building character, we would do a lot to redeem many of the wayward youths who are out there.

As I pointed out earlier today, Sir, some children who pose behavioural and problems of deviance are children who do not do particularly well in school. Out of a sense of frustration, they take it out on the system and they become utterly rebellious towards authority. I would welcome the programme to bring back good traditional values to these children but at the same time to let them know that, even though their education would be vital for the market place, there are certain aspects of education which in themselves can make them good. I would ask the Minister if he has thought out the programme and what particular thrust this programme will take.

Of concern to us over here as well, Sir, is this. In recent years at the St. Leonard's Girls' School, a number of female teachers almost invariably in the Home Economics Department have died at relatively tender years. We are asking whether the Ministry of Education has done anything to investigate whether there is some peculiar fungus in the Home Economics Department or whether there is some particular substance down there that has so far not been detected. I am going to ask the Ministry to look at this because I personally know some of these people who have died. I do not think any of them were pass 60 years. I believe there may be others who are suffering respiratory problems at this time.

Sir, you would have heard some Members refer to the problem of reading in school. In my view, not only should we isolate reading by itself as a problem but we must look at that massive amount of money spent in the newer secondary schools and the return you get for the expenditure of money in these schools. If any analysis is done of the examination results in the so-called older secondary schools compared with the newer secondary schools, it becomes fairly obvious that some schools are high flyers and high achievers and in other schools it is a great achievement for 2 or 3 children to pass 5 or 6 "O" Levels annually. Sir, in view of the enormous sums of money spent in the so-called newer secondary schools, I want to know if the Ministry of Education has any data to guide the Ministry in relation to the true success rate in the newer secondary schools. In those schools too, Sir, you get some strange occurrences, for example, like an examination offered midway in school called the Barbados Secondary School Certificate Stage I. There is no such thing as the Barbados Secondary School Certificate Stage II. Even the Barbados Secondary School Certificate Stage I on which great amounts of money are spent in the paying of people who correct these papers, has hardly any recognition in Barbados today. There used to be a time when it was used

for entrance qualification to the Polytechnic, but these days it is not even of that much use.

I would like the Minister, in view of this and in view of the disturbing trends in the newer secondary schools where there have been serious allegations of wastage of resources and serious behavioural and disciplinary problems, to tell us what plans the Government has for reviewing the situation in the newer secondary schools: The time has come, Sir, where now that we are in a situation of austerity we need to be extremely prudent in spending money. Money has become overnight a very scarce resource. When money is allocated for any particular purpose, it must be sensibly spent. We cannot ever appear to be wasting more at this time. In that regard, Sir, I will turn once more to the St. Thomas Secondary School.

It is now obvious, Sir, that whenever the St. Thomas Secondary School is resumed it is going to incur a cost overrun. There are capital works programmes planned within the Ministry of Education in relation to buildings and maintenance. I am urging the Honourable Minister to evolve a list of priority schools, especially in the rural areas, which deserve the closest and most expeditious attention, such as St. James Composite School, Indian Ground School, and Turner Hall School. These are schools that have witnessed a diminution in their value and decline in their general standards. Some of the buildings need some repair. I want the Ministry to evolve an inventory of schools, especially in the rural areas, which need attention and, secondly, to ensure that in fixing these schools no unnecessary cost overruns are incurred.

Sir, while I am at it, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister if the new school at Bakers will progress as usual. This is one of these specially funded schools. As I come to a close, Sir, I just want to correct something which the Honourable Minister may not have clearly understood me to say earlier. I asked whether there were plans for a specialized system of security at schools. The Minister seemed to have interpreted that to mean that I was asking if there were plans to increase the total number of security guards at schools. All I was trying to suggest was that, in circumstances where the security is now supervised by the Ministry of Defence and Security, whether the Minister of Education itself had ever thought about having its own grouping of security people trained, because there are certain security guards who since they will be temporarily assigned to schools, behave in an unprofessional way especially among young girls between 14 and 16 years. It is a fact. Some of these security guards feel that they will get a one-week or 2-week assignment at a school. In the absence of proper training to tell them how to conduct themselves in school, some go to some of these schools and are known to misbehave themselves.

Sir, the point I was trying to make is this. In a situation where there has been a degeneration

into lawlessness in Barbados, the time has come for the Ministry of Education itself to really look closely at security in every way by training people, by ensuring that proper security posts are established at entrance and exit points, and by ensuring that children board and get off the bus properly.

Finally, I had earlier lamented that we on this side did not like the idea of a serious cut to the same extent as it is under the Audio Visual Aids Department. But during the debate so far on this Head, Sir, we have heard about computers and technology. Whereas I have mentioned earlier that certain children, in experiencing learning difficulties, do not easily understand a teacher who is lecturing or one who is using old fashioned teaching methods, the time has come for us to exploit new technologies in schools. Indeed, Sir, I do not know if the Government knows, but a few people in education have on their own gone to North America and trained in educational technology and some have come back into our schools as ordinary teachers without having the opportunity to give the society the benefit of their training.

6.20 p.m.

Sir, I am suggesting, finally, that the time has come too when the Ministry should look very closely at this question of children in the newer secondary schools moving automatically from Form 1 to Form 2 to Form 3 to Form 4 and then at Form 4 they suddenly discover that they cannot read, they cannot master the three R's, they are frustrated and have not benefited from the opportunity given to them.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make two important points really. The first one has to do with what the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and a couple of other Honourable Members raised to the utilisation of the building that has been designed for the St. Thomas Secondary School.

I speak here primarily as the representative for a constituency that has a secondary school which has been the victim of serious overcrowding for almost all of its modern existence. The St. Leonard's Boys' and Girls' were designed for a certain number of students. As of today the St. Leonard's Boys' has 1 220 and the St. Leonard's Girls 1 150. That seems to me to be a lot of young people in a relatively small and confined area. They do not have the benefits of a wide open pasture which some of us had when we were going to secondary school. The girls at St. Leonard's have as their only playing area a hard court, which incidentally was put there by the efforts of the PTA some 10 or 15 years ago, as I remember it. It is a very difficult proposition for the teachers and the students in those St. Leonard's Schools to be able to function in an environment that is as overcrowded as that one is. I think

it is remarkable, quite frankly, when one examines and looks at what happens to those schools. It is remarkable that they are able to get the kind of results which they get year after year in circumstances that are not conducive to good learning. The environment is not right.

What I remember about the St. Thomas School is that it was designed to assist in taking off some of the numbers from that school and the other two secondary schools in the proximate area. That is, Ellerslie, whose numbers while they are not as cramped as the St. Leonard's Schools, 'are still over the numbers for which it was designed.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, now that you have won the election and you have established that you are a winner, you can turn to the quality things of life and let us look at the school in a qualitative way. The need for the St. Thomas school was established, in my view, at that time. We felt then, and I see no reason to change the view now, that the school will be an important input into the quality of education at secondary level, not for the next year or two, but for as far as the eye can see into the 21st century. We are therefore not discussing the finishing of the school in 1992, the reasons why the school cannot be finished have been adumbrated. We do not have enough money to finish all the projects which we undertook. It was not bad planning, it is a case of running out of money.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I take the collective responsibility for it. I have no difficulty with that, I am in the Government, I am part of the Cabinet. I have not resigned, so therefore I am partly responsible for our not having enough money. That is simple and straightforward. I am merely saying, therefore, do not worry to come now with political arguments trying to get on as though we are in a land of plenty and we have behaved so badly in the land of plenty that we are not able to meet the ordinary planning requirements. We are in the same condition as you were in 1981-82 with regard to a number of projects, so we are putting this on hold. We are putting, the St. Thomas Secondary School on hold *pro tem*.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, one of the advantages of being in this Committee when the Honourable Member is here is that I learn something. I wish that some of his colleagues could say that they too learn something.

The second point I think is of more import. The Honourable Member, who, like a number of people, in spite of the fact that the information is put out over and over again, raises the question concerning the death of a number of people from the St. Leonard's Schools, as

he identifies it, sources those persons as having an association with a sector of the school, to wit, the domestic science laboratory. You have to understand, Mr. Chairman, that from the point of view of being the representative I will have an interest and from the point of view of being Minister of Health I have a further interest.

This matter was raised about four years ago. The deaths of the persons have been investigated by the Ministry of Health. We have sent a report to the Ministry of Education and we have refused to give details of the individuals because I certainly believe, and it is a matter of policy in the Ministry of Health, that the cause of death of an individual, unless foul play is involved and it has to go to the courts, is something which must not be made public in great detail. It is not fair to them. Their families may tell you if they wish. However, what we have been able to say publicly, and what I now say publicly, is that of all of the women who died and were teachers at St. Leonard's School – the 4 or 5, and I am speaking off the top of my head – not one of them who died from cancer has died from a cancer that can be traced, or that up to now has been traced to any matter related to the chest, or any matter related to emphysema or any of the respiratory tract infections. In other words, it is reasonable to conclude that it has not been the result of asbestos, the cry which was going up 3 or 4 years ago and was sustained by a particular doctor in the society who has a particular complaint about asbestos across the board.

Now, Sir, notwithstanding that, the Ministry of Education spent over \$240 000 in this last year's Estimates to change the asbestos roof at St. Leonard's School. That asbestos roof might not have been changed and we would have, in the words of the Member for the City, saved \$240 000. Out of an abundance of caution the Chief Education Officer, having made a commitment to the teachers at the school that the roof would be changed, the Minister included in the Estimates past \$240 000/\$250 000 and put a new roof on the school to replace the asbestos roof. We, in the Ministry of Health, acting upon the concerns expressed by the National Union of Public Workers, not only about the St. Leonard's School but about the Treasury Building and a number of other buildings in this country, sought the assistance of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health of the United States. They sent 2 experts into Barbados. They prepared a report. They examined Bulkeley Factory, the Treasury Building, the St. Leonard's Schools and 2 other locations. They submitted a report in great detail, copies of which we sent to the Ministry of Education. We sent copies to the Press in Barbados, to the media houses and we even sent a copy to Elombe Mottley and a copy to the National Union of Public Workers.

6.30 p.m.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If one did not go to the Shadow Minister, let me apologise now. We sent to the agencies which showed an interest in having this information. I give the Honourable Members the undertaking that we will send one to the Opposition. It was an oversight.

The point is that the report indicated that there was no danger from asbestos. Using the criteria that are used across the United States, they could find no area of danger. They pointed out that there are certain levels of the asbestos dust which would have to be in the air in order for a person to be affected and they found nothing in any of the efforts which they made. We sent that information as widely into the public domain as possible and we asked them to publish the information as broadly as possible. Still, some years later, we are inundated from time to time about the concept of asbestos causing these women to die of cancer. I hope that I have put the matter to rest.

However, in recent times there has been a question raised by first one staff member, then a second and then a few staff members – and the newspaper article on Sunday was accurate – that they were feeling discomfort which they attributed to something in the school environment. The Medical Officer of Health at Sir Winston Scott Polyclinic, Dr. Maheswaran – I call his name just to establish professionalism – the most experienced of the doctors who deal with public health at that level, went with a team to the St. Leonard's school. They did a thorough sweep of the school. They could find nothing which indicated that there was something wrong. However, they suspected that there may be in the environment surrounding the school something which may be causing some discomfort. As a result they have ordered a further test which is in the process of being done by the Black Rock Polyclinic and assorted persons and they are going to report on this matter as soon as the exercise is completed. They are searching for a chemical source which might be the cause of the discomfort which people are feeling at the school.

That, Mr. Chairman, is the report in response to the Honourable Member's reasonable question about St. Leonard's and the health matters relating to it. I hope that I have given enough information.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Ministry of Education for the second time in the last 6 years is going to have to live with a cut in both its current and capital expenditure. It is true but not very well known that in the financial year 1986-87 the Ministry of Education was made to help pay for the generous income tax cuts of the 1986 DLP... It had to endure a cut of its current and capital expenditure. In fact, Mr. Chairman, it is strikingly true that, in 1986-87, the Ministry of Education which ordinarily would spend on an average about \$13 million in capital expenditure spent only \$5 million, giving rise to tremendous maintenance problems in the schools and the dilapidation of many schools which the Democratic

Labour Party would want to pin on the Barbados Labour Party. I say that mainly to establish a bit of background. This is the second year in which the Ministry of Education...

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The problem with maintenance of schools is not a Barbados Labour Party problem. In 1986-87, in order to accommodate the massive giveaways, the Government of the day cut education on both current as well as the capital side and reduced your total capital spending on education to about \$5 million. This meant that no schools were being maintained. The maintenance problem of today is a legacy of that whole process of Democratic Labour Party policy.

My point, however, Sir, concerns the contemporary situation where the Ministry of Education which as recently as 1990 was spending \$223 million on its current operations is now to spend \$191 million. The fact of the matter is that, even though there is a cut in the Ministry of Education vote, Barbados is still spending a lot of money on education. There is within the Ministry of Education vote, in my view, a lot of scope for financial innovation. I have to ask the Minister of Education what are some of the innovations he intends to bring this year to accommodate to the situation which is now upon him that his Ministry has to cut its current budget from \$223 million to \$191 million. I ask that question in the light of the information provided at Appendix A. Appendix A contains some of the most interesting information that perhaps is not used by this House.

Most of the schools in Barbados are given grants. In Appendix A one is also shown the revenues that the schools in Barbados generate for themselves. One comes across a picture which is so contrasting in terms of the scenarios that it creates that it suggests that there is tremendous scope for financial innovation within the Ministry of Education. For example, one finds that Community College generates \$146 000 in revenue to help meet its total expenditure. The Samuel Jackman Polytechnic generates no revenues at all. This table tells us for example that the St. George's Secondary School is relatively efficient in generating revenue whereas the Alexandra School generates no revenue at all.

It would seem to me, Mr. Chairman, that in the context of a situation where schools, obviously, are going to have to live with smaller grants, a greater emphasis has to be placed at the level of the individual Board with raising a larger proportion of their revenue from rents, lunches, functions and fees. The existing situation would seem to be that there are some schools which are deficient in doing it and others which are not. I am wondering, therefore, if the Ministry of Education has given any thought to this particular matter and what are the kinds of

innovations that the Ministry is expecting to apply at the level of individual schools to reconcile each of the schools concerned to the fact of reduced subventions.
6.40 p.m.

My second broad question has to do with the relationship between education and the structural adjustment programme. I believe the decision that we take today is going to have a very profound bearing on what happens to Barbados 5 or 10 years from now. Nowhere is this more relevant than in the area of education.

We happen to know that the Government has had a large number of sectoral studies done. We have had a study for tourism. We have had the Landell Mills Study for the offshore sector. We have had the Howard Study for tourism. In each of those sectoral studies great pains have been taken to identify training requirements and human resource development requirements that must be undertaken in order to give effect to a structural adjustment in the Barbados economy.

It seems to me that, if the structural adjustment programme is going to be successful, then the human resource aspect of it has to be managed properly. What, obviously, should have been an imperative, in my view, this year is for the Government to take out from each of those sectoral studies the training and human resource development requirements and incorporate them in this budget this year to make sure that the economy functions in accordance with projections and plans in the medium and long term.

Now, I have read these Estimates and I see no indication whatsoever that the Ministry of Education is doing anything new and innovative this year in terms of the development of our human resources to comply with the broader requirements of a structural adjustment programme. What this suggests to me is that the Ministry of Education has accepted defeat. It has been told by the Ministry of Finance that everybody has to cut and it has just started cutting without asking itself vital questions within the context of its budget as to how they can get a bigger bang from the money they have to spend.

I really have to ask the Minister to tell the House whether the Ministry of Education has given any consideration this year to drawing, from all the sectoral studies the human resource development aspects, the components which are so very necessary if you are going to change this Barbados economy, the training requirements in the various studies, the training requirements to change tourism and if, in fact, those kinds of considerations informed the construction of these Estimates.

I am satisfied that Barbados can spend \$250 million on education this year, spend that money well and have at the end of the day a labour force that can be

rained to conform with the requirements of a new Barbados. Two hundred and fifty million dollars in any language, Sir, is a lot of money. Two years ago we were spending \$190 million on education. Therefore, I am not one to get myself tangled up in the arithmetics of the individual cuts.

I would like to ask the Minister if he has the broad picture in his head and if he can give this House the assurance that we are not going to find ourselves in a position, 5 years from now, where the structural adjustment programme is frustrated precisely because the pre-planning was not done for it.

Before I leave, I want to make just one point. There has been a kind of controversy, in this House today regarding the question of the rights of students to be involved in protests and matters of that kind. I just want to state for the records that my position in these matters is very clear. I do not believe that on the question of the appointment and the dismissal of members of staff children have rights in decision making.

I truly do not believe that we should create the impression either that matters pertaining to employment and the running of the Board in terms of the administrative decisions to be taken at the level of a board are matters that 12-year olds must feel it is for them to adjudicate. I really cannot lend my support to any notion that it properly falls to children to do man work and run schools in terms of insisting on a right of decision making in relation to matters of employment, hiring and so on. I strongly feel when we reach the stage in Barbados where we believe that the children have rights to intervene at that level in the running of a school, that we succeed only in undermining discipline in our society and making this country a worse country.'

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, just to reply to pages of comments. I started my reply to the Honourable Member for St. Andrew as I wanted to be instant. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas' enquiry on the Farmers' School completion date is on the same school referred to by the Honourable Member, that is, the Hillaby/Turners Hall School. It is anticipated, because of the stoppage, they probably will not be able to go in before April next year. I do not think we can get in for September this year.

On the need for the St. Thomas School, there are now approximately 21 000 in secondary schools and 21 secondary schools. That is easy maths. That is 4+ maths. That is about 1 000. You heard the Honourable Minister of Health mention that St. Leonard's has 1 211. Now the 1 000 happens to be an average. There are a few schools that are considered to be small in size, for example, the Louis

Lynch School and the traditional St. Michael School. They are asking for more space.

Of course, you have the erstwhile older secondary schools which traditionally carry 700 and 800. Therefore, you find that there has been this 1 100 and 1 200 number at the newer secondary schools as they were referred to. It turns out that those are the very ones that need more emphasis and more attention. There needs to be a byway. In other words, they can relieve the load eventually and also give us the flexibility. I agree with your point in terms of long range planning and looking down the road. There is thought that maybe at some time when that is completed, we can very well look at moving more into the technical area with one of the schools. I will not at this stage be bold enough to designate it because many more factors will have to be in place. I had a note that the redirection is valid and has been engaging the Ministry.

The Honourable Member for St. George South asked a question about "A" Level examinations by CXC. CXC is supposed to be working on an "A" Level syllabus. There is no specific time. One cannot state at this stage that it will start in a particular year. The question of the future need for "A" Levels is what we have to pay close attention to in the future.

The point made by the Honourable Member for St. George South that one can more or less bypass that 2-year period already is one we see that some students are making effective usage of in the Associate Degree Programme at the Barbados Community College. As we gain more and more credibility for the Associate Degree Programme at various universities, both locally and overseas, you will find more students opting for it.

We have also found that some students who do not get a scholarship or exhibition leave the secondary school and go into the University at Cave Hill. By the time their partners have completed 2 years in a 6th Form they are already 2 years into Cave Hill. That is happening on a regular basis. Your point is well taken. I think it is a conception of how some parents view things. We do not have to go into the Barbadian thinking of what your child should do.

6.50 p.m.

The cost of CXC is approximately \$504 000, half million. Courses at Cave Hill. I might say only that we are discovering that the courses at Cave Hill are pretty heavy in law and low in terms of social studies. Indeed they have been directed by the Government to pay close attention to adjusting the disparity there where you have low entries from Barbados right here at Cave Hill so that you have more students from Barbados. We have been dealing with them in terms of addressing the requirements as we see them and as they relate to the requirements of Barbados.

To the question as to whether or not a student doing architecture may be entitled, let us say some other place, for an economic grant if he is not doing it at, let us say, St. Augustine, there may be consideration for an enabling grant depending upon the particular situation.

In response to the Honourable Member for St. James North, there will be no extra dollars in terms of the cost of the courses and living at where you have discussed. That will not cost anything additional. It is going to cost manpower. You may argue that time and people are ready money but they are money's worth as opposed to hard dollars in terms of the Estimates.

You have received from the Minister of Health all the comments on the St. Leonard's Girls' School in reply to your comment on that. I hope you are satisfied.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I am sure that the Minister of Health will make sure that a copy of that report goes to the Opposition.

And of course your other point in terms of some so-called newer secondary schools and how they are going. It is overall. How do you analyze it? They do it strictly in terms of numbers per year, numbers per class, what have you. Some, overall, do as well as if not better than some of the other schools. You know the clamour we are having now, let us say, for the school just up the road up here, the Louis Lynch School which is just about the newest of all. We have the sudden movement in terms of the Deighton Griffith School, in terms of the image that school seems to have impacted on the society already.

Yes, indeed, there is a standard priority list in the procedure for repairs. That is normal in terms of how one should do it.

The Baker's school is in the Second Education Project. Additional security cannot be provided of the training and type you are talking about whereby the Ministry would take people and train them in security. That seems to me like an additional educational institution to take care of training of people in security. In my estimation that is the function of the training arm of Defence and Security. Therefore I do not think we should bring people in and train them to do security in schools. Yes, we have to do additional training. We have taken teachers from every school and we have put them all through technical training at Erdiston College, where we have the computer training centre established there and we have had teachers who have all gone through the programme.

Indeed in conjunction with York University we had a graduation function which I attended at Combermere just a few weeks ago. I would also like to say that they have

reached the point, those of you who are familiar with the technology, when they have established their own blackboards, with their modems and their own PCs and telephone at home. They are actually interfacing and the teachers are coming up to scratch, those who are interested – I will comment later when I refer to a question asked by the Member for St. Peter – I repeat those who are interested.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter asked a question about fund raising. The fund raising at the schools should be done in co-ordination with the PTAs. It is interesting that a few of the schools are so successful, not only secondary. We find the same differences existing at the primary level and not necessarily at the schools we tend to hear about at the primary level. Usually the primary schools that are successful in fund raising have 2 or 3 people who are self starters within that community, that PTA and drive the other members of the PTA in activities where they do very well. They should all remain nameless at this point.

The question of human resource training. I mentioned the teachers in terms of the blackboard and the technical education which they are going through. To get back to the other point now, one of the key elements to the area of technical education in all of this change has to do with some of the teachers with tenure, if you will, who have been in the system for a little while. Understandably, some are afraid of change. We know that is an old problem. Some are afraid to adjust to the new technology.

There are teachers in schools now who would not go near the computer or will turn their backs if you want to introduce something to be done in their classes with computers. This is normal. That tells you that those are the ones within a certain age group. This is only normal. So we will have a transition period and, hopefully, with all of the young ones who are getting involved and are going through training and with the students down at the primary level who are really eating this stuff up, you will get a combination growing over the years where I predict, in 5 years from now, by which time you will have your own PC in your house, the cost of a computer will probably be about \$150. All the kids will probably have their own by that time.

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

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Two minutes, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I will close by saying to the other question by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, that the contract was for \$15.3 million. We have spent \$7.5 million. We are half way there in terms of dollars. He

also went on to ask about the security and protection. There will be a cost and the contractor will assume that responsibility but you know...

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: - No, no. Let me finish - ...the legal end to it. At the end when it comes to the contract arrangement then naturally they will add that cost on to the claim.

I think I have answered just about all the questions. A few points were made, however, which I did not take the chance to deal with because I was responding basically to questions by Members. Just to refresh your memories and to make a few points. In the *Estimates* there is constant comment that we are taking so long to appoint teachers. First of all, the Ministry itself does not appoint teachers at any level. There are 92 principals 3 in pre-primary or as commonly referred to, nursery schools, leaving 89 in primary/composite schools. There are 92 and there are currently 11 vacancies within that 92. If I am correct, I think somewhere they are now interviewing people or might have completed the interviews - I am not sure because that is done independently - to fill something like another 5 or 7 of those vacancies within the very short-term. The comment about not appointing teachers is a little out of line. The other thing that we were hearing the last time we discussed this was that, even at the time when we heard comment about the number of substitutes who were not rehired, we also did not hear when, during that same time frame 240 and more teachers were appointed. They felt very nicely, they wrote their letters and their acceptances but there was no comment that these teachers were appointed. Although there was a 3-line item in the press and also in the *Gazette* there was no general comment.
7.00 p.m.

There are currently 340 temporary teachers who are filling in as I mentioned earlier, for teachers who are sick, on leave and what have you. The last time I had occasion to comment on this I made the point that this is an ongoing process and from time to time you will find for one term x number of people go off because it is a contractual arrangement. Some people go off for a term's leave in the first term, some go off in the second term, some go off in the third term.

The 3 other projects, the Baker's School, the Turner's Hall/Hillaby School and the St. Stephen's School, we anticipate will be continued this year.

Mr. Chairman, I think I have covered all of the points raised. Computerisation, which was raised by the Honourable Member for the City, continues and with that, Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you, Sir.

The question that the sum of \$120 693 850 under Head 34 Ministry of Education as amended stand part of the schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, 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, at this point, I am moving that this House be suspended until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning, March 25, 1992.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 10 o'clock on March 25, 1992 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 of Supply. To that it should revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply has resumed.

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, as amended
- \$104 532 060

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 36 stand part.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Bridgetown.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the health sector is one of the most savaged in these Estimates at a time when we need to be developing our human resources to face the challenges of the coming structural adjustment. This is a time when the Government misguidedly and mistakenly seeks to cut back in health.

I would want to refer, Mr. Chairman, first of all to the revenues expected to be raised by the Ministry of Health. As I said about the Ministry of Education yesterday, this is truly if looked at with wide open eyes a productive sector Ministry. If we look at page XIV near to the front of the Draft Estimates, you will see that under the Ministry of Health the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is expected to raise much increased revenues in this

financial year. When I say much increased, Mr. Chairman, I am not talking about a 10 per cent increase or so. I am looking at a 500 per cent increase in all receipts from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Hospital fees alone are expected to move from last year's \$25 000 to \$930 000 this year.

Mr. Chairman, again the spectre of user fees described by me yesterday as the hallmark of the IMF, particularly where the social sectors are concerned. It is not 36 but 360 per cent increase in fees. I have no doubt the Minister of Health, even at the risk of preempting the Minister of Finance, will tell us exactly where these increases in fees are to be expected. I have no doubt that room rates are going to be doubled or maybe tripled or even quadrupled at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I have no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that charges for procedures to do with radiography and laboratory testing of one kind or another are going to be increased 400 to 600 fold.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do not have to have a copy of the paper, Mr. Chairman. It is patently obvious. This is how the IMF does its business. We have a Health Levy, and do not let us forget it, which raises almost \$36 million and that goes straight to the Consolidated Fund. We have taxes imposed by the Minister of Finance including stabilisation and a whole host of other taxes. We have together with this an 8 per cent cut in salaries. We have coming something known as a Value Added Tax, a sales tax by another name. The Minister of Finance is looking very quizzical but I do not want to preempt him. I do not want to embarrass him in any way. But when the Budget comes next week, I expect that we may hear about the VAT. If we do not hear about it then, we may hear about it in a later budget. Last year we had 4 budgets so it would not be too much to expect if we have half a dozen in this year. But when the VAT comes, that is another cost added to the person who is a consumer of health services. More importantly, Sir, I would want reassurances even at this early time as to whether the VAT like the sales tax before it, which was brought by the Democratic Labour Party in the early 1970's, is going to be found on drugs, baby care products, and other such basic necessities. All of this too, Sir, is coming at a time of cutbacks.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, I have to anticipate this on behalf of the people of Barbados. That is what the Barbados Labour Party has to do. They are to advise, warn and caution people that this is what is coming in health and in all sectors.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would caution the Honourable Member that even though that may be her perception it cannot now form part of this debate.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, Sir. We are not into perceptions and impressions on this side. That is the function and role of another party but not this one. I would want to refer you, Mr. Chairman, to the Health Estimates themselves. Let us go to page 67, for instance, and look at the proposed cuts in General Management and Coordination of Services. Look at the proposed cuts on page 69, MCH. This is really the main task of the polyclinics and look at the cuts in temporary staff under Other Personal Emoluments of \$1.5 million.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to tell you why it would be bordering on the criminal to cut the polyclinic vote at this time. The reason why it would be the most dangerous thing at this time to cut particularly the polyclinic vote is this. With all of what I have just described regarding the levies, taxes, the coming VAT, and the cutbacks not only in Health but in Welfare, many people are going to have to resort to the polyclinics. Many people will no longer be able to go to their private doctor on the fee for service basis. They just will not be able to afford it. People who would normally go earlier to the doctor will now start going later and those who used to go later, because they could not afford to go earlier, will now not go at all and then when it gets too bad, and whatever it is, they will then have to recourse to the polyclinics. So I have no doubt in my mind at all, Sir, that the traffic at the polyclinics is going to increase dramatically. This is not the time to be cutting back, certainly not on staff and certainly not reducing the services in the polyclinics.
10.10 a.m.

I am not ever likely to forget the attitude taken by the Democratic Labour Party and by the medical profession to the concept of a national health service based on capitation rattle than fee for service. We are not going to see a capitation creeping in through the back door now, but a totally unsatisfactory health service of another kind is going to creep in through the back door. People are going to wish now that they were on a doctor's panel and that they could go when they were ill and not have to put it off because they did not have money in their hand at the time. People are going to pray for that to happen, people are going to regret that it did not happen, because they are not going to be able to afford the fee for service.

The doctors, like every other professional in Barbados, are already feeling in their pockets the slow down in the traffic. Doctors who used to play golf or Thursdays only, are now playing golf on Monday, Tuesday half day on Wednesday, plus Thursday. I know whereof I speak. You see, the Government is not drawing any revenue from golf courses. It is not because the doctors do not want to work, the doctors do wish to work and we hear the Minister of Health with all of his big talk about open heart surgery and all of these very sophisticated and advanced procedures. All of that talk is happening at the time when we are seeing a cut back in the basic

primary health care services. Do we wonder that people are asking if we understand where the priorities really lie, not only in respect of health but in respect of every other sector, particularly the social sectors?

Control and prevention. I am still on page 69, Sir. A 50% cut in Operating Expenses. How is the Minister going to interpret that? The Honourable Prime Minister did not like my interpretation of the Estimates. The Dental Health Service has been cut. Nutrition Service. Now, Mr. Chairman, one of the positive things about the health services is that after many years we have been served with copies of the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989. I believe that she is working on 1990 and 1991. The sooner we get it the better. I have read with great care these Reports and there are some disturbing features. One that I would like to draw to your attention, Mr. Chairman, and that of the House has to do with this question of nutrition. I am looking at the Report for 1987-1988, the green one, at page 11. There is a disturbing piece of information, and I quote: "There is an increase in the number of overweight children being seen in the child health clinics." This is malnutrition. I really cannot believe that the Minister of Health is giggling at this. Malnutrition does not always mean thin children with rickets and swollen bellies. It is not a matter of feeding too well, it is feeding with the wrong things because people cannot afford the right things and I want to draw this to the Minister's attention. It is the thin edge of a wedge. I will remember that Members on those benches, including the Minister of Justice, found this amusing.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do not want to hear about Guyana. That cannot be a model for Barbados. I am now at page 73, Sir, and I am looking at the Animal Control Unit and the Vector Control Unit. It is an interesting observation that there is a staff of 20 temporary officers in the Animal Control Unit and a staff of 20 established persons in Vector Control. The Minister does not understand the point I am trying to make here. Look at page 73, look at the explanatory notes. I want to know if we are going to see the disappearance of the Animal Control Unit.

I am at page 74, Sir, looking at an 8% cut on Statutory Personal Emoluments under the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, a 15% cut in Supplies and Materials, a 26% cut on Maintenance of Property.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in one minute.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir. When I come back after this one minute, I would want to look at page 75, Subprogram 04, the St. Joseph Hospital, Grants to Public Institutions, Recurrent and Capital, and to have a clear

understanding of the difference between the Estimates of last year and the Estimates of this year under that Head. Under the Psychiatric Hospital, another significant cut. Under the Care of the Elderly, another significant cut. Geriatric Hospital, another cut. Children's Development Centre, another cut. There is nothing that has escaped the knife of the IMF...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Miss B. A. MILLER: ...with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health looking on.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, you would appreciate that the methodology which has to be used in the light of the questions being asked will require me to respond fairly frequently. I do not intend to let any of these questions go abegging.

First of all, the Honourable Member for the City has raised the question and sought to suggest that the cuts in the Ministry of Health is the work of the International Monetary Fund. Let us establish at the outset that we are fully seized of the fact that the International Monetary Fund programme requires us in Barbados generally to reduce expenditure in the public sector. Let us take that as a given, Sir, that was a given for so long now that it is trite for anyone now to be putting it up. Secondly, you will recall that it has been the cry of the Oppositions, those inside and outside of Parliament, that the Government's expenditure must be cut back. Now that an attempt is being made to cut expenditure,...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, if you want to talk about Sherbourne you will have to wait.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to allow that kind of interruption.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not think he is being offensive, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is to the Chair

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is a knee jerk reaction, Sir. The point we want to make very early is that in the Ministry of Health over the last five years, nearly five years, from the time I have been to the Ministry, we have been trying to bring to the Ministry of Health a higher appreciation of management techniques in the running of a set of services that have traditionally carried large amounts of the taxpayers' money with them. I hope I do not have to keep repeating it, but within the Ministry of Health we have been able to effect substantial savings by the application of modern management techniques.

On the question of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital the Honourable Member has asked some questions and I am going to deal with the revenue side first. Since 1982 there has not been an increase in the fees charged at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It is somebody's fault, but the fact is that since 1987 I asked the people at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Management Committee, to prepare a programme of increased fees for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I want to establish, so that there is no doubt in anybody's mind, that not a single area where persons did not have to pay will they be required to pay. There is no increase. The concept of user fees is a concept that is abroad in the international community by which they insist that all persons who use a service must pay something. Those who do not understand the use of that term ought to be careful how they use it. There is no attempt at any provision for user fees revision at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. What has been determined is that the fees which are charged at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are going to be revised upwards to take account of the cost.

10.20 a.m.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will inform the people of Barbados, but I am not going to be jockeyed by anybody. The revision of fees payable for accommodation and treatment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital... The fees currently charged for private patients here at the hospital were fixed by the Health Services (Hospital Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, 1982 and came into force April 1, 1982. Under these regulations, the rate currently paid for a private room ranges from \$60 to \$70 per day. The fee for the intensive care unit is \$70 per day and the fee for ward accommodation for persons not eligible for free service is \$20 per day.

These fees bear little relationship to the actual cost of service at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and it is proposed that they should be revised to reflect more closely the current operating costs at the Hospital. The current operating costs...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member give way a moment? During discussion in Committee each Honourable Member has the opportunity to make a submission or to make a contribution. I am not going to tolerate these kinds of interruptions. Thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Ministry of Health is in the process and has more or less completed a \$40 million development project at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. (We are paying for the \$40 million project of the Barbados Labour Party that was signed in 1987 when they were in office. The agreement was signed in 1987 but she says it is their project!)

The feasibility study which was undertaken as a precondition for the grant of a loan identified the need to strengthen and improve management systems at the hospital and, accordingly, we had a technical cooperation agreement with PAHO and they sent consultants. The objectives of the programme were:

to improve the management efficiency through better management information in the areas of hospital administration, accounting and medical records;

to improve the quality of training for health personnel including training in the use of modern equipment and development of in-service and continuing education programmes;

to improve the equipment, maintenance system by implementing a preventive oriented scheme;

to improve the medical and nursing care standards in the emergency, surgical, neo-natal intensive care and nosocomial infection control areas and strengthen the integration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital into the health care system.

During the execution of the technical cooperation programme, consultants were engaged to review operations in certain designated, administrative and clinical areas and to advise on the systems and the procedures which should be introduced to improve the delivery of service at the QE. A programme coordinator was appointed to implement the project and consultants were engaged in the following disciplines: manpower development, information systems design, financial management, hospital supplies management, medical records and statistics, maintenance and conservation engineering.

The consultant who was engaged on the study of financial management systems carried out an evaluation to identify deficiencies in the existing system of accounting, to assess needs for the short and long term and to determine strategies which should be employed to improve financial management in the hospital. A major deficiency identified was the absence of a cost-accounting system which would assist in determining the cost of operating individual departments. The absence of accurate data on the cost of providing patient care and the absence of a management information system for collecting and preventing operational statistical data on all hospital departments were also identified as weaknesses in the system.

The consultant employed in cost finding...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Minister is reading his speech.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member can shout from now until tomorrow.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have a problem in that the Honourable Member rose on a point of order and 2 Honourable Members are on their feet. I do not know that she was shouting.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will continue, Sir. The consultant employed a cost finding technique known as the step-down procedure. This is a method used in several United States hospitals.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member give way a moment. Standing Order 33(6) requires Members not addressing the Chair to maintain silence except when called upon by the Chair. There are also penalties for any obstruction in the Rules and Standing Orders of the House. I want to make it abundantly clear that I am not going to tolerate that kind of behaviour without using the penalties.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The consultant who was engaged to advise on financial management employed a cost-finding technique known as the step-down method. This is a method that is used in United States hospitals to determine the cost of running departments, something that has never been done in Barbados. We used a second method and both of them came out with the same answers. The procedure usually allocates hospital overhead costs, such as plant operations, laundry, stores, staff, meals and general services to patient departments, to arrive at the unit cost of service in all patient care departments of the hospital.

Sir, the method used showed that the cost of services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital ranged from \$112 per day in the orthopaedic department to \$741 per day in the intensive care unit with an average cost overall of \$199 per day at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Remember that I said the fees we pay now are \$60 and \$70 a day. This was going on since 1987. I want to make the point that this is not IMF driven. This study was going on since 1987. We are paying \$60 and \$70 a day at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital while the same persons who pay \$60 and \$70 a day pay \$335 per day to go to the little hospital at Bay Street.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Health Levy does not cover that.
10.30 a.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Health Levy does not cover that. The Health Levy does not cover the persons who go into a hospital and have to pay and they pay \$60 and \$70 a day. The Minister of Health recommended to Cabinet that we should find a realistic figure for the private rooms in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will conclude in 2 minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will give them the information in due course. I give the Honourable Members the assurance that before I am finished, I am going to tell them what the rates are because it is not a secret. These are the rates that will come into effect as soon as the Order is made. I have 2 minutes but I cannot tell you in 2 minutes. I have to give the background. The point is, if it now costs \$741 in Intensive Care, the fact is that there are a number of people who go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital that have insurance so the people who are the beneficiaries are not the people who go into the Hospital but the insurance companies. The taxpayers are paying the cost per day in the private rooms for most of the people who go to the Hospital...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Maybe not most but a substantial number. Will you agree on a substantial number? A substantial number of people in Barbados who have insurance go into the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not going to get involved in that, Mr. Chairman. The point is the people who go into the Bayview Hospital pay \$300 and \$400 a day for a room, to say nothing of the procedures. If the Honourable Members on that side are not going to make this a political point, if they are not intent only on scoring political points, they will agree that if we are going to be spending \$40 million at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to upgrade it, then we have to recover at least part of it. We cannot go on in this country making the kind of gestures which will allow us to spend \$40 million on the upgrading of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and \$9 million on the upgrading of the St. Joseph Hospital and not charge appropriate fees. I asked for an increase in the fees and we did it realistically.

I must also tell you, Sir, that we conducted negotiations to have Blue Cross and Blue Shield into Barbados. When we completed those discussions, Blue Cross and Blue Shield had a problem in the United States and are not now able to use "Blue Cross" and "Blue Shield" outside of the Continental United States. The principle still applies. We also have negotiated with American Express. We have negotiated with all of the major card holders.

One of the other things that happened is a person would come from the United States and go into the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. He wishes to pay the bill but is surprised at the rate which he has to pay, to begin with. Then when he goes to pay the bill, he does not have any cash because Americans always walk with their American Express Card. So he, leaves and goes to the United States and we never hear from that person ever again. All of these are ways and means by which fees in the Hospital were not collected. I will return and answer further questions, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister still has not told us the fees but I will press on.

I would want to ask a few questions now. I want to know, first of all, if the step down method includes Ministers. The question I want to ask secondly, Sir, has to do with a new prescription form for the Drug Service. On this form there is not only a request for one's National Registration Number, but one's full name, address and a whole host of other information that we would not ordinarily see in all our lifetime on prescription forms. Do you know what this is, Mr. Chairman? This is the beginning of the means testing mechanism. That is not information needed for the Drug Service per se. That is information anticipating that many people will now have to be put to the means test in order to be able to afford to buy drugs and other medication prescribed by doctors. I would want some information on that.

I want information too, Sir, in respect of 2 polyclinics. I have already made the point that we are going to find ourselves very quickly and in a very dramatic fashion, depending on the polyclinics to deliver far more than they are delivering today. Yet still we see that at Black Rock the Government under this Minister of Health, saw fit to leave many acres in the Psychiatric Hospital compound to go, not too far up the street, because they have to service the same catchment area, to a place on Black Rock Main Road and the corner of Washington Avenue, totally ill-suited to the siting of anything remotely like a polyclinic. I do not know where the parking is going to be, to begin with, for the staff not to mention people attending the polyclinic, and they are building a polyclinic there.

Questions are being asked in the public domain, Sir, who is the major beneficiary of this change of location. Questions are being asked about a house in the environs which is being built at the same time as the polyclinic. I cannot say it is a 2 or 3 bedroom house but it is just an ordinary house. Whenever the building stops at the polyclinic site, the building stops at the site of that house. Whenever the work starts up again at the polyclinic site they start up again at that house. People are talking about all these things at the side of the road in Black Rock. I am a Black Rock person. I know whereof I speak. This Black

Rock Polyclinic, is all under this Minister of Health, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member making a point that this particular house is a section of the Black Rock Polyclinic?

Miss B. A. MILLER: No.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Why do we want to connect it at this point?

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is what people are wondering if it is some satellite clinic to the Black Rock Polyclinic or if there is some other health service that will be delivered from that place.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If you are not connecting it then I do not see where the question arises.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am the one who is asking the question. I do not know. I am expecting that the Honourable Minister will tell us about it.

I see work going on in a very haphazard fashion outside the Black Rock Polyclinic. I pass it every morning and you will see no more than 2, perhaps, sometimes if you are lucky, 3 people. They were doing some outside grey cement plastering. The roof is on. I am not certain that, perhaps, is the best kind of roof to use. It may not be as costly as the roof being put on at the new Ministry of Education where you are putting a concrete roof and you are putting a clay tile roof on top of a flat roof. I do not know if that was the procedure used at the Black Rock Polyclinic. I have no way of knowing, short of visiting – and I would be obliged of a site visit – to know what is going on inside at the Black Rock Polyclinic. I do not know if toilets are in. I see windows and doors. I do not know how far the finishes are. I do not know what the position is with the cupboard work.
10.40 a.m.

I do not know when the start-up date for this polyclinic is and I do not know to what use will the old polyclinic in the Psychiatric compound now be put. This services perhaps the largest catchment area in Barbados, all of Black Rock, all of the Farm, Deacon's Road, Fairfield, Grazettes, Cave Hill, all down past Walmer Lodge people come up and Paynes Bay people come up to the Black Rock Polyclinic. It services to a large extent the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Health. I want some questions answered about the status of the Black Rock Polyclinic.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do not want them now. I want them after you give me the fees. I want to ask a

question about a so-called polyclinic. I do not know if it is supposed to be a polyclinic because it never got out of the foundation up in St. John at Gall Hill. The Honourable Member for St. John made an election promise. It was part of the St. John Development Plan. All I can see is nettles and bush growing out of the foundation there. Another unfinished project. Somebody needs to go around with a camera and take photographs of all of these unfinished monuments to stupidity and to bad planning and to squandermania. It is hurtful that so many of them are to be found in the health sector. I have not gotten to the St. Joseph Hospital yet, Sir, but I am getting there. .

I want to know now what is the completion date for the St. John Polyclinic. The Honourable Member for St. John should want to know that too. That is not even up to ringbeam level. That is still down in the foundation. Yes, Mr. Prime Minister, you need a site visit, Sir.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The St. John Polyclinic. He is asking which one.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is not past ringbeam. It shows how long you have not gone into your constituency.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to know when is the proposed completion date for this and, according to the Estimates, there is nothing here to indicate that the Government intends to finish the St. John so-called Polyclinic. That is another project now to be put on hold...

Now, the St. Joseph Hospital. Before I get to the St. Joseph Hospital, Mr. Chairman, Sir, if I may say so a lot of misinformation was given to the House in respect of health insurance. It is true that a number of people in Barbados do have health insurance but this is a minority of people which is a shrinking minority of people. Comments were made about Blue Cross, Blue Shield. Blue Cross, Blue Shield has been replaced by something called the GHMSI the Group Hospitalization and Medical Services out of Washington, superior to Blue Cross, Blue Shield. Again I know whereof I speak. I have been the beneficiary of it.

Health insurance rates in Barbados have gone up. The Bar Association has just had to renegotiate its group plan upward. They are going to have to renegotiate again, I have no doubt. But the point I want to make, Sir, is that a number of people who are labouring under levies and taxes and the 8% cut – and Lord help them when the VAT comes – are themselves ordering their priorities and are cutting back on health insurance. So the number of persons

who could be the beneficiaries of a health insurance scheme is falling, not increasing. The health insurance, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is not a scheme – the private health insurances – to be enjoyed by those people who are truly in the greatest need of the health services.

The people who are breaking down the polyclinic doors every day are not the kind of people who have health insurance. The people who are going to be faced now to face these user fees – I am glad to hear there are no new fees. They are just savage increases in all of the existing ones.

I do not want to hear, Sir, and I am sure the people of Barbados do not want to hear any odious comparison with what is happening at private hospitals.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No! They are not paying a health levy to maintain or help maintain private hospitals. They are paying a health levy and they are paying taxes to maintain the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the eight polyclinics to service their needs. If they have a national health service there would not be the grinding of teeth and the rending of clothing that we are hearing even now. This is preceding the increases in the user fees and preceding the VAT.

But the St. Joseph Hospital. This St. Joseph Hospital, I suppose it is not too much to ask the Minister of Health to tell us how much the Government, his Government has spent on the site at the St. Joseph Hospital. That is now like Sherbourne. We do not know what its true function is ever going to be, if it will ever have a true function under this Government. He might tell us if it is true – what I am hearing – that it is for sale in Europe and that the asking figure is only a fraction of what my taxes, Sir, and your taxes and everybody in Barbados' taxes have helped to spend on it, in excess of \$20 million.

And we are hearing that it cannot be made operational because he cannot get the sewerage scheme right and all sorts of foolish excuses and that you have doctors down there still drawing salaries administering an empty building, and staff servicing an empty building. Mr. Chairman, Sir, this scandal at the St. Joseph Hospital cannot go on forever. It really is going to have to come to a halt. The real reason why that hospital cannot be made operational, Sir, I have repeated it in here several times and I am going to repeat it in here again today, the Government cannot afford to establish posts to put a staff there to carry out any kind of service. When we look at the cutbacks in these Estimates...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in 2 minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You should conclude in 2 minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir. What I am saying, Sir, is that the St. Joseph Hospital, when you look at it in the context of the health estimates, there is no way that the Government, in this coming financial year, is going to be in a position to put staff in place to make that hospital operational. And yet we go on and on and on. The spending has to come to a stop. I am suggesting that that is a project that should be put on hold and hope to find a buyer for it, although no buyer is going to pay more than the \$3 million which we said from the very beginning was no more than it is worth.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It has not been on hold for 5 years because salaries have been paid down there for 5 years and more. But we cannot go on and on with it.

The Honourable Minister said that cuts had to be made somewhere. The \$2.5 million is going to be thrown into Sherbourne now, more concrete and more steel.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The money that is being wasted and frittered away even in this health budget. He is now talking about all kinds of procedures which he knows will never see the light of day. Not to mention the money being thrown away at the St. Joseph Hospital. Those monies might better be redeployed in the health budget so that the people of Barbados can continue to expect the quality health service delivery to which they have become accustomed.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am still waiting to hear what the new improved, increased fees at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are going to be.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am happy to give the Honourable Member the information. The Honourable Member is asking many questions and I give the Committee the assurance that she will get answers.

I was saying, Sir, we have made arrangements with the insurance companies in Barbados to accept their cards, *et cetera*. As a result we expect that the revenue at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will be increased substantially. The fees which will be charged are fees which were recommended by the Management Committee of the Queen Elizabeth. I repeat that these fees are not going to be charged to those persons who now go to the hospital free. All the people who now go to the hospital free will be able to continue using the hospital freely. All the services which

are now given free will continue to be given free. But paying citizens and permanent residents will now pay a \$150 a day. If that is not reasonable I defy any right thinking Barbadian to say that \$150 a day....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Q.E.H. private ward \$150 a day. If you are not a permanent resident or a citizen of Barbados, you will pay, as usual, double that. The ward accommodation other than the intensive care unit which now costs \$20 a day will be doubled to \$40 a day. If you come from outside of the country you pay \$80 a day. 10.50 a.m.

We have created a surgical intensive care unit and that surgical intensive care unit will now be \$300 a day and the other intensive care unit will be \$250 a day. As I indicated the cost of running the first one is \$741 a day and I think that these charges are not unreasonable. These are for private patients who are sent there by consultants in the usual way. This is not for the person who comes in in an accident. This is for all those persons who normally are in the hospital who use these facilities; they will continue to use them free.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the middle class includes the Honourable Member the Leader of the Opposition, he cannot be emasculated, Sir. This talk about the middle class is very fine, but the middle class is supposed to be ...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: In fact a policeman who gets injured in the line of duty goes into a private ward free. That is the order. A policeman and fireman or woman who is injured in the course of duty goes to a private ward free. So, nothing will change in terms of the policy of who goes in free. I can go on and give you the rest of the details but these will be published.

I went to look for Lord Radio who was in the hospital and Lord Radio said to me that he was shocked when he heard what the fees are. He told me I could say so. He told me that if I, in his words, "hear any yard fowls complaining about how much they have to pay say that I, Lord Radio, say so". He told me to tell you all so.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, but he told me not to allow what happened when the last Black Rock Polyclinic was built by Hugh Brathwaite, do not allow that corruption to go on, that is what he told me. He told me that this new polyclinic will not be built the same way as the last one.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order, those remarks have to be withdrawn.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Why?

Miss B. A. MILLER: You are saying somebody is corrupt? It will have to be withdrawn, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members are on their feet. Can I hear what the Honourable Member is...

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is suggested that the Black Rock Polyclinic which was built during my tenure as Minister of Health was attended by corrupt practices. It must be withdrawn, Sir. He is ascribing to me improper...

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: The name has to be withdrawn.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I withdraw the name, Sir. Strike it from the record.

Yes, Sir, and this one at Black Rock is not an EEC project it is being paid for by the taxpayers. It has to be paid for. The Honourable Member must know that it is under the hand of the contractor. It has to be paid for whether it is EEC or otherwise, it has to be paid for by the taxpayers.

If we are going to have a debate in which it is going to be suggested that there is improper activity going on with regard to the Black Rock Polyclinic all I am saying is that it will not be done in the same way as the last Black Rock polyclinic was completed. The methodology will not be the same. I just wish the Honourable Member to be aware that I am also aware of the kinds of innuendos which are put out from time to time and we all can spout them. If the Honourable Member wishes this debate to go in that direction I will be happy to accommodate her.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is true and you are not going to accuse me of any either. Yes you did, by implication.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have warned already about interruptions. I am not going to do so again. If Honourable Members feel uncomfortable sitting in the Chamber, well then they can take their comfort when my ruling obtains.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You can't come in here and try to put that implication just because of some coincidence of circumstances and not expect to get a return. Are you mad?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes. The absolute truth.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can the Honourable Member get back to Head 36?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member...

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. I rise only on points of order, Sir. I rise on a point of order to say that the Minister's speech for the last few seconds has been totally irrelevant, addressed in personal remarks about you, and comment in here, about people being mad, Sir. I would expect that the Minister will deal with his subject rather than be so rattled while saying that he is not rattled.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, you are not going to make a speech. That is not a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I understand the Honourable Member, Sir. The Honourable Member for the City said that she was looking at this document on page 11 and said she read a paragraph from page 11 which says, "there is an increase in the number of overweight children being seen in the child health clinics." Special attention is being given to the weaning diets and weaning practices."

Now, Sir, taken on its own and what the Honourable Member said, she went on to say that this was an indication in the case of malnutrition. I think it is unfortunate, Sir, that the Honourable Member did not take the time to point out that page 11 is dealing with the whole question of nutrition and pregnancy, the importance of breast feeding, multi-mixes in weaning your baby, diabetic clinics, open days for diabetics, diet and diabetes. In other words, Sir...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir, I prefaced my remarks with the words that this was to be found on page 11 and that it dealt with nutrition services. That Government closed the nutrition centre.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The point of order raised by the Honourable Member is not relevant. She is reading from the document and saying that the place was closed. Mr. Chairman, in 15 minutes I am not going to read the document. What I am saying is that the impression which she left was that the increase in the number of overweight children was the result of malnutrition and what is being dealt with under the heading Nutrition Services, between pages 10 to 11, has nothing to do with malnutrition. It has to do with proper dieting and that is the point I am making. You left the impression that the cutbacks were causing malnutrition.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. I address my remarks to you, Sir. I went on to make the point that it had to do with poor diet, people eating the wrong things, children being fed the wrong diet. What other interpretation now can you put on that?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, all of us heard what she said. Even on the point of order she said that this Government closed the nutrition centre. Let me read it, Sir.

"The National Nutrition Centre continued its efforts to improve the standard of nutrition in the country through activities which have been decentralised and are now being carried out at the Polyclinics."

Only a person who is intent on creating mischief would fail to recognise in the opening paragraphs of this subject that the National Nutrition Centre has continued in a different form and that it is being done at the Polyclinics. When you say that they closed the nutrition centre you are giving the impression that the Nutrition Centre was closed down and nothing replaced it.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member's statement impliedly and expressly accused the Honourable Member of a person intent on creating mischief. I submit to you, Sir, that is unparliamentary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: How come she did not hear that. That is very strange I said that about the Honourable Member and she did not hear it. The Honourable Member is wasting time. Sir, she went on to indicate that a number of cuts could happen but I am going to deal with the more substantive things.

The new prescription form for the drug service which, if I heard the Honourable Member correctly, she indicated that this was really the beginning of the means test. It is no such thing, Sir. It is the result of the management techniques which I talked about, where after examination of the prescribing practices of doctors in Barbados a study was done, which demonstrated that not enough care was being taken in the writing of prescriptions, in the methodology for prescriptions and as a result there was much wastage of medicines that were either over prescribed or related factors. The result was that the formulary committee of the drug service and the sub-committee set up to examine this matter came up with a design which has been acceptable to all of the consultants outside of the Hospital and now within the hospital, that we will have a single type of prescription form which will allow for information to be tabulated and allow the Drug Service to keep tabs on the drugs...

11.00 a.m.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Oh, Lord have mercy!

Miss B. A. MILLER: You cannot call on the Lord who does not sit in this Chamber anyhow. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister is misleading the House in respect to this prescription form. This prescription form is now going to have not only name but address and a whole bunch of other information on it. There is going to be little or no room to write more than one or possibly two prescriptions on it. If you have to go to the doctor and there are 3 or 4 items, it cannot now fit onto the prescription form. I cannot see the relevance of having one's address on a prescription form to answer what he is saying is the need.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Ignore the "he", Sir. The Honourable Member does not understand because management techniques are alien to her own concepts. What we are pointing out here is this. The reason why they need to know the address of the person, for example, is that people belong to a particular catchment area and we have persons who go from catchment area to catchment area getting drugs at different polyclinics. We have a system now. We are developing a management information system which will allow for evaluation and which will allow for reconciling of the amount of drugs which have been brought with the amount of drugs that have been dispensed.

I cannot think that anybody who understands even remotely the techniques of management can find any fault with this. In any event, a prescription that is written for an individual that has the individual's name and address on it is one of the surest ways of ensuring that the individual for whom the prescription is written gets the prescription.

The other factor is that there are persons...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, first, regarding the question of the Black Rock Polyclinic, they wanted to know who is the owner of the land. We came to this House with a resolution to acquire the land from Mr. Louis Redman who lives in Black Rock. Louis Redman, in his own right, lives at Washington Avenue. We gave all of the pertinent reasons why we were moving the Black Rock Polyclinic from its present headquarters. There is no question that that particular polyclinic, converted as it was, has proved never to have been satisfactory either for the persons who work or for the persons who go there.

Secondly, regarding the question of parking, the present parking facilities at the Black Rock Polyclinic, as it now exists, are less than the number of car parking places that have been included in the plan for the new polyclinic. If this Honourable Member, Sir, who is not interested in the answers so much as she seems to be interested in the questions, if she does not wish to get detailed information, we will be happy not to give her also.

In so far as the St. Joseph Hospital, she wanted to know how much has been spent at the St. Joseph Hospital. It is just short of \$9 million according to the information that I have.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The cost of the St. Joseph Hospital was \$3 million. Sir, the Honourable Members have been Ministers and they know. The capital cost of the hospital is not included in the refurbishment. When I speak again, I will indicate what work has been done at the St. Joseph Hospital.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, I represent a constituency which has a number of health services institutions there. One is a home for the elderly and a polyclinic. There are a few areas that I wish to ask the Honourable Minister about Government's policy. As he has just finished with the Drug Service, I want to deal with that. I want to know why consideration cannot be given to putting under the Health Service drugs for glaucoma. I come across it all of the time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. Glaucoma is entitled to drugs and, if your constituents are not getting it, then something is wrong. Glaucoma falls under diabetes, or cetera.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am very glad to hear that because I have had some difficulty with it. I would like that to be well known. It may fall under diabetes, but there are certain prescriptions for specific drugs which may not fall under the drugs that are prescribed in the Health Service. That is what I would like to know. I think we had better get this right. I am not raising this in any contentious manner. This is a very serious matter because for some reason or the other there are a number of cases in this constituency that have come to me and I have tried my best to find out what is the position. About 3 months ago when the matter came to my attention for the second case, I was then informed that it was not under the Service. The mechanism that is used is that the person has to get somebody to recommend them to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital you may be able to get it via a prescription at the Queen Elizabeth

Hospital. That is the mechanism that has to be used and many people have this problem. This is a very important point and the drugs are very expensive.

The second thing that I would like to raise in connection with this also is that there is a treatment for glaucoma. As I understand it, there are a number of machines which are available in Barbados but not necessarily at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I well recall, when the National Health Levy was introduced that as a result of representations which were made to the Government at the time, a decision was taken that the Medical Aids Scheme would be expanded not only to include treatment outside of Barbados but also treatment within Barbados where the Hospital and the Government Services did not have the requisite equipment, but that equipment was available in Barbados and under the Medical Aids Scheme treatment could be given and one could benefit. I want to know why that is not in operation in relation to that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member has given way, Sir. The answer to that question is that that is the policy. That is the present policy. It is the practice. For example, we have carried it so far that those persons who are disabled and mentally subnormal who have to get their teeth cleaned or get some procedure from a dentist get it under the Medical Aid Scheme where they are sent to the orthodontist here in Barbados.

11.10 a.m.

I wish to give the Honourable Member the assurance that it is the policy - I do not what would have been the specific difficulty which he had - that where a procedure cannot be done in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and it can be done in the private practice in Barbados, that person is entitled to assistance under the Medical Aid Scheme.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, in the Chief Medical Officer's Report for the years 1987 and 1988, the green document, at page 3 early on under the head Health Policy, this is what it says, and this has been the philosophy of successive Governments in this country: "The philosophy of the Government of Barbados with respect to health is that the right to health care is a fundamental human right without which none of the other rights guaranteed under the Constitution can be obtained." That has been a guiding principle for successive Governments in this country, but I am deeply concerned, Sir, looking at this year's Estimates of Expenditure for the Ministry of Health, that the particular right to quality health care is being deliberately and systematically eroded by this Minister of Health, who, as he himself just said, made recommendations to the Cabinet.

There are other matters which concern me and I would wish to hear the Minister on them. The Minister

has **been** fulminating both here and abroad on the question of HIV infection and AIDS. World Health data, Mr. Chairman, discloses that the incidence of AIDS is highest in the world in the western hemisphere region, and that within the western hemisphere, including North America, South America, Central **America** and the Caribbean, the incidence of AIDS is highest in the Bahamas, in Bermuda, in Trinidad and Tobago and in Barbados. We have one of the highest per capita in the world.

The Minister of **Health** has gone far and wide on this Government's commitment to **services** to be provided in respect of AIDS, and so it was with a great sense of shock that I read at page 69, **Subprogram 03, HIV/AIDS – Control and Prevention**, where it registers a 50% cut. How does the Minister reconcile this with his statements in the Press both here and abroad that the Barbados Government is deeply concerned? Only last week I read in the newspaper that the Minister of Health **acknowledged** that there was a great deal of money for AIDS out there in the international community, but that there was a duty on us as Barbadians to help ourselves as far as we can. Is this the way we are proposing to do it? A 50% cut? Do you know where the majority of these AIDS cases are to be found, Sir? In the 15 to 29 age grouping. Do you know when the victims are contracting this disease? During their years at school, and yet we do not have a proper family life education programme with a realistic sex education **component** in it, neither at the secondary nor at the primary level, and that is now imperative if we are going to fight this disease. How do we do it when we **see** here such a significant cut in the vote for AIDS?

I would now like to draw your attention to the Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report. These reports are depended upon everywhere in the world, and particularly here in the Caribbean. You must ask the Minister why they are so late, but I am grateful for these small mercies. I know that the Chief Medical Officer did her best to get them ready. You are the Minister and you must answer that. With all the \$40 million in management techniques, you tell us why. I am referring you, Mr. Chairman, to the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer for the year 1989 at page 2. This is a matter of deep concern. When the giggling has subsided over there, perhaps the Chairman will hear me.

On page 2, subheading Population and Demographic Trends, and I read at the last paragraph: "Both the birth rate and the death rate increased in 1989." The birth rate, Sir, increasing from 15.2 per thousand in 1988 to 16.1 per thousand in 1989. There is nothing all right about that, Sir, that is the thin edge of a trend which I expect to continue in the years of management of our economy by the IMF. It has been a trend observed in other countries under the management of the IMF. We have barely got into the programme and already the trend is beginning to establish itself. I want to know how in the face of this the Minister

of Health could recommend to the Cabinet that it should cut the subvention or the grant to the Barbados Family Planning Association. I want him to justify that.

It does not amaze me, Mr. Chairman, that this too is a subject for frivolity on that side of the House. The death rate is **also** increasing and there are **implications** there too. That is not stabilising the population. You see, you never look at the **rate** of natural increase. This is where people fool themselves, Sir. I know whereof I speak on this. I am supposed to be a UN expert on this, so nobody is going to question me on this. There is something called natural increase. In the face of this, and bearing in mind all of the implications, when you look at the Tables in the Chief Medical Officer's Report – I have waited for this for so long – and you look at the ten principal causes of death printed here at rates per thousand, Sir, and you then look through any page where you see a Table, and you look at where the **real** savage cuts are occurring in the Health Budget you begin to wonder what considerations informed the Minister of Health in the recommendations that he put to the Cabinet.

11.20 a.m.

There are 10 principal causes of death in Barbados. Malignant neoplasms – cancers are at the top. Another table at page 18 shows that in the year 1989 there were 451 cases – it tends to be a disease of older people – 345 of those were 65 and over. In the 45 – 65 age grouping, there were 86. You will find cancers among children under leukaemia. You will see that the largest of malignant neoplasms in this table showing deaths by age groups and causes occur in malignant neoplasms of the prostate. There are 76 cases. The next highest number would be malignant neoplasms of the stomach – 55 cases. You go back and look at these 10 principal causes of death: heart diseases, diabetes. It is suggested – and I **speak** subject to correction. I would wish to be corrected if I am wrong –

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the year of the Report?

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is 1989, Sir. The latest that has come to hand.

The instance of diabetes is perhaps the highest per capita in the world. It is a subject ripe for much more research than is currently going on it in this part of the world and in management of it. There is a surgical ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital that I visited not so long ago. Every single person in that ward was an amputee. Some were double amputees. There was only one cause, diabetes. It is one of the biggest killers in this country. The CMO Report says that, not me.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am saying, Sir, that the health profile in Barbados very much resembles the health

profile in any developed country of the world. The significance of that is where are the cuts coming. You say that there have to be cuts. I would have thought it would have been more selective with the knife. Where the cuts are coming does not lead us to believe that Government has any appreciation of where its priorities in respect of this sector ought to lie. Barbadians are going to want to know. Indeed, the AIDS Task Force led by Professor Walrond is on the television nearly every night to try to promote AIDS control, AIDS prevention. How is the Minister going to justify a cut of the size that we see in these Estimates?

There are other matters which fall under the Ministry of Health which we have not even begun to address. There is the sewerage project. There is the sanitation service. I do not want anybody to feel that I am not going to get to them.

We are concerned about the sewerage project, Sir, and about the tourist industry both on the South and West coasts of Barbados and all of us - 7/8th of the population of Barbados or close enough to that - live in St. Michael and Christ Church, now expanding into St. George, and to some extent to the St. Philip area in the coastal terraces.

Prior to 1986, the plan for the sewerage of the south coast was very advanced. This is now 1992, people are using package plants for partial sewerage treatment. Raw, partially treated sewage is being dumped into the waters of the west and south coast every day. I cannot begin in this debate to describe the degree of environmental damage.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: If you look at the World Bank Report dated August 9, 1991 on Barbados, there is more devoted to the environment in this report than on any other subject. Not because they cannot find anything else to write about but because it is a major priority. Again, when I look at the Estimates I do not see anything to lead me to believe that the Government is at all appreciative of this. We have an environmental engineering division.

You see, when they came into Government in 1986 and immediately put the axe on the Ministry of the Environment - imagine, in Barbados, we have no Ministry of the Environment - and then fragmented it through 3 or 4 Ministries where the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing and sometimes some hands are not working at all. The part of it which falls under Health I am concerned about. I would want to hear from the Minister of Health on this.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time has expired.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I will come back to it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is asking a number of questions in a way which requires immediate response. First of all, the sewerage project. The South coast sewerage project has been an ongoing project which has reached the stage where submission to the IADB occurred late last year. It is going to cost in excess of \$46 million. So there is no point anybody trying to grand stand on this. The Inter-American Development Bank, at the level of the managers, when the feasibility was being processed indicated that they are not satisfied that we have established beyond a 'shadow of doubt' that there is sufficient pollution on the south coast to warrant the project and they have asked for further studies. They have given us a grant and those studies are being completed under a sub-contract with Bellairs Institute. We believe that the studies will be completed within the next 4 months and then the project will resume its process through the Inter-American Development Bank's chain of command.

It is well known and should be understood that a project of this nature takes approximately 5 years from the period of gestation before it becomes a project. The South Coast/West Coast project. This Government got the IADB to agree that we would tack on a study of the west coast to the south coast project so that we would be able to do the pre-feasibility for the west coast at the same time we were doing the application for the south coast. The Honourable Member is not behaving like a former Minister to talk about "even the Bible took 7 years." The Honourable Member must know that...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, even in respect of...

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. I never said what the Honourable Member is saying that I said. What I said was that even in the Bible within a 7-year period many projects were accomplished, which is not true of the Democratic Labour Party Government in respect to the sewerage project.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: They were not able to do much for the Honourable Member none the less. They tried.

Sir, the south coast project. We have been able to tack on the west coast project to the south coast project and we expect that approval of the loan should come some time during this year.

The pre-feasibility study was done by a firm from Canada that won the contract and prepared all of the designs. The project is ready to go. We have identified the outfall position. We have identified where the sewerage plant is going to go. We have identified all of the areas that are necessary. So it is not desirable that we should

have any kind of suggestion that nothing is being done. The south coast project has a project manager who has been directing. Everyone knows that he is one of the most competent persons functioning in the public sector. Let us not spend any more time on that.

The Honourable Member talked about the AIDS cut. I am glad the opportunity is presented to correct an impression which, because of the techniques which are used in electronic journalism in Barbados, had an excerpt from a speech which I was making to the AIDS Society convey the wrong impression. I was making the point that AIDS does not respect any person, therefore, we cannot command a cut in AIDS *per se*, that AIDS will press on without question. That information, unfortunately, was conveyed in such a way as to give the impression that I was saying there could not be a cut in the AIDS vote. 11.30 p.m.

But that is not the point. If you turn to the AIDS vote, Sir, you would see that we have reduced the amount from \$200 000 to \$100 000. If you examine page 69, and you look at the column's actual expenditure 1990-91, you will see that actual expenditure coming from the Consolidated Fund of Barbados was \$75 000. That is the actual expenditure; but we spent in excess of \$600 000 on AIDS. If in 1992 it is intended that we will have a figure of \$671 896 coming for the AIDS programme from external sources, these are not external sources such as the IADB, and, therefore, they will not show up in the Estimates of Barbados.

It is indicative, because Barbados has been part of the management programme for the global programme on AIDS. Barbados has been a member of the Management Committee for the AIDS Programme for the entire world. This Minister and Professor Walrond have been the delegates. We are fully seized of all the factors relating to how much money we can get from where. Therefore, in our medium term plan for 1992, the Government will, in fact, be spending \$614 979 on AIDS which is not in the Estimates because it is anticipated...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. I made the point. I said I know there is a lot of external financing out there for AIDS, even though foreign aid is being cut. I said, using the Minister's own words, that we must be seen to help ourselves so why do we cut our own domestic vote?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Because we are not going to be spending it and because in the circumstances it will not be necessary. You do not just simply throw money at something. The people in the Ministry know. That is part of the management we have been talking about.

Under this Head there has been discussion of the cut in Other Personal Emoluments. It is no more secret. An

examination would demonstrate that what has happened from time immemorial is that a sum of money has always been allocated to Other Personal Emoluments. That sum of money has not borne any real relationship to the exact amount of money that would be required to service the staff for vacation leave, *et cetera*.

No attempts were made, for example, to stagger leave in such a way as to ensure there was no hiatus with persons who would come in for substitution. None of these things was done in the past. What we have been able to do and demonstrate successfully in the Ministry of Health is that the numbers which now appear in the Estimates and which appear to be cuts can and will service the exact number of persons who are currently involved and employed in the Ministry. These numbers will service those persons.

What we have to do is simply ensure that the vacation leave, *et cetera* is handled in a particular way. For example, whereas before there was a certain automaticity in the provision of substitutes for persons who were going on leave, by staggering leave and arranging it in a particular way we are now able to function without the requirement of the large number of substitutes which used to be the norm. That accounts for the changes which occur in the column "Other Personal Emoluments."

The question of 400 people, for example, being laid off from the Ministry of Health does not arise, did not arise and could not arise. To discuss Personal Emoluments in terms of cuts is to demonstrate a misunderstanding of the system of management which we have been able to bring to bear. There are 1 563 persons at the moment on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital staff. I believe between 110 and 120 persons were laid off from the global Ministry of Health when they had the layoffs. If I am wrong by a few, I will accept that. The fact is that of the 1 563 persons in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, what used to happen is they used to strike a mean and use that mean as the basis for determining what would be put into the Estimates to relieve those persons who go on vacation, sick leave, *et cetera*.

What we have done is this: Now that we have information systems and that information is available promptly, we are able to specify how much money will be needed in the particular areas. I hope that explanation will save us from further onslaughts about Other Personal Emoluments.

To come back to AIDS, Sir. We have submitted a medium term plan, as we are required to submit, to the international agency. The World Health Organisation has a division called the global programme on AIDS. We have submitted that Barbados is going to be needing a total of \$1 188 387 over the period 1992-93. Barbados itself

will be putting up in kind and cash \$1 270 958 for the AIDS Programme. That constitutes **the** total that we will be using in the AIDS Programme, approximately \$3 million in 1992 and 1993.

If anyone wishes to have the breakdown, we have the following programmes: Management Prevention of Sexual Transmission, Prevention of **Perinatal** Transmission, Prevention of Transmission By Blood, Reduction in the Impact on Individuals and Groups in Society; and **Epidermilological** Surveillance which will form the totality of our programme.

The Honourable **Member** also trotted out **the** statistics about morbidity and mortality. Those statistics have not changed. There has been no change in the pattern in Barbados. I have spoken elsewhere at length about the chronic diseases. Malignant **neoplasm** and heart diseases and **cerebrovascular** diseases have been the leading causes of **death** in Barbados for the last 10 years or so and, in fact, even before that.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am responding to **the** questions raised by **the** Honourable **Member**. The Honourable Member cannot have it both ways. If the Honourable Member has one Member **getting** up 4 or 5 times...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member addressing the Chair?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I run this how I see it. This is the Ministry of Health.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will **the** Honourable Member address the Chair, please?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable **Member** was like Poonka all over the place and you are there sitting now trying to tell me how to run this?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has to do is to get up and demonstrate what he is saying.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that I am going to respond to the questions they ask in the way they ask them. They have been giving the impression to the public that we have cut the AIDS vote. I am saying that the amount of money available for AIDS will be no less than is required for AIDS management in Barbados over the next 2 years. Looking at the numbers and saying that we

have cut it ignores our ability to demonstrate how much money we actually **need** to run a programme.
11.40 a.m.

Do you think we are going to have budgeting by accretion?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Seventy-five thousand dollars is what we used in 1990. But what we have not been doing is making a big fanfare about it because we do not wish **the** international donors to come and say that we are not putting forward our own funding. That is what I was saying on the Saturday when the television picked out a piece and carried it and left **the** impression that something negative was happening.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has caught my eye. But I should just like to make a comment because there have been some protests about the control of the debate. Let me **say that**, for the number of questions that are asked, if they are seriously asked, the Minister must have time to respond to them and he cannot speak for more than 15 minutes at any one time. **Honourable** Members must understand, if they ask for information, that the only way it can be provided is if the Minister is allowed to respond. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I did not **intend** to take up **the** Honourable Member on his chest beating about the **new** management information systems, as a result of which they were able to identify the areas where there was over provision in the past, particularly in Personal Emoluments, and that an analysis of **the** Estimates would show that as the real reason for the cuts.

The truth of the matter is that, if you look at page 79, under the Drug Service you will see that that cannot be borne out. There has been a substantial cut in Supplies and Materials, Item 210. Supplies and Materials in the year 1992-93, \$13 695 000. In the last year the Approved Estimates provided \$14 254 000. What is perhaps more significant, far more significant, is that the actual expenditure in the year 1990-91 was \$16 839 000.

Sir, I am asking the Minister of Health two questions. I want to know whether or not there are any arrears owed to the suppliers. I want to know in respect of the Drug Service now whether or not there are any arrears owed to the druggists and others. The second thing is whether it is not a fact that, given this level of cut, some decision has to be taken as to the reduction in the Supplies and Materials that are going to be bought. Prices have not gone down, as far as I know. If prices have gone down I would be very glad to hear that. But a \$3 million cut in \$13 million...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ...from \$16 million in 1990-91! That was the actual expenditure. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been around here long enough to know that there has not been a year without supplementaries for the Ministry of Health. The fact that last year you voted less does not mean that you spent only \$14 million because you owe people. You did not bring the supplementary, as usual.

So that when you are coming here now and telling me that for Supplies and Materials you are going to vote \$3 million less than you actually expended in 1990-91 and that it is as a result of this great new management systems that you have introduced, I am saying I cannot accept that. I can accept the point about personal emoluments but I cannot accept the point about Supplies and Materials.

The second thing about Supplies and Materials. If you go to page 74 – we are going right through Supplies and Materials to show you where the real cuts have taken place – Supplies and Materials, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, page 74, \$6 665 000 actually expended in 1990-91. Eight million dollars voted last year. Revised \$7.4 million. Again there is no new management brought to that. What new management what? The whole structure of running the health institutions like the hospitals in Barbados does not lend itself to any proper management principle because you run them like a civil service department. If you really want to run them you have to create an executive board to run them. We were going through that exercise a thousand times.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Go into that? Do not come to me with all of this big talk about new management systems. You have not introduced anything new at all. Absolutely none. You have not changed any of the personnel who are running it. What are you going to introduce to me? Tell me that. You have not changed any of the personnel who for the last 20 or 25 years have been running it. What new are you going to do since the people who are going to run it are still the same people basically? And with all of these new techniques that you talk about. They are professionals. They would be aware of the professional journals and of all these step down and step up systems that you are talking about.

Aside

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is the whole point. Who says they are going to be done now?

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: They have been done. I see. Again, Sir, with Supplies. This is the significant thing that

we have to go through, Supplies and Materials. The next page, Sir, is 76. In this one the Psychiatric Hospital, there has not been too much, only a little \$400 000. That is small. There may be a little manoeuvre for wastage and you will say you cut that out. There may be a little manoeuvre there, a little wastage there. But the actual expenditure 2 years ago was \$2.6 million.

But as for the basic position with the Psychiatric Hospital, I also want to raise another question here. I want to know the policy of the Minister about the creation of a unit to deal with drug cases many of whom are now being dealt with in the Psychiatric Hospital for which I understand proposals have been put to the Government and have received some kind of reasonable reception – that is my understanding – about the utilization of part of the St. Joseph Hospital, not the main St. Joseph Hospital, but a unit there to create a drug rehabilitation unit. That is what I would like to know.

Because my understanding is that neither the Prison nor the Psychiatric Hospital is the proper institutional framework to treat these types of cases that you have. There is a thing called the Richmond Foundation. There does not seem to be much publicity in respect of its activities, but I believe it is still in existence, and you also have a house somewhere in St. Lucy. I would like to get information on that.

The other area that I would like to get information on, Sir, is a very important matter of the elderly, Sir. Increasingly, Sir, my own visual examination has indicated quite clearly both in Bridgetown and in other areas of Barbados and in Oistin town too, increasingly a number of people who are sleeping on streets and at the side of the road, not at the side of the road in Oistin, Christ Church. They sleep in the market. You have people who are released from the Psychiatric Hospital, older people who have nowhere to go.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am telling you this. This is a fact of life. Some of them are sleeping on the sidewalks and also in the market at Oistin. I want to know about this because the Government must have a policy in relation to the elderly.
11.50 a.m.

When I first came into politics there used to be an old people's home in every parish. I remember the arguments we had then that when we abolished the Vestry system we would then have had the District Councils and would consolidate, save costs and improve services while reducing the number of homes. Now we have no local government and, while it appears to me that what we are going to have is an improvement, certainly, in the services for those who are lucky enough to get in, for the large number who

are not able to get into the governmental institutions we are going to have vast deterioration in the standard of services.

Once upon a time it used to be integration between the Public Health Services in these matters. The Public Health Officers used to be able to report to the National Assistance Officers and others cases which they met in the course of their rounds and were deserving of help. Today it is an exceedingly difficult thing for any Member of Parliament to get up in here and say with certainty what he should do if he is consulted by his constituents as to how to get an old person into one of these homes. It used to be a simple matter but it is not a simple matter any longer. I have tried.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: In my constituency, Sir, there is a house, 20 x 10, in which 22 people live. I have been trying for years. I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central tried too, in his period of time, to get some kind of public welfare in the form of housing for these people. Of course you can get a stove or you can get weekly money for them, but the delivery of services has to be looked into, because now you have centralisation and lack that intimate contact which used to take place as a result of having another tier of Government that is non-existent now. You are dealing with a National Assistance Board, you are dealing with a Public Welfare Department, you are dealing with the Public Health Department and you are dealing with National Housing, a whole multiplicity of agencies. I feel embarrassed sometime when I pick up the phone or get the Secretary of the Constituency to try to follow through these simple requests.

We also have the problem of people coming back from abroad – recently we had one in our constituency – people who have been abroad 30 or 40 years and have come back and cannot get into an institution. Some of them have enough pension that they can pay, but not enough to pay in the private old people's homes. This is going to be a very serious problem and I do not see any provision at all, nor have I seen recently any statements by the Government about its policy in relation to the expansion or otherwise of the accommodation of these people.

I know there are a number of other institutions that say they can take care of this. I know the Home Help Service. After all we introduced the Home Help Service to try and cater for the active elderly. We have tried that but that is now, I am told, the subject of some kind of change too. I would like to have an answer on that.

The last area is children. Don't let us fool ourselves. We have stray children in Barbados too, don't let us fool ourselves, we have – and girls at that. Somebody said that there was an increase in the number of delinquent young

people. We have problems with that too. Now where do you go? If you close these children's homes and you say you are fostering children out, really, with respect, we don't get these reports up to date, that is another thing. I am sorry that is it. I see here St. Andrew's Children Centre, as a hospital for the mentally subnormal. I will deal with that at the particular time. These are a number of questions. I hope the Honourable Member can get accurate information for me about the glaucoma because our information on this side is not good.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on glaucoma, the fact is that the Honourable Member is right. Glaucoma has not yet been included. All others have been. It is included in the Development Plan 1988 to 1993 so it is expected that it will be included in the next chart.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South ...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, I do. I indicated that I gave wrong information. I have no difficulty with that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, he made...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me hear the point of order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am trying to help him clean up Hansard. The earlier statement, as I heard it when I was doing other work, was to the effect that glaucoma was in fact included for free drugs. The Minister has now said that information that he gave the House was not accurate. I am not saying that he lied to the House, Sir, but I am saying that he misled the House and he ought to ask ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point of order is made.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He ought to ask that he be allowed to withdraw the earlier statement. I think that is the proper way, Sir. I am not making sport.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Whatever the Honourable Member wishes. I withdraw the earlier indication that glaucoma was in. I was obviously mistaken. In the last couple of months we have put in 3 additional diseases and I thought glaucoma was one. It has not yet been put in.

The Honourable Member raised some questions concerning the reduction of supplies in the vote and he mentioned three of them. I want to tell him that on the contrary it is a result of the management techniques. Let me explain. First of all he said the same people are doing it. The answer is, that is not so. We now have a Deputy Director at the Hospital who has a Masters Degree in Business Administration, as well as a Masters in

Hospital Administration. That particular person has in fact implemented systems which demonstrated that in one department alone, that we have been able to save \$52 000 a month at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. When I first saw it I said it was a mistake and I sent and asked for the information and they have demonstrated that they have been able, in the area of supplies, to reduce it by \$52 000 a month. I expect that these systems are going to be applied, as the Honourable Member said, as if it were a private Hospital.

Frankly, if I had my way the Hospital would have a Board. As you will recall, in the 1970s, an attempt was made. Some people were misled and misinformed and as a result it was not done but the Queen Elizabeth Hospital would be much better off if it were run by a Board and if its subventions were able to be carried forward so that any savings from one year could go on to the next year. That is a policy direction in which we should head. That is a matter which obviously cannot be done by the Government by itself, it has to be done in consultation with the workers representatives. From a purely policy point of view, left to me that is where I would go.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When you were the Minister you were not able to do anything.

Mr. Chairman, Sir ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is given permission to address the Chair. All others must be silent.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member asked about the Richmond Fellowship, the Richmond Fellowship has in fact maintained its connections with Barbados. They have established a private half-way house at Ellerton which is now going smoothly and the Government has established a public half-way house at St. Peter - it is really now St. Lucy with the new boundaries - at Colleton House. That is working very well.

On the question of provision for the elderly, this is one of the uses to which the St. Joseph Hospital will be put. The Villa Maria Convent has been subdivided. Half of it, something like 88 beds and/or rooms, will be allocated to the elderly for precisely that class of person that cannot afford to pay the exorbitant fees at the private elderly homes but who, nonetheless, will prefer to pay. That is the last thing that remains to be completed at the St. Joseph Hospital.

On drug rehabilitation, we expect from April 1992 to open the Drug Rehabilitation Unit at the St. Joseph Hospital. Some time during April/May this year, we expect that the Drug Rehabilitation Unit at the St. Joseph Hospital

will be opened. The staff is in place, the arrangements are being put in place and the provision is being made in this year's Estimates. It is part of the \$2 million which is being voted.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It does not matter if I make 11 announcements. Everybody knows that last year we were directed by the Opposition that we should pay some attention to cutting expenditure and we have cut expenditure.

12.00 noon

Regarding the question as to when St. Joseph Hospital will open fully, we expect that before June there will be out-patient services at that hospital for the people in the north which will help to relieve many of the pressures which now attend the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I will come to this House with a statement whenever we are about to begin a particular programme.

On the question of getting old people off the street, that is a problem for Barbados. It is a relatively new problem. We used to have a few characters but now more and more people have started being on the street. We have a programme which we have not been making public statements about. It is a programme by which we have made provision at the Geriatric Hospital for persons collected off of the street to be taken there and, I am going to use this word, be "detoxified". But really, decontaminated would be a better description and we feed them. The problem we have has to do with the human rights of the individual. When once you have taken that person, you have bathed them, and you have given a fresh set of clothing and you have fed them and they are feeling good, there is no way in which you can keep them. Many of those persons revert to their behaviour pattern and we have a recurring situation where you are picking up the same people over and over again. But we have not been able to, and we are grateful if the Honourable Members can come up with the way in which we can, take persons off the street and keep them. This is a problem not only in Barbados but it is across the world where persons have their rights. This Minister is not going to be using any Vagrancy Act to deprive anybody of his or her rights, because even those persons who are somewhere in the outer-most part of their existence have rights. We have had to walk very carefully. We take these persons up but they are not criminals. In most cases, they have done nothing that can be described as criminal and, therefore, we do not interfere with them.

I do not think there is any other question that needs to be answered at this point. I give way to somebody else.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Christ Church West.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, no matter how many times the Minister intervenes in this debate he is not going to remove the actuality that the surgeon general of the Prime Minister's Office has massacred his Ministry with enormous cuts. He may get up 50 times to give all sorts of excuses that he is going to get money from private sources for HIV or AIDS or that he has better management techniques. But when we look at the Estimates, this Ministry has had the second biggest cut in the whole of the Estimates. Now I am going to use the assumption of the Honourable Minister and debate him. He wants to get us and tilt us off from a debate. I am going to use the assumption that he has improved management techniques.

I want to ask him why that has taken him 5 years of wasted money by bad management if he tells me that he is going to deliver the same sort of services by bad management over these 5 years, since he has been spending – in his words, as he said that nothing is going to suffer – so much money to deliver the services that he was delivering formerly.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It is the civil servants. You see, Sir. The Minister lives in a world of fantasy. I am going to talk about actuality and give his cases. I know as a fact that the Hospital is still short in many departments of both personnel, equipment, and supplies for the proper management of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The Minister had a report from BAMP. He has seen it. I read the report since 1990. BAMP did an overall survey of the Hospital. The Minister would know it, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I received no survey from BAMP. If BAMP did a survey for the Honourable Member, that is a different matter.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: That shows the low regard in which he has since he did not receive the BAMP Survey. All of the people who work at the Hospital such as the consultants, registrars, junior doctors, and nursing care got together and did a detailed survey of department after department.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I do not believe that any document exists. I would like to see the document.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, the Minister would know that Committee had on it some of the people that he knows very well, Sir, such as Dr. Adrian Lord, Dr. George Mahy, Dr. George Nicholson, Dr. John Shepherd, Dr. Michael Brown, and Dr. Belle.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can you tie this to the Head under discussion?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Sir. That is what I am talking about, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member is going to quote from a document, Sir, the Ministry of Health officials cannot say that they have seen this document and the Honourable Member has to make this a document of the House.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I know more about what happens in this Minister's Ministry than he knows. Can you imagine a Minister who is going to tell me now that he has not seen a document that is in his Ministry and that his officials would have done by the professionals who have to operate the Queen Elizabeth Hospital?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: There is no document in my Ministry that any officials have. If that is a political brief which he has, let him say so. He cannot get up and say that there is a document in my Ministry. A document that comes into a Ministry has to be an official document or it cannot come into the Ministry. He cannot come in here with that.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I have not finished with him yet, Sir. I want to tell the Minister that there is not one department in the QEH under his management that is not short in terms of supplies and personnel for managing that department including the need for additional nurses. The Minister knows that.

I want to go a little bit further, Sir, and say to the Minister that I have found...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have given the assurance that Members will be able to make their contribution uninterrupted.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I have had complaints made to me of people who have gone into the QEH for an operation and they found that they have not got the proper surgical aids to deal with their problems. I have cited in this Committee before the particular case where they had to send out to get the surgical band or gauze to deal with the problem of a person being operated on. The Minister does not hear these things because he is too willing to make himself look good with the Press instead of investigating what is happening.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. All that I am saying to the Honourable Member is that I have never heard him cite it, so cite it again. I want to hear the details. I am challenging him to give me the details. I want to answer him.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am suggesting that this Minister is really not being frank with this Committee. I do not accept from the Minister that he made

any recommendation to the Prime Minister about how he is going to increase fees.

12.10 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of **order**, Sir. The Honourable Member is making a clear implication that I have lied to this Committee. I stated categorically when I got up that in 1987 I directed the Hospital to take a certain course and that what has emerged is as a result of that. For him to imply that I am lying to this House, Sir, is a breach of the rules and I ask the Honourable Member to withdraw the remark.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has indicated that he does not believe it. I can understand the concern of the Honourable Member, but in my view I do not know how we can make him believe.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: With **respect**, Sir, he started the statement by saying that the Honourable Member is not being frank with this Committee. Even with the worst interpretation, to start the sentence with that is a clear implication that he is **attacking** my integrity. I think the Honourable Member should withdraw it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would think in that circumstance the Honourable Member would wish to rephrase it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I can only rephrase by telling the Minister that he has said to the Committee that he made a recommendation but I personally do not accept it. I will say this, Sir. The Minister has given the impression to me, in his speech, that the only significant increase is coming in the cost of the services given to those persons using the private wards. The Minister must know that there are a whole host of services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital used by people who are not necessarily going into a private ward whose costs are being increased.

I want the Minister to spell out in this Committee quite carefully the specific increases in the other services at the QEH. We must know that Government is raking in an additional \$5 million from revenue at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in this financial year. Last year the revenue was \$1 million, page 14 of the Estimates. It is anticipated that revenue is going up to \$6 million, so it is a \$5 million increase and is not going to come from the limited number of beds being used mainly in private wards. Therefore, the increase is coming in receipts of sales of drugs and meals, rents, fees of consultants, medical reports, the whole gamut of services at the QEH. That is a substantial increase and I am not going to discuss this in any cosmetic terms, Sir. It affects the people the Prime Minister has levied an 8% cut on, increased the health levy on, and put up other various taxes on in this country. Those people are worse off. Every little increase decreases the quality of life and the standard of care we are getting in

Barbados. That is the significance **when** I get up and say that there is a substantial decrease in the vote under Health.

The Minister must know that, Sir. I am not quarrelling with him, I am **quarrelling** with the architect, the surgeon general, the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South, for the manner in **which** this Government has gone into a structural adjustment programme, that is now in the classic way going to make Barbadians not only poorer but worse off in **terms** of their health and well being. That is the gravamen of my charge, Sir. Even in the Medical Aid Scheme an increase in revenue will be collected, \$2 000 in 1991-92 being increased to \$100 000, a \$98 000 increase.

Hon. B. M. TAITT rose to speak.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am not giving way, Sir, the Minister has to take his blows. He does not have to get up every minute. Tom? This is Henry who is not giving way and the Honourable Member must understand that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must address the Chair.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am addressing the Chair, Sir. If all this was being looked at in a context in which the Government had not increased other charges. But the very people, including those people who he says get services free at the QEH, have had a substantial increase placed on them in relation to the effect of the health levy on their incomes. He is hitting us from all angles. That is why the people of Barbados are angry, and although the Minister may be the best public relations expert, outside of....[name withdrawn], for the Democratic Labour Party today...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member knows that there is someone who can be so identified. Will the Honourable Member withdraw that?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Although the Minister...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member withdraw the name?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The name, Sir? Outside of the people...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member withdraw that?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am withdrawing the name, Sir, but I am saying that he might be the best public relations expert outside of that person, the public relations expert at CBC then, Sir - everybody knows who the person is, so you could have it **either** way - for the

Democratic Labour Party, Sir. The Minister must understand that the people are hurting nonetheless, Sir.

I want to deal with the St. Joseph Hospital, because once again I have grave difficulty in accepting the Minister's breakdown on St. Joseph Hospital. He said he has *spent* just under \$9 million to date on the St. Joseph Hospital. In 1990-91 the Government actually spent \$8 236 394. Am I to understand that last year the Government spent less than \$700 000 in relation to St. Joseph? I *really* have to ask that, and if that is so, then it is obvious to me that all of the talk of the Government in the note on page 75 which says: "This provides for the operation of St. Joseph Hospital in *arcas* of Obstetrics and Gynecology, General Surgery and Medicine. Also includes provision for the completion of the refurbishing programme" cannot be *relied* on, because none of that is going to happen this year on the *figures* you have.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am saying to the Minister that the Government should face up to the reality that St. Joseph, as originally conceived by the Government, is a mistake. Let us cut our losses at this stage and do the sensible thing and identify uses for St. Joseph that will be beneficial to the overall *health* of the country and at the same time not increase the recurrent cost of running the Government.

The Minister is *talking* about the elderly. I want the Minister to tell me how far he has implemented the recommendations made in the pre-feasibility and feasibility studies done on health services for the elderly in Barbados. When we left Government we had arrangements with PAHO for that study to be done with a view to implementing the programme. The Minister would have had the study handed to him in July 1986 by his predecessor in office. I want to know how far he has implemented the informational study done in relation to improving the flow of information and the management techniques in his ministry. I could show him copies of it as well, Sir, because he does not believe I have these documents.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on the question of a balanced study, I do not know of what the Honourable Member speaks. It may be a political brief prepared for the Honourable Member but I have not seen the document. I do not know of what he speaks so I cannot respond to that. Secondly, on the revenue from the Medical Aid Scheme, the fact is that nothing was being done to recover funds that were supposed to come back into the Medical Aid Scheme. When the Government extends large sums out of

the Medical Aid *Schème* the principle is that where there is an insurance policy that the proceeds from the insurance policy should be paid into the Government's coffers. That was not being done even though the signing had been done between the patients and the hospital. No steps were being taken to recover the monies.

This year, *arising* out of what I have said about increasing and improving the management techniques, we are making provision for each single dollar that is provided for in an agreement with a potential Medical Aid Scheme patient to be collected. Hence the figure of \$100 000. Already, since we have implemented this - I can say that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, if he does not mind, could in fact advise the Honourable Member the Leader of the Opposition and Members on his side that, arising out of a matter of which he is seised, we received a substantial cheque for the Government coffers which the Honourable Member had to actually run down the Government to get them to collect. These are facts.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: In excess of *Can.*\$200 000. The Honourable Member spoke to me at the level of politician to politician to say he was having difficulty paying out this money. The fact is that it is not exactly the fault of the officials in Barbados. Honourable Members would be shocked to know that the hospital in Canada which is a private hospital where the patient had gone actually said that they were not in a position to provide details of the procedure. They could not send out a bill because they could not find this or that. Inefficiency is not something that is *confined* to the Caribbean. This is in the great Canada. What we had to do was to prepare in Barbados a *pro forma* invoice, send it to our Consulate in Toronto and let the Consulate prepare a *pro forma* invoice for the hospital which then sent it back to us in order for us to collect a substantial amount of money from an insurance company. Since then, we have received another \$45 000 from another insurance company. So the \$100 000 which we have put down to recover from the Medical Aid Scheme may be a little short. I, personally, can say that I received a cheque for \$20 000 from the Manufacturers Life Insurance Company which I turned over to the Government, as we properly should. You know, my family were beneficiaries of the Medical Aid Scheme. I wish they had not, but they were.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Some of it is a gift. There is no question on that. There are many people in all walks of life in Barbados who have benefited from it. The policy is straightforward. If the procedure cannot be done in Barbados, the Government undertakes to have it done outside, but the fact is that we are entitled to the proceeds from the insurance companies and we intend to collect.

Now, Sir, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition asked some questions about the St. Joseph Hospital and I think that is reasonable.

The Drug Rehabilitation Unit. Work started on that and the funds for the Drug Rehabilitation Unit would have been expended. The partition of a section of the Villa Maria Convent for exclusive use of the Drug Rehabilitation Unit was done. Obsolete kitchen equipment was removed. Bathroom and toilet facilities were provided along with nursing stations and administrative offices, facilities for treatment and therapy sessions. This work has been completed and as I said earlier, we expect to open the unit.

For the Hospital proper. After an engineering inspection, the decision was taken to replace the main boilers, the generators, the central airconditioning system and other items of fixed equipment. A survey of the sewerage treatment plant disclosed that this plant was no longer functional and it would have to be replaced. The order was placed with Lakeside Equipment Corporation of Illinois in the United States for a sewerage treatment plant. The contract for civil and construction work was awarded to Tropical Construction Limited. The plant was installed and commissioned.

The keys were handed over in February 1991 and contrary to what the Honourable Member for the City implied earlier, the sewerage plant has been in operation ever since it was handed over.

In the main hospital building, work has been completed on the administrative offices and the refurbishing of wards. A new pharmacy and a new mortuary have been constructed. Work is in progress in the accident and emergency department and on change rooms and a lounge for the medical and nursing staff. Work on the upgrading of the operating theatres is more or less completed, the laundry has been completed but some minor work remains to be done in the kitchen. The call system has been replaced. Electrical services have been upgraded and the plumbing has been refurbished. That work that I just described has been undertaken at a cost of approximately \$9 million.

The Honourable Member listed...

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ...the fact is that \$9 million sounds like a lot of money but I invite Honourable Members to go on a site visit to the St. Joseph Hospital. They may go with or without the Minister.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We paid \$6 million for the entire property of 22 acres. For \$14 million we are going to get

the availability of a substantial amount of operating facility and we hope to have this from April 1992 but I believe it will be more like May. It is proposed to offer out-patients services in Obstetrics and Gynecology. This accounts for what is in the note which the Honourable Member said was not accurate.

We are going to be offering out-patient services. We are also seeking to make provision for day surgery to be performed and we hope to have these going by June 1992.

The Villa Maria complex will be refurbished to provide geriatric care, as I indicated earlier to the Honourable Member. A hospital administrator is in place. We had recruited nursing personnel but all of the persons except for the Director, the deputy director, a senior nursing officer and 2 nursing officers, have been diverted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We have a housekeeper and we have a secretary to the hospital administrator. We have an accounts officer, a clerical officer. The person who was in charge of accounts, the financial comptroller, has recently been returned to the Public Service.

The Honourable Member asked what had been done to a study that they had left behind. Services for the elderly. That health services study proved to be deficient. The Inter-American Development Bank did not accept it; they found that it was deficient. Arising out of the finding by the IADB, revisions were made in the policy projections. The Inter-American Development Bank has given the country a grant of \$1.7 million. That \$1.7 million is now the basis for a rationalisation study which will seek to put the proposals which appear in the Development Plan of the Ministry into bankable language, as they tell me, which will be acceptable to the Inter-American Development Bank.

The feasibility study is designed to rationalise the existing health services as well as to review the development of our health services.

12.30 p.m.

We have attracted under that study the services of Northwestern University out of Chicago to provide consultancy services for the study which began on February 28 this year. The study will do a number of things. I am not going to go into detail on that because I want to take this opportunity to respond to something which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition wants to know. He wants details of the fees at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I did not give them before because the Honourable Member for Christ Church South felt satisfied with the ones I had given. Let me give him the details: Use of operating theatres now \$60 for operations moved to \$120 and \$300. In other words, \$120 would be for citizens and permanent residents and \$300 would be for other persons. These would be for major operations. It moves now to \$300

for major operations and \$150 for minor operations. The use of the delivery rooms will now be \$200.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We did not have the suite where they are going to be delivered in. That is part of the \$40 million development programme.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is not for persons who are going on the ward. We are **talking** about the use of facilities. What has been happening is that people pay the consultants and go on the public ward. This would not affect those persons who have been going on the public ward.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is what has been happening. The Hospital has not been collecting fees. I go on – use of operating clinics, no charge. If you come from overseas you will pay \$40 per visit. Use of the Accident and Emergency Department – no charge. If you are a foreign person, it will be \$40. Use of laboratory equipment, **it** is \$4 – \$12 now and it will go to \$5 – \$40 per schedule. This is for persons who come from outside. Use of radiology equipment: the fees that are being paid now for the CT Scan will remain \$100 for examination for citizens and permanent residents and \$200 for others.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The cardiac catheterisation would be \$100 per examination. That is what is being paid now. You will not find those fees in the Regulations. Ultrasound will be \$10 per examination and simple X-ray examinations will be \$10 which it is now. Use of radio therapy and nuclear medical equipment will be \$100 per **treatment** for citizens and \$200 for others, X-Ray \$50 for citizens and \$100 for others.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Persons who come in for consultancy. These figures which I am calling is to satisfy the question which you raised. All those persons who now get free treatment will continue to get free treatment. I want to stress that. All those persons who now get their services at the Hospital free will continue to get those services free.

Use of Neurology equipment and endoscopy equipment are all basically the same kind of fees.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying that I should sit down. **When** the Honourable Leader of the Opposition got on his feet, he said that I was not giving any details. It has to be done in an Order which is going to be published anyhow. But the Honourable Member said I had not given them and I am giving them.

Use of **hemodialysis** equipment would be exactly what is paid now, \$125 for persons who **are** citizens or permanent residents and \$250 for persons who are not citizens or permanent residents. Physiotherapy and occupational therapy...

Aside.

Medicines will be important for the Drug Service Regulations which exist now.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: This is for information. When the Order is to be laid, it will be laid in here anyhow. I hope the Honourable Member is satisfied now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I will not be long on this Head this year. I want to ask the Minister a few specific questions. How many operating theatres at the Queen Elizabeth **Hospital** are actually operational and functioning? I am speaking about now. I ask that because I had the **experience** of having to send a client overseas for a **replacement** because the conditions at the Hospital here were not sufficiently acceptable to allow the orthopaedic surgeon to do the procedures here. That was last **year**.

Secondly, does the Minister not feel that there is a **need** for a further orthopaedic surgeon? We have **great** difficulty in **getting** medical reports from the orthopaedic **consultant** here because it is virtually impossible to produce the reports with the **speed** that would redound to everybody's benefit.

They just do not have time to do their actual surgery and **then** do the administration of their reports. I am not getting into the policy because I do not follow health that much. I do not know if you recruit orthopaedic specialists from overseas or what but if you do, I **think** there is a crying **need** in this area for additional personnel to take some of the load off Mr. Winston Scale.
12.40 p.m.

Thirdly, Sir, I just want to ask a little question about Mangrove. I had teased the Minister earlier today but he can rest easily, within the next week we will have a Budget, I will be dealing with Mangrove, if necessary for the whole country to see. Get in line for me next week.

Last year the Minister told us that they were entering into a programme with the IADB about an incinerator and they would have had some report ready within 9 months. That was last year March. I wonder if he can tell us whether the first report is ready. I wonder if he can also tell me whether he intends to continue dumping at what I call the old site. The new site is not ready. Do you intend to continue at the old site? Because he had said last year that they had virtually brought that site to a standstill.

I want the Minister to **tell** the public – I am not going to do it – the status of the new site and whether he feels that, by summer of this year, I mean from June on, the new site would be fully operational, because if the new site would not be fully operational from June this year when our temperatures are at their highest, you can expect combustion that will produce the same kind of problems we have had in the past. I have given full warning to the Government and I am in a very easy mood today. I will not be in this mood next week, I promise **you**. I have given full warning that by way of preventive action they should establish a sprinkling system from now, March, to control that area – All you want really is a temporary half inch main and some stringer pipes attached to the sprinkling system to **keep** down dust and **reduce** the possibility of fire.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have not passed in the last 2 weeks. I am just asking, because I remember I mentioned it in here and called for it. I just wanted to know the status of the sprinkling system, Sir.

The Minister had also told us about a rendering plant to deal with the offal. He promised that. I have him here, last year.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Right. I want to know the status of that. I follow you up.

I said, Sir – I have a little throat problem, I am still recovering from the flu – I should like to hear the answers to those specific questions.

I am much obliged, Sir

Aside.

hhr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Minister is so anxious. For the second day in a row, Sir, I am asking for something else in St. George to be closed down. When the pulverization plant in Workman's was opened, I believe, in 1977 the word was that it would be closed in 10 years.

Almost exactly to that time the land was overflowing and, for the last 5 years, that has been its condition. We have had a number of complaints made to the Ministry of Health. The Minister in his usual style temporized with the residents of the area, wrote them some fatuous letters, paid the occasional visit up there and treated the people with the usual amount of disdain. But the problem remains. The Chief of the Sanitation Service Authority himself has been up on a number of occasions and a number of promises have been made.

I am concerned on 2 fronts. One is that there is still an uncomfortably high incidence of leptospirosis in Barbados. The Ministry of Health no doubt is concerned as I am about it. In areas like Workman's and St. George generally and the agricultural areas of Barbados we have the canefields and everybody knows that rodents, rats and mice are teeming in the canefields. A place like Workman's is being hit in two ways. There are the rats and the mice coming from the canefields and also from the pulverization plant. Despite all their best efforts, the Ministry of Health and the Sanitation Service Authority have not succeeded in preventing rodents from crowding the area of the pulverization plant in St. George. I am very concerned about that.

I, like the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, would like some word as to when that plant will finally be closed. I do not know about pulverization, but about the dumping. You can keep the plant for as long as you like, not that we like it. The people in Workman's have paid their dues. You cannot ask one virgin village in Barbados to carry the garbage for the rest of Barbados for 15 years and not think that at that point you should pass the burden to somebody else. Things are bad.

We want a clear, unequivocal commitment by the Government at this time. As I said you have been temporizing and trying to put them off until you find...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: ... I would not say prevaricate because I do not want to put anybody in trouble, but you have been temporizing. But now that an alternative dump...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You can call it what you like. I am not in for any euphemisms. They are dumps. Now that you have identified another dump and boast of the acreage and all the grand things you are going to do with garbage up there, it is time to take the burden off the people of Workman's.

They can put it right into the heart of the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. That is not my concern. My concern is for the long suffering people

of Workman's. I do not even get a word of support from the Minister of Education who represents the other half of St. George. The pulverization plant is in my constituency and across the street is the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Education. And he would not say a word for these people. He has to talk in here. He has to do something.

I am not going to raise any other questions at this point. Please give me an undertaking that we can finally close the chapter on all the garbage being piled up in Workman's in St. George and on all the rodents and everything that is making the lives of the people up there so uncomfortable.

12.50 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, let me answer the question by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas first. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas asked **first** of all, how many operating theatres are functioning in Queen Elizabeth Hospital. There are 6 operating **theatres** functioning at the moment in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Hospital Director told me 6.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on the question of orthopaedic surgeons, Sir, the Honourable Member would understand when I tell him this has been one of the most difficult areas in which to **find** competent surgeons who wish to come to Barbados.

Orthopaedic surgeons are now, as you will **appreciate**, at a premium. However, we have a Barbadian surgeon in Toronto who is scheduled to complete his studies. He is coming home in June of this year, so that hopefully a place will be found for him. He is already a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and went for orthopaedic advancement.

More than that, we have also made arrangements with Mr. **Errol Bennett**, who as you know, is one of the more competent orthopaedic surgeons to be in Barbados. He is now functioning in North America, in Maryland. We have now made **arrangements** with the kind understanding of the relevant Ministries that he **will** be able, instead of our sending persons to North America for total hip replacement – we usually send them to Canada or the United States – he will now be coming into Barbados and with Mr. **Seale**, will be doing total hip replacements here in Barbados. So you can see we are going more and more towards bringing the expertise here.

They have **already** done, I think, about 4 total hip replacements in Barbados. All have been successful. So that is the direction in which we are going. We are finding more and more that part of the problem is that people are living much longer. As you will see from the Chief Medical Officer's Report, life expectancy in Barbados is now up to 75.2 **years** for women and **73** for men. People are **living** longer and when a person reaches a certain age, if he or she falls the usual requirement is **total** hip replacement.

In orthopaedic surgery. As difficult as it is, we are trying to improve and hopefully by June of this year, we should see some improvement with a return of that orthopaedic surgeon. The point is, however, that the vacancy which exists right now, is a University vacancy and has to be filled by the University. They have **been** trying. At one point last year they had a person who accepted the position and then when we had gone through all the processes, work permits, the whole bit, that person was unable to come. As you know, the rules require a start from scratch so you re-advertise the job, and make sure to let everybody know. It is a difficult problem.

On the question of the Mangrove. The Honourable Member understands, and I think it is fair to say that the Honourable Member, as representative of the constituency, has been very understanding. We have discussed this issue and he and the **constituents** in the area have understood. Among other things we have taken specific steps to reduce the odour levels by ensuring that cover for the old site was done much more efficaciously than had been done in the past.

Now, with the best will in the world, we were not able to complete the new site at the date projected. However, we have now laid out the clay layer on the new site. This is something new for landfills in Barbados but this is an attempt to ensure that the water table is protected, even though we are in zone 5 land. We have brought clay from the Scotland District and we have laid out a layer on the new site. We expect to complete, this very weekend, the laying of pipes in the new site. The **leachate** which seeps from the landfill over time will now be collected in pipes and recycled so that any **leachate** which is susceptible of going into the underground will now be collected in pipes.

You will recall, as I indicated, that we are approaching this in a scientific way. I am pleased to say, as part of the scientific management which the Leader of the Opposition says he does not believe, that we have been able to get funding from outside Barbados. PAHO has given us an additional \$100 000 towards developing the site. We have got technical assistance from PAHO and we have fitted 6" to 9" pipes for the collection system. As I said, this will be completed within the next 2 weeks.

The construction of the fence is due to begin on Monday, March 30. We are going to fence it completely to avoid bits and pieces blowing out and to keep persons from coming in. It is going to be fenced, the **contract** has been awarded and that is scheduled to begin on Monday. It is expected to take 4 weeks. The new site should come into operation therefore before or around June of this year.

We have to build the structure for vehicles coming in and we are going to be putting a scale **beam** because you can appreciate that the lack of control of what comes to the site has been the undoing of the present **landfill** and **faccal** matter has in fact gone on that site when it ought not to have gone.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am satisfied that has happened. It took me 2 years to get it out of anybody else. Unfortunately, the rendering plant is tied to the abattoir so as the abattoir goes so will the rendering plant.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I think the Honourable Member for St. Philip North indicated yesterday that they were looking at the new site but there are some inherent difficulties. All I can say is, the rendering plant is **dependent** on what **happens** with the Abattoir.

The pulverisation plant. I think it would be foolhardy of me to give the kind of unqualified **commitment** which the Honourable Member is asking for. However, I can find no evidence in the Ministry that when the Honourable Member for the City in her capacity as Minister of Health **opened** the facility she gave any undertaking as to the length...

Mr. L. R. TULL: In early 1976, Senator George Moe, who was then the **Leader** of the Senate gave the undertaking in the Senate that this would last 10 years. It was nothing to do with the Minister opening the plant.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am merely going on to say that it has been said by the people that the Honourable Member had said 5 years but we have found no evidence. I take the Honourable Member's word that a Senator, who at that time would have been going on what was projected, said it would last 10 years. I think it is the **landfill** that presents the problem and not the pulverisation plant as such. The **landfill** has reached its zenith...

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ...what is the word? It has become a mountain - I thought you would like zenith. I thought the Honourable Member would have been glad that I was helping him with his position. Seriously, we would

expect that when the new **landfill** ... This is a problem. I have not worked it out with the officials and so I am saying what I think. I believe, that by the time we have put the new **landfill** in practice, we will have to cap the **landfill** next to the pulverisation plant. It cannot take much more. It does not matter what anybody says. It has reached the point where we have to consider **closing** it. Whereas I cannot give the categorical undertaking which the Honourable Member is asking for, the fact is that I am satisfied it has reached the point where we have to consider closing it and the garbage will then have to go to the new **landfill**.'

1.00 p.m.

In that connection, let me say there is no doubt there is a solid waste programme. We signed a technical co-operation agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank on December 19, 1991. The Bank made a **grant** of U.S.\$1.5 million available to us to finance a comprehensive long term solid waste management plan and a feasibility study. The funds are to be disbursed over a **32** months period during which the project will be executed in 2 phases, the first being of 9 months duration and the second of 6 months duration. Consulting **firms** were invited from member countries of the Bank to submit applications by March 15, 1991 for registration to pre-qualify and 60 firms made applications and were evaluated. Thirteen failed to satisfy the criteria and, of the remainder, 6 were short-listed and invited to submit proposals by March 20, 1992. They are as follows:

BCEOM French Engineering Consultants,

Burnes & McDonnell of the United States of America,

Camp Dresser and McKee International of the U.S.A.,

Environmental Resources Limited of the United Kingdom,

Fichtner of Germany,

Stanley Associates Engineering Limited of Canada, and Environmental Resources Limited.

The Environmental Resources Limited of the United Kingdom subsequently declined the invitation to submit a proposal. We expect the study will be to support Barbados to improve environmental sanitation by means of a comprehensive long term management programme well into the 21st century suited to the needs of Barbados.

The goals will include elements of an integrated approach such as area wide planning, land usage regulations, monitoring and enforcement, disposal points, cost recovery alternatives, institutional coordination, training, research and public education. The consultant

will prepare final designs, tender document and the loan request to the Bank for the resulting investment project.

I believe, as I have said before, that that investment project will be in the vicinity of \$80 million' to \$100 million. That we expect sometime towards the end of 1993 or early 1994. That will be the solid waste disposal project. I just want to point out that the Government, even in these difficult times, is still pressing ahead with this programme for solid waste disposal in this country. This is to respond to the question about the priority which we give to environmental matters. There is no question that we consider the environment and environmental matters to hold high priority in our scheme of things and I shall be willing to answer any other questions which Members may have.

The question that Head 36 stand part 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 to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 2.10 this afternoon.

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

The question that this sitting be suspended until 2.10 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
1.08 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 is resumed.

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS (AS AMENDED) - \$13 035 632

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 37 Ministry of Housing and Lands, in the sum of \$13 035 632 stand part.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government has demonstrated by these Estimates its insensitivity to the

plight of the working poor in Barbados in relation to housing. I have said on more than one occasion in this Chamber that housing is the most pressing social need in Barbados. We had a long history of chattel buildings in this country and everybody knows that chattel stock tend to decline at a very rapid rate.

Over the years, the Barbados Labour Party Administration and the Democratic Labour Party Administration have considered the provision of public housing for low income earners as a top priority in housing strategy. This is the first time in more than 3 decades that a government of this country has retreated from that position.

These Estimates tell a sorry tale. There is a 26% - 30% reduction in the provision for housing, and one has to look at it against the background of a wide scenario. About 2 or 3 years ago, Sir, the Government introduced measures for restriction of credit. People could not borrow money either from public or private institutions. The funds dried up in the areas of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company and the National Housing Corporation and because of Government's policies it was almost impossible for people to get loans from the private financial institutions to enable them to repair, renovate and build. The result has been that over the last 2 or 3 years there has been a deceleration of housing development in Barbados and the people who are affected by it most are the people of the lower socio-economic groups.

The Government has now added to that 2 more burdens. One is the fairly steep increase in interest rates and the consequential effect of mortgages. The imposition of heavy consumption taxes on building materials has also resulted in a retardation of housing development in this country.

A number of studies have been done on housing in recent years. As recently as 1985, a White Paper on housing was laid in this Honourable Chamber. It sets out with great specificity the historical position of housing in this country, the present needs and the plans to address those needs. The history remains. The plans have been abandoned. We have about 38 000 households in Barbados. I am using a "guesstimate". Perhaps the Minister can give me a more specific figure. That represents an increase in the number of households over the last 10 years. There were perhaps 8 000 to 9 000 fewer households 10 years ago than there are now.

The reason for this is cultural. Young people are no longer prepared to stay in their parents' houses until they get married. Forty or thirty years ago unmarried women would remain with their parents until they were 40 to 60 years old. Married women too. With men much the same prevailed. Men stayed on with their parents when they were married. The situation has changed fairly dramatically

in recent years. Young men and young women as soon as they leave school and start to work want to move out. They want to live on their own. There is nothing wrong with that. It is good for them to escape the suffocating influence of parents after a certain age.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: One needs a safe haven. A retreat in these trying days. So, when you go back home perhaps you find it there.

The demand for housing has not slackened and because of the change in attitudes in relation to living with parents it will not lighten for some considerable period of time. It is folly to believe that taking money out of housing is going to solve any kind of problem. It is going to delay the apocalypse. Time will come when there will be an expansion. What we are doing is putting pressure on the community which it cannot bear. We are destroying the hopes of young people to move out.

What we see in these Estimates, with the rise in mortgage rates together with the restrictions of indirect taxes on building materials, is the retardation of housing development, the final blow. In addition, the Government has increased the rents in the housing areas. That is another burden. Added to that, the Government, in grasping for more money, is doing one or two very strange things. Not only is it selling off its own stock in the Ministry of Housing, like Clarendon, but it is bringing unconscionable pressure to bear on people who live in housing estates. The word is that you must buy the unit you have been living in for all these years or they will put you out. The people in the National Housing Corporation are telling tenants of National Housing Corporation units, "Try and buy the lot. We wrote you two or three years ago and told you to buy the lot. Buy the lot or we will put you out."

The Government really is asking for trouble.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: In the months of January and February 1992, I received 7 specific complaints, all of which have been communicated to the National Housing Corporation, of persons from the Ellerton Housing area who brought to me letters written to them in 1989 and who were told in recent weeks by a follow-up letter that they must proceed to buy the unit or they will have to move out of the place. If the Government wants to say that is not their policy, say so but do not tell me it has not been happening.
2.20 p.m.

I have spoken to the Legal Department of the National Housing Corporation about it. I told them if they want to do it, come up in Ellerton and move out any of

them. They can bring along the Minister of Housing, and even the Prime Minister, and move any of them out when they are ready. Just give me notice when you are coming.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: No, not the Bay Land. I have seen the roads in the Bay Land barbergreen 3 times in 2 years. In the meantime, I have seen people in the depressed areas of housing in St. George who have not had roads for over 300 years. We are dealing with 2 different things. I want to talk about rural development in the course of this because this falls within the 4 walls of that.

Let me get back on track, Sir. The Government has to understand that this is a bad time to deprive low income people from housing. A lot of the social problems in this country are being caused because of poor domestic situations. I have heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church South earlier today saying that he knows of a small house in Christ Church with 22 people living in it. That kind of circumstance breeds social discontent. The people begin to feel marginalised that they are not in the mainstream of what is happening in Barbados and they are beginning to express it in anti-social conduct.

All these things are inter-related. Bad housing conditions, the world over, are the breeding ground for crime, corruption, immorality and all of that. If you look at the slums in the major metropolitan areas and the urban areas, you would see that. If you look at places all through Latin America and in the Caribbean, you would see the slums on the periphery of big cities are the breeding ground for a lot of the anti-social conduct in our community. Right here in the City of Bridgetown where we have a lot of social problems, when you go into Greenfields, Chapman Lane or New Orleans or up town, where you have problems you will see that all those areas are areas of depressed housing. The Government has to be joking. It is really making sport when they have almost literally dismantled the Ministry of Housing.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Minister of Housing, had no right to get a salary at the end of this month because nothing has been left in his Ministry. The National Housing Corporation has been closed down.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Nearly the whole staff has been sent home. The Minister should tell us when he gets up the percentage of the number of workers he sent home.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: They have kept the people to sell Clarendon and the place in the Pine. They have left

the lawyer and 2 people to help collect the outstanding rents, a handful of wardens and 1 or 2 innocuous staff members recruited from St. Lucy. One thing about the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is that he always looks after his people. While people were being sent home from the National Housing Corporation, people were recruited from the parish of St. Lucy.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The sequence is the wrong way? Mr. Chairman I am going to finish at this point and I am going to come back.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by lending my voice in support of the point which has been so eloquently made by the Honourable Member for St. George South. There can be no doubt that the housing need in Barbados represents one of the most, if not the most urgent social need not only today but for some long time past.

In addressing this Chamber more than 10 years ago I called for an approach back into a national crusade in an attempt to lick the problem. I thought then that we could, perhaps, have borrowed some of the techniques that were employed in Singapore in addressing this particular problem. In fact, when I first suggested that we resort to the whole technique of levies, in my view, the first levy should have been applied to housing. That was not done. It was applied to transportation and subsequently to health but we have never got around to giving housing that big push by finding some special source of financing for it.

The history of the performance of the Democratic Labour Party in relation to housing in the last 6 years really represent a retreat from that social challenge. They really have nothing to shout about or be proud of. These Estimates which we are currently debating represent a very low point in an already dismal record. The history of countries that are under structural adjustment programmes really suggest that, given it is very difficult to get away from the impositions of the conditionalities of the international lending agencies, one really has to fight, as a government, once you are compassionate and have not totally lost your direction and abandoned your commitment to the people, to find compensatory mechanisms. You have to find them in education, health, housing and so on.

The Government really should be concerned to find some sort of exemption to the limitations and spending to ensure that we continue to provide an adequate stock in relation to housing. It is important for reasons of stimulating the economy too because we cannot allow the economy to become so depressed that whenever we are out of the programme, we really have a major problem on our hands in trying to revive and reactivate the economy. Housing is one of the areas in which we can keep some

level of activity going in the country without putting too much burden on the foreign exchange supply in the country because we have come to realise that housing does not really take up too much of scarce hard dollars.

There was a time when we felt that to build a house a 30% or 40% of it represented a "Porsche". I heard that view has subsequently been amended. It is now felt, especially in the context of a cement plant in Barbados, that you can really build a housing unit representing less than 20% or 25% and no more of the cost representing imports.

Mr. Chairman, I want to look at the whole question of land acquisition and the management as it relates to the Ministry of Housing. There was a time when the Honourable Member for St. Thomas had the honour of chairing the National Housing Corporation. He used to address this Chamber quite frequently about the need for, and paid attention then to what was called a land bank in the National Housing Corporation.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am hearing that the land bank is now bankrupt but I certainly do not hear a great deal about it these days.
2.30 p.m.

There is an urgent need in the Scotland District for resiting and relocation of existing houses. Often in this Chamber we speak of the Scotland District as though it represents land without human settlements, without communities. And so we talk of the need to stabilize the land through employing engineering and agronomic techniques but we very rarely speak of what happens to the human communities, the settlements there in the Scotland District, as they are affected by land slippage and soil erosion.

The position is particularly acute in Western St. Joseph. I speak of areas such as Upper Parks and Lower Parks and Chimborazo. Within recent years - though slippage has been a continuing challenge and a continuing problem in the St. Joseph area - one gets the impression that the soil is experiencing a new fragility and almost after ever serious downpour you have several incidents of slippage, particularly in the Chimborazo and the Parks area. It has reached the point where urgently needed in St. Joseph is something like 50 to 75 house spots to relocate people who are seriously affected by the soil erosion and soil slippage of their properties.

Up until recently there used to be some lots available in Lammings but Lammings has become too dense, too overcrowded. We are in danger of Lammings becoming a kind of slum if we add to the density of Lammings. There are really too many people living in Lammings right

now. Many of the residents who are affected by slippage in St. Joseph, many of the householders and who do not want to move out of St. Joseph and I think that it is important that we do everything to allow the people to remain in rural Barbados. We cannot have any further migration of people from rural Barbados to urban and suburban Barbados. If we are going to avoid that, it is going to be important that there be a new housing area developed in the parish of St. Joseph.

The area that has been identified is an area, a narrow strip of hard land stretching from north of the Grantley Adams Secondary School to opposite the St. Joseph Primary about 200 or 300 yards going north from Grantley Adams to opposite the St. Joseph Primary. I would hope that Blackmans possibly Easy Hall – it is no longer under cane nor is it in agricultural use. I think that it lends itself to easy change of use for housing purposes. I would wish, at a convenient point, Mr. Chairman, to make a tour with the Minister and his officials and see whether that particular area could be put into immediate use as an alternative housing area for those people in St. Joseph who are affected by land slippage.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, there are some points which have been made by Honourable Members, the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph relating to this vote on Housing.

Contrary to what the Honourable Member for St. George South has stated the Ministry of Housing has not been dismantled. It is true that the National Housing Corporation has suffered a fairly heavy cut. But as the Member for St. Joseph has indicated there are other aspects in the Ministry of Housing which, to all intents, and purposes still remain not particularly touched in any significant way by the cuts. There is still some work. I am not trying to make a plea or put up a defense but I think just to set the record straight that there is a whole set of other activities relating to the Ministry of Housing which still command national attention and which of course are urgent and indeed one of the areas was highlighted by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

The Honourable Member for St. George South and the Member for St. Joseph have made reference and certainly made the point about the importance of housing, which importance has been acknowledged by both political parties. I do not think that one needs to argue that point. The fact of the matter is that the Ministry of Housing, like other Ministries, have had to suffer some cuts because of the serious economic situation which confronts this country. There can be no getting away from that. I do not think that this situation will remain forever like this. I am confident that with the return to economic prosperity, and certainly

as prosperity begins to return, that we will see a continuing and certainly greater thrust being made in the area of housing. Because in this party we recognize the importance of housing both from an economic and also from a sociological and a political point. So that we are at one on that particular point.

The Honourable Member for St. George South raised the question about the fact that there are very few people working at the National Housing Corporation now, because of the cutbacks which have taken place.

Let me for the record state that before the reduction, the National Housing Corporation employed 597 people. Two hundred and seven people have been laid off as a result of the cuts and at present the staff complement of the National Housing Corporation is 390. There is a lot more than just the legal officer and a couple of clerical people that the Member for St. George South made reference to. That is just for information.

Aside.

Hon. B E. GREAVES: Pardon?

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: There have been some cuts. Not modest cuts. I do not want to get into this argument or even respond in any meaningful way to the point which the Honourable Member made, about recruitment of staff from St. Lucy. But since the point was made I think I ought to make my position very, very clear that since I became Minister of Housing and Lands I have not been able to get one person employed at the National Housing Corporation for probably longer than 3 months. One person for whom I had asked the General Manager for a job went on to work as a messenger and he did that job for about 3 months. That is the extent of employment from St. Lucy through my asking. I want to make that position very, very clear. I am not aware and I categorically deny that anybody from St. Lucy has been employed as a result of my asking. I do not think the Honourable Member is fair to me. I must confess that I am really probably a foolish Minister in that respect. Because I doubt very much that there is any Minister on either side who would have tolerated that position. But I recognize the problem which there was and therefore I have decided that the National Housing Corporation has to try to operate along proper management lines and therefore the management of the Corporation must manage the Corporation in as effectively and in as efficiently a manner as possible. Therefore I do not seek to impose on the National Housing Corporation my position because I want them to function in the way which I believe a statutory corporation should be allowed to function.

Sir, on the question of the sale of units which the Honourable Member for St. George South alluded to,

let me say that I am informed that so far the National Housing Corporation has been pursuing a policy relative to the sale of single units. I believe that this policy would have started some time ago and it continues. So far 818 single units have been sold and 206 such units remain to be sold. I am sure that the Honourable Member for St. George South would not want to deprive his constituents, if there are any single units in his constituency, of becoming homeowners so that they could really appreciate the importance of house ownership. I would want him to join with the National Housing Corporation in encouraging the owners of those houses to enter into an arrangement with the National Housing Corporation to purchase the houses. I think it is a laudable policy and one which should be encouraged rather than the kind of attitude which I know, he really does not mean, but I understand the kind of political approach there. Quite seriously, I have said to the National Housing Corporation that sending letters out to people is not the only way in which they can encourage people to come into the programme. It has to mount a public relations programme to encourage people and to let them know that the units are for sale; to set up an approach which could be used, which would make it easier for people to own units. It is in our interest to get units in the hands of as many people as possible. I think that is a matter which we would want to pursue and which I am sure the Opposition would be interested in assisting the Government in pursuing.

2.40 p.m.

The other point I would want to make in reference to the Honourable Member for St. George South. Yes, the National Housing Corporation has embarked on an approach of selling off some of its property for a number of reasons to raise some income. This is not an unusual thing. I think one recognises that the National Housing Corporation has advertised some areas for sale: Clarendon in Black Rock, an area of land up in Wildey, and I think they are in negotiations with the Pine Hill Dairy for the sale of an area of land aback of the Dairy which runs right on to the Dairy property because the Pine Hill Dairy wants to expand in that particular area. The sale of these properties will generate some income for the National Housing Corporation because one of the things which we had hoped to do in the not too distant future was to have enough income that would enable the Corporation to build a proper headquarters.

At the moment it is difficult to manage the Corporation in the way in which it is spread out. Part of the technical division is in Black Rock, the main area is in Country Road and the workshop is in the Pine and it does, as you will appreciate cause some problems in the overall management of a corporation spread in this way. The idea was to try to bring the operations into one general area so as to make management easier. Of course that particular plan will have some delay and one would hope, however,

that in the not too distant future to be able to see the realisation of that.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke about the question of land acquisition and the management of land resources and referred to the Scotland District and the need to provide some area for the relocation and **resiting** of **persons** in that **area**, particularly in St. Joseph. We recognise the very serious problem which face people who live in the Scotland **District area** and have identified two areas of land in St. **Andrew** - in Walkers and some other area in St. Andrew. I don't now recall the areas which have been set aside and which will be developed specifically for **resiting** purposes in the Scotland area. It is a flat area in St. **Andrew** and the engineers have suggested, and I just want to make the point that we have to rely, in these areas, on our technical advice. They have suggested to us that these would be the more **suitable** areas for **resiting** in that particular **area**. We recognise that it is going to be a very difficult thing to move people from the setting to which they have been accustomed and move them into an entirely different area. We are **trying** wheresoever possible in **resiting** to **resite** people as close to where they have been accustomed to be living.

As far as St. Joseph is concerned, I know that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph did identify this **area** of land sometime ago. In **fairness** to him he had indicated that he would get in touch with me for us to go on a visit to identify this area. I recall when he did raise that question, asking him whether this land 'was under agricultural production and he assured me that was not the case. However I just want to make the point that certainly the Ministry of Agriculture views land, if it is in the agricultural belt and if it has potential for agriculture, as agricultural land. This is **one** of the hurdles which we will have to overcome. I will have no objection, I can assure the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, of going to have a look at that **area** but one has to again recognise that we will be constrained with the amount of money which is made available for acquisitions. Let's face it, I am being very frank with you that we have still quite a large sum of money outstanding for acquisitions which have been made before. I would certainly be quite willing to look at that.

He did indicate, and if you will permit me, Mr. Chairman, for just 2 more minutes, I want to address the point that he made here that Lammings is becoming overcrowded and he did not think that Lammings could hold **anymore** houses. I did go up there some time ago and there is an area of land which was acquired. Lammings runs **North/South**. It is opposite the Community Centre on the left hand side going in a southerly direction, opposite the school, which could probably accommodate about 14 house spots. I think that is what they told me. It has a fairly long frontage. We are looking to see what we could accommodate inside there.

Thank you.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I was very concerned when I heard the Minister in his reply to some questions raised by Members on this side, stating that there were some 206 houses yet to be sold. In fact they are all completed. I want the Minister to understand clearly what a serious problem he has on hand. It also has serious implications for the Government because as I see here it is the intention of Government to complete 495 houses at Husbands and in St. Thomas. If I were to take a rough calculation, each of these houses cost approximately \$80 000.

2.50 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: No, no, 495 houses! I am seeing here a Sub-housing Programme. There is a grant to the National Housing Corporation under expenditure to help offset the difference between estimated expenditure and expected revenue from rents. There will also be a continuation of projects under the capital programme. Completion of 495 houses at Husbands, St. James and Cane Gardens, St. Thomas under a project between the Governments of Barbados and Venezuela.

This is a very, very serious thing. The Government is saying to me that in this financial year – note they are saying the word "completion" – that means they are going to finish in this financial year. There is a question of mortgages, Mr. Chairman. These houses will require adequate mortgages in order for potential or perspective purchasers to complete the purchase of these houses. I have done a rough calculation of let us say \$80 000 for an average house. I am talking about a two-bedroom house measuring 700 square feet, a 25x28 on 3500 square feet of land. That is the size that Government usually allocates to this type of house. You have \$63 000 for the cost of the house at \$90.00 square feet and the cost of the land will be \$17 500. I make that a total of \$80 000 for a two-bedroom house. Now the 495 houses will need or require \$39 million.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: No, no, you are talking about completed houses. People are not in them. You do not get a mortgage until the house is finished. I am asking what provision is made.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I do not know if I am really hearing correct. I am saying "completion" of 495 houses. Nobody could be living in them. If I am being misled, I want the Minister to get up and say why I am being misled. I say "completion".

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: On a point of elucidation, Sir. The Honourable Member feels that he is being misled by the note which states: "Completion of 495 houses." In truth and in fact, this project is a project which has been going on for some time now. A number of these houses have already been completed and occupied. What this note here really means is that during this financial year the entire project, which was 495 houses, will be completed. I do not want the Honourable Member to be misled into believing that there are 495 houses to be completed this year and to be mortgaged and financed, occupied and all of that kind of thing:

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I understand that. I know enough about this matter. I am saying the Minister would have to say how many houses are completed. He has to say that so that I will know and the House will know how much money has to be looked for by way of mortgages. Therefore, I would address my question to the Minister of Finance and the entire Government to make sure that money is made available for the purchase of these houses and for other perspective house owners. Otherwise, do not talk about any housing. This is very serious because the Government in 1990-91 raked in \$25 million in property taxes, well above what it had projected in that financial year. I am saying that, if you have accelerated and have housing going and the mortgage funds are there, more houses can be purchased and the Minister of Finance would have more money to rake in as a result of taxes. It is a fundamental point. That is all that I am saying. Rather than have the burden put on other people for paying taxes, I am suggesting to the Minister of Finance that here is an area where the money can be found. First of all, you have to have a policy and know what you are doing, because you must make sure that you have funds injected in the Mortgage Finance Company and ask the banks by some persuasion or some other form of tactics to have money available for perspective home owners. At the moment, people are not buying and lots of houses and properties are on the market.

This is very serious for all of us in Barbados. It means that the finance companies, insurance companies, the banks, and the Barbados Mortgage*Finance Company cannot fulfil the requests. There is no sense in the Minister saying that he is appealing to the Honourable Member for St. George South to encourage people to buy the houses. Yes, I agree with that policy. It has always been our policy to have people own the properties. But I am saying, if you do not have a window for lending at the National Housing Corporation and you do not have money from the Housing Credit Fund to assist people in purchasing houses, what is the sense of appealing? This makes sense. The Minister has no reason to be annoyed because this point is made. It is the only sensible and logical point that can be made as far as housing is concerned. I understand what we are talking about. It has a multiplying affect. Sometimes we want

the Opposition to put suggestions. I am telling you how you can rake in a couple of million dollars to help ease the burden.

The other thing is this. I am seeing here Valery repeated in this year's Estimates. Now Valery was acquired over 7 years ago and every year it keeps cropping up. Something has got to be really wrong with Valery. Something has got to be wrong with this if year after year we see money in the Estimates for the completion of Valery and things are going at a snail's pace over there. I am asking the Minister to look at this. I can understand sometimes the problem but we cannot have a situation where we see here repeated the provision for fully serviced lots at Rices and Valery. We cannot have it because we want to know what component of this provision is made towards Valery. Valery was surveyed, roads were put in, and everything was done. There are some lots yet to be occupied. I am calling on the Government to allocate the lots and let the people go and settle on the lots and build. There is wisdom in this. The lots are out there. Money has been spent.

I must tell the Minister as well to go into the Ivy and you will see lots that have already been serviced. Yet, I see nothing in these Estimates. Nothing is being said or mentioned about the Ivy but there are serviced lots there. I also want to draw the Minister's attention to the work that is going on in Haggatt Hall. The work is not yet finished, but I do not see it here in the Estimates. When you provide these notes you have to be very careful. As a former Minister, I know that if it is not in the Estimates then people question whether you have to spend money on those projects that are not identified. I want to know if we can interpret this note to mean that others will be included among those projects which are mentioned.
3.00 p.m.

What are you going to do with the Ivy? I want to know that. People are saying they have applied for house spots and they want to occupy them. Even in East Terrace people have made down-payments but they have not been given permission to build on the lots. This is what is causing confusion in the housing sector of Barbados.

I am identifying the problems. I travel and I know what I am talking about. I do not need to be questioned on this. We are missing the point here. If you are going to provide serviced lots, Mr. Chairman, and you do not have the window for lending, then it is an exercise in futility. It is just confusing people. I can see the point of the Minister of Housing. He is trying to give people a stake in the country. I want the National Housing Corporation to examine carefully whether or not the mortgages are easily available. It is difficult to go to Broad Street or anywhere else to get \$20 000. Even the credit unions that used to lend freely are not now lending. One of the serious things going on in this country is that some of the credit unions,

especially the Transport Board's, which used to lend money to buy property, are not lending because they say there is no job security.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: We are just skirting along with this whole business of housing but there are more serious and fundamental problems to face up to. I know that there is a need for rental units but the cost is so prohibitive. I know what it takes to build rental units at today's cost. I am in total agreement with the Minister and the Government in trying to hold up. What the Government can do is to make land available and allow families, as in Puerto Rico, to start building their own. That is what I would encourage the Government to do, if you cannot provide the money because I know the contractors are charging too much per square foot. I am asking the Government to make land available to the people so that they can put up their houses. I have to be concerned about this. I hope that the Government will take a cue from me on this occasion and see if it can get things corrected.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, however we dress this up, these Estimates disclose an abandonment by the Government of a responsibility undertaken since 1946 by successive governments in this country in the provision of housing for that element of the population which in this society, like in many other societies, will never be able to provide housing for itself. When I look at this and I see the subvention to the National Housing Corporation of \$1 million, I know that that will only go towards the absorption of some of the administrative expenses arising from the difference collected in rents and what is expended in administration in the Housing Authority.

It is clear to me that the Government is planning an increase in the rents of the Housing Authority. It is clear to me that the Government is not coming out very clearly and saying so. But, if the National Housing Authority is to function in its customary manner, with the Government providing by way of subvention a sufficient amount of money to cover the difference between the rents collected and the normal administrative costs plus the element of maintenance, the rents do not even cover the maintenance. The last report from the Housing Authority indicated that the rents did not cover maintenance.

The Government is suffering from the effects of its own taxation policies. Seriously, I believe that by not making provision in this area, we are going to have a serious setback in the housing situation of Barbados. It is well known and recognised from the surveys that you need at least a minimum of 300 units to be built. The Government for a long time has not reached that target. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East,

with his knowledge of an element of the market, has made the point that unless there is mortgage money available then the market between 60 000 to 100 000 will not be able to function. Although there may be units there, unless the lending institutions are willing to lend the money then those houses will not move. To suggest that the provision of money for the Husbands, the Cane Garden, St. Thomas and the Venezuelan Housing project is going to fill the real need is not correct. The need is not only in that area. It is in the area of a lower income than that.

I am very interested in this because in the constituency I represent we have a lot of urban tenancies in the constituency along the coast. They do not come within the plantation tenancies because some of them are contiguous to the sea and in addition to that they were part of lands that were subdivided from plantations a long time ago – Worthing, Oistin, Pegwell. There are areas there that were designated as urban tenancies. Notices under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and others have been published. I believe surveys have been undertaken of these areas and under the Urban Tenancies it is the responsibility of the Government to put in the infrastructure and do the realignments. Now where is the vote for that this time? I am looking at these Estimates and I do not see any vote for that. Is it abandoned? I see professional services – \$3 million. I have been looking at it and I see a question about agricultural lots and tenancies. As far as I know, not many of those urban tenancies have been attended to as yet.

I would like to know what is the specific programme of Government. You see, this party has a completely different approach to the question of land use, land development and housing than the other side. It is a fact of life that in a country like Barbados, because of the small amount of land and the need to preserve land for certain uses, the Government has to make up its mind on a policy of getting increments in the value of land by way of taxation that arises inevitably as a result of planning permissions. You must have a philosophy to deal with that.

It took the Government nearly 2 years to bring in the order that was necessary to capture some of the increments in the value of land arising from the ABC Highway. It took a long period of time. Whether this Government likes it or not, there is going to be tremendous pressure in that area. I hear that there is a land use plan that has been published. I would have thought that that is such an important thing that greater publicity would be given in respect of it. I see that Warrens is designated as an area.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We should really get one. It is a very important area. I remember distinctly in the Planning and Priorities Committee that the lobbyists were operating from as long ago as that. There was a great argument to where the line would fall whether it was to the

seaward or the landward side of the ABC Highway. I remember I expressed the view very clearly that the Government would get a lot of resistance and pressure but that the only fairest thing in the community was that if any permissions were ever given, the maximum tax should go out there and capture the increment in value. A 50% is not enough. I hope the Government understands very clearly about this position.

3.10 p.m.

I must have an answer about the tenancy such is at Worthing. It is a scandal when you think that Worthing Plantation was subdivided by Mr. Alleyne, as I understand it.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am speaking of Amity Lodge and other low lying areas there. It is not the area taken up by the Sewerage Scheme. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West will tell you that he has been bringing questions in here for a long period of time about it. Promises have been made. Surveys have actually taken place. It is drainage. A lot of Amity Lodge over the years has been done but there are still other areas there. The people want to buy the land. They have houses there. They have started to improve them. In our time I know there was difficulty because there was a multiplicity of landowners.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Not the Pepperpot. The Government bought the Pepperpot and that is going. Amity Lodge was designated as an urban tenancy. It is the same thing you get in Scarborough in Christ Church, Thomas Gap and all of those areas. We must pick some of these and do them because they are the urban areas.

The next point I want to make is that I have a different philosophy from some people in respect of these urban tenancies. There are a number of areas that belong to the Government that the Government does not even know belongs to it. Every day in Oistins people come to me and say they want that spot. It belongs to the Government. I know it belongs to the Government because I remember when it was acquired. You ask about it and you would be told that it is designated for the removal of some houses. When I ask from where, nobody knows. They have it reserved originally on the file to look after houses that have been dislocated as a result of a road scheme. The road scheme was the Oistins Road. Now, what hurts them is that somebody from somewhere else goes in there. That is where the trouble starts. Luckily, I have only seen a bulldozer in there. I have not seen anybody moved in yet. People are agitating about it.

We must also educate the public in Barbados to understand that if they are living in urban areas it is no different from anywhere else. They have to understand they have to live in more than a single storey dwelling. We do not have the land to do it. I had hoped that the Housing Authority, with innovative legal mechanisms, would have encouraged people to purchase on a long-term basis, whether it is long lease or otherwise, some of these very well set out terraced units. It can happen in a way in which a company owns the building, a long lease is given, and the only shareholders in the company are the tenants, after they have paid off. There are mechanisms to do it.

In many parts of the United Kingdom they have been able to sell off some of the multi-storied flats in this way. The Housing Authority does **not** have any money. They have to sell capital. They are like the Government. You have to dispose of the capital in order to pay your current expenses. It is a very dangerous position to **be** in because sooner or later all the capital will go and you would have nothing left. It is like many people who inherit some money and decide they are going to stop working. They go ahead and live on the capital until it comes to an end. I want to know about those because these are very important areas.

Now, land acquisitions. This is a very serious thing because there are a lot of these outstanding. What is more is there are some outstanding in relation to Town Planning refusals and so on. People think that land acquisition procedures and compensation by the Government only arise when you have acquired the property but under the Town Planning Act, there are certain circumstances where refusal from the Town Planning equally gives rise to compensation. Some have reached the Courts. These should be attended to.

I do not think we should fool ourselves that a number of these large capital projects which have been completed or are near completion that the cost of acquisition is not **part** of the cost of the project. When, therefore, you start to bring in money from the taxation around the surrounding areas, some of that money should really be devoted to paying for the acquisitions. I remember they are 3 major ones, the O'Neal Highway, the ABC Highway and there must be some along Highway 2A. No Development Order in respect to Highway 2A has been made yet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I hope we do not find ourselves in the same position.

His Honour T. E. ESTWICK: I will not be very long, Sir. I just want to make a few comments under Programme 2, Sub-programme 3. Unlike the Honourable Member who just spoke, I have in my constituency 3 areas of great

concern. I am certain the Honourable Minister is already aware of them.

One of the most troublesome areas is Parish Land. I have been trying in my own way to get that sorted out quickly. It is troublesome from the point of view that line marks are often removed, people commandeer land and it is a **real headache**. I have tried not to do as some have done before me, that is, go and measure out **house spots** and put people on them. I have heard of some politicians before who would go **and** mark out the land by footsteps if they did not have a **tape**, and give out a house spot. I have been trying my utmost to avoid doing that. There is a pressing need in the area for house spots.

Under this Head I **see** that \$500 000 is being set aside to put infrastructure in **Rices**, **St. Philip**, **Valery**, **St. Michael** and other chosen locations in an ongoing programme to provide full serviced lots for the low income bracket. My sole reason for getting up is to request of the Minister that he gives his attention, as urgently as possible, to Parish Land, Bourne's Land and to Inch Marlowe/Breedy's. There is a pressing need for **house spots** in the area. If nothing else is done, in the present circumstances, I believe people who want to buy house spots should be given the opportunity to do so. There are a lot of **people** who are interested in buying their house spots once the National Housing Corporation will allow them to pay by instalments. If no mortgage money is available I do not see why that cannot be arranged.

3.20 p.m.

But the people are quite prepared to buy their house spots. I have already indicated to the Minister and to the other authorities that I believe people from the locations that I have cited, Parish Land, Bourne's Land and Inch Marlowe ought to get first choice in the purchase of these house spots because I think it is important that families be kept together in the present circumstances today. The concern was voiced by the the Honourable Member for Christ Church South where people who have grown up in 'an area who are now moving out from home and want to remain in the area and live near a grandmother or mother would see a house spot, enquire about the house spot only to hear that **somebody** else from another Parish who never made a check on it at all has all of a sudden, in one weekend, erected a house on the house spot.

I have had minor difficulties with some persons at the National Housing Corporation only because I have tried to comply with the law and I have tried to encourage people, in whatever way I can, to contact officials at the National Housing Corporation rather than commandeering a house spot. I would hope to continue to do that. But the need is terribly urgent and I would hope that I would not have to do anything else. I would never do that. I would never encourage people to put their houses on house spots. I would prefer to use this medium to request of

the Minister to pay as much urgent attention as possible to remedy the situation in these three areas. There is a crying need for it.

Thank you.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I think two significant points which have been made by the two previous speakers relate to the whole question of Government lands and identification of such and a problem which has plagued Barbados for many years and which seems to be on the rise within the recent past and up to now is the whole question of squatting, because that is really what it amounts to. Let me just address these two points, along with some other points which have been raised by Honourable Members.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South raised a problem which is of some considerable concern to the Government. I am sure when he was himself Prime Minister that this problem also plagued the Government. That is that up to this day, whatever the date is in March 1992, the Government of Barbados does not know all of the areas of land that it owns. This is in spite of the many pleas which have been made to try to get this matter brought under control. A property management unit was established for this specific purpose. I remember hearing the late Right Honourable Prime Minister, the Member for St. John making reference many, many years ago to the absence of a terrier. He was talking about a compilation of properties owned by the Government. We do not have that document available. The work has not been done.

Just about a month ago a lady came in to me, her uncle died and ~~she~~ inherited his property somewhere in Christ Church. When she went to a lawyer to get the papers straightened out and a survey was done, it was discovered that her uncle for over 20 years had built two bungalows on Government property. The Government only realized that when the lady came to get the property straightened out. This is not unusual.

When the Honourable Member made reference to the existence of lots in Christ Church, I daresay this is in existence in almost every parish of Barbados, where the Government owns land and we have not, as yet, been able to identify it completely. I have issued instructions to the Property Management Division of the Ministry of Housing that they should really go full steam ahead to get this matter brought under control. Indeed that efforts should be made as they go along to computerize all of the information so that they would not be falling over as it seems to me, research which has been done before.

I take the Honourable Member's point that sometimes when people go to the Ministry about land they sometimes have to go and identify the land to the officers because the officers do not know of its existence. I hope that we will

be able to get some hand on this particular **matter** because it is one of considerable concern. It also is a source of potential revenue to the Government from the point of view of rents or if it is land which can be sold then I believe it could be disposed of at market value. That is I think we ought to recognize. It is one which has plagued us for many **years** and one which we are **trying** to bring some measure of control to through the activities of the Property Management Division.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East made reference to Parish Land which is a huge area of land owned by the Government. It is probably one of the largest, I do not think we should call it a tenantry, but for the sake of this discussion let us call it a tenantry or a settlement. It is laid out and some of it is not laid out. The problem which we are finding there is that despite the many efforts of the National Housing Corporation to bring some kind of order to that development it is proving a Herculean task. I believe we could spend the next five years trying to get that matter resolved.

What has happened is that as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has pointed out, there are people who have gone in there, people who were supposed to be responsible people and have encouraged **people** to go and put their houses down. It makes life very very difficult for people. There is a big sign, I believe which has been put up by the National Housing Corporation to the effect that squatters or illegal erection of houses will be prosecuted and all this kind of thing. That sign is now crowded out by houses which have been put up illegally.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I am told by the representative for the area that the sign is now part of somebody's paling. It is a serious matter.

I would like to think that people would try to bring some order to this and to try to follow the directions and act in a more responsible manner. I know **that** there is pressure out there for lots. But it is not going to help the situation where people sometimes go and put houses down anywhere and then they expect the **services** to be put in. They expect roads to be put in to accommodate what they have done outside of the arrangements which have been made in terms of the roads and the various services.

I really sympathize with the Honourable Member for Christ Church East – he has identified, Parish Land, Bourne's Land, Inch Marlowe and Breedy's – and I indicate to him that yes we have some money in the vote but it is miniscule compared with the work which has to be done in this particular area. We will **try** to see how we can utilize this vote as effectively as possible but it is not a terribly large amount.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South raised the question about the work which is being done and which is supposed to be **done** in urban tenancies and he identified a number of them. I would want the information to indicate that work has **begun** in that area and in Thomas Gap just off **Westbury** Road. We have done some work down there. That has to be paved now. After that, the titles will be made available to **the** persons who qualify in that particular area. It is Thomas Gap **and there** is another area. I do not remember the other area. But I specifically remember Thomas Gap because we did pay a visit to that a few weeks ago to see the progress which was being made there. As far as Amity Lodge is concerned, I am not aware of the particular situation there. But the point which has been made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, we will have to have a look at that and see what possibilities exist there.

3.30 p.m.

The Member for St. Michael South East asked a question about Valery and indicated that Valery has been appearing in the Estimates for a number of years. Let me say that my information is that Valery is now at a point where we will begin to allocate the lots. My information for the hold up in that particular area has been that the Ministry of Education required an additional area of land for some school development and they had to re-survey the entire area so as to cut off that particular area. This is what they told me was the reason for the delay.

As far as Rices is concerned, Rices is now ready and I believe a price has been put on the land by the National Housing Corporation. I believe that persons who have indicated an interest in that area would be, as indeed in some other areas in St. Peter and in St. Lucy and other areas, receiving indications from the National Housing Corporation to come in and begin to make arrangements for the occupation of these areas.

Now, the Member for St. Michael South East made reference to Cutting Road, Haggatt Hall. We had temporarily to stop the work there because of the shortage of funds. We propose to recommence and see how much more we can do with the limited funds which we have available. I would imagine therefore that some additional lots will be made available. I am in no position to say how many of them would be made available during this coming year.

I think there might have been a little confusion in the mind of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East because he came in at a point when I was replying to a point made by the Member for St. George South, where I was giving some information on the sale of single units, which units were built by the National Housing Corporation. This is not the Venezuelan Project. This is a separate project. I made the point that 818 lots were sold and there were 200 single units remaining to be sold.

I know that the Honourable Member as a previous Minister of Housing and as a prominent real estate agent in Barbados knows the price of land and housing – the whole situation relating to the housing market. We recognise that mortgages are difficult to obtain and the Government is making an effort to identify funds to put into the Housing Credit Fund and into the Barbados Mortgage Finance to assist in this particular area.

I want to say, Sir, that as far as the Venezuelan Project is concerned, the project was originally aimed to construct 495 housing units of 2 and 3 bedrooms at Husbands and Cane Garden sites in St. James and St. Thomas. To date 449 units have been started and 299 completed. Another 150 are at various stages of completion and it is anticipated that the project will be completed this year.

Thank you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, when one sits and listens to the Minister of Housing you would **think** that his **realm** spans a continent. This lame excuse that the Ministry of Housing is unable to work out a compilation of a list of all the properties owned by Government is a little bit shameful. Everybody in Barbados knows that Government owns land all over Barbados. For the Ministry, continually over the last few years, to be telling us month after month in this Chamber that it has not got the capacity to get people out there to do a census and to work out how much land we have, I think it is a little bit hard for us to take. I am not going down that road.

I want to hear something about the Venezuelan Project. The relationship between the Government and the Venezuelans has been a very unhappy one. There are a lot of questions that have not been answered yet in relation to that particular relationship. I see the Deputy Prime Minister looking up for a change.

I understand there were 495 houses as the Minister said. A number of houses have been completed and have not been handed over to residents. Perhaps the Minister could tell whether the relationship between the Government and the people in Venezuela has been working **as** well as was intended.

I understand that the National Housing Corporation has not been accepting **the** receipt of houses from the Venezuelans because the houses are being built like cattle sheds. When the rain falls, water comes in. The roof leaks. Some of the plumbing is not working and as a result the National Housing Corporation has not been accepting receipt. The Venezuelans have stopped **working**. Now there is no doubt about that. The Minister accepts that the Venezuelans stopped working on the project for a number of months. I want to know, Sir, what is the reason why they **.stopped?** Why has money not been

disbursed in Caracas, for a long time, in respect of these houses? I also want to know from the Minister, because he is the only one who is answering all the questions in detail, I want to know if the Government approved the architecture of the houses at Husbands? The reason why I have asked, Sir, is because they are a blot on the countryside. They are aesthetically offensive.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am glad that you agree. I want to know if the Minister could tell us whether those plans, the models, were approved by agencies in Barbados? The Minister has other problems. He freely admits that his Ministry has been so sharply cut off that he really has not got much to do, a \$10 million cut. I want the Minister to reflect, since he has lots of time now.

Mr. Chairman, ask them to keep quiet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order please?

Mr. L. R. TULL: Since the Minister has lots of time now to pay attention to the number of houses that are coming on the auction block, because I think he is seeing his role too narrowly. All the policies of the Government in the last several months have made it very difficult for a number of people, particularly middle income people to continue to pay their mortgages and a lot of houses are being threatened by the finance institutions because of this inability to pay. The lawyers' offices in Bridgetown are really compiling big lists of houses that they are going to be auctioning off.

A lot of people who own these houses or who are paying the mortgage for them are middle income civil servants and I think it is time to provide some protection for them. The policy of the Government and housing does not seem to reach in those areas. The Government is the one that has inflicted the damage on these people.
3.40 p.m.

In my first statement, Sir, I mentioned the rise in interest rates, the consequential affect of the mortgage rates, and the cuts in public officers' salaries have made it almost impossible in some cases and extremely difficult in others for public officers to continue to meet their mortgage payments. There is going to be a lot of problems in this country unless the Government moves with expedition to use its authority with the mortgage companies and finance houses in Barbados to prevent people from losing their homes. When the Minister of Housing has ended listening to the harangue from the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, he can perhaps address his mind more particularly to this important matter that is troubling a lot of people in this country.

Now one brief question about the Town & Country Planning Department. I remember not long ago that Members of the Government were bringing a lot of duress to bear on the Town & Country Planning Department. It was the problem in the Belle and the squatters and so on. Members of the Government brought undue pressure to bear on the people in the Town & Country Planning Department. I just wonder, Mr. Chairman, whether the Minister can give a clear statement...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: No, you are anxious to know the answer, too, about the relationship between the Town & Country Planning Department and this Ministerial flexing of the muscles.

I also want to raise the question of homelessness. Homelessness was raised under the Head of the Ministry of Health or Welfare. It was projected as a problem that related to mental problems of aging Barbadians, but there is another element. Part of the growing homelessness in Barbados relates to the fracture in the domestic relationships. A lot of people are being put out of houses because of domestic problems and that is contributing to the increasing homelessness in this country. A number of these people have been going to the National Housing Corporation when they find themselves in these difficulties to seek units in the National Housing Corporation and are being told on a continual basis and with good reason that there are no housing units available. If a man has nowhere to live and you tell him every month that there is no housing unit available, that does not give him anywhere to sleep. We are not talking about the aging people who seem a little disoriented and who go out of the Mental Hospital and sleep on the sidewalk. But a lot of younger people who are in possession of their faculties have to be sleeping all around the island uncovered under the canopy of heaven because there is nowhere else to go.

As I said before, the Government had planned to build 1700 new units. Circumstances have changed. The only circumstance that has changed is that people instead of looking forward to the assistance of a caring Government are now being caused by that very Government to sleep beside the road. But they said there would be 1700 units of housing provided per year and out of them there were supposed to be over 440 provided by Government for low income housing. Nothing at all is in the Estimates to meet that need.

When the Minister was speaking earlier in response to an intervention by myself, he sought to put the debate in the sense as if I were saying that people should not be encouraged to buy the units which they have been renting. Nothing is further from the truth. That is not my philosophy and I have not said that. But the point that I wanted to make which was reinforced by the

Honourable Member for Christ Church South is that there is a fairly substantial number of people in Barbados who will never be able to buy a house. I do not care how easy you make it. Their circumstances will not allow them to buy a house. Any social democratic government, as they say they are, would understand that is a priority that cannot be ignored. Repetition and consistency show virtue. The people who say one thing and do something else show a lack of virtue.

I want to hear about the 1700 houses and I want to hear how in the new dispensation what alternative plan does the Government have for these people. If the alternative plan is to ignore, then say so. If there is no plan for them, say that so they and others will know how to cut and contrive. But you cannot put out in one year that you are going to spend \$11 537 000 on housing and then the next year provide \$1 million, which is a drop of \$10 537 150. This was in an area for low and middle income people in this country. We have got to hear something about it. There is no point in making all of these glib statements which we hear coming from Members on the other side. These are of sufficient seriousness as to warrant serious discussion.

I want to raise a question, Sir, in relation to the rural tenancies. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South dealt with the urban tenancies. I want to ask a few questions about the rural tenancies. The Minister is also the Minister of Lands. The Government, in my submission, has not moved with the kind of expedition to complete a number of the transactions in the rural tenancies. While they are dragging their feet on this, a lot of other problems are developing in those tenancies. For instance, we have the problem where some people have paid, like in Bulkeley, at the market value for their spots.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes?

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, two minutes. Some of them have been paid. The Government must refund the difference between the 10 cents per square foot or \$1.00 per square metre and the commercial price that they paid. Some of the money has been paid.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I keep hearing about intentions. The people are tired of hearing of the intentions of the Government. The people want the money and the figure here reflected in the Estimates for repayment of the people in that category is nugatory, slight, and insignificant. The money in the Estimates suggests that the Government has no intention during the coming financial year to pay the money to these people they owe. This money in the Estimates goes only part of the way. I want the Minister to address himself to these things.

There is one **other** thing that I want to raise quickly, Sir, in the few seconds remaining to me. It is the figure of \$636 500 that is paid by the National Housing Corporation into the Consolidated Fund. It does not say in the Estimates what this money is for. I am hoping the Minister when he gets up again can explain this figure of revenue \$636 500 and tell me **from** where it is derived.
3.50 p.m.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I really do not want to usurp the time of the Honourable Minister for Housing and Lands but I think there are 3 points raised by the Member for St. George South to which I have to respond.

The first point was to deal with property management. The Honourable Member for St. George South said that the present Minister of Housing was trying to give the impression...

I don't want you to leave. You can't just walk out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Address the Chair, please.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: He says that the Honourable Minister was giving the impression that it was a difficult job to get a dossier made of the magnitude of government property in Barbados. Mr. Chairman, I would like to say here that the Barbados Labour Party was in office for 10 years and the property management section which has authority over almost \$500 million in government property had 2 persons working in property management. When I became Minister of Housing and Lands this Government realised the importance of property management and it set about to get a department within the resources available which could at least begin to look at the amount of government property in Barbados. That is why we brought in some **temer** officers. We advertised for property managers, deputy property managers and others.

I would like the Honourable Member for St. George South to know that it is not for lack of trying or wanting to do the work that at this moment a full **temer** is not in place as far as property management is concerned. It is not an easy task. There are a lot of properties throughout Barbados which belong to Government and Government does not even know that it belongs to Government. This administration is trying and that is why we have put people in place in the property management section in order to do this job. I want that to go on record.

With regard to the Venezuelan houses, the Honourable Member spoke about leakages. He said that the houses were leaking. Mr. Chairman, the Venezuelan houses are no different from any other houses. Sometimes you get your own house built and it leaks. There were a few houses in **Husbands** that were leaking. That is true, but I have had lots of compliments from people living

in Husbands praising those houses. You only have to pass there and see how the people living in those houses have the houses looking. It is a beautiful place to behold. There are a few problems which the National Housing Corporation, I know has been addressing. The problems will be solved as time goes on. Leakages are not anything new. There will always be leakages.

He asked about the designs of the houses and who approved the designs. I would like to tell the Honourable Member for St. George South that the designs for those buildings were approved by NHC when the Barbados Labour Party Government was in office. The Democratic Labour Party recognising that this was to all intents and purposes a government to government contract did not want to break the contract and continued the project. If the Honourable Member for St. George South was a member of that Government and he does not know or pretends not to know or tries to give the public the impression that he does not know or that this Administration approved the designs then he was sleeping for the 10 years he was in there. He should know that the designs were approved by NHC when the Barbados Labour Party was in office.

Mr. Chairman, just let me say one other thing on the Venezuelan houses. This is for the benefit of the Member for St. George South as well. The contract that was drawn up by the then Government provided that the Venezuelans would be bringing in their own cement. We stopped that. We said that we have a cement factory and that they had to use Barbados cement. That is why they use Barbados cement. Instead of criticising this Administration for not operating in a manner that is beneficial to the people of Barbados I think that the Government should be complimented on the changes that it has made, and that is one of them. A cement plant in St. Lucy and a contract drawn up that the Venezuelans should bring in cement here.

I think that is enough that I have to say on the Venezuelan housing because the substantive Minister will respond in the other areas. There is one other point I wish to make before I sit.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: That is, the Honourable Member speaking about pressure on town planning. Mr. Chairman, I have been the Minister for Housing and Lands for 5 years and at no time in those 5 years can any single person in the Town Planning Department say, record or report that I have ever called any person in the Town Planning Department and told them to make this or that division. I will say this, Mr. Chairman, I know for a fact that there was a Minister over there in the Barbados Labour Party who called down there and told them that certain files should not come up through the system but should come straight to him. I have never done it.

Let me speak briefly on the Belle before any sort of talk starts up about the Belle.

Asides.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: The point I want to make about the Belle and this is one of the examples to show that there was no pressure at all from this Minister on the Town Planning Department. The Town Planner sent out those notices to the people in the Belle, the squatters in accordance with the law. He did not have to check with me. I knew about it Tuesday when I heard it on the news downstairs. He did not have to check with me first. I operated from a position of principle. I did not interfere at all. I just want to set the record straight because if you know of a Minister who put pressure on the Town Planning Department you should say which Minister it was. You cannot leave it like that because I was the Minister before the present Minister and therefore you would have to say which Minister put the pressure on them. It was not me.

I want to say something about the Belle because some person is bound to say something. As regards my position with the Belle squatters, I will repeat what I said to the Press about that situation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are having too many cross conversations. I cannot have it.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: When the notices went out to the people in the Belle I felt it my duty as a Member of the Government to allay the fears of the people. I know what can happen if persons living on land suddenly get a letter saying that they have to move their houses in 28 days. All I said to the Press was that the notices that have gone out to the people in the Belle were standard. If you turn over to the back of the notices you will always see that the person has 28 days to appeal. I never at any time said that the persons in the Belle did not have to move. What I said was, because I was trying to allay the fears and trauma the people in the Belle were going through, if you look at the back of the enforcement notices, you will see they have 28 days to appeal.

4.00 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN: Nobody was frightened by Don. I have not been frightened by Tom Adams furthermore Don, and you know that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this is the strangest debate in which I have ever taken part in this House of Assembly. I must say that. The Honourable Member who just sat down for all these days

kept very quiet and silent in these debates. He did not interfere with anybody. We did not interfere with him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I need to have some guidance on where the Honourable Member is going.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am debating with him if you want to know where I am going.,

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member....

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am entitled to pick up a debate from the contribution made by the previous speaker. I am saying that we on this side have not interfered with the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member for St. George South did not do anything to draw out the Honourable Member. We realise that the Prime Minister does not talk to him so there is a silent zone like up there at the Hospital.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I invite the Honourable Member to recognise that we are not talking about interfering.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We are keeping our distance too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are talking under the Head of Housing.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member gets in this Housing debate when he knows there are problems with houses from time to time. It has not warranted any big intervention. Nobody accused him as Minister of Housing of pressurising the civil servants. All of us in here forget the man that I was talking about yesterday. It is Don Blackman, not that Blackman. He is so sensitive. It is the other **Blackman** that used to treat civil servants badly, that cursed the whole Town Planning Department. You forget that?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: First of all, that has absolutely nothing to do with the Head under discussion. You called the name of a person, in my view, in a pejorative sense.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I claim the same rights and privileges from you that you granted to the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. You have allowed him to put in the record that he did not pressurize any public officers in relation to Town Planning matters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps, the Honourable Member was absent when an accusation was made about the Government pressurising personnel from a certain Ministry. I am saying having said what you said, that is, in my view calling the name of a person who can be identified, in a pejorative sense.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Can I say anything pejorative about Don Blackman?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member does not wish to correct that, then I will have it struck from the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You do not want me to call his name in here, Sir? If you do not want his name called, tell me that. I will not call his name in here. Let us go on, Sir. Next week will be the Budget debate. Somebody else will be in the Chair. I will deal with it then. Stop me then.

I want to ask the Honourable Minister of Housing some questions because I am very sad today. As a former chairman of the National Housing Corporation, it grieves me to look over there and see all those public officers who served this country well. Housing will be getting \$11 million less this year than last year. I want to know what they will have to do that will exercise their minds, that will merely give them job satisfaction in the 1992-93 fiscal year.

I want to know how you can feel comfortable in your consciences that a Ministry like Housing has been mutilated or destroyed by the Minister of Finance, who has gone outside. Why he could not come in here and take some of this? The Minister of Finance is the one responsible for this. I want to know what principles or policies informed his decision to cut a social service like Housing in the massive way he had done it. You know why I have to say that, Sir? On April 2, last year, the Honourable Minister of Health told this **country**, and this House of Assembly on television, it was 4 months before that - and he pointed to all of us. He said all of them on that side walked around this country crying wolf, wolf, the IMF is next door.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is here at page 599. I will read it out.

"They predicted that if the Democratic Labour Party were returned to the Government there would be massive layoffs in the country. They were talking about the civil servants..."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member says he is reading. I do not know from what he is reading.

".....and, of course, the magnificent men and women of the National Conservation Commission. They were talking of MTW workers..."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member says he is reading. Can I have the reference?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, it is Hansard page 599.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know when I take a note of it next week for television, and start reading from my own notes then you cannot say anything.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is fully seized of the Rule which says that a matter which has been debated during this session cannot be reflected on or dealt with in the manner where it can be debated again. The Honourable Member is referring to a debate that has occurred and seeking to import that debate into this debate, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That section of the Honourable Member's speech I cannot allow. To begin with, you have not quoted.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I said *Hansard* for 1991, page 599. ■ showed you. I am not reflecting. I am quoting and using an Honourable Member's words.

Sir, if I may move on. I really cannot believe that we have now reached the stage in this country where we cannot provide housing for the very poor who need housing, not necessarily to buy, but to rent. I remember the days when we were building terrace units, when 400 or 500 houses a year in the public sector were being built. We had the workshop at the Pine and the workshop at Clarendon. I want some information from the Minister. I understand that those two properties are up for sale. I did not actually see the advertisements but I have been told that. Those two properties...
4.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds I will read 28(4):

"It shall be out of order to reflect on any vote of the House or attempt to reconsider any specific matter upon which the House has come to a conclusion during the current session, except upon a substantive motion for rescission."

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have you, Sir. I have not attempted to reflect on any vote or any substantive motion that was in here. All I did was to quote the words of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Specific matter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have you, Sir. Wrong interpretation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Specific matter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member knows that in these matters that the Rule right after it, Rule 12 says and I quote:

"A Member may read, from the authorized report of the ~~debates,~~ the report of any speech made in the House of Assembly during any previous session."

I submit that we are still in this session. He is not entitled to read it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Alright, let us get on, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have made my ruling on that already.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I said previously that in the circumstances that I would not allow it in the record.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is there though. Whether it can be used in this session or not, it is there.

Sir, I want to ask the Minister of Housing, if it is also correct that the Ministry of Housing or the National Housing Corporation is planning to buy the property next door to the offices in Country Road, where the Mortgage Finance place used to be and the Pink Pelican. I understand that Housing wants to buy that property. It does not seem to me to be making any sense if you are slimming down and having a leaner operation in the Housing Corporation. You are selling two properties which you have to buy another one when your business is contracting. What is the rationale behind that? If the information is correct.

If the Minister does not know, I want the Minister to be reminded that National Housing Corporation cannot sell any property without your approval. That is part of the law. They cannot sell without Ministerial approval.

Also in the light of the substantially reduced vote, it is my understanding – the Minister was very kind to try and up front in this debate by saying that 207 have gone already. But he has not answered the whole question. In the light of the reduced vote, can the Minister give this House an assurance that 256 other employees in addition to the 207 of the National Housing Corporation are not likely – I am talking in the realm of probability deliberately – to be sent home shortly? Can the Minister also state whether it is not a fact that letters are being prepared all like yesterday in respect of the 256?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not work for them. I want some assurances on that, Sir. A few months ago, I think the whole country was alarmed to read that – especially lawyers – what we lawyers never thought was possible appeared to have taken place. That in fact two houses seem to have been or some such thing or to have changed their location for prices of an alarming nature, the relocation expenses were in excess of \$100 000. I am not interested in any rumour. The Minister had promised to do an investigation. I want to know if he has completed his investigation.

Aside.

Mr. D; A. C. SIMMONS: Who? Representing who? You know I do not represent break and enters. You know I do not represent burglars. I will do murders and manslaughters but nothing else. No chance of that. I should like to know if the Minister has identified the source of the problem.

In relation to the functioning of the National Housing Corporation I wonder if the Minister will give the House some information about the relationship between the National Housing Corporation and an agency which was at one time authorized to collect debts on behalf of the National Housing Corporation. There is some evidence that an authority purporting to act as an agent for the Housing corporation in the collection of debts has been less than honest in its dealings with the Housing Corporation to the extent that creditors of the National Housing Corporation have suffered unfairly as a result of the malpractices of the agent. I had mentioned something about it a couple years ago, I think about 2 years ago and I was promised some investigation. I would like to know if that is progressing.

I am not going to make any *specch* on Housing this year, Sir, because really there is nothing to talk about. If a Minister of Finance can be so unfair to the poor people of Barbados as to withdraw from the purview of the Minister of Housing \$11 million, why should we be wasting time in here talking about it. We should be blistering the Minister of Finance.

Hon. E. E. GREAVFF: Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of specific questions which have been asked and I believe that the time has come for me to give some answers.

I omitted in my previous intervention to advert to a question which was raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South relating to the sale of terrace units of the National Housing Corporation. This is a matter which, apparently, has exercised the attention of the National Housing Corporation for some time. It turned out that there is a legal problem relating to some of the older units. I am told that the legal problem has to do with the absence of a dividing wall, a clear partition to identify clearly the four

corners of the particular property that would be disposed of. In some of those older units the sale of the terrace units would create a problem. However the more recent units which were built and are being built by the National Housing Corporation, efforts have been made to take care of that particular problem and they are built in such a way that individual units could be disposed of. Ferniehurst, in Bonnetts, in Pondsides in St. Philip and in Church Village, all of the newer areas have the wall which clearly identifies the particular property, so that they could be disposed of. The National Housing Corporation will be entering into an arrangement with the tenants to dispose of those if any persons are interested in purchasing some of those units. It is all in furtherance of the proposal by the Government to ensure that people own as many of these areas as possible. 4.20 p.m.

Now, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas raised a number of questions. I did indicate in a previous intervention that the National Housing Corporation has put on the market some of its property and I have identified two of them. Clarendon and the Pine are for sale. It is not the first time that the National Housing Corporation is selling any of its property. I am sure that as time goes on they will seek to dispose of some of its other property for a variety of reasons, one of which is to ensure that the private sector has access to some lands which it could also develop, but at the same time to earn some income.

I am not aware, at this stage, of any proposal from the National Housing Corporation to buy a property contiguous to its property in Country Road as I am hearing from the Honourable Member. I am not at all saying that the Board has not considered it or maybe it is not in the thinking. As the Honourable Member has indicated they obviously could not purchase property without my knowledge, in the same way that they cannot dispose of property without first informing me as Minister.

I am in no position to indicate to the Honourable Member or to this House or to the country, or give any assurance and the Honourable Member was quite specific. I cannot give any assurance to this country that 256 persons are not likely to be sent home. I really cannot give that assurance.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said 256 or however many ...

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

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Neither can I give the House the assurance. I am totally unaware of any letters which are being prepared. I really do not work at the National Housing Corporation. I really would not know. The Honourable Member seems to know because he says that letters are being prepared all like now. I am not

aware of that. I would say this, and I am being quite frank about this matter. If the time comes where in the changed circumstances a decision has to be taken to further slim the operations of the National Housing Corporation by way of a reduction in staff it will be done.

As far, Sir, as the relationship between the National Housing Corporation and an agency which, apparently the National Housing Corporation has contracted to collect debts on its behalf is concerned, again nothing has been drawn to my attention. I promise the Honourable Member if there is a problem I will seek to get the answer and at another intervention, provide the Honourable Member with that information. I am not aware of any difficulty between an agency contracted to collect debts on behalf of the National Housing Corporation and the National Housing Corporation.

More importantly, Sir, he raised the question about a problem which has been identified in the relocation of two houses in Gall Hill, St. John. He wants to find out whether or not I am in a position to say anything specific on that matter at this stage or if I will be able to identify the source of the problem.

Let me say, Sir, that the Board of the National Housing Corporation was asked to investigate this matter and they are investigating it. I am aware that the Board has had a meeting on this matter. I have not as yet received a report about any decisions or the results of any investigations, but once again I will give the Honourable Member and the House the assurance that when the evidence is available the information will be made available to this Honourable Chamber. Thank you.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I want to carry on from where the Honourable Minister left off because I am hearing about this investigation into the resiting of two houses but I want to let the Minister understand that no report can come before this Honourable Chamber and be made public to Barbadians which would confirm that it takes \$200 000 to resite any two houses.

I know where the two houses were in St. John and it is just about three miles from where it was resited, from down at the bottom of Bath/Sargeants Village/Welch to Gall Hill. It cannot cost \$200 000. Not \$100 000 to move two chattel houses. I don't want to go on with this thing about this inquiry and investigation. I want the Minister to understand that I would not be satisfied with any explanation, whether they have too much staff or not, because it would bring the reputation of the National Housing Corporation into play here, because if they allow this to happen ...

We have to make sure. I want the Minister to give this House the assurance that at no future date would it

take \$100 000 to resite any house. That is all I want to hear from him.

The other point I wish to raise is one which concerns me most and that is in the Pine. In the Pine you have the oldest housing estate and it has the largest number of rental units, owned by the National Housing Corporation. I have the honour and the privilege to represent persons living in the Pine and at the present moment people still have to go out outside. The toilets are in the yard. People still have to go at nights to attend the toilets or as they call it, for human call. I have appealed before to have that situation remedied and I am hoping that the Minister will give me the assurance that all such facilities ...

I know that there has been a steady programme to correct the situation but as the representative I am duty bound to call on the Minister and the National Housing Corporation to correct this situation. We are in 1992 and it is not enough to come in here and say that the people were there for years and the BLP or the DLP had the Government and did nothing.

It would not be true, Mr. Chairman, to say that the Barbados Labour Party did nothing because under the Barbados Labour Party as a government between 1976 and 1986 the people on Princess Royal Avenue who suffered the same conditions had those conditions changed. I hope that the other houses in Golden Rock where this unseemly thing occurs, that something is done to address this situation.

At the same time the Minister should be reminded that I mentioned to him some time ago that termites were found in the houses. The houses are in need of termite treatment because some of the tenants complained to me and I have seen it, where the furniture have been attacked. In Parkinson Field in particular, people have been complaining and I want the National Housing Corporation to address this serious problem. The National Housing Corporation should have these houses treated. At the same time the National Housing Corporation should look at the whole question of maintenance.

4.30 p.m.

Most of the houses in Wildey and in the Pine were wired. There are just a few of them that were recently rewired to meet up to date standards as set out by the Government Electrical Department. But most of the houses, Mr. Chairman, were wired 30 or 40 years ago and they are fire hazards. We saw that 3 years ago when some 4 units were burnt as a result of this. People are using modern day equipment in the area, not only in the Pine but in all other housing estates. They do not have the wiring which would be compatible with the equipment that they are using and, as a result, you have fire hazards. The National Housing Corporation is going to be faced with this problem and it could be extremely disastrous for us if something

like this happens. Unfortunately, we had 2 or 3 houses burnt down as a result of the overloading.

The other thing you must look at as far as this overloading is concerned is that the Light and Power has got to be on call very, very often responding to the tripping of these breakers. A couple of weeks ago, I had to call the estate manager and I must say that he was very cooperative. I want to congratulate him for his response. It happened at night and 8 persons on a block were without electricity in Wildey. I spoke to him and he immediately got in touch with an electrician who came and **corrected** this problem.

I made mention of this because it is a situation which we have got to understand is **very** serious indeed, especially at a time when there is so many crimes being committed. All you have got to have is a tripping of one of these breakers causing the whole area to be in darkness and then people can get into the houses. As a result, we would have a serious situation. We have to address, too, this whole question of the units where some of them have outlived their usefulness. The structures were put down some 30 or 40 years ago and we have to look at the structures to see whether they can bear the load that they are carrying at the moment. Obviously, the structure will be weakened and there are some cases where the units need to be demolished. We have to look at that because it is nothing new when I talk about demolition of some of Government's **properties** or housing units. We go abroad and we see in England, for instance, in some cities or boroughs where they demolish houses and make way for new houses because the houses have been health and life hazards.

I want the Minister to look at all of these matters. This is a matter of projection. It is not a matter of looking at a house for someone, but we have to protect what we have. It is true on the other hand that Government must look at disposing of some of these properties because the maintenance escalates after a period of time beyond the point where it is not worthy for Government to keep them. I would hope that the Minister would look at that. Look at the maintenance. We should be looking at that and see what the maintenance will cost. Do not forget when we are talking about disposing of these units and increasing rent. It must have some bearing on the economics of the houses. Some of the houses have paid back for themselves. Therefore, we have to look at that factor. I do not really swallow the argument that you have to increase rents because they were not increased over a period of time and because of the maintenance costs. We have to look at those factors. All of these things have to come into play in determining whether you are going to dispose of them or carry out maintenance.

I want to be assured that Government is fully equipped to do proper maintenance or has a proper

contractor. I see they **are** going out to **contract** because I do not think all of this work can be handled from the NHC Headquarters as it stands now. I am aware of the physical space there. If you are going to do some building, it is not going to be able to tackle these problems. In the meantime, as I am looking at it, the Minister may very well have to go out to private tender. In considering a private tender, I want the Minister to get someone who is responsible and will do the job and look for the most **competitive** contractor in this case. Because I have seen Government go out to get a private contractor and then the contractors run rings around Government. We will come here with a very high bill and I do not want to hear that we have gone out like the maintenance of CARICARGO. I do not want that to happen and I am asking the Minister to be very vigilant because I know some people who have interest. I know that. I know how people do things. They may have their people lined up to award contracts so that they can be the beneficiary in one way or another. But I want the tenants to be the main beneficiaries and there will not be a cost which cannot be justified in the maintenance of these units.

I am appealing to the Minister to look particularly at the houses in Wildey. They want painting. Some of them have not been painted for over 10 years. That is why at Christmas time 2 years ago I painted thirty of them.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I assisted in getting the houses painted. I did voluntary work.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I would hope the Minister recognises the fact that the houses really need a face-lift. Self-help alone cannot do the job, Mr. Chairman. I am prepared to assist and some of the people in the area are willing to assist. It was remarkable to see the young boys and girls from the area painting along side with me. **Yes**, they were painting along side with me. I want to congratulate Sissons Paint for donating some of the paint. That is what I want to do. Read that into the record because some people are **doing their** bit. I would like to see the **Honourable** Minister of Housing take a lead too. Do like me and come out and hold a brush. Well, you do not know how to brush.

I hope the Minister understands that the houses need a face-lift. Those of us who visit the area often would recognise this. After all, the people in the area have been complaining. They are asking me what is going to happen now that the workshop at Factory Avenue and the workshop at the Pine will be closed. I do not know what to tell them. But I am sure that the Minister will do everything in his power to ensure that the Corporation takes care of this problem.

With those few words, I hope the Minister will give me the assurance, I am sure he will, or make sure that he puts his words into practice and let us have a face-lift in the Pine so that when he and other Members of Government pass through they will see a new looking Pine and Wildey.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Andrew.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask a few questions of the Honourable Minister relating to the National Housing Corporation. Sometime last year we had a number of houses resited from the Whitehill and Isolation Road areas into areas of Apes Hill and assurances were given to most of these people that they would be able to purchase the house lot on which the house was resited. I would like to know from the Minister whether or not the relevant plans have already been completed and, if not, how soon.

I had earlier inquired of the Minister some information relating to the repairs to a number of housing units in the Belleplaine area. I have been given the assurance that these repairs would be undertaken as soon as possible. The situation with those housing units remains the same and I would like to know from the Minister whether or not there is some discrimination relative to the repairs of the houses in the St. Andrew area and the houses in the other tenancies which seem to be reaping their benefits from the Estimates relevant to repairs in tenancies in the housing estates.

4.40 p.m.

The other area of concern, Mr. Chairman, relates to the acquisition of land for housing purposes in the Walkers area. This is land which was acquired in an area which, in my view, is totally unsuitable for housing purposes. To date we have had no response from the Minister relevant to an enquiry which he was supposed to have made as to whether or not this was so, and there are a number of persons in the area which is affected by slippage, in the same Isolation Village and White Hill area in Hillaby, St. Andrew. There are a number of areas affected by the slippage and the owners of these houses are in urgent need of house spots. Perhaps the Minister could tell us whether or not he has found alternative sites for these persons and what is the position relative to this area, the Walkers area.

Those are my few questions, Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I have been reserving most of my speech on Housing for the Budget and I am therefore going to limit my comments to a couple of questions relating to general problems in housing as illustrated by my own constituency.

I wish to know, Sir, whether it is intended to sell the remaining house spots in Pleasant Hall, St. Mathias and in

Bonnetts. I have raised this matter previously in the House and we have still not had any progress made in relation either to the sale of the lots in Pleasant Hall or those in Bonnetts. I also have a problem where the lawyers have written to the National Housing Corporation, and I have written in my capacity as the Member of Parliament, about the Simmons Land area – Bonnetts and Simmons Road I am talking about – where after the sale of house and land to people out there, suddenly an infestation of termites occurred. It seems to me that there is an obligation on the Corporation to put that right or to reduce the price in some way for these people. Two particular ladies have been the worst cases that have come to my attention and I should be pleased if the National Housing Corporation would hurry up and make a definitive decision in relation to this matter.

I do not want to air it much further. I usually get good co-operation from the National Housing Corporation, but in this case I am sorry to have to raise the matter on the Floor of the House, but it has got to that stage.

The other question, Sir, relates in general to the urban tenantry under the Tenancies Freehold Development Act. The Minister normally designates certain areas as tenancies and I have asked about the designations that have taken place in Worthing View, Gospel Hall Road, Gunsite and Forde's Road and how soon it was proposed to commence work in those areas. I got a blanket answer that as soon as funds had become available, and that was some time ago. Could the Minister state now whether any funds have been voted in these Estimates and how soon the necessary work would be put in? If no funds have been granted, could the Minister say what efforts he made on behalf of my constituents to ensure that he could carry out the word of the former Minister of Housing that matters would be dealt with? If he did make a lot of effort, can he tell me why he failed to convince the Prime Minister that the funds should be there? If there is a shortage of money, Sir, can he tell me whether that shortage was due to the ineptitude of the Prime Minister in running the country in such a way that he now has no funds to deal with the matter? I am sure he will answer those questions when he gets up, Sir.

The other point I wish to address to the Minister is simply this. The last plan was laid by the Minister some months ago. Can the Minister bring us up to date on how far the Government is now with the amendment of the plan to comply with the Town and Country Planning Act? I am sure the Minister will recognise that there have been only two Ministers of Planning who have had the privilege of bringing plans to this House. The Honourable Member and myself have tried to comply with the law and I would hope that he would also see whether we can in this case get any revision that is necessary on the Table of the House in time, because it is a breach of the legislation not to do so, and secondly, I think it leads to a lot of decisions we would not like to see made.

As I said, Sir, any other comment I have on Housing I will reserve for the Budget debate.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I believe that this will be the last intervention before the break. There are a number of questions which have been asked. I recognise that Honourable Members seek on these occasions to raise matters on behalf of their constituents and I have no problem with that. I think that they point to a number of problems in some of the housing estates.

The Member for St. Michael South East raised a question on the wiring in houses in the older section of the Pine, termite treatment and some areas which need painting and cleaning up. From time to time houses which have been built very long ago have to be rewired because of the modern conveniences which are now used. The National Housing Corporation has a programme for rewiring those houses. I think the Honourable Member knows that and I would want to give him the assurance that this programme will continue. I cannot indicate the speed at which it will continue, but I am sure that the programme will continue, because we recognise the dangers which can come from a situation where there is faulty wiring.

Termite treatment is another matter. I think that is the subject of a Parliamentary Question and I suspect the answer should be ready very shortly and the Honourable Member will be given the answer in the fullness of time. Suffice it to say that again the National Housing Corporation will be treating these areas as much as can be done with the money which it has at its disposal.
4.50 p.m.

I was very pleased to hear the Member for St. Michael South East making reference to his rather generous contribution to community development, just prior to the elections, in terms of his time and his effort. I am not aware, and he has certainly not indicated, that he has done that since. I know that the Honourable Member is an honourable man and therefore would not want to mislead this Chamber. I think that that effort ought to be complimented. Let me say that one of the things which I have found lacking in some of the housing communities in Barbados is that there seems to be a kind of attitude that pervades those areas where people think that they have to sit down with their arms folded and await the Government to come and do every little thing which has to be done to the houses or in the area. If there is a latch missing, if in a toilet bowl the ball inside gets broken and there is a problem with flushing or if there is a lock which is spoilt, it would seem that people just sit down and wait or call the National Housing Corporation and harass the National Housing Corporation to do the smallest things.

I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the members who occupy these houses – and I am reminded that the majority of them are in arrears – should try to

develop a personal interest in where they are living and certainly a community spirit. This brings me to the whole question of the surroundings of a number of these areas.

Sometime ago, the National Housing Corporation was spending about \$1 million a year by getting the National Conservation Commission to clean up a number of these areas; I think, Sir, that that is a misuse of government funds. When I say misuse, I do not want to give the impression that anybody has misused government funds in that respect, but I would like to think that people who live in communities like this would band themselves together and try to keep their areas properly cleaned and kept and in such a way that they could feel proud and happy to be living in that particular area and not allow the grass to grow 10 feet tall and sit down and wait until the Government can get around to cleaning. The National Housing Corporation has no money to do that kind of work. I am, therefore, calling on people in various housing areas – Bonnetts, Brittons Hill, Maynards in St. Peter and in Eden Lodge and other areas – to develop a spirit of self-help where that community spirit seems to have been lost. The Pine, led by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East because I am sure he would give of his time and brushes and do some painting also.

Asides.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I would really like to have that reintroduced among our communities in Barbados. It would be a credit to all of us.

There were a few other questions which Honourable Members have raised. The Member for St. Thomas raised the question of a relationship between a collection agency and the National Housing Corporation. I did promise him that I would try to find out and inform the House. A gentleman – I am not going to call any names – obtained a judgment against this company, and all monies were recovered. The company apparently collected monies on behalf of the National Housing Corporation. A judgment was obtained. However, the National Housing Corporation was able to recover the monies from the company. Tenants who were able to produce receipts in respect of the monies paid to this agency have had their accounts credited by this amount. The owner of the collection agency was also involved in a joint housing venture project with the Corporation. Monies which were being held for him as retention were used to offset funds which he collected for the Corporation and which were not paid in. It would seem as though that matter has been straightened out.

The Member for St. Michael South East raised a question about outdoor facilities. I am informed that the National Housing Corporation is moving to refurbish all units which have outdoor facilities and has done so in Bayville, Princess Royal Avenue to mention a few. The programme will be continued.

As far as the matter raised by the Honourable Member for St. Andrew in relation to those persons who have been refocated to Apes Hill, I am told that persons who have been relocated to Apes Hill will be allowed to purchase their respective lots as soon as all the necessary documentation that will permit the Corporation to convey the lots is available. That will include the survey plans and certificates of compliance.

The Member for Christ Church West raised the question of lots at Pleasant Hall and Bonnetts. These will be offered for sale very shortly. The surveying of the areas is currently being done. Tenants at Simmons Road – this matter is being dealt with currently by the technical division of the National Housing Corporation. He did make the point that I have had the distinction of being one of the only 2 Ministers to have laid the Physical Development Plans of Barbados. I am told that as far as the revision is concerned work has not yet started on the revisions. Instead the Town Planning Department has been concentrating on detailed plans of various areas which are being completed based on the policies of the revised Physical Development Plan. For example, the greater Bridgetown Plan which came out in 1987 and the ABC Plan which was recently released.

I want to give Honourable Members the assurance that very shortly copies of those plans will be available to the Members of this Chamber so that they will also get an opportunity to know what is in the Plans and indeed to make an input when the occasion arises.

Basically, Sir, those are the points which I want to make reference to. The matter relating to undue pressure by Members of this Administration on the Town Planning Department has been dealt with and I do not want to deal further with that particular matter. It remains therefore for me to beg to move that Head 37 as amended stand part.

The question that the sum of \$13 035 632 under Head 37 as amended Ministry of Housing and Lands stand part 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 5.30 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.
5.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SITING

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair in the House and Mr. CHAIRMAN took the Chair in Committee of Supply.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply is resumed.

HEAD 38 – MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE – \$27 431 204

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 38 stand part. I would normally have some introductory remarks to make but in view of the time constraint I shall allow Honourable Members to make any comments they wish to make.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, the most significant feature with respect to the cut under this Head is the savage manner in which the Minister of Finance has dealt with the Minister of Community Development and Culture. One wonders when the Minister of Finance was dealing with his structural adjustment programme last year and he was considering the cuts in the various Ministries and Departments of Government, whether or not he intended to cut this Ministry. Looking at the cuts, one cannot see any need whatsoever for these cuts in the Ministry of Community Development and Culture as it is now constituted.

Mr. Chairman, I hope the Honourable Member for St. John does not take my comments in a personal light. Either the Honourable Member for St. John has been unable to effect any meaningful programmes within that Ministry to command, at least, make the Minister of Finance feel he is capable of commanding a Ministry, or the Honourable Minister of Finance has shown such disrespect for the Honourable Minister of Community Development and Culture that he has decided on these cuts without even consulting him. If I were in that position, I would resign. We like to judge other people by our own standards. One wonders why the Honourable Member for St. John remains in that Ministry.

Perhaps, when one sees the overlapping in comparing the cuts in this Ministry with those in the Ministry of Labour, which time would not permit us to reach, one would suspect that, in the next change that the Honourable Prime Minister might probably propose in his Cabinet, this Ministry will be merged into a Ministry of Labour and Community Development and the Honourable Member for St. John will probably become Parliamentary Secretary in that Ministry. This is mere speculation at this time,

Sir, I do hope that the Honourable Member would not be offended by those remarks.

These, Mr. Chairman, are very serious cuts. When one considers the structural adjustment programme and the pressure which will be placed on the poor people of this country, when one considers the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party Government where they were talking about a caring Government, you could only consider that these cuts represent a total abandonment of the pledges in their Manifesto. In my view, they are a vicious onslaught on the poor people of this country. There certainly can be no justification whatsoever for cuts totalling \$5 million in areas like the Welfare Department \$1.1 million, the National Assistance Board \$2 million, and the Child Care Board \$1.8 million when you are allocating \$2 million to Sherbourne. To do what?

Mr. Chairman, if you would take the particular cuts individually, as I have already said, because of the structural adjustment programme, severe pressure will be brought to bear on these departments. One would note that, with the cuts in the Welfare Department, the actual amount is \$1 125 904. The actual cuts relating to poor people who normally seek assistance from the Welfare Department totals \$940 662 which means that 80% of the cuts within the Welfare Department are reflected in the grants to poor people of this country. I cannot see the justification for this. I would like an answer from the Honourable Minister as to what guided his thinking in agreeing to these cuts and remaining as a Minister in this Ministry.

The National Assistance Board, as you know, Mr. Chairman, has given yeoman service to a number of poor and destitute persons in this community. There are a number of old people living alone exposed to the elements. Were it not for the mercy of the diligent officers of the National Assistance Board one wonders what would have become of them. What this Government has done in these cuts is to put these people on trial and condemn them simply because they are poor and destitute. The only crime these people have committed is the fact that they are poor and destitute. There are cuts to the tune of \$2 million. There can certainly be no justification for these cuts.

The Child Care Board: I believe it is about time that the Honourable Minister of Community Development tell us what is the position of Government relative to the Children's Homes in this country. As a member of a service club, the Kiwanis, to be precise, we have seen the need to adopt one of these Children's Homes. From our experience with these Homes, we think they should be increased rather than decreased.

It is all right to adopt a policy whereby you decide to place people in these Children's Homes under foster care. There is good argument for that, provided you do not have more people than the actual Children's Homes can take.

This is not the situation in Barbados because for every 2 people you place in foster care, there are 4 or 5 waiting to get into the Children's Homes. There can be no justification whatsoever at this particular point for the cut to the Child Care Board which would reflect on these Children's Homes.

Perhaps, the Honourable Minister could also let us know, and this is very disturbing, for only yesterday we were speaking about problems with the Boards and the Head Teachers at the Secondary Schools – we highlight these things because these people have the numbers to mount protests, while people who run Children's Homes and put the children in Homes cannot – the Honourable Minister could let us know what he is doing about the chaos in the Child Care Board. We have already had 3 resignations from the Child Care Board and there has been no public statement from that Board or the Honourable Minister.

5.40 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: We should also like to know whether it is the intention of Government to lay off more people from the Child Care Board. Already the signals are there. There are a number of persons in the Child Care Board, employees, who, are very apprehensive, very concerned, very frustrated on a day to day basis because of the uncertainty surrounding their jobs. I think it is only fair, seeing that the Minister of Finance has already stated that there will be more lay-offs. We can see from the cuts that areas like the Child Care Board will be affected. We should like to know from the Minister if he knows, because it seems as though most of the Ministers who have spoken so far do not seem to know whether there will be any lay-offs in their Ministries and, if so, how many. But I should like the Honourable Minister to be as frank as the Honourable Minister of Education was yesterday and give us some reasonable answers to these questions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member should conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, the National Cultural Foundation is also included in this Ministry, and we note here that there is a grant of \$1 369 623 for promotion and development of cultural awareness which would include the National Cultural Foundation. My understanding is that the National Cultural Foundation has not been able to publish any financial statements since the Barbados Labour Party left office. I do not know how true this is. It would appear as though there are a number of irregularities in the National Cultural Foundation. Maybe the Honourable Minister could let us know when we will have a publication of the next financial statement. We also understand that the National Cultural Foundation has been instructed to meet expenses through sponsorship

only, as there will be no money for operational expenses. Hence things like workshops and training will be a thing of the past. This is unfortunate because, at a time when you will have a number of people on the streets due to lay-offs caused by the structural adjustment programme, these workshops and training programmes are needed now more than ever.

Just briefly, Sherbourne. We believe it is about time that Government states its position on Sherbourne. Sherbourne...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: We believe that Sherbourne should be put up for sale. Two million dollars cannot even pay the outstanding expenses.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: With those comments, I conclude.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Bridgetown.

Miss B. A. MILLER: We are getting close to the guillotine, Sir, and we are aware of that. There are certain subheads within Head 38 that I wish to address, but most particularly I wish to address the question of welfare. This has been my theme throughout the Estimates debate. Taxes, levies, a coming value-added tax, user fees throwing people on to the welfare services in a way that they had thought never to see again. We are going back, Mr. Chairman, to the bad old days of means tests where you have to get in a line now and get a voucher and people must come home to see how poor you are. This is the country which sports a motto: "Pride and Industry". I am particularly concerned, at a time when the Minister of Finance knows that he is about to inflict even greater taxation in the form of a value-added tax and in the form of user fees – the value-added tax is coming, maybe not today or next week but it is coming – but of all the user fees that we have seen we have seen in Health, in Education. Mr. Chairman, Sir, Welfare traditionally has been a safety net, a buttress against hard times in this country, a cushion which has protected the underprivileged, the indigent, the poor, the marginalized, the homeless, what are now to be recognized as street children in Barbados, these are the people...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have to repeat this because you are not learning the lesson. They are like wayward children over there. They will not learn and understand.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, they can afford to snigger and giggle at it but we cannot overstate the hardship that is going to come to people in Barbados, the hardship that is already here, that is already being recognized in the Welfare Services. I look at the vote for Welfare. I look at page 87, Sir, and I see a tremendous cut. I see that actual expenditure for the year 1991 was in the order of just over \$13 million. I see a cut now to \$10.5 million. I see the Estimates for 1992-93 \$10.5 million. I see a big cut in terms of Travel. I see a big cut – and these are officers who must move around the country – in terms of Operating Expenses. Subsidies, like subsidies everywhere else, virtually halved. Grants to Individuals, again a major cut. If you look at the Explanatory Notes, Sir, you will see where it says that the:

"Welfare Department is responsible for the administration of National Assistance which includes monetary grants and assistance in kind."

You will see details further down it says that monies, under the Head or the line item Operating Expenses, which have been cut:

"Provides for the purchase of uniforms, burials, refreshments, legal aid, postage" and something called the "Food Centre."

I would like the Minister to tell us about the Food Centre. No, no, no, no. Do not laugh at this.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This Democratic Labour Party Government...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is addressing the Chair and I am not laughing.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Not you, Sir, because I know that you are going to feel the need in your constituency.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But it is this Democratic Labour Party Government that has continually turned a deaf ear to the Salvation Army which for years has been trying to raise enough funds to construct a night shelter.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Do not tell me it is not true. I belong to the Salvation Army. We need a return of the night shelter, a hostel to provide overnight care. A lot of the homeless people you see sleeping on the Mutual steps and on other pavements in Barbados and generally in Bridgetown nowadays, are the kind of people who, when I was a girl, used to go to the Salvation Army

night shelter and at least have a bed and a pillow for the night, a cup of hot tea and a loaf of hot bread with some salt butter in it the next morning. I know whereof I speak.

Government is cutting away services and there is nothing to replace these for the people at the end of our community where the need is greatest. Barbadians are a proud people, Mr. Chairman, Sir. There are many mothers – I know some of them – who know exactly where they can go from year to year to get that little something so that they can provide school uniforms for children. Now that the vote is cut and particularly that line item for Operating Expenses is cut, all this tells me is that fewer children will now go to school. Already fewer girls are going to school because, in families in Barbados today, where there are 2 or 3 children and a mother cannot afford, either for want of bus fare, lunch money, or both and other things to send more than one of those 3 children to school, do you know whom they choose out to send? The boys.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. Gender discrimination. We are going back to the 1940s and 50s in Barbados where young girls are being discriminated against in respect of access to educational opportunities. The Democratic Labour Party is presiding over all of that.
5.50 p. m.

It is a sad thing that this young man here, the Honourable Member for St. John, finds himself now presiding over a Ministry which, according to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, will not now be a Head by this time next year, because I fully believe that, he is presiding over a Ministry that is about to disappear. There is even less for him to do than the Minister of Housing. It is clear to us on this side that the Child Care Board – I don't know if the officers are hearing it for the first time, but you had better listen – the Child Care Board, the National Assistance Board, all these Boards will disappear just like the NCF and be absorbed in a Ministry to give this Honourable Member from St. John something to do.

That is all part of what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West called management systems within the Government. I don't care about the management systems, Sir. What I care about are the clientele, the people who want to participate in these programmes, the people who do not have any choice. You are going to find a cut now in respect of school uniforms. That means that more children, and particularly their children, will find that they can't go to school because their mothers cannot afford a school uniform.

Even burials. Legal aid: this is something I wish to address, Sir. There is going to be a greater need for legal aid as these hard times advance upon us. Many men,

through no fault of their own, find themselves unemployed, laid off, without work. So that, even if they were willing, many of them are simply not in a position to provide maintenance. They will be getting the unemployment benefit for a period of time, that is, those who worked. Some of them have other means and they hide from their responsibilities to maintain the children.

Many women, and middle-class women too, I know whereof I speak, middle class women are now turning to the legal aid system. Something is wrong with the system, Sir, a number of things, in particular we are getting to a position where many members of the profession are finding it more and more difficult to accept work sent to them from the legal aid system. Many of us have our names down because we feel we have to make a contribution but still have to be paid, at least, something for what we do.

What is paid for legal aid in respect of work done in the Magistrates Courts is so pitiful, Sir, that nobody goes in the Magistrates Courts for the kind of money that is paid out in legal aid. The cruelty is that you do the same amount of work you would do if you went to the High Court. When you look at the Family Law Act there are certain inequities there and you may find yourself going 3 and 4 times. But there are certain inequities.

A woman who is living in a union other than a marriage with a man, can go to the court for maintenance of the children of that union in the case of a breakdown in that relationship. If there is property which was acquired during the course of that union she can ask for a declaration of her interest and an apportionment of her interest in respect of that property. Not so persons who are parties to a marriage.

A woman who is a party to a marriage, particularly a poor woman who has to go to the court for maintenance for her children cannot at the same time ask a High Court Judge to make a declaration as to her interest in the property, without first having filed for divorce. Many women are not in a financial position to do that because there is no legal aid for divorce. There is legal aid for maintenance.

All these little inequities and others which I have not got time to mention today, Sir, are working great hardship. It really is not going to help matters now if under this Head, for those women who have only legal aid to come to their assistance in the business of trying to get maintenance to support children, legal aid is going to be cut, for if this is now cut from under their feet, you are throwing them on to other services which have also been cut and eventually some children whose mothers cannot, for want of these services, provide support and maintenance for them are going to end up on the street as street children and are going to end up in our already overcrowded institutions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will conclude in 2 minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I should very much want the Honourable Minister to be very serious about this sub-Head, the Welfare Department, and to explain to us – I am not even asking for any assurances because the cut here is so deep when you are going to move from \$13 million to \$10 million, I don't think that I am disposed to accept any assurances – I really want an explanation now as to how this Ministry is expected to cater to increased traffic which of necessity must be attracted to it in the course of this coming financial year.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, in the time available to me I wish to respond to some of the comments made regarding this Ministry. Let me start by saying that I assumed, until the Honourable Member for the City spoke about the legal aid scheme, that she was in defence of the poor in Barbados. Now, were I involved in the legal aid scheme I would have no objection, so long as it would not cost me other than time to serve the poor, indigent and less well off in this country. She is now making out a case for increased fees out of the Legal Aid Department and I think this is unfortunate. I want to understand where the focus is. If \$350 for a lawyer in the Magistrates Court for maintenance cases is not a lot of money, I don't know what is. If I compare it to other jurisdictions, our legal aid in Barbados is generous.

I want to make the point that the legal aid system the Welfare Department administers is not the same legal aid system which the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety administers. Maybe she does not understand this. The Welfare Department administers a legal aid system where it keeps attorneys on retainer annually and they work on behalf of clients of the Welfare Department.

We have found that system to be particularly unsatisfactory. Maybe, as we chose people like the Honourable Member for the City they did not find the remuneration at the level they require.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do not belong to that plan. I was never invited. I would do the work for nothing. Don't point a finger at me, Sir. He is misleading this Honourable House, don't let him point a finger at me, Sir. The fact is, a lot of attorneys are not accepting this work. I may do it for next to nothing but there are a lot of attorneys who are not accepting the work and therefore people are not getting the service.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point is made.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, when I used the word "like" I meant similar to. I did not mean the Honourable Member. I meant similar to her in outlook when it comes to the poor.

Now, let me make the point. There is a new private but non-profit legal aid clinic in Barbados. The Welfare Department is currently trying to work out a programme with that legal aid clinic to provide these services where they would pay them an annual amount and young lawyers or others who are part of that legal aid programme would provide legal aid services.

I think this is a commendable development and one which should create less problems in terms of those that have existed because the legal aid clinic could then use that money perhaps to assist them in defraying the administrative costs of the legal aid programme and ensure thereby that they are actually assisting poor people in the community. So I think that, rather than questioning the programme, we are going to end up getting value for money from this development.

Let me move off on to comments by the Honourable Member for St. Andrew. As he spoke he reminded me of a statement recently made by the British Prime Minister who likened an attack from the Leader of the Opposition to being savaged by bread pudding. He had a script in his hand which clearly was not his own and therefore moved swiftly through items without giving due consideration to issues he was raising. He began by saying the Ministry of Community Development and Culture has not been able to develop any meaningful programmes during the past year. He knows that to be a total misrepresentation.

The Barbados Youth Service, which has been debated from the 1970s, finally came on stream during the past year. The National Youth Orchestra, a voluntary programme involving music teachers, with 100 participants from the schools throughout Barbados, has been initiated at no cost to Government. In fact, support services have come from grants of other entities like UNESCO, the Venezuelan Government, and so on. The Ministry facilitated it and provided the secretarial services and other assistance to get these grants processed for the National Youth Orchestra. That is the point. Many of the things this Ministry does can also be done with committed assistance from persons who are knowledgeable and able to provide services in the community, persons who are retired, persons who have talent, persons who might be working in Government positions but have time on their hands after school or otherwise and who wish to develop a project. The Ministry is only there to facilitate. Once it has moved ahead and done its best, Government steps back. That is my understanding of the role of Government and certainly it is the understanding that Honourable Members should have. 6.00 p.m.

Now the National Youth Orchestra, as I said, has commenced at no cost to Government. He said: "no meaningful programme." Last night we launched the Youth In Business Programme funded by the Organisation of American States. They gave us 5 computers and a

range of other kinds of assistance for encouraging young people to be involved in business, not only advocacy but linking young people to funding, linking them to training, linking them to ideas and linking them to agencies that can assist them in starting a business. Honourable Members pooh-poohed that.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I shall inform Honourable Members that Standing Orders are still in place. I have cautioned Members earlier today and I do not want to do it again at this late stage. Thank you.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Commission on Youth has been established and is carrying out the necessary survey among young people and institutions in Barbados to determine factors that impact negatively on youth. This is a manifesto promise which is being met and, as a meaningful programme by the Ministry, is being supported by the Opposition because they generously nominated a member to serve on that Commission. If that is not meaningful, well then take the member off the Commission and let them get on with the work they are doing, if I am to take what the Honourable Member for St. Andrew is saying at face value. I am going to get to all of that. I have time.

Last Independence this country hosted a Caribbean Summit for children, again at no cost to the Barbados Government, gathering resources available to this country but which hitherto we may not have pursued because we were not in these economic stringent circumstances. There are resources out there we can draw on for community development programmes such as the Commonwealth Youth Programme and UNICEF. There are a whole range of entities which we have not been as aggressive in taking our fair share out of entities for programmes of Government. We are committed to ensuring that this is done. It is not only us. It has been going on for a considerable time. When you have the money, you almost feel like a pariah asking for more. Let us be frank. There is no point in making a silly point about: "It happens under you and it does not make a good statement about youth". When money is flowing, people forget and they always say Barbados never asks. In fact, we want to make contributions but do not want to ask for anything. It is time that we do this and we have been doing it.

I want to move on to the question of Welfare and the National Assistance Board. The Honourable Member for the City has asked about the Food Centre. She said she is a member of the Salvation Army, not a recipient I hope. I would assume that she knew about this project, because I understand the Government has been making a contribution or has been involved in the Food Centre since the early 1970's.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Oh, if you are talking about expansion, that is a different thing. That is not what you said. You said that you wanted to hear about the Food Centre. I was about to say this Food Centre is situated at Reed Street in the City, which you may already know. It is a joint project.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I hope they are not renting it. I hope you are giving them that family home free for a programme such as this. I really hope so. It is a joint project operated by Government and the Salvation Army. It provides hot meals for 131 elderly and/or indigent persons on a daily basis from Monday to Friday. About 74 of these have no fixed place of abode. A packed meal is provided on Saturdays and Sundays and the Meals-On-Wheels Service is also provided for 27 house-bound elderly persons in the parish of St. Michael.

The Honourable Member has indicated that she wishes it expanded. To the best of my knowledge, no formal request has been made to me in that regard, but since she mentioned it, it is something we can consider.

We already have a responsibility to look at the question of vagrancy and the question of people who do not have homes which is growing in Barbados. We are looking at this and the National Assistance Board has been looking at various arrangements to provide for this kind of thing. These will come on stream not only as local funds will permit, but if we can, we shall also seek out other funds which might be available in other areas particularly, in the international service clubs and other entities like this to provide for this particular project.

Regarding cuts in the Welfare Department and the National Assistance Board, I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church South earlier speaking about some kind of rationalisation of the social services that impact on people in communities. He was making the case out for a family living in his constituency, whose story I know very well. We understand the problem relating to the rationalisation of these services. There are people in Barbados who, because they have desperate problems, let us say among that 22, may have 3 to go to Child Care Board, 2 to the Welfare Department, the old lady to the NAB, and another one to the Health Department. We have been looking at ways and means of establishing some kind of coordinating committee to look at those particular cases where an individual is indigent or disadvantaged in several ways. This is one of the reforms we have been looking at in addition to the rationalisation of Welfare and NAB Services and the renaming of the Welfare Department. I am hoping that, consequent on that rationalisation,

where at the early part recognises that a person, different kinds of problems the person's case can be referred directly to the coordinating committee to seek to ensure that resources are put together for that individual. This is something that is needed. I feel persons who apply for welfare and are not given it should also have the right to appeal. That is my view. A lot of people do not exercise that right and a lot of the processes have become redundant over time. People will call the Minister and then he sometimes has to intervene. But there should be a formal review procedure for Members of Parliament to write to that entity and say that here is a case that clearly needs assistance. The person may have gone in the beginning to the wrong department and, therefore, been denied assistance because it is not the kind that department may offer. But they are cuts. The point is, if you wish me to relate to Sherbourne I can do that. The conference centre at Sherbourne is near completion.
6.10 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The block which is almost completed is the conference centre. The block to the South of that, the furthest South, is the examinations centre and the piece in the middle is the auditorium. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew, who obviously does not understand the English Language, is saying he wants to hear Government's position on Sherbourne. About 4 Ministers have visited Sherbourne and told the public what Sherbourne is about. If you want to say you disagree with Sherbourne...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow this kind of discussion. It just is not right.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON:...the Government has not denied what Sherbourne is about. It includes a performing arts centre, an examinations centre and a major conference facility. If the conference facility is not important, then all that people like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and others have been saying about tourism is rubbish, and I do not believe that. Therefore I know they will give their support to a project that provides those services.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time is 6.15.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Is Mr. Chairman hearing the point of order?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time is 6.15 and I was just about to say to the Honourable Member that his time has expired. If I allow a point of order at this point, then I may have to accommodate the Minister subsequently.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Are you hearing my point of order, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me hear the point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am rising on a point of order to say, that the Honourable Minister is misleading the House.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I hear the point of order?

Miss B. A. MILLER: The point I am trying to make, Sir, is that the House is being misled as to the use to which Sherbourne is to be put.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am on a point of order! I am on my feet on a point of order!

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The Member is continuing the debate, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: She is continuing the debate, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: And she is continuing the debate. She cannot continue the debate, Sir. I am drawing the Chair's attention to the rules of this Chamber. The point of interruption has arrived.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have committed myself to hearing the point of order, if it is valid. Please conclude the point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I am saying is that the Honourable Minister is misleading the House about the use to which Sherbourne will be put. To say that it is going to be a

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But I am on a point of order!

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Any time she is talking about the use of Sherbourne she is continuing the debate

in this Chamber. The point of interruption has arrived, Mr. Chairman, and we cannot continue this debate.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Is he frightened for the debate?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: She is using it to continue the debate, Sir. It is clear.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I got up, on my point of order before the debate was finished.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please continue the point you are making.

Miss B. A. MILLER: If I may conclude my point of order, Sir, I am saying that a convention centre has to be custom built.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, in that respect the House is being misled as to the use to which Sherbourne...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order. Will the Honourable Member take her seat?

The question that the sum of \$27 431 204 under Head 38 - Ministry of Community Development and Culture - stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

**HEAD 39 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
- \$17 498 787**

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$17 498 787 under Head 39 - Ministry of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the Environment - stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 40 - MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE - \$12 751 692

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$12 751 692 under Head 40 - Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce - stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 42 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION - AS AMENDED - \$83 026 786

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$83 026 786 under Head 42 - Ministry of Public Works, Communications and Transportation - as amended, stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 43 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND SPORTS - \$29 623 672

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$29 623 672 under Head 43 - Ministry of Tourism and Sports - stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 50 - POST OFFICE - \$5 684 113

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$5 684 113 under Head 50 - Post Office - stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 as amended was called and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 were called and passed.

The Schedule as amended was called.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Schedule as amended be the Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

On the motion of Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Appropriation Bill and the

Estimates in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 1992.
6.20 p.m.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am asking to recommit the Order of Business so that I can give notice of a Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no objections then leave is granted.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$3 180 975 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1991-92 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1991-92 No. 3. I should also like that this matter be done in all of its stages at today's sitting.

Before that, Sir, we should also like to do another matter of which notice has been given sometime earlier.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (RESUMED)

ORDER NO. 2 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING OF US \$7 MILLION FOR USE BY VARIOUS END USER DEPARTMENTS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, this is one in a series of measures this Honourable House has been called upon to approve. In this sense, therefore, I do not believe that there would be any issues of controversy relating to the matter. Basically, what we are seeking to do is to approve the provision of a loan from the Crown Agents Services Limited to the Government of Barbados through the agency of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. The proceeds of this loan would enable what are termed End User Departments, that is various government ministries, departments, agencies and para-statal corporations to purchase goods of a capital or semi-capital nature or in the form of spare parts up to a certain amount to be paid for up front through the facilities which the Crown Agents may make available. Then, in due course, there are arrangements for the repayment by the Government in certain stipulated tranches of the amounts advanced or paid up front.

The terms and conditions are set out in the Addendum to the Resolution and I do not propose to go through them in detail. The Resolution has been circulated for some time

now to Honourable Members and, unless there are questions on it or some clarification sought, I do not propose to say very much more on it. I think Honourable Members on both sides understand the purposes of these supply and financing agreements. I believe sometime in 1984 or thereabouts the Government of the day entered into such a supply and finance agreement. There was another in 1988. We are here seeking approval by this Honourable Chamber for this particular third supply and finance agreement.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES; I second that, Mr. Speaker, and reserve my right to speak.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Suppliers credit is a well known facility used by governments, particularly in the Commonwealth, but the significant thing about this is – and I hope the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance will appreciate the point – that the developed world helps their manufacturers and suppliers by providing finance to buyers so that they can increase their exports. The developing world, like poor Barbados, is not allowed to help its manufacturers by providing finance, according to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The injustice of this economic system is very clear. They can increase their exports by giving the buyers credit but, when we do it, it is contrary to the norms set out by the multilateral financial institutions.

I hope the fact that we are getting credit does not, however, prevent our Central Purchasing Department or other agencies of Government from doing a critical examination of what they are buying. Sometimes you have to look at this so-called advantageous credit critically. There is no point in buying equipment and supplies inconsistent with what you have and with what you are familiar. It is a very important point. Some departments may, because of the fact that they can get credit, be forced to buy machinery and equipment which is not compatible with what they have. You get this a lot in the transport area and in a number of other departments. I believe there is no specific information as to which departments are likely to be users.

I remember suppliers credit was used for the Coast Guard Headquarters. The building of the Coast Guard is an area in which there is a lot of expertise in shipyards in the United Kingdom. In any event, most of the officers who were to use the equipment were technical assistance officers, and there was an opportunity to train the people who would use it. There were landrovers and things of that kind. I believe some buses and equipment for the Fire Service were once bought on suppliers credit from Leyland.

The utilisation of suppliers credit is something one expects and something we have some experience

with. Subject to the precautions that I have drawn to Honourable Members' attention and standardisation, in particular, we have no objection, but we would want to have some more details of the particular end-user departments and the type of equipment that is proposed for use. Of course, one has to scrutinise the contractual documents and matters of that kind, particularly in relation to the question whether the equipment is going to meet specifications.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On the last occasion the Honourable Minister of Finance brought a similar resolution before this House I made some comments concerning the monopolistic position of the Crown Agents as the main agent acting in respect of the importation of goods under such an arrangement. Some of the goods which will be imported are normally imported here through commission agents and commission ordering houses. Whenever the Crown Agents intervene, it means they take the full commission fee, unless that has been changed.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: ...unless that has been changed but normally the whole commission fee normally went to the Crown Agents. Frankly the service to be given subsequently is then given by the local Barbadian agents who may be agents for the particular exporter from the United Kingdom or the United States.

According to the Addendum to this Resolution, Crown Agents Services Limited is going to get 314% of the unutilised (unshipped) value of the principal amount of the Forfaiting Facility. Prior to issuing a confirmation of Approved Contract in respect of the Forfaiting Facility an appropriate proportion of the Reservation Fee will be converted into a Commitment Fee at the rate of 1.25% per annum. Therefore, Crown Agents Services Limited will be remunerated at basically 2% plus a flat or arrangement fee of U.S. \$50 000. That is a pretty substantial remuneration for the limited amount of work which Crown Agents Services Limited is called to perform.

I seriously ask for regularisation with the Crown Agents. If Crown Agents are to continue to act in these capacities towards Barbados and other countries we should regularise part of that fee which ought to be passed on to the normal commission agents and ordering houses who have normal responsibility for the type of goods being imported. I make the point for the simple reason that Crown Agents do not really employ people in Barbados. They have an office which is part of the Overseas Development Agency's Office of the British Government. I believe the officers are now placed in the British High Commission.

Commission agents, however, and commercial houses here have to maintain their establishments in full. They also have to pay staff and pay into the Treasury and to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue money due by way of taxation. Crown Agents, on the other hand, do not pay, as I understand it, and will not be asked to pay any Income Tax or other charges on fees they earn. Therefore, I believe Government must use its negotiating position to straighten out the arrangements to be made in these circumstances. In other countries where Crown Agents sell their services in this way, I know that arrangements have been made because Governments have made it quite clear to them that, while they appreciate their position as a facilitating agent for getting the Facility from the EXIM Bank or the ECG, at the same time they have to understand that there is a local commercial group whom the Government would wish to encourage and not destroy.

I issue that, Sir, as a caution. I am going to ask the Minister, particularly when he goes to Britain later this year and talks to the head of the Crown Agency and the Minister for Overseas Development with special responsibility for the Crown Agents, that these points be made. As the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said, this is a facility the British Government makes available as one of its commercial arms in order to ensure that British exports are being sold on the market.

What you would notice, Sir, now is that the arrangement is operating not only in relation to Britain but there is an arrangement between the U.S. Export/Import Bank and the Crown Agents where if one has not got the goods it buys from the other there is a sharing arrangement. We must not allow the developed world to get us into such a mind-fix and a mind-set that, where we are under pressure as we are for foreign exchange, they are going so to box us in that they will get the full benefit or value of our commercial position.

I agree the Crown Agents look after themselves so we must look after our own as well. While we need to get their money and borrow their money, particularly for part of the financing for Government's operations 1992-93, we must at the same time also not do it as beggars because we are paying them this money back.

You will notice, Sir, from Page 6 of the Estimates, that suppliers credit to the extent of \$14 million has to be arranged as part of the foreign financing of the Estimates for 1992-93 which we have recently passed. Obviously the sum in this Resolution is the U.S. \$7 million equivalent to Bds. \$14 million which is part of our foreign borrowing for next year. I understand the position, but I do not want Barbados to borrow at any cost and on any terms to cost us jobs, business and knowledge of the market as well.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, in reply to this I am grateful to the Honourable Members for

Christ Church South and Christ Church West for the comments they made. I really do not have much of a quarrel with that they have said. The points made are valid and valuable.

I should only like to observe, however, that it is my understanding, and I am speaking subject to correction, that where there are local commission agents operating with products for which they would have been eligible for commission, they automatically get the commission. I shall certainly explore that matter further.

As far as the other point made in relation to developing countries being able to give assistance for their own exports is concerned, I think this is something that developing countries will have to work out on a co-operative basis. As we seek to expand our exports, we shall have to devise mechanisms, financial and otherwise, to support exports we are seeking to sell abroad. Whatever facilities we are able to develop, I would be very surprised, Sir, if there are international institutions encouraging developing countries to spend more time and energy on improving their exports and then saying to them that the particular facilities should not be in place to underpin the financing and so on for those particular exports.
6.40 p.m.

Sir, with those few words, once again, I should like to thank Honourable Members for their comments.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 7.

Order No. 7 was called – To move that the House resolve itself itself into Committee of Supply to consider grants of sums of money for the services of the country.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1991-92 No. 3

To move the passing of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$3 180 975 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of Government to supplement the Estimates 1991-92 No. 3 as set out in the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, under this Head falls, as is well known, subprogram 01 Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Operating Expenses and Supplies and Materials. These are the two areas for which supplementary provision is being asked. The figure of \$480 150 is to supplement the Medical Aid Scheme. Mr. Chairman, this situation has arisen because of the difficulty in estimating amounts required under the Medical Aid Scheme from year to year. The cases sent for treatment are determined by the type and complexity of medical problems diagnosed. This area cannot be forecast.

The scheme was approved, as you know, Sir, to allow for any procedure which cannot be done in Barbados or, indeed, in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to be done elsewhere. This includes procedures done in Barbados in the private surgeries of private practitioners where those practitioners have equipment or expertise that is not available in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

More recently, for example, we gave approval for a patient to go to the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital in Trinidad and Tobago because they are able to do retinopathy which is not available in Barbados but which will become available not long from now after we have established the Caribbean Eye Care Institute.

Sir, during the period when it became obvious that this vote would be exceeded, up to the end of January, 1992, approval had been granted for 46 persons to receive treatment under the Medical Aid Scheme at an estimated cost of \$1 905 195.62. This included some who were sent even though one was aware there would be need to supplement the vote, when the nature of the illnesses required that those persons be sent as a matter of emergency. Hence, to avoid what has continued to happen in the past where there was a large sum of money, carried over for example, this sum of \$3 000 000 though in the case of the Medical Aid Scheme \$480 000 would have been carried over into next year's vote, Government is determined to ensure that there are no carry overs and hence the amounts voted for 1992 are the amounts to be used in 1992.

What has happened hitherto is that the numbers in one year include large carry overs from the previous year.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We do not intend to have the roll over. We do not intend in 1992 to roll over and hence...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT:... because we cannot, in the circumstances.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The information came from him in the first place. There is no point my going back to him. Let me just explain. For example, I said that the amount estimated was \$1.9 million, but of that \$1.9 million \$1 229 487.35 has been approved as outright grants, \$1.2 million of this figure of \$1.9 million would be outright grants because the persons concerned were deemed not to be capable of repaying the sums. Therefore, the remaining cost will be met as follows:

Repayment of Loans	\$ 59 000
Repayments by insurance companies	\$576 980
Employers contributions	\$ 24 728
Personal contributions	\$15 000
which altogether recoup	\$675 708

I have been mentioning to the Minister of Finance, and we are going to look at the possibility, the idea of making the Medical Aid Scheme a revolving fund rather than to have to come to Parliament, have a sum of nearly \$2 million voted and then have paid into the Consolidated Fund the money to be collected. I believe that the fund will be much more efficiently run if its funding comes from repayments and insurance payments *et cetera*. For example, since repayments last year arising out of the same management techniques I was talking about, we collected \$101 420.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It would have to be amended. We know that. One hundred and one thousand, four hundred and twenty dollars was collected of this \$1.9 million. One hundred and one thousand dollars has already been collected. In fact, when I was speaking earlier today, I could not remember the figure. But we will receive a cheque shortly for CAN.\$289 000...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: As repayment. We have advanced CAN.\$289 000 out of this sum. That is going to be refunded. That has already been agreed upon and so it is only a matter of our recovering. In essence, although we are asking for this supplementary, the amount of money spent during the year is actually less. The actual expenditure is less than the amount which appears in the numbers in terms of actual expenditure. Because of the financial system which we have, we have to expend \$1.9 million but will recover \$675 000. Hence the need for this supplementary.

On the question of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital we have a situation where, under Supplies and Materials, during the course of the financial year we had a complement of 530 beds increased to 592. The beds were increased because we commissioned the areas...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is true. The increase of 62 beds resulted in a substantial increase in the cost of supplies of linen, clothing, bedding, *et cetera*. I mean if you have 62 new beds you have to make provision for their use.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The old ones did not have any? Maybe you all did not leave any.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: They have now.
6.50 p.m.

An amount of \$900 000 had been brought over from the year before. We intend there should be no carry over. With this supplementary there should be no carry over. Certainly if there is carry over it cannot be in that vicinity, for it is very, very, very poor management, where every year you come to the House you ask for \$X.

Then we have the Drug Service. We had a sum of \$14 254 000 provided for under Supplies and Materials for the Drug Service. At the end of February 1992 the outstanding payments to our drug suppliers stood at \$905 000 and so a supplement of \$902 000 is required.

It has been necessary to meet the excise duty on alcohol which is in excess of \$200 000. Yes, we have to pay it. That is new and had to be paid for. The allocation of \$3.7 million to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was exceeded by \$971 000. The point is that we, through the Drug Service, allocate drugs to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and that was exceeded by \$971 000. In order for us to deal with the situation at the end of the year a supplement of \$902 977 is required. In those circumstances, and bearing in mind that the decision has been made that there will be no carry overs, in so far as it is humanly possible, from this year into next year, this Committee is being asked to supplement the vote to the tune of \$3 180 975. I beg to move that Head 36 stand part.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, every word that the Honourable Minister has just uttered has fortified us in our view that the Ministry of Health, under that Minister of Health, is the most mismanaged of all Ministries, despite the special management plan. I am not withdrawing that. There is nothing unparliamentary about that. It is factual.

This Minister came in here in December of last year, less than 6 months ago, for a supplementary which at

that time exceeded the original vote and made much the same speech as he is making now. I have to advise the Minister...

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The \$800 000 which I came for was a capital amount to pay the contractors and architects for the \$40 million project. We had to get that money by the end of the financial year, 1991. It was \$800 000. This is an entirely different proposition. The Honourable Member cannot now get up and say that I came in here and asked for the money for different purposes. She should withdraw it.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we heard the same language and the Minister of Finance has to be cautioned about a Minister who will continually come in here, during the course of the same financial year and make the same excuse: "Please, Sir, please, Sir, the till is empty. I must have some more", and there are always a lot of excuses. It adds up to the same thing, mismanagement in the Ministry. He comes in here now with a lot of "poor raky flannel and fuzz" excuses about carry forwards. Every Ministry carries forward. All of us on this Bench were Ministers. Every Ministry carries forward. This is the second time in this current financial year and at the very end of our financial year when we have finished even the Estimates for the year 1992-93. This financial year, 1991-92, has less than a week to go and he has now come limping in here, under cover of night, hoping that tired and after 5 days of debate, he is not going to get crucified. It is a disgrace, Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a disgrace that, after \$40 million has been spent on management studies and management techniques, even a 2 x 4 Ministry like the Ministry of Housing, much depleted, much decimated. It is disgraceful.

This is one of the most important Ministries. It is one of the Ministries attracting the largest share of the national budget and it really is not funny that it is mismanaged to the extent that the Honourable Minister of Health has to come in here for 2 major sums. These are not minor, there is nothing small about the size of this supplementary. This is a lot of money. This is a whole budget for some Ministries. The first week in December was the last time he was here, Sir. This is now March, 3 months later. He comes back again. It is a sad thing. Look what he is coming for. Under the Drug Service and under the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Sub-Heads he is coming particularly under Supplies and Materials, where this year ... You see no lessons are going to be learned. The Minister ought to be aware of the possibility that this is going to happen in the coming financial year as well if he does not do something about it.

He is shaking his head, Sir, he is shaking his head. There are cuts in the Estimates just passed by this House. There are cuts in Supplies and Materials under these particular sub-heads. If he is now mismanaging in this current financial year, having cuts in the coming year, how much more now will he mismanage in 1992/93. This is it. The only way you will take mismanagement out of the Ministry is to remove the Minister. I have made the point already in here tonight. There is no way that any management scheme can work in any Ministry where the current Minister of Health is the head of it.

It is with a great deal of reluctance that I give my support to this because these are people who have been suffering at the hands of the Ministry of Health, at the hands of their bank managers and suppliers, Mr. Chairman, who had, many, many months ago, in some cases as long as over a year ago, exceeded their overdraft ceilings and have been paying excessive interest. They are not going to be able to recover the interest on the overdraft, Sir. Many are going to be out of pocket. Some of them are small suppliers, small fruit and vegetable people, small people supplying items that will help, in non-sugar agriculture. What we call the small man sometimes in this country is expected to make a living out of this. It is a hard thing when a man goes to his bank manager and is told he has exceeded his overdraft limit, that the manager been more than generous with him but the bank must have money. All the time interest rates are going up and it is working terrific hardship.

The Minister has given us an undertaking in here that this is not to happen again. I hope that we are not going to have to be quoting that ...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: He is taking back the undertaking now. I understood the Minister of Health to say that this business of carrying forward is not to occur again in this Ministry. I would expect that the Minister of Finance is going to give that instruction to this Minister or get on the job another Minister who will learn to live within his margins and who will understand, yes, yes, Mr. Prime Minister, that cost overruns cannot any longer be the order of the day.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as I say it is with a lot of reluctance that I give my support, but this, coming at the time that it does, in microcosm, does not make it anything small; \$3 million is a lot of money. In microcosm, this is what we have been debating, for the last five days. This is what we have been debating for the last 5 days. This is a little minuet which shows the world the style of mismanagement. Much as the Minister may have thought that the timing of it would facilitate a move out of it, he has been headed off at the path. But the Opposition is alert and awake to this sort of thing. The Minister is saying

that he is not giving us any assurance. I would hope that, if the Minister is not in a position to give the people of Barbados an assurance that this cannot reoccur, at least the Minister of Finance would be able to do so.

7.00 p.m.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Joseph.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Sir, I do not propose to be long. The Honourable Member for the City who just spoke has been in a particularly swash-buckling debate. But I really feel sorry for the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who has been at the receiving end of her biting tongue. In supporting this Resolution, I want to express satisfaction that Government at long last has settled on their policy with respect to assisting people who are in need of surgical procedures that are not available here. There was a time when there was a departure from policy and the service organisations such as the Rotary Club, Lions and others on a weekly basis received requests from people who waked around with soiled papers requesting \$10.00, \$25.00 or \$30.00. I am glad that is no longer the case. It was a gross error to have departed from the policy we had left in place in respect of that.

They tell me there are, at present, large numbers of specialists across a wide field at the hospital. I want to know precisely what sort of surgical procedures are now in demand for which we still send people abroad. I know we have a neuro-surgeon on staff, a very distinguished Barbadian. He hails from St. Patricks. I know that we have chest and abdominal surgeons and so on. What sort of operations and medical conditions demand that we send people abroad and where do we send them? For example, whai determines whether you go to Jamaica, United Kingdom, Canada or the United States? I get the impression, when I talk with some of these surgeons, that even though they are capable of doing a large range of surgical procedures here, basic equipment is not available. We are spending money which we can save if only we would make sure that basic equipment is in place.

I would like the Minister to give us some light on this. Thank you.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, today I really did not want to intervene in debate on this Resolution, but I wanted to make some points on the Drug Service and this has provided me with the opportunity of so doing. You will recall, Sir, less than a year ago I raised a question about outstanding claims of the Drug Service. I was told then that they were not complying with regulations. I notice here that we are now going to vote \$902 977 to pay outstanding claims. Really, the Drug Service has to be a lot more sensitive than it has been to those people who allow it to work. These small traders are operating with very little

equity and financing available to them. Most of them are on overdraft facilities. The interest on the facility ranges from 16.5 per cent to as high as 19.5 per cent. If they go over their overdraft limit anytime during the month, then that goes to about 36 per cent. People who are paying bills for the Government in the Drug Service do not understand this. I have at least 2 pharmacies in my own constituency which have been under tremendous pressure. Therefore, the Drug Service people must understand that, when they are opting out, they are not opting out because they want to be difficult. They are opting out because the Drug Service people have used the letter and law of the contract and sometimes beyond the contract to pay them or not to pay them at all. What is annoying about this is that the Drug Service issues a directive drawing to the attention of suppliers that those same pharmacists must not have access to formulary drugs. The suppliers have interpreted this to mean that, where the small pharmacists are even prepared to pay the duty, they are not going to allow them to participate. Now I am going to bring the Drug Service and some of those people before the Law Courts because I think it is preventing Barbadians from earning a living and from employing people. In my constituency, they have to lay off. I am appealing, too, because I have seen bland statements from the Drug Service. I think it was totally uncalled for. I think it is pressure on these people and I despise the way the Service believes it is going to tie people into the Service. I have advised the people to bring them before the Law Courts and make the Drug Service understand that it cannot get compliance by using the big stick. I have not got permission to name the 2 companies, but I have a lot of correspondence going on with the legal advisers, where 2 of the main companies, including a manufacturing company here, have interpreted the Drug Service's letter to mean that they cannot sell anything under a formulary even when these small people want to pay the duty involved.

I do not believe, if we want a genuine property owning class and people who are going to be in business, that this is the way to do this. This Drug Service has to understand they have to go and talk to the people. They do not want to break up the Drug Service. It is that the Drug Service has never been known to pay its bills timely. Whereas Collins Ltd. may be able to take that stick, the small pharmacists in Barbados cannot take subsidising the Drug Service. I did not want this debate to conclude without making that point.

7.10 p.m.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South says he has had the same experience with small pharmacies within his constituency. I am asking them, if they wish to keep the goodwill that is there, to look and see where their procedures have been wrong and how they can facilitate people coming into the Service. People do not leave the Service because they want to break up the Drug Service. They leave it because they cannot carry the extra

costs which are being passed on to them. It is not enough for the head of the Drug Service to reply through the Press by saying that their contract says that they have 60 days and they are complying with their contract. Well, you will not get anybody to come into contract with you in the future. They will have their lawyers look at it. The Government now is not in the driver's seat in these hard times so they will drive harder bargains. I do not believe that this is the way we should deal with this matter. I will not belabour it but I hope the problems that have surfaced will now be discussed and properly solved.

You will realise that earlier this year, or late last year, some of the pharmacists issued a statement on it. I believe it is worthy of the Minister's looking into it. I will show him my file on the matter if necessary. I will show him the correspondence I have had with the legal advisers to some of the suppliers and, if necessary, the legal opinion that I have given. It looks as though we will head to the Law Court unless we can solve a matter that I think should be solved in the interest of the people who want to get this service.

Let me tell the Minister, that some older people, in particular, do not want to run from their normal pharmacist, who will come out late at nights to accommodate them, and to go somewhere else. He must realise there is an element of personal service here. There are not many pharmacists you can get to come out on Sundays or at nights to fill a prescription. When you do not give them access to the formulary drugs, even if they are prepared to pay the duty on it then, in my view, you are denying it as well to the people in the area. That's my statement on it, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Honourable Members for the very constructive criticisms which they have levelled.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Even the Honourable Member for the City, despite the attempt at blunderbuss, in underlying that criticism tried her best to make a constructive comment. She said the amount of money for the supplementary is a lot. On the face of it, it is a lot of money, but if you look at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital where \$66 million is spent, a supplementary of \$3 million which is 5%, cannot be deemed to be unreasonable. I indicated when I came to the first supplementary that it was money which we were recovering because it was IADB money. For the second supplementary, I pointed out that we were recovering \$675 000 from the Medical Aid Scheme. So I do not really think that it is necessary for me to dwell any longer with the Honourable Member for the City.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph asked a very serious question which deserved some very serious responses. The first question was, what kind of surgical procedures require us to send persons overseas? First of all, the bulk of the surgical procedures for which persons go overseas are heart diseases – angiographic work, angiograms and open-heart surgery. We do some angiograms here, but we do not have the facilities and the 2 doctors who are competent to do angiograms prefer to send them to Northshore Hospital. That is where we send the bulk of our people. Barbados has been very fortunate to have an arrangement with Northshore where we make a donation of approximately \$20 000 a year and they take every patient sent from Barbados because Dr. Ishmael – I am not calling his name pejoratively – has been associated with that hospital for some considerable time. So there is an arrangement of which we, as a country, are the beneficiaries.

In the Estimates, we made provision for the angiographic suite which has been in the Estimates since 1988. This year, we are fairly certain we will get that angiographic suite. We will be able, when we have installed the angiographic suite, to do all the angiograms here and that will cut down the number going abroad because only those who go for actual surgery will...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ... yes. The procedure basically is to look inside the heart and open the closed valve by use of a tube.

The second area in which we send people overseas has to do with the eyes. Most of our people here go to Moorfields in London. You should have read – and I intend in due course to come to the House and give details of the Lions Caribbean Eye Centre – that we are, in fact, getting a grant of \$5 million to build an eye centre in Barbados. When that eye centre is completed, we will be able to do all of the procedures which are being done elsewhere or more. In fact, we will be able to attract, if not all, most of them. We will then have to attract the persons with the requisite qualifications.

Mr. Chairman, I might take this opportunity to say that there is a young Barbadian ophthalmologist who has just passed the equivalent of the consultants examination for ophthalmology. He will be an FRCS in Ophthalmology. He is the first Barbadian to take the examination and pass the first time. He was trained mostly here in Barbados. All of his practical training was done here, and he should be coming back to us in June. We also have another one who came back last year.

One of the things we have done since 1987 is to try to get as large a number of Barbadians as possible trained as ophthalmologists. There are 5 of them. One

came back last year, one is coming in June, the one who did so well, and the other 3 are going to be coming over the next 2-3 years, if they do well in their exams. So one of the things the Eye Centre will be able to do is to train optometrists or orthoptists. Basically, we have not had in Barbados the kind of ancillary technical people connected with ophthalmology. You do not need only ophthalmologists. You need nurses who are specially trained in eye care. You need the orthoptists. You need the opticians and a whole host of people. In this centre we will be able to train people for the entire Eastern Caribbean and beyond.

The third area in which we send people out, as I said earlier, is for orthopaedic surgery, where total hip replacement is necessary. Again, we are taking steps to bring that nearer to home.

Those are the 3 broad areas that take the bulk of the persons who are being sent out.

The Honourable Member said there was some question about the lack of basic equipment. To my knowledge, that is not so. You would have heard that so far we have done 4 kidney transplants. Those transplants were done by West Indian surgeons and West Indian doctors at the hospital and they did not require any special equipment which is not there. These transplants were done in Barbados with the equipment which we now have.
7.20 p.m.

One of the things which the \$40 million development did was to ensure that all of the basic equipment necessary for the advancement of the Hospital was put in place. Barbados has been very fortunate.

I have spoken before about Barbados being the beneficiary of a generous offer from a person through the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, of a Gamma camera. That was a \$400 000 gift to Barbados. We are constantly receiving equipment as we go along as the doctors themselves make contact or in some cases, a Minister, or the overseas offices make contact with persons who wish to assist us. They give equipment. I do not know of any situation where an operation was not done because we did not have the basic equipment.

In the case of the Orthopaedic total hip replacement the skill might be there but we do not have the numbers. You need more than one orthopaedic surgeon. You need some additional equipment. In the case of Mr. Bennett coming in, he brings equipment with him. In due course, we will have to get the equipment once we are able to do total hip replacement. Unless you are actually using the equipment, it would be uneconomical to purchase.

The Honourable Member raised some questions about the Drug Service. I want to say that I take very seriously

the issues which the Honourable Member raised. If he would speak to the same person I believe he would be aware that I have met with the pharmacists concerned. There is one in particular and 2 or 3 others. One is a very young, aggressive businessman who wants to go in his own direction.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We have met with him and I disagree. I pointed out when we had the meeting – in fact, I am surprised to hear that anyone is saying that if they are prepared to pay the duty that they cannot be supplied. That would be a restraint of trade. That has nothing to do with the Drug Service. There is no directive which the Drug Service could put out that could operate as a restraint of trade. Any such directive which is being so interpreted will be revised, if necessary, from the Ministry because I think the Honourable Member would know that this Minister will not stand for any restraint of trade.

The point is, however, that where a small pharmacist is looking to get the duty-free allowances he would get if he were in the programme then if he withdraws from the programme, he must understand he takes with him the benefits and the burdens. It is as simple as that. I do not see any difficulty. If the Honourable Member wishes, outside of the Committee, to assist in an amicable settlement of this problem I should be happy to entertain him.

Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Members on my side, like the Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House who has been so supportive in his comments, as I am giving this information to the Committee.

Thank you very much, Sir.

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

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Resolution in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, the Resolution was read a first, second and third time and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, we have had 5 days of strong debate on both sides of this House. I sure that Honourable Members must be feeling the effects of the long hours not being accustomed to such long hours generally, except once or twice per year. I want to

thank all Honourable Members. I would also like to thank the support staff, everybody including reporters, electronic technicians, policemen and, of course, such public servants as have attended to assist in this debate, and anyone else who may have assisted us, Sir.

I now move the adjournment of this House until Tuesday, March 31, 1992 at 12 o'clock noon, Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, speaking on the motion for the adjournment, let me say that we have gone through 17 of the main 21 Heads in the Estimates and have given detailed consideration to 16 of these. Unfortunately the guillotine came down when we were into the 17th. My calculation is that this is about 80% of the matters that have come before the Committee of Supply of the House, and, indeed, before the House. In the last 21 years, outside of the period when there was unlimited debating time for the Estimates in this House, this is the first time that such a substantial number of Ministries has come under scrutiny in Committee. I should like to suggest, Sir, that consideration be given to, probably, a further 2 days. I would think that, if the Estimates procedure went through a period of about 7 days with the combination of the Budget being incorporated into the situation, the people's business would be much improved. I believe that the debates, as well, would be more beneficial to all sides.

I also would say, speaking for Members on this side certainly, that the break over the weekend has probably

eased the tiredness that would normally have come on the staff, the Presiding Officers and ourselves from this period. We should really learn from these lessons to improve our procedures.

7.30 p.m.

I wish to join in the statements made by the Honourable Leader of the House and particularly to say that I am very much indebted to Members on my side for the valiant way in which they have stuck to the task, Sir. I shall never forget seeing the Minister of Health under such heavy manners and heavy pressure as he was today.

Certainly, I should like to comment that I would wish that we could learn from the way in which the Heads have been given consideration on this occasion.

I should like as well, Sir, to thank the staff of Parliament particularly and include in that those people who provide for our security and those persons who help us as well in the luncheon room, and to say, as well, that I think the *bonhomie* between Members of Parliament, despite the divide on various areas of policy, and what not has been most refreshing.

The question that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday 31st March, 1992 at 12.00 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly at 7.32 p.m.

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FRANKLIN, Hon. W. O. (St. Philip North)
GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy)
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HALL, Hon. W. W. (St. Michael West Central)
KING, Hon. M. A. (Christ Church West Central)
MILLER, Miss B. A. (City of Bridgetown)
MORRIS, Mr. R. L. (Christ Church East Central)
PAYNE, Mr. G. W. (St. Andrew)
SANDIFORD, Rt. Hon. L. E. (St. Michael South)
SIMMONS, Mr. D. A. C. (St. Thomas)
SIMMONS, Hon. N. K. (St. James South)
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